

**Planning Officer:** Harry Chalk

**Planning Application Ref:** FG/217/21/T

**Location:** 1 Sea Lane Close, Ferring, BN12 5DT

**Description of works:** 1no. *macrocarpa* tree (T1)- Remove damaged major lower N/E limb back to trunk. Reduce lower northern limb by 3m to give adequate distance from highway. Reduce radial spread by 2m, reduce overall spread from 14m to 10m. Crown lift to 5m. Deadwood canopy and remove any damaged branches.

**Reasons given:** 1. Health and safety 2. Proximity to property

**Comments on Application:**

**T1 Monterey cypress / *Cupressus macrocarpa*** Height: 20-25m, Spread: 5-10m, Age class: Late mature

- I have considered this application by means of a desktop review, using the information and plans submitted as well as online resources. Previous consideration from site and familiarity with surrounding areas provides further insight to the proposal.
- This tree is long-established and highly visible to the public being very large and prominent adjacent busy highway. It possesses high landscape and public amenity value.
- The removal of dead or imminently dangerous branches (such as those that are longitudinally split through – ‘hazard beam’) is an exception and does not require planning consent, although in respect of the latter those undertaking are required to notify this authority at the earliest opportunity and works should only be to the extent that the immediate threat to person(s) or property is abated. Any work desired beyond that which is absolutely necessary requires a formal application.
- We can accept this application as due notification of appropriate and limited work to deal with any imminently dangerous crown material such as reported on the lower NE limb.
- The work proposal also seeks to reduce crown spread on all aspects by 2metres, raise crown height to provide 5metres overhead clearance on all aspects, reduce large limbs to mitigate risk of impact from vehicles and prevent failure. Collectively this represents a significant amount of live material to be removed.
- Regulation 14 – (1) (c) of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 permits ‘*The lopping of tree branches to the extent that such works are urgently necessary to remove an immediate risk of serious harm*’ as an exception from the normal application process. In practice this means that the applicant (in this instance) is also permitted to prune branches which overhang the public highway to achieve overhead clearance of a maximum 2.5m above the footway and 6m above the carriageway, without further recourse to this authority.

**Conclusions:**

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
- The removal of low branches to achieve 5m clearance above ground level on all aspects has not been justified on arboricultural grounds and exceeds that which is recommended in the British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations.
- Adequate clearance of public highway and removal of hazardous material can be achieved by undertaking limited works under the exception described above.
- Whole crown reduction pruning has not been justified on arboricultural grounds in my opinion. The extent of property and public highway overhang is not obviously problematic where adequate overhead clearance exists and it contributes to visual amenity.

- The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape and appears to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. Elements of tree surgery within the proposal that do not qualify as an exception would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.

**Recommendation:**

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

Mark Warwick  
Tree Officer / Greenspace