

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe
Planning Application Ref: FG/130/19/T
Location: 5 Ferringham Court, Ferringham Lane, Ferring, BN12 5LT
Description of works: Fell 1no. sycamore tree
Reason given: Health and safety concerns

Comments on Application:

Sycamore / *Acer pseudoplatanus* Approx. height: 12m Average spread: 3m Age class: Mature

- This tree appears to be under significant physiological distress, evidenced by low upper crown density, high percentage of deadwood, moderate shoot extension on live parts and negligible formation of woundwood (main stem).
- There is a large zone of bark loss and decay of exposed sapwood low on the main stem. This does not appear to have been initiated mechanically and so despite the absence of any obvious pathogen, I suspect some involvement from common soil-borne fungi such as *Phytophthora*. The wound has failed to produce any effective new wood in response suggesting low vitality and/or canker-like infection.
- The tree is prominent at the front of the property (roadside) and can be clearly seen from numerous residential dwellings and to highway users.
- We have not been made aware of any detailed investigation of this tree and no evidence or report from a suitably qualified and experienced person has been submitted in support of this application. That said, I believe that on balance of probability, this tree will continue to deteriorate such that it will present an ever-increasing hazard to users of the public highway and those living/working in proximity.

Conclusions:

- This is a tree that would have provided considered visual amenity during its prime but unfortunately now appears to be in terminal decline. Options for management pruning and/or treatment that would allow such a tree to be retained with dignity and acceptable level of risk do not exist. Therefore, I must conclude the work proposed is justified on arboricultural grounds.
- The applicant has planted (<2years) several ornamental trees of potential large stature (*Catalpa* sp. and *Liriodendron* sp.), within 5metres of the sycamore. They appear to be establishing well and under careful management, so expect them to adequately compensate for the loss of the sycamore in time. As such, we do not need to condition a replacement tree as part of any approval.

Recommendations:

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

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team