

Planning Officer: Hannah Kersley

Planning Application Ref: BE/154/21/T

Location: New Barn lane Footpath adj. to Whittaker Grove, North Bersted, Bersted, PO21 5DB

Description of works: 1 no. oak tree (T1) - Crown lift to a height of 4.2m from ground level to accommodate the proposed access road

Reasons given: Highway clearance

Comments on Application:

T1 Pedunculate oak / *Quercus robur* Height: 10-15m Radial spread: 5-10m Age class: Early mature

- Outwardly and from a distance (roadside) this tree appears to be in a fine physiological state and assumed to be so in the absence of any evidence provided to the contrary.
- It is a prominent tree of high public amenity value and growth potential. The development of low limbs on southern and eastern aspects adds considerably to its visual appeal.
- Low-level branches now encroach the newly constructed footway but are free of carriageway (new estate access road). The access road has already been constructed and is in use.
- The Agent (Mr Buck of UPTON Ltd) states in their report (Appendix 2: Tree Survey Schedule), that crown lifting is to occur on the site side. This is assumed to be the Bellway development side and affects the South and East aspects only.

Conclusions:

- Crown lifting as a pruning operation can be interpreted as the removal/reduction of low branches to achieve desired extent of overhead clearance. It should be clearly specified on which aspect(s) of a tree's crown that work is to be applied. In this instance, the wholesale removal of low limbs and branches is not necessary to achieve adequate clearance of public highway and would irrevocably spoil the visual amenity of the tree.
- Long-term clearance of the public highway can be achieved with a revised and sympathetic proposal for lesser work.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.
- **I would like the applicant to be invited to agree to a revised proposal for lesser works** (such as described below) as part of the current application so as not to incur further delay. Such work would go some way to addressing their concerns whilst preventing a diminution of the tree's landscape and public amenity value:
 - ***'Remove/reduce branches as necessary to achieve a maximum of 3metres overhead clearance on South and East aspects only where above (and to a maximum 600mm beyond back-edge of) the tarmac footway.'***

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- 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 All Approved Works: -

- 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 interest of the tree's 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

