

Planning Officer : Janice Chapman

Planning Application Ref: AW/32/14/T

Location : 17/19 Craigwell Lane, Aldwick

Description of works: Reduce the height and spread by 7m to 8m

Reasons Given: Recent failure of central trunk and tree surgeon alleged decay in wound

Comments On Application: T1 – Monterey Pine Height – 14m : Avge Spread – 6 to 7m : Age – Mature

- In recent storms the central main stem of some 500mm diameter crashed out of the tree and across Mr Smythes garden and partially demolished a wall.
- I do not have the benefit of having seen the wound from a climbing inspection and in the absence of any photo's from the tree surgeon I will have to make my mind up from ground level.
- It has been topped out in the past at the point that the stem failed so it is possible that there was decay undermining it.
- Essentially the whole of the west side of the tree has been lost and there are long attenuated limbs to the southwest and south and north sides.
- These limbs are at risk of snapping out due to the opened out centre of the tree which will allow wind vortices to whip around and twist these branches without any resistance – thus torsion cracks could appear and the branches then fail.

Conclusions:

- ***I Object to*** the extent of the works that have been requested on the grounds that they are likely to undermine the ongoing health and vitality of this tree and if you prune it this heavily you might as well remove it and we are not yet at a point where this is justified.
- However, for safety reasons this tree should now be reduced and reshaped with the exception of the crown massing to the southwest side which is the main buffer to the prevailing winds and should remain as it is for the time being.

Recommendation:

I would object to the principle of pruning to a lesser degree to make the tree safe and should the applicant amend or resubmit seeking the following I would support it:-

1. Reduce lowest limb over Mr Smythes garden by 2m in length
2. Reduce the branch spread to the north by 3m to 4m and also the long branch to the southeast side by the same amount making final cuts adjacent to living growth points and not leaving stubs with no foliage (sap draw).
3. **No Works are permitted** to the crown massing to the southwest side at this time.

N.B. I also recommend that the tree surgeon fully probes the wound to see if there is any residual decay and takes a series of photographs to illustrate the extent of any decay found so that we can assess the need for any further works before we proceed with the ones recommended in this report. i.e. if it has to be felled then it would be pointless to reduce it beforehand!

I also note that the applicant is not the owner of the tree so it will be necessary to have the owners approval before any works are undertaken.

Bernie Harverson

Consultant Arboriculturist