

CONSULTEE RESPONSE (Council's Arboriculturist)

Date of inspection: 28th July 2026

Case Officer: Silvie Steiningerova

Reference: BR/122/26/T

Location: 13 Normanton Avenue, Bognor Regis, PO21 2TU

Proposal: Crown reduction of 1no. English oak (T1) to leave a height of 10-13m and spread of 13-14m.

Reasons:

1. To remove immediate threat of damage to dwelling and fixtures from direct contact with branches.
2. To reduce the risk of further structural damage from root activity, both directly and indirectly.

Comments on Application:

T1 Pedunculate oak / *Quercus robur* Height: 15-20m Radial spread: 5-10m Age class: Mature

I was unable to access the property to gain a close view of the tree due to its secure perimeter and site hoarding. My assessment was limited to the roadside.

T1 is the dominant tree locally, being large, broad crowned and prominent in the street scene. It is long-established and grows over the main dwelling, a neighbouring property and public highway. The upper crown is unmodified, resulting in a broad and visually impressive profile.

I have estimated the tree as having a top height of 20metres and average radial crown spread of 10metres. This is broadly consistent with the applicant's engineer's measurements. The proposed work represents a >65% reduction in crown volume. In addition to an immediate loss of visual amenity, there would be a harmful impact on the tree's health and vitality including creation of multiple large wounds that invite ingress of decay causing organisms.

The engineer has recommended a phased removal of the tree, this being the first of an intended two-stages. Inevitably, the proposed extent of whole crown reduction pruning exceeds that which is recommended in BS3998:2010 Tree work for retained trees.

It has not been evidenced that tree root-related subsidence is causing significant structural damage to the dwelling. No crack/level monitoring or arboricultural input has been provided.

The catalogue of damage (cracks) is seemingly dispersed throughout the main dwelling, including first floor rear bedroom, and none evidentially attributed to a causative factor with high confidence. Only those directly affecting the front porch appear to have been so.

Pre-emptive works to the proposed extent will diminish the tree's visual amenity. As this is currently high, the demand for supporting evidence should be too.

The issue of direct damage (e.g. porch slab distortion, boundary wall cracking/heaving) from tree roots will not be mitigated by pruning, given the proximity and size of the tree. Any root pruning necessary to facilitate a repair would need to be the subject of a separate application as roots are protected to the same extent as branches above ground. I would be happy to discuss a supervised combined exploratory excavation/root pruning operation, to progress essential work, that avoids the extended delay a formal application incurs, subject to the planning department approving such an approach.

Conclusions:

This is an important tree in the landscape which demands careful management. Any substantial pruning must be justified on arboricultural grounds. The issue of direct interference with the dwelling and fixtures could have been dealt with already (see comments in response to recent application ref. BR/76/26/T).

The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape and appears to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. The tree surgery proposed in the application would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.

A degree of pruning to limit top height and spread in most directions is reasonable given the dominating effect the tree has over surrounding area presently and its potential for growth. In the absence of justification for its removal, that work should respect its ongoing health and vitality, amenity offer and be compliant with the requirements of BS3998:2010.

Recommendation:

As it stands, I am unable to support this application. I **would like the applicant invited to agree to a revised proposal for lesser works (as described below) as part of the current application so as not to incur further delay.** Such work would go some way to addressing the applicant's concerns whilst ensuring no undue detriment to tree health or loss of amenity:

- *Prune branches as necessary to achieve a maximum clearance of 2metres from dwellings, outbuildings and associated fixtures.*
- *Reduce height of tree to leave a minimum of 18metres when measured from ground level and reduce radial spread (when measured from the bark of main stem) to leave a minimum of 8metres on all aspects.*
- *Remove large limb growing in a northerly direction low across the carriageway, leaving a large but correctly positioned final cut on the main stem.*

If the applicant agrees to the above revision then I would be able to recommend we grant consent, subject to the following condition:

Condition 1

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

Reasons: To accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice in general.

Condition 2

The work hereby approved shall be undertaken under the supervision of the Local Planning Authority who shall be notified not less than 7 days before the work commences.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of tree surgery in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy ENV DM4 of the Arun Local Plan.

