

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin

Planning Application Ref: FG/170/20/T

Location: Verge opposite 18a Ocean Drive, The Poplars, Ferring, BN12 5GJ

Description of works: Various works to 6no. Austrian pine trees

Reasons given: To enhance enjoyment of gardens

Comments on Application:

G3 (originally 8 Austrian pine) **6x *Pinus nigra Austriaca*** Height: 15-20m Spread: 5-10m Age class: Mature

- The applicant has employed WHS Tree Services as agent, to prepare and submit the application. This is well-intended, and the overall approach is clear although I had some difficulty associating work specifications with individual trees. That said, I feel able to adequately consider the application and make recommendations with confidence.
- The pruning of pine trees should be selective and limited due to their intolerance of hard pruning and inability to produce new growth readily from older wood. These are established trees of significant public amenity and landscape value which help to define the character of this estate and so demand sympathetic management.
- All trees in G3 appear to be on 3rd party land and not wholly in the ownership of any adjacent property.
- The six pine within G3 appear outwardly to be in a fine physiological state. Their form is erratic and probably associated with strong coastal influence and historic incidents of gale damage.
- Several low/mid-height limbs and branches are growing to dominate rear gardens of 18a-18c. A degree of property overhang is both necessary and desirable to ensure those trees retain visual amenity. A balance can be struck between that important aim and to ensure reasonable enjoyment of adjacent dwellings/gardens, although I find this work proposal excessive in places and open to interpretation.

My interpretation of the work proposal and comments specific to each tree:

T1 & T2 - The bulk of property overhang arises from these trees. Crown lifting to 5m could pave the way for excessive reduction of lateral spread (to achieve the proposed overhead clearance), resulting in unacceptably large wounds being created. The stated reduction of lateral spread from 8m to 5m is excessive and likely to result in decline of individual branches.

T3 - There is no growth below 5m ht. or significant overhang from the tree's east aspect.

T4 & T6 - Both trees are heavily suppressed by their companions and not obvious candidates for the work proposed.

T5 - Low branches are present (below 5m ht.) and could be removed without detriment to the amenity value of this tree. Property overhang is proportionate and should remain.

Conclusions:

- These trees require careful management that respects their age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
- The applicant proposes 2-3metre reduction of lateral spread for several trees. If the full extent of meterage is applied, that would exceed the recommendations in British Standard 3998:2010 – Tree Work and cause decline in some of those limbs/branches.
- The trees are a significant feature in the local landscape and appear to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. The tree surgery proposed in the application could result in undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.
- **I would like the applicant to be invited to agree to our revised work proposal and only for the items listed below**, 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 trees landscape and public amenity value:

T1 & T2 - Reduce radial spread by no more than 1.5m. In any event, a minimum of 7metres lateral spread when measured from the main stem must remain. Crown lift by removal of/reducing small diameter branches (<100mm) to achieve a maximum of 4metres overhead clearance.

T5 - Crown lift by removal of/reducing small diameter branches (<100mm) to achieve a maximum of 5metres overhead clearance.

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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 All Approved Works: -

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 trees 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

Advisory:

- It appears that these trees are under 3rd party ownership. We are therefore obliged to advise the applicant that any consent granted by the Local Planning Authority does not by association give authority to undertake the proposed work from/or cut back material to beyond the property boundary, without first seeking permission from the tree owner.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 3 Crown lifting

