

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe
Planning Application Ref: FP/250/19/T
Location: St Marys Court, 32 Limmer Lane, Felpham, PO22 7EU
Description of works: Remove wind damaged branch from 1no. silver birch tree
Reason given: Health and safety

Comments on Application:

Silver birch / *Betula pendula* Height: 10-15m Group spread: 15-20m Age class: Mature

- This tree was inspected from the garage complex to the south. Whilst having only a partial view of the tree's main stem and unions it appears to be outwardly healthy and stable with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile. It is an important constituent of a group of birch trees which collectively are a significant feature of visual interest.
- The proposal is to remove a wind damaged branch. I did not observe any obvious gale damage or cause for concern at the time of my inspection, nor has the applicant provided evidence of the same. The photograph submitted has been annotated to show their area of concern, but this captures a large portion of the tree or major stem at least – far from being a branch.
- The applicant does not provide any more detail as to the precise extent/nature of the damage, so I can only assume there is a perceived risk of damage rather than an established structural defect with the tree at this time.

Conclusions:

- This tree requires careful management that respects its age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression.
- Removal of the stem/limbs as shown encircled on the applicant's photograph would ultimately create a very large wound at the main stem with potentially serious implications for the tree's long-term health and vitality and would not comply with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.
- The tree is an important constituent of 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:

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

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team