

Planning Officer: Mr F Gardner
Planning Application Ref: BR/150/20/T
Location: 252 Hawthorn Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 2UP
Description of works: Crown reduction of 1No. oak tree to height 7.2m and spread 6.3m
Reasons Given: Excessive shading of neighbouring properties

Comments on Application:

Pedunculate oak / *Quercus robur* Approx. height: 20m Average spread: 10m Age class: Mature

- Restricted view at time of inspection (from Pagham Court only) although outwardly and from a distance this tree appears to be healthy and stable. No concerns in respect of its condition have been raised or evidenced. A recent incident of large, low limb failure has temporarily diminished its aesthetic value when viewed from the west, but it otherwise retains a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile – especially when seen from publicly accessible land.
- It grows so close to a rear garden boundary that it dominates the outlook from the back of this property as well as apartments in neighbouring Pagham Court – a relatively recent development in the history of this long-established tree. Seasonal influence from shading is not insignificant but unlikely to be excessive.
- Overhead and lateral clearance of branches above and from the property appears to be adequate but there is scope for some light pruning to improve conditions if desired. A subsequent application would need to be carefully prepared and for example - specify the precise extent of clearance from built structures and extent/type of low branch removal (crown lifting).

Conclusions:

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression. It will always be a dominant feature for those properties nearby but remains in harmony with its surroundings.
- The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape and appears to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) by such an extent does not comply with 'British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations' and would result in harm to the health and vitality of the tree with large pruning wounds being formed as well as undermining its visual amenity value and impact in the landscape.

Recommendation:

- I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team