

Planning Officer : James Smith

Planning Application Ref: EP/70/14/T

Location : Midholme, Sea Lane Close, East Preston

Description of works: 1 x Horse Chestnut – reduce to a point 50cm above previous topping out cuts

Applicants Reasons To maintain the cyclical pruning regime and make the tree safe

Comments On Application:

T1 Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* Height = 15m Avge spread = 8m Age = Mature Grd Cl = 2m

- This is a mature tree positioned at the entrance to the site adjacent to the main road and is thus a prominent tree.
- There is evidence that this tree has been very heavily topped out before at about half of its present height and then allowed to grow out from this again over time – this is not ‘pollarding’ as the applicant refers to as this would be a pruning operation repeated on a regular (usually a maximum of 2 years) cyclic basis.
- The precedent for heavy topping and lopping has been set so I am not going to refuse this application outright but rather recommend that the work to bring it back down to the level of previous cuts is undertaken in two phases of work two years apart and then I suggest that they apply every 18 months to 2 years to have the regrowth removed so that we get back to a cyclical pruning event that can truly be classed as ‘Pollarding’ and the tree will readily cope with this rather than having one major pruning event every 5 to 10 years which is very stressful on the tree.

Recommendation:

I **OBJECT** to the extent of works as applied for because they are excessive and contrary to BS3998 and current industry guidelines and will be very stressful for the tree.

I recommend that they re-apply for the following works:-

- Reduce the height and lateral spread by 3m overall making all final cuts adjacent to living growth points.

Condition To Be Applied to All Approved Works: -

- *Where whole branches are to be removed final cuts close to the trunk or branch union are to be made as shown in Figure 2 of BS3998:2010 and all branches which need to be shortened are to be cut at the correct angle and adjacent to a live bud or lateral as defined and illustrated in BS3998:2010.*
- *Attention is drawn to the fact that some trees could provide suitable habitat for bird nesting (ivy and cavities) and bat roosting (ivy, branch cracks and cavities) and this might at certain times of year influence and possibly restrict the form of management which can be applied. Given the legal constraints imposed by the Habitat Regulations and the Wildlife and Countryside Act and the fact that it is a criminal offence to disturb or destroy nest sites, this may necessitate expert ecological advice being sought before proceeding with these recommendations. As a minimum requirement it will be necessary for the appointed Tree Contractor to climb the trees and verify that there are no birds nesting or bats present in splits; holes and cavities prior to commencement of works.*

Reasons:-

In the interests of the trees continued health and vitality and to accord with current arboricultural industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice.



Consultant Arboriculturist