

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe

Planning Application Ref: LU/39/20/TC

Location: Flat 1 Surrey Cottage, Norfolk Place, Littlehampton, BN17 5PB

Description of works: Crown lift to 5m and reduce overall height to 10m and overall spread to 5.5m 3no. Macrocarpa trees within the Littlehampton Seafront Conservation area

Reasons Given: To ensure trees remain safe and healthy

Comments on Application:

3x Monterey cypress / *Cupressus macrocarpa* Height: 10-15m Spread: 0-5m Age class: Mature

- All trees appear generally stable, free from obvious significant structural defect and in fine physiological condition.
- They are individually asymmetric due to close spacing although collectively they are an impressive group, presenting an attractive shared crown profile. This is impressive at such an exposed location and is testament to their mutual support provided by root/crown cohesion.
- This impressive group tree feature is further enhanced by/complements a similar age/species tree group to the south, growing within the Norfolk Gardens park. They are a significant public and visual amenity.
- Low branches do not appear to be obviously problematic, although could/should be pruned to provide a maximum of 5metres overhead clearance directly above the carriageway and driveway only (not over garden or parkland aspects) to achieve unobstructed access for high-sided vehicles. This work would qualify as an 'exception' and therefore not require our consent. Care should be taken to ensure such work does not exceed our specification as that would be unnecessary and unlawful. All work should be carried out as per the British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations.

Conclusions:

- The removal of low branches to achieve 5m clearance above ground level on all aspects is not justified on arboricultural grounds and exceeds that which is recommended in the 'British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations'.
- The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) to the stated dimensions does not comply with 'British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations' and would be likely to result in harm to the health and vitality of the trees with large pruning wounds being formed as well as undermining their visual amenity value and impact in the landscape.

Recommendations:

- I recommend the making of a Tree Preservation Order to preserve their place in the landscape and better control future management. I attach a TEMPO form and GIS plan for this purpose.

Advisory:

- The removal of dead branches is an exception and does not require permission.
- There is also an exception for work on dangerous branches. Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm to person(s) or property 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. If the danger is not immediate the work does not come within the meaning of the exception.

Consent for works to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order

It is an offence to work on a protected tree without consent and if unauthorised work takes place, the Council can (and does) take legal action which can lead to fines of up to £20,000, or twice the value of each tree, whichever is the greater. The Council's written consent is needed before any felling or pruning takes place. To give notice of work to tree(s) please complete the [Application Form](#) and refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) which cover trees both in and outside conservation areas.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team