

Planning Officer: Mr F Gardner

Planning Application Ref: LU/77/19/T

Location: 22 Camelia Close, Littlehampton, BN17 6UT

Description of works: Crown thin by 50% 1No. willow tree and 1 No. eucalyptus tree

Reasons Given: Close proximity to dwellings and excessive shading of garden and solar panels

Comments on Application:

T1 Corkscrew willow / <i>Salix matsudana Tortuosa</i>	Approx. height: 10m	Average spread: 3m	Age class: Early mature
T2 Eucalyptus / <i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Approx. height: 9m	Average spread: 4m	Age class: Early mature

- T1 – Outwardly appears to be in a fine physiological state. It has previously been ‘topped’ involving a severe truncation of the main stem at 2.5m ht. Growth from that point has been prolific resulting in stem congestion which may ultimately lead to their separation. It has developed an asymmetric limb/branch framework due to its proximity to the southern neighbouring dwelling. It is discreetly located in the rear garden and visible only from adjacent residential property.
- T2 - Outwardly appears to be in a fine physiological state. It has previously been the subject of ‘*crown reduction*’ pruning and has grown-on well, typical for a healthy specimen of its type. It is visible from publicly-accessible land and in part from neighbouring property.
- Repeat ‘*crown reduction*’ operations will be necessary throughout the remaining life-span of both trees, to achieve a reasonable degree of structural integrity appropriate for their location.
- This applicant seeks to undertake ‘*crown thinning*’ (a reduction in crown volume); an operation which will provide only short-term improvement in ambient light levels and will not reduce the overall dimensions. As such, it would not satisfy the reasons given for the work. Furthermore, the extent of ‘*crown thinning*’ proposed exceeds the requirements of ‘BS3998:2010 - Tree Work’ and would be unduly detrimental to their ongoing health and vitality.

Conclusions:

- The work proposed is in principle justified on arboricultural grounds as it seeks to maintain reasonable enjoyment of the property with respect to natural tree form, although the percentage proposed is excessive and unacceptable. ‘*Crown thinning*’ work to that extent would not comply with ‘British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations’ and be likely to result in undue harm to the ongoing health and vitality of both trees.
- The applicant has proposed ‘*crown thinning*’ work whereas one would ordinarily seek ‘*crown reduction*’ (reducing the height and spread) to address the reasons given.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.

Advisory:

- I would like to see the applicant submit a revised work specification such as detailed below, which would seem to address their concerns whilst preventing a diminution of the tree’s landscape and public amenity value. In respect of T1 it may be considered more desirable to remove the tree altogether rather than repeat the earlier ‘topping’ work:

T1 – Option 1. *Crown reduction of maximum 2metres from height and 1metre from radial spread. Crown thin of 10%*

or

T1 – Option 2. Fell to ground level.

T2 – *Crown reduction of 2-3metres, effectively a repeat of the earlier operation leaving final cuts back to near past pruning wounds.*

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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 conditions:

Conditions To Be Applied to All Approved Works: -

- 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
- 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.
- T2 only - The removal of crown material which has developed since the last operation must be done sympathetically and with respect to established 'knuckles' so as not to extend beyond the point of origin.
- The long-term vitality of both trees is best respected when significant pruning work such as '*crown reduction*', is undertaken during the late-spring to summer period (May to August). Such work must only be undertaken during this period.

Reasons: In the interests of the trees 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

