

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin

Planning Application Ref: AW/269/20/TC

Location: 20 The Fairway, Bognor Regis

Description of works: Reduce 1No. Lombardy poplar to height 16m and spread 7m and Crown thin by 20% within the Aldwick Bay Conservation area

Comments on Application:

Lombardy poplar / *Populus nigra Italica* Approx. height: 20m Average radial spread: 4m Age class: Late mature

- This tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a full and attractive crown profile. No evidence of significant past modification of the crown. Appears to be a fine example of its type.
- It is highly visible from surrounding properties. The upper crown is visually impressive when viewed from adjacent estate roads. As such, it has public amenity value.
- Although the applicant is not required to provide any reasons for the proposed work, I am not aware of, nor did I observe any obvious arboricultural justification for the same.
- The proper execution of *crown thinning* as defined by British Standard 3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations involves ‘the removal of a proportion (1:5 ratio proposed here) of small, live branches from throughout the crown to achieve an even density of foliage around a well-spaced and balanced branch structure.’ Such an aim could only apply to the upper 2/3 of this tree and in any event would be an unsatisfactory outcome for it and with no discernible gain elsewhere. If the intention is remove any weak crossing branches then that needs to be specified so we are in no doubt as to the extent of material to be removed.

Conclusions:

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression. The proposal to reduce the height by approximately 6metres could result in harm to the health and vitality of the tree with large pruning wounds being formed.
- The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape and appears to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. The tree surgery proposed in the application would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.
- I register an **Objection** to this proposal.

Recommendation:

- I recommend the making of a Tree Preservation Order to preserve this tree's place in the landscape and better control future management. I will forward a TEMPO form and GIS plan separately for this purpose.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team