

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin
Planning Application Ref: **AW/198/20/T**
Location: **54 Westminster Drive Aldwick PO21 3RE**
Description of works: **Fell 1No. Poplar tree**
Reasons given: Problematic root system and prolific sucker growth

Comments on Application:

White poplar / *Populus alba* Height: 15-20m Spread: 5-10m Age class: Early mature

- This tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile. It grows at the front of the property and is prominent, being highly visible from surrounding properties and to users of the public highway (footway and carriageway). As such, it has public amenity value.
- It is stated that the tree has become problematic for occupiers of adjacent property, in respect of driveway disruption (direct root action) and sucker growth arising from the root system. There is stated concern for future negative influence from this tree (which has high growth potential) over the surrounding area.
- White and grey poplar are known to; have relatively high water-demand and produce extensive root systems thereby exerting great influence over ground conditions, produce sucker growth from live roots especially in response to any pruning or natural loss of high canopy, be vulnerable to breakage of branches in the upper crown and have low resistance to decay. It is therefore important to consider the limited management options available for such a tree in this particular context.

Conclusions:

- It is unlikely that there is a practical engineering solution available that would allow safe retention of the tree as is and in harmony with a functioning driveway across the property. Although it has not been evidenced, I find observation of the physical state of the driveway adequate to attribute cause to the developing root system of the poplar tree.
- This tree has already outgrown its context (presents an unreasonable level of nuisance to those living nearby) and not yet reached its full growth potential. The work proposed is justified on arboricultural grounds.

Recommendations:

- I recommend **CONSENT** for this application, subject to the following condition:

Condition to Be Applied to Approved Work: -

- Once the tree has been felled (and either grubbed or ground out) then a replacement tree is to be planted to within 5metres.

This is to be of Standard Nursery Stock proportions (10-12cm girth & 2m to 3m overall height) supported on a 'short stake' system with appropriate securing ties and pads.

It is to be planted within 12 months of the removal of the poplar tree.

The species shall be selected from the following tree groups and in agreement with the local planning authority's tree officer: -

Hawthorn *Crataegus* spp., **Ornamental cherry** *Prunus* spp., **Crab apple** *Malus* spp., **Whitebeam/Rowan** *Sorbus* spp.

- **Reasons:** To accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice in general.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team