

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin
Planning Application Ref: FG/31/21/T
Location: 5 Green Park, Ferring, BN12 6QX
Description of works: Various works to T1 - Pine
Reasons given: Encroaching property and low growth over highway

Comments on Application:

Black pine / <i>Pinus nigra</i>	Height: 15-20m	Radial spread: 10-15m	Age class: Late mature
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- Outwardly this tree appears to be in a fine physiological state with a full and wide crown profile, having been allowed to develop heavy low limbs. A visually impressive tree of high amenity value and having great influence over adjacent property.
- Those low limbs give rise to a number of hanging branches, although carriageway clearance seems adequate around 4metres and entirely appropriate for the location. That said, there is scope for some light pruning to increase the margin of overhead clearance. Branches extending low towards the applicant's dwelling may well become problematic and I recognise they could already feel oppressive. Again, some pruning would be tolerable to improve conditions on that aspect of the tree.
- The proposal involves the removal of 15 low limbs, which I find excessive and not entirely justified. I can find no official reference to a statutory height of clearance over the highway and so prefer to apply the common-sense rule for any minor or unclassified road that might require transit from emergency and refuse collection vehicles. In such cases 4metres is usually adequate.
- The removal of dead branches is an exception and does not require consent from the local planning authority.

Conclusions:

- The principle of the work proposed is sound although I find the volume of crown material to be removed in one operation excessive and unjustified.
- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression. It is a significant feature in the local landscape and appears to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. The tree surgery proposed in the application would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and 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 a revised proposal for lesser works** (such as described 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 tree's landscape and public amenity value:
 - Remove 2 lowest limbs growing over property (NW aspect), remove 2 lowest limbs growing over property (NE aspect), remove 3 lowest limbs growing over carriageway (SW aspect), remove 3 lowest limbs growing over carriageway (SE aspect).

Note: Lowest hanging (height of foliage bearing tertiary branches) rather than lowest at point of origin on main stem.

- 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 Approved Work: -

- 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 tree's 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