Informative:

Hard pruning creates numerous and/or large wounds, incurring a physiological stress which may affect long-term health and vitality. The optimum time for pruning a deciduous oak tree is late spring to summer (May to August). Winter months when the trees are dormant is the traditional season for such work and certainly much less harmful than undertaking during spring or autumn, which should be avoided.

Mark Warwick
Principal Tree Officer
Environment and Climate Change

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

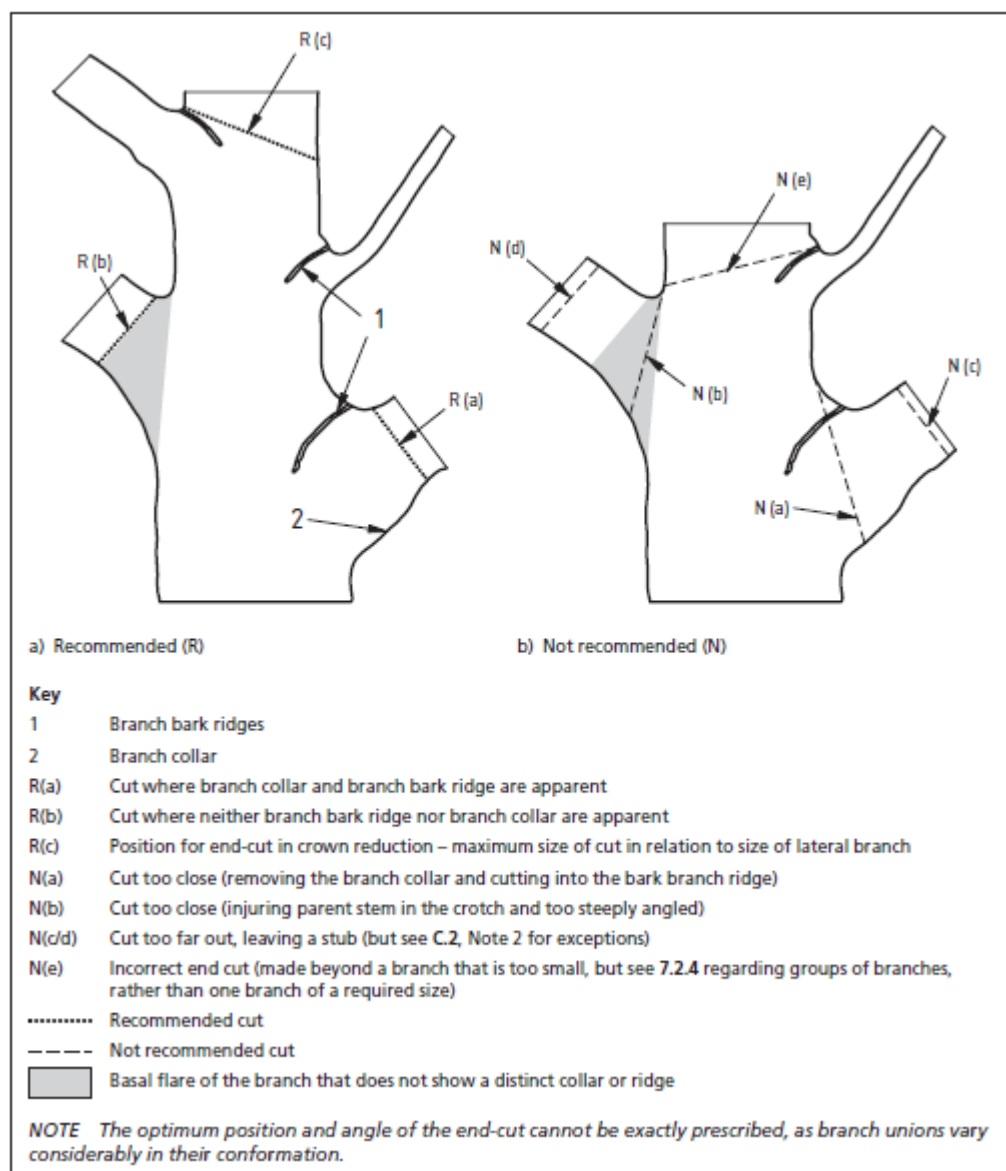
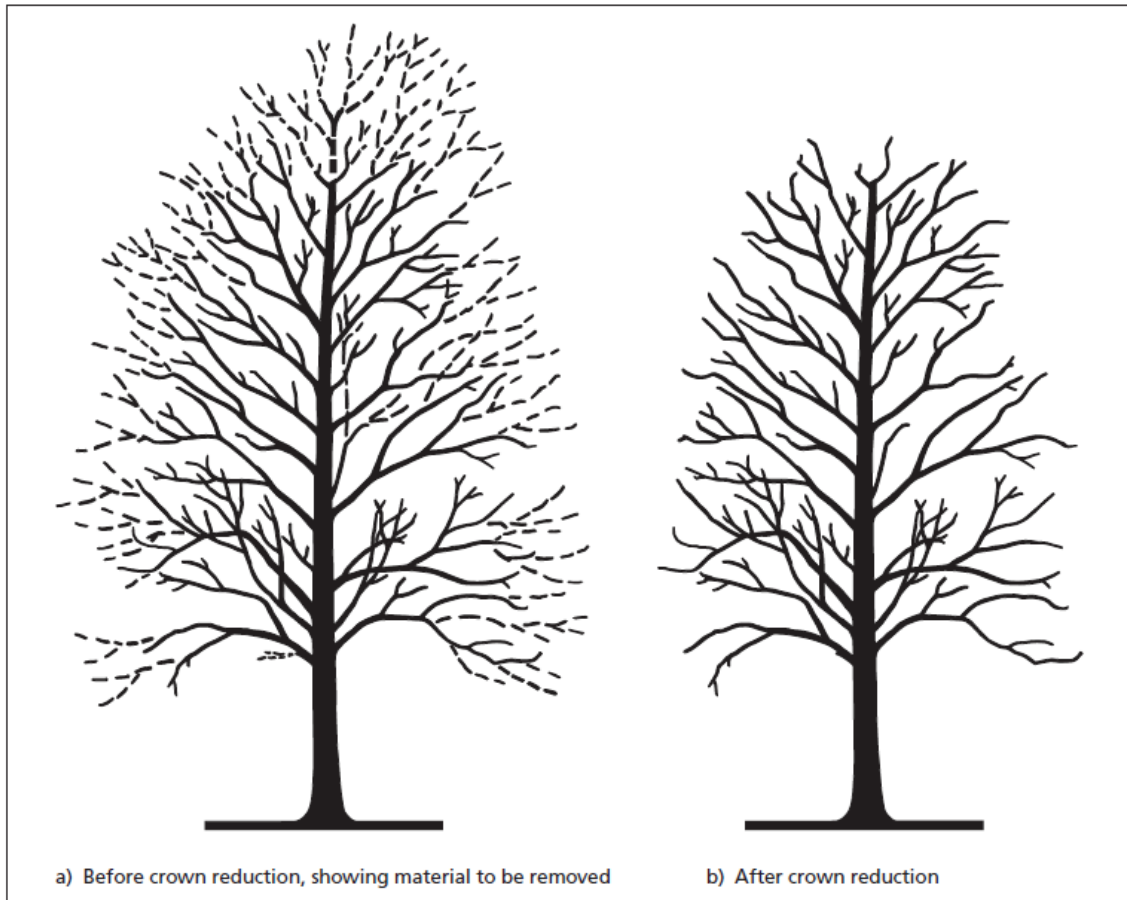


Figure 4 Diagrammatic illustration of crown reduction



[REDACTED]

From: Elaine Walby on behalf of Planning.Responses
Sent: 06 August 2026 14:51
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: BR/122/26/T
Attachments: BR.122.26.T.pdf; BS3998.2010.Figure 2.Final cuts.pdf; BS3998.2010.Figure 4.Crown reduction.pdf

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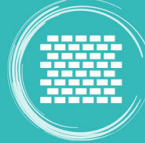
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From: Mark Warwick <Mark.Warwick@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 August 2026 16:03
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Silvie Steiningerova <Silvie.Steiningerova@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: BR/122/26/T

Please find attached my report for your consideration.

Regards,

Mark Warwick
Principal Tree Officer, Environment and Climate Change

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www.arun.gov.uk