

Planning Officer: Miss Z Toppin
Planning Application Ref: FP/142/20/T
Location: 8 Ceres Place, Felpham, PO22 7RG
Description of works: Fell 1No. Sycamore (T1)
Reason given: Direct damage to brick patio by tree root(s)

Comments on Application:

Sycamore / *Acer pseudoplatanus* Approx. height: 18m Average spread: 5m Age class: Early mature

- This tree appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile arising from co-dominant stems.
- It is visible from surrounding properties and in part to users of the public highway (footway and carriageway); a minor yet important constituent of an established line of mature trees which help define the character of the area and collectively represent a significant public amenity.
- A report from a Chartered Surveyor describes damage as limited to the brick patio and an Arborist has investigated/identified a problem root from the sycamore, likely to be a contributing factor in the damage event.

Conclusions:

- The applicant has implicated this tree in damage to the brick patio, which is severely disrupted at its leading edge (nearest the tree) but otherwise appearing to be in a good state. We have not been made aware of any further attempt to repair (or investigate precise cause/nature of) the damage or importantly propose an alternative landscape/engineering solution that would permit retention of this tree in greater harmony with its surroundings.
- The condition of brick patio could be restored to original condition without recourse to felling of this tree or incurring unreasonable expense.
- Although proximity of tree roots to single-storey structures can often be a genuine concern, no evidence has been submitted that would implicate this tree in such a damage event or suggest it has a foreseeable risk of doing so.

Recommendations:

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

Advisory:

- I advise a narrow (<300mm wide) exploratory excavation be attempted adjacent the edge of the brick patio, to a minimum depth sufficient to determine the depth of sub-base. Any problematic root material (>25mm diameter) closely associated with the damage event could be removed at that time, under supervision and in agreement with the local planning authority's Tree Officer. Note: All parts (above and below ground) of the tree are similarly protected by the existing Order (TPO).

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team