

Planning Officer: Zac Denton

Planning Application Ref: FG/24/19/T

Location: Grange House, Church Lane, Ferring, BN12 5HW

Description of works: Reduce crown of 1 No. ginkgo tree by 2.5m & reduce crown by 2.5m & crown lift lower canopy to 5m over highway to 1 No. oak tree

Reasons Given: To limit influence over property and achieve satisfactory clearance from built structures

Comments on Application:

Note: Tree numbers below (eg.T1) are for the sole purpose of interpreting this application (no tree reference numbers were provided) and have no relationship (intended or otherwise) with those referred to elsewhere, such as may be recorded on the original Tree Preservation Order.

T1 Holm oak / <i>Quercus ilex</i>	Approx. height: 20m	Average spread: 8m	Age class: Mature
T2 Maidenhair / <i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Approx. height: 12m	Average spread: 3m	Age class: Early mature

- **T1** - has recently been the subject of a similar application (FG/180/18/T) from the same applicant, albeit to a lesser extent, namely a 1.5metre crown reduction. As of the date of this report, that work had not been undertaken. This latest application proposes a greater reduction of 2.5metres. Neither operation would involve any cutting back beyond the obvious ‘knuckles’ developed since the last operation.
- This large tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with an attractive crown profile, despite past reduction work from which it has ‘grown on’ well. It grows at the front of the property and is prominent on the skyline from all aspects and can be seen from numerous dwellings and publicly accessible land.
- **T2** - appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile. It is visible from adjacent residential property but only with difficulty from publicly accessible land.
- It now grows in close proximity to a conservatory and although clearance is adequate at this time a degree of pruning will become necessary to maintain the same.

Conclusions:

- **T1** - This important tree requires careful management that respects its age and contribution to the character of the area.
- Although no compelling reason for the crown reduction operation exists at this time, I can sympathise with the desire to repeat some light ‘containment pruning’. If the work is undertaken to a high standard and at the right time; then it is unlikely to have an adverse effect on the tree’s long-term vitality and visual amenity. The work proposed is justified on arboricultural grounds as it seeks to maintain reasonable enjoyment of the property with respect to natural tree form and is consistent with previous works approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- The carefully selected reduction/removal of low branches to achieve 5m overhead clearance above the lane is necessary to prevent obstruction of vehicles and so is justified on arboricultural grounds.
- **T2** - The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) by 2.5m respectively does not comply with ‘British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations’ and would be likely to 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.
- The tree work proposed in the application has not been justified on arboricultural grounds.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I must recommend **REFUSAL** for this application as I find the proposal for **T2** unacceptable.

Advisory:

- I would like to see the applicant submit a revised work specification for **T2** such as detailed below, which would seem to address their concerns whilst preventing a diminution of the tree's landscape and public amenity value:
 - Remove/reduce branches as necessary to achieve a maximum of 1.5m clearance from adjacent built structures.

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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 conditions:

Conditions To Be Applied to Approved Work: -

- 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
- 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.
- The removal of material during crown reduction work which has developed since the last operation must be done sympathetically and with respect to established 'knuckles' so as not to extend beyond the point of origin.
- The long-term vitality of this tree (**T1**) is best respected when significant pruning work such as proposed, is undertaken during mid to late winter (January/February). The crown reduction work proposed must only be undertaken during this period. The crown lifting element may be undertaken at any time.

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.*

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