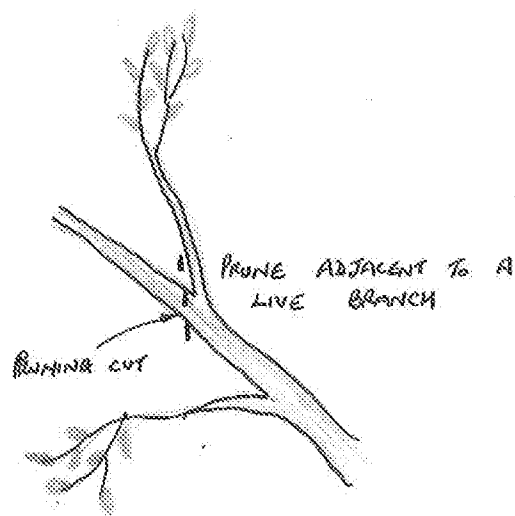
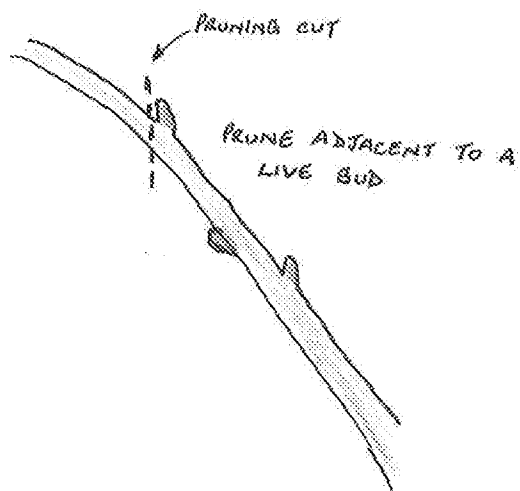
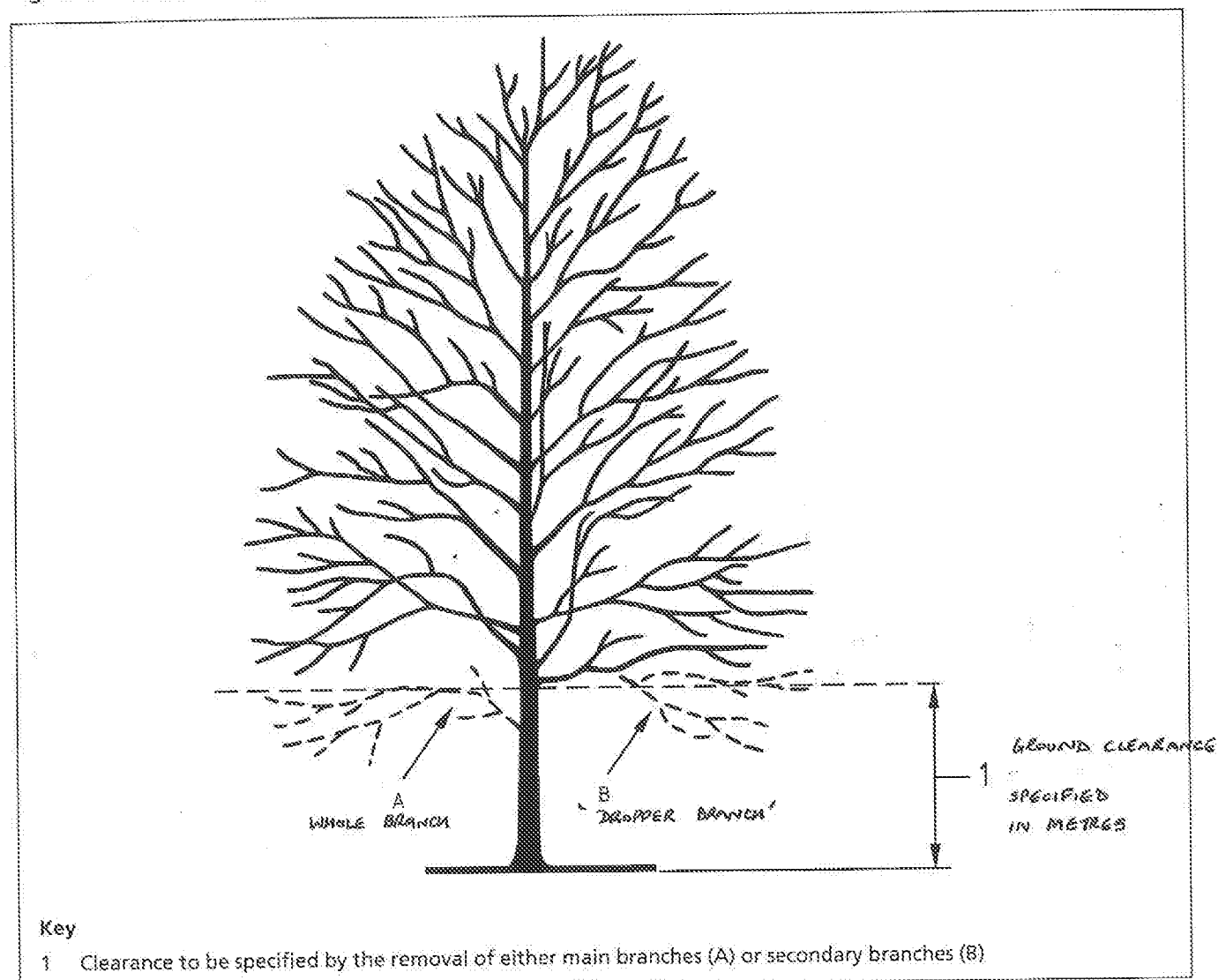


Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

