

**Planning Officer:** Zac Denton

**Planning Application Ref:** BE/7/18/TC

**Location:** Walnut Tree Cottage, Shripney Lane, Bognor Regis

**Description of works:** Reduce crown to 1No. Weeping Willow by 5 metres, remove one low limb on west side & cut lower branches overhanging footpath

**Reasons Given:** To reduce risk of limb failure

**Comments on Application:**

**Golden weeping willow** *Salix x sepulcralis* var. *chrysocoma* Height: 16m Spread: 7m Age: Over mature

- Tree occupies a prominent position relative to neighbouring cottages but with limited view from the adjacent lane. A long-established ornamental feature tree no doubt appreciated by passers-by and local residents.
- To some extent it is a shame that this tree has received modification to its branch framework. As healthy trees of this type will do, it has responded with vigour to the heavy crown reduction work (more of a pollard-type operation), undertaken c2003. Repeating this operation is now necessary to limit the risk of branch failure.
- Appears to be in good physiological condition, especially for its age. I did not have a close view of the stem base, so cannot comment on its overall structural condition, but there are clearly some cavities in the limb framework – notably on the large west tending scaffold limb, which are a valid concern.

**Conclusions:**

- This is an important feature tree, albeit for a relatively small number of people and its age needs to be considered if it is to not endure unnecessary adverse effect on its health from the work proposed.
- If the tree is pruned to a high standard with respect to previous pruning cuts then what is proposed will be an entirely reasonable operation to carry out at the correct time of year (Mid-winter or mid-summer: avoid Spring and Autumn).
- The risk of tree decline is unfortunately out-weighted by the need to address structural defects in the limb framework.

**Recommendations:**

- I raise **No Objection** to the works that have been applied for and see no reason to make a TPO in this instance.

**Advisory:**

- Remove small branches to just beyond position of past pruning cuts in order to ensure a satisfactory standard of tree surgery, in the interests of tree health and ongoing vitality.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team