

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin

Planning Application Ref: FG/3/21/T

Location: Kimberley, Greystoke Road, Ferring, BN12 5JL

Description of works: To reduce 1no. ash tree's height from approx. 10m to 7m and its radial spread by 8m to 5m. To thin crown by 30%

Reasons given: None given

Comments on Application:

Ash / *Fraxinus excelsior* Height: 10-15m Radial spread: 5-10m Age class: Early mature

- Outwardly and from distance (roadside) this tree appears to be in a fine physiological state (and assumed to be so in the absence of any information/evidence provided to the contrary).
It has both sub and co-dominant stems which is far from ideal, although presents a full and attractive crown profile.
- There is one Tree Preservation Order affecting this site (TPO/FG/9/70) made in 1970. Having considered both historical and current mapping resources, I am satisfied that this tree is not a subject of that Order. This interpretation is further supported by my estimated age of the tree (<50yrs).
As such, consent from the local planning authority is not required. Furthermore, due to the imperfect stem configuration I feel it's amenity potential has been limited so does not make an ideal candidate for an individual Order to preserve its place in the landscape.

I wish to acknowledge the representation from Ferring Parish Council; as I can support much of their Tree Warden's comments. I hope those responsible for the tree's management will consider our comments further.

- Presently, this tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile, making a valuable contribution to the street scene.
- There is no obvious justification for such an extensive reduction in crown volume, which also exceeds the requirements of British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations.
- Perhaps a light reduction of say 1metre overall and selective reduction of lower branches where problematic, would be sufficient to address any concerns and retain more aesthetic value.
- *Crown reduction* and *Crown thinning* work has not been justified on arboricultural grounds. In respect of the latter, such work rarely provides a benefit to the tree and often only a short-term increase in light levels. Furthermore, combining the two operations (and especially to the extent proposed) could drastically alter tree dynamics and natural defences against wind pressure. The sudden exposure of central crown areas to such winds can result in significant damage.

I would like to reassure the applicant and their appointed contractor, they are under no obligation to consider this advice, nor would it have any bearing on a future application.

Conclusions:

- The ash tree is not the subject of any Statutory Protection (Trees) and consent from the local planning authority is not required before undertaking the proposed work.
- The ash tree is not a suitable candidate for TPO.

Recommendation:

- I recommend the applicant be invited to withdraw their application and advised to proceed without further recourse to the local planning authority.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team