

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe

Planning Application Ref: FG/44/20/T

Location: 18a Ocean Drive, Ferring BN12 5GJ

Description of works: Reduce 4No. pine trees on East aspect by approx. 3m to growth points

Reasons given: Reduce boundary overhang

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 Richard Moore Tree Surgery as agent, to prepare and submit the application. This appears to be well-intended but lacks the necessary detail to achieve a confident interpretation from site.
- No individual trees are identified by unique reference or accurately plotted on a sufficiently detailed plan, such that we cannot be sure which trees are subject of the proposal. Furthermore, the work specification is the same for all four trees, that have different limb/branch architecture and extent of lateral spread. A work specification should accurately detail the crown spread to remain post-pruning, so that all interested parties are in doubt as to the extent of permitted work.
- 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. Any tree work application will need to include specific work proposals for each tree and arboricultural justification for the same.
- 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 and open to interpretation.

Conclusions:

- These trees require careful management that respects their age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
- The applicant proposes a potential 3metre reduction of lateral spread for each tree. If the full extent of meterage is applied, that would exceed the recommendations in British Standard 3998:2010 – Tree Work and cause decline of 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:

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

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team