

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe

Planning Application Ref: AW/281/19/T

Location: Strawberry Cottage, Cypress Way, Aldwick, PO21 4DF

Description of works: Reduce circumference by 3m and pollard by 3m 1no. Turkey oak tree. Reduce circumference by up to 3m away from property 2no. field maple trees

Reasons Given: T1 – pollard restoration, G276 – building clearance

Comments on Application:

T1 Turkey oak / <i>Quercus cerris</i>	Approx. height: 10m	Average spread: 4m	Age class: Semi-mature
TPO ref: G276, 2x Field maple / <i>Acer campestre</i>	Average height: 15m	Average spread: 5m	Age class: Late-mature

- **T1** – Outwardly and from a distance this tree appears to be in a fine physiological state but with a heavily modified crown. It has responded with vigour, typical for a healthy example of its type and in time could present an attractive crown profile when in leaf.
- **G276** – Both trees appear to be in fair physiological condition. The southernmost tree is multi-stemmed (possibly a cluster planting). Both have asymmetric form but are cohesive and together present an attractive crown profile despite an erratic pruning history. The applicant proposes a reduction in circumference. This is not a recognised tree work specification, so I have assumed it means lateral spread. Reduction in circumference alone, suggests an overall crown reduction (height and spread) is being sought. The proposal then further specifies ‘*Away from property*’ which suggests that future interference with built structures (existing dwelling and garden wall/arch brickwork) is the issue being addressed; that can only apply to the southernmost tree in the group.
- G276 is highly visible from surrounding properties; both can be seen from publicly accessible land.

Conclusions:

- **T1** - This tree is not the subject of any Order nor worthy of such given it has been irrevocably spoilt by past pruning which has terminated the main stem at 6metres height and truncated the scaffold limb framework. Having been so compromised, at this location it will have to be managed long-term at similarly reduced dimensions to achieve an appropriate degree of structural integrity. Local planning authority consent for the work proposed is not required.

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- **G276** - These trees require careful management that respect their age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
 - The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) by 3m respectively would not comply with ‘British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations’ and be likely to result in harm to the health and vitality of the tree with large pruning wounds being formed as well as undermining their visual amenity value and impact in the landscape.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.

Advisory:

- I would like to see the applicant submit a revised work specification such as detailed below, which would seem to address their concerns whilst preventing a diminution of the tree’s landscape and public amenity value:

G276 (southernmost tree) - Reduce/remove branches as necessary to achieve a maximum of 2metres clearance from built structures (main dwelling and garden wall/arch brickwork). Pruning wounds on completion of work must not exceed 100mm diameter.

- If the applicant is prepared to re-submit in line with this advice, then I would be able to recommend APPROVAL subject to the following condition:

Condition to Be Applied to Approved Work: -

Part a) Where whole branches are to be removed and final cuts made close to the trunk or branch union they are to be made as shown in Figure 2 of BS3998:2010

Part b) Where branches are to be shortened back the final cuts are to be made at the correct angle shown in BS3998:2010 and adjacent to a live bud or lateral.

Reasons: In the interests of the trees continued health and vitality and to accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice.

- *See also the standard pruning guidance notes issued with the consent letter*

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

