

Planning Officer: Charlotte Easton

Planning Application Ref: **AW/342/18/T**

Location: **4 A'Becket's Avenue, Aldwick, PO21 4LU**

Description of works: **Crown reduction of 1-2m to 1 No. horse chestnut tree**

Reasons Given: To prevent building interference and to open up the area

Comments on Application:

Horse chestnut / *Aesculus hippocastanum* Height: Approx.16m Average spread: 6m Age class: Mature

- This tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable, with an attractive profile despite having been the subject of crown reduction (c2012) from which it has 'grown on' well.
- It is a prominent feature and highly visible to both public highway users and those accessing/exiting the estate.
- The reasons stated for the work are not sufficient to justify such action, although I support the basic principle of repeating such operations where sufficient regrowth has occurred from the past pruning points, to maintain structural integrity throughout the crown.
- There appears to have been a degree of soil/root disruption immediately to the north aspect of the tree, following installation of a new boundary fence. Extensive soft landscaping work has been carried out around the base of the tree and tending south out across the anticipated rooting zone.

Conclusions:

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
- If the work is undertaken to a good standard and at the right time; then it is unlikely to have an adverse effect on the tree's long-term vitality and visual amenity.
- On this occasion, I cannot say the proposal to reduce its overall height and spread with a view to restricting its growth is justified and consistent with previous works approved by the Local Planning Authority as I have not been able to retrieve a past permission for the original operation.

Recommendations:

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

Conditions To Be Applied to Approved Work: -

- 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
- 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.
- The removal of crown material which has developed since the last operation must be done sympathetically and with respect to established 'knuckles' so as not to extend beyond the point of origin.
- The long-term vitality of this tree is best respected when significant pruning work such as proposed, is undertaken during the late spring/summer (May to August) period. The work proposed must only be undertaken during this period.

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

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team