

Planning Officer: Hannah Kersley

Planning Application Ref: BR/258/21/T

Location: 252 Hawthorn Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 2UP

Description of works: Crown reduction of 1no. *Quercus robur* (English Oak) to height 18m and spread 8m

Reasons given: Proximity of limbs to surrounding buildings and associated risk of damage

Comments on Application:

Pedunculate oak / *Quercus robur* Approx. height: 20m Average radial 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. 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 the owner's property as well for some apartments in neighbouring Pagham Court – a relatively recent development in the history of this long-established tree.
- This application seeks to initiate whole crown reduction that would incur a volume loss of approximately 40%.
- Overhead and lateral clearance of branches above and from affected properties appear adequate but there is scope for some light pruning to improve conditions and provide long-term clearance.

Conclusions:

- This tree will always be a dominant feature for those properties nearby but could remain in harmony with its surroundings under careful management.
- 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 may 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:

- As it stands, I am unable to support this application. **I would like the applicant to be invited to agree to a revised proposal for lesser works** (such as described below) **and 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:

Suggested work proposal

- *Crown lift to provide maximum of 3metres overhead clearance from ground level, on all aspects.*
- *Reduce/remove branches as necessary to provide a maximum of 2metres clearance from all adjacent dwellings and outbuildings.*

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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 Approved Work: -

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 interests 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 / Greenspace

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

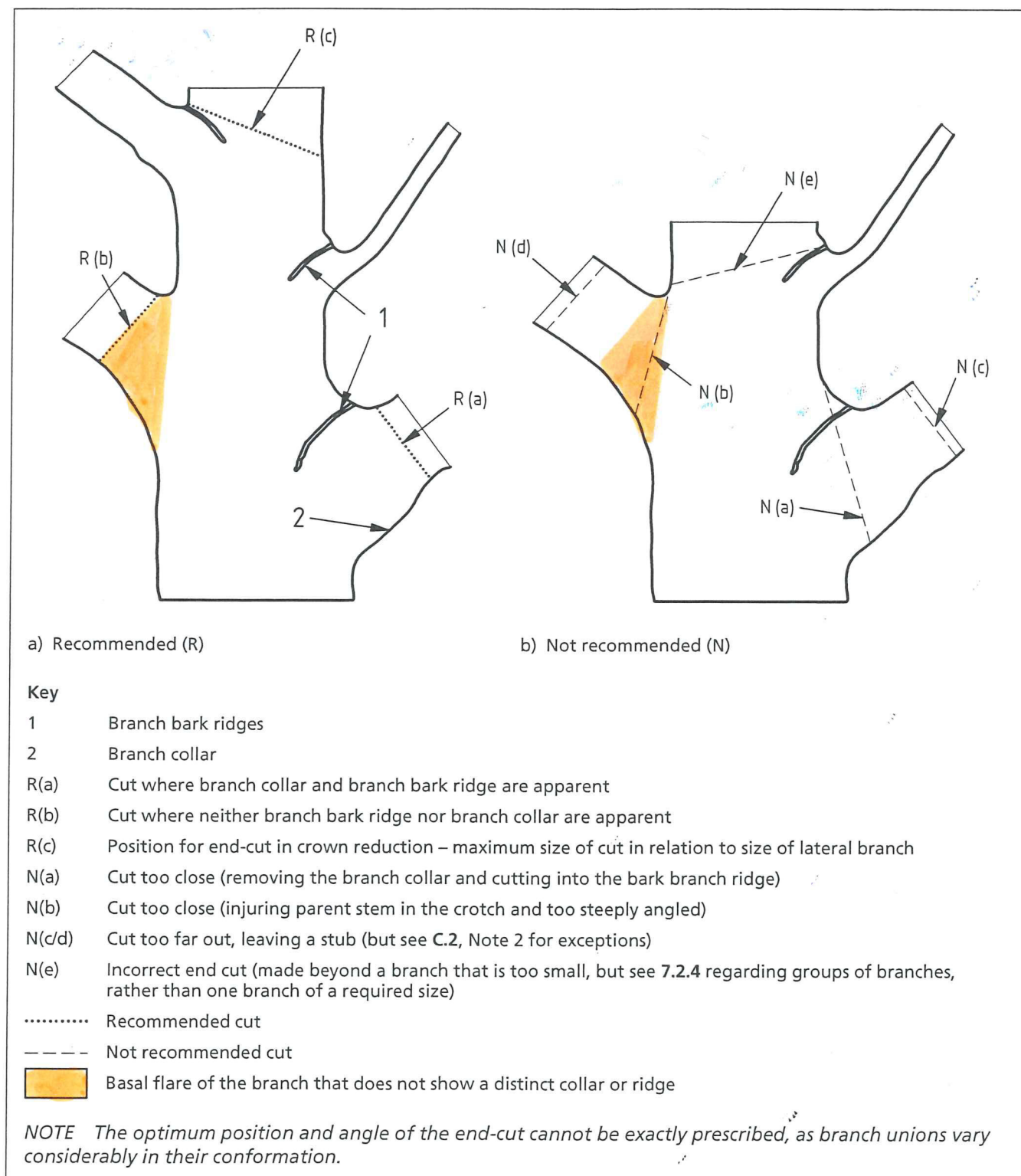


Figure 3 Crown lifting

