

Planning Officer: Charlotte Easton

Planning Application Ref: LU/320/18/T

Location: 1 Watersmead Drive, Rustington, BN17 6GH

Description of works: Reduce height by 2m to 1No. Pine Tree. Fell 1No. Silver Birch tree

Reasons Given: T1. Excessive shading T2. Suppressed form

Comments on Application:

Note: Tree numbers below (eg.T1) are for the sole purpose of interpreting this application (no tree reference numbers were provided) and have no relationship (intended or otherwise) with those referred to elsewhere, such as may be recorded on the original Tree Preservation Order.

T1 Monterey pine / <i>Pinus radiata</i>	Height: Approx. 15m	Average spread: 3m	Age class: Early mature
T2 Silver birch / <i>Betula pendula</i>	Height: Approx. 12m	Average spread: 1.5m	Age class: Early mature

- Both trees appear to be outwardly healthy and stable.
- **T1** is one of many trees of its type that form large linear groups between a busy arterial road and adjacent residential estates. They help define the character of the area and complement the nearby parkland.
- In the absence of low-level branches, sustaining the upper crown is of particular importance to its ongoing health and vitality. The applicant proposes a height reduction of such an extent that would result in the decline of several limbs/branches and likely initiate the tree's decline.
- **T2** is a northern outlier of the tree group and consequently has a slender, drawn-up asymmetric form.
- Both trees are situated in a prominent position, T1 in particular being visible from the public highway, neighbouring properties and traffic accessing/exiting the estate.

Conclusions:

- **T1** does not present any obvious defects, nor has evidence been submitted to justify the work now proposed. It is an important constituent of long-established local tree groups of similar character and composition, which provide significant landscape and amenity value.
- There is no established 'right to light' in this instance nor can an increase in ambient light level to the property be achieved by an arboricultural response that would also satisfy public amenity interest.
- 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.
- **T2** contributes little to the overall aesthetic and cohesion of the group, such that its removal would not incur a notable loss of public amenity.
- Remaining tree density and canopy cover is extensive enough within context of the site such as to negate the usual requirement for a replacement tree.

Recommendations:

- I recommend **REFUSAL** for the work proposed on T1 Monterey pine.
- I recommend **CONSENT** for the work proposed on T2 silver birch.

Advisory:

- I would like to see the applicant re-submit with a revised work specification for T1 such as detailed below, which should address the concerns of the adjacent household without detriment to the tree's landscape and public amenity value:

1x Monterey pine

- Reduce prominent North tending lateral limb by no more than 2m in length, to just beyond last reduction point and at junction with an obvious strong lateral branch.

Were the applicant willing to re-submit as advised, I would be able to recommend CONSENT, subject to the following condition being applied:

- 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 interests of the tree's continued health and vitality and to accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team