

Planning Officer: Charlotte Easton

Planning Application Ref: M/81/18/T

Location: 6 Ancton Way, Elmer, Middleton-On-Sea PO22 6JN

Description of works: Fell 4 No. Sycamore trees

Reasons Given: All four trees are dangerous

Comments on Application:

Sycamore x4 (T1,T2,T3,T4) *Acer pseudoplatanus* Average height: 12m

- Woodland fringe trees growing along southern boundary of compartment and in linear formation along the entire property boundary. They are visible from surrounding properties and public highway.
- These trees are of varying age although all have previously been the subject of heavy ‘topping’. With one exception the group have grown-on well.
- T1 has an obvious decay pocket at the site of past major pruning which may well compromise the integrity of subsequent branch attachments.
- T2 has been suppressed and appears to be in physiological decline.
- T3 and T4 are the dominant trees within the group with full crowns extending far into the rear garden and over a neighbouring outbuilding.
- The applicant proposes felling in response to multiple decay events although from ground level inspection I saw only one event of note (T1). That said, there may be more throughout the group but this has not been evidenced within the application. T4 is ivy-clad and so stem and branches could not be visually assessed.
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Conclusions:

- Felling (or even lesser work such as re-pollarding) of all four trees has not been evidenced as necessary to mitigate risk of large item failure nor is justified on arboricultural grounds.
- These trees form part of the woodland’s first line of defence against salt-laden prevailing winds, as such their wholesale sudden removal could expose the interior to damage with a resultant loss of public amenity.

Recommendations:

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

Advisory:

- In the interest of dealing with obvious hazards and abating nuisance, I would advise the applicant to submit a revised work specification as follows; on receipt of which I would be able to recommend APPROVAL subject to the conditions beneath:

T1 Sycamore – Re-pollard back to just beyond historic pruning wounds.

T2 Sycamore – Fell to ground level.

T3 Sycamore – Prune back branches on south aspect to reduce lateral extent by 2metres.

T4 Sycamore – Prune back branches on south aspect to achieve 1.5m clearance from outbuilding (rear garden of no.8).

Conditions To Be Applied to Approved Works: -

- (T1) 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 below the point of origin.
- 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.

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