

Planning Officer: Richard Sherman
Planning Application Ref: FG/65/21/T
Location: 148 Littlehampton Road, Ferring, BN12 6PH
Description of works: Various works to 1no. Monterey cypress (T2)
Reasons given: To reduce risk of future damage to limbs and branches

Comments on Application:

T2 Monterey cypress / *Cupressus macrocarpa* Height: 20-25m Radial spread: 5-10m Age class: Late mature

- Outwardly and from roadside only this tree appears to be in a fine physiological state and assumed to be so in the absence of any evidence provided to the contrary. This assumption is reinforced by the report from Arun Tree Company Ltd submitted in support of the application.
- It is a landmark tree with full and attractive crown profile, highly visible from surrounding properties and to users of the busy public highway (A259 dual carriageway).
- At such an exposed location, it is foreseeable that branch fractures would accumulate over time. There are several visible from ground level inspection now requiring attention and it is conceivable that more may be found during climbed operations. Otherwise this is a fine, aged example of its type. As such, it is a good time to revisit the exceptions around removal of damaged/dangerous branches:

If you are concerned about the safety of any tree(s) on your property which you believe are the subject of an Order or within Conservation Area and need to undertake urgent works; please be aware that there is a responsibility on the client (usually the tree-owner) and their contractor to determine and evidence the condition of the tree and any subsequent actions taken. Please read the following notes carefully:

What is the exception for work on dangerous trees and branches?

Where a tree presents an immediate risk of serious harm and work is urgently needed to remove that risk, tree owners or their agents must give written notice to the authority as soon as practicable after that work becomes necessary. Work should only be carried out to the extent that it is necessary to remove the risk.

In deciding whether work to a tree or branch is urgently necessary because it presents an immediate risk of serious harm, the Secretary of State's view is that there must be a present serious safety risk. This need not be limited to that brought about by disease or damage to the tree. It is sufficient to find that, by virtue of the state of a tree, its size, its position and such effect as any of those factors have, the tree presents an immediate risk of serious harm that must be dealt with urgently. One consideration would be to look at what is likely to happen, such as injury to a passing pedestrian.

If the danger is not immediate the tree does not come within the meaning of the exception.

Paragraph: 080 Reference ID: 36-080-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

- The removal of dead or imminently dangerous branches is an exception and does not require permission, 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.

Conclusions:

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression. While the principle of risk management behind the proposal is sound, I do not find whole *Crown reduction* to be justified on arboricultural grounds.
- The tree 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 low branches to achieve maximum 4metres overhead clearance above highway (Worthing Road) and driveway.
 - Reduce lateral extent of prominent 1x N and 1x E tending limbs as described, by maximum 3m.

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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 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 interest 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

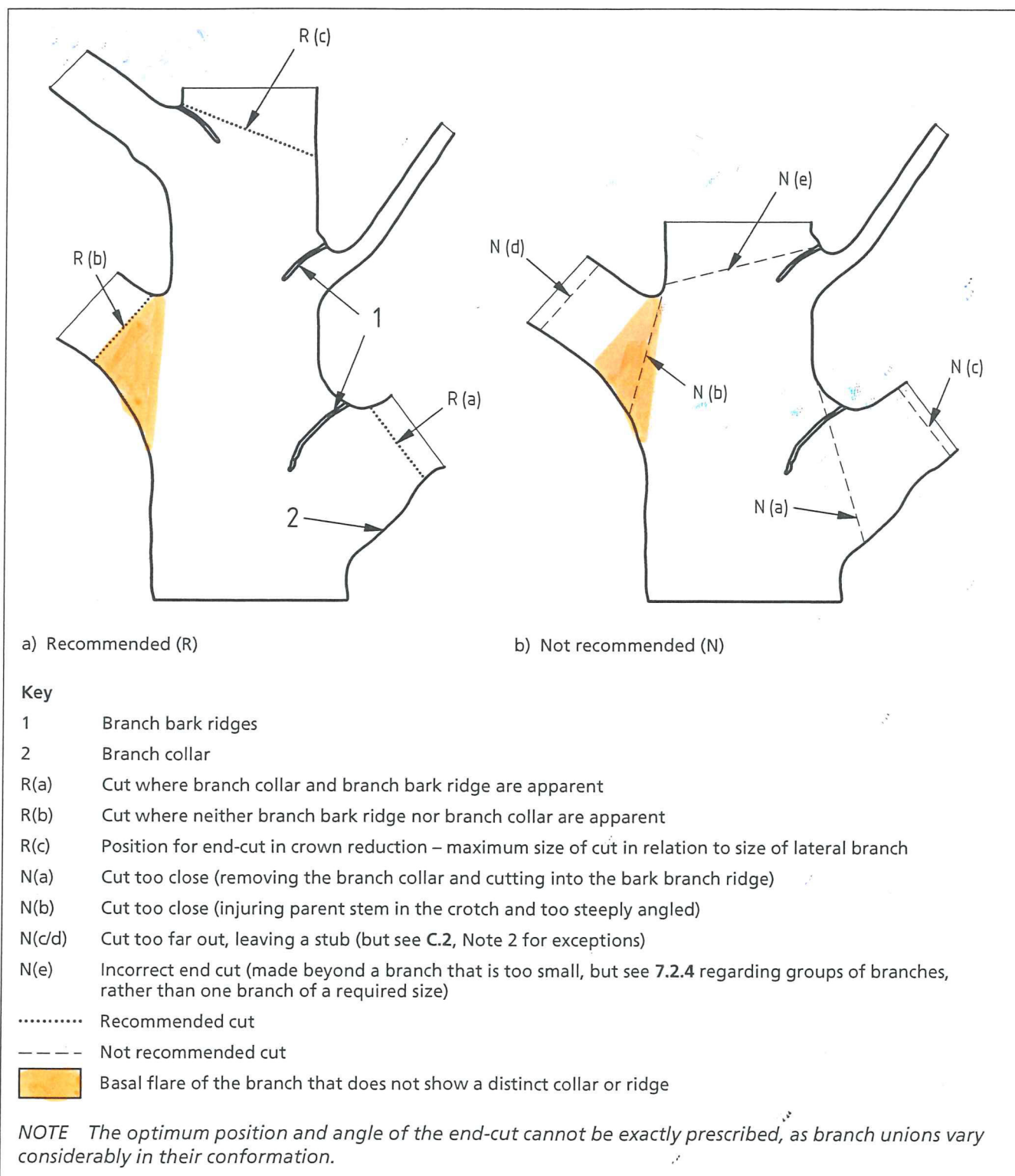


Figure 3 Crown lifting

