

CONSULTEE RESPONSE (Council's Arboriculturist)

Date inspected: 5 July 2022

Case Officer: Hannah Kersley

Reference: P/90/22/T

Location: Church Farm Holiday Village, Church Lane, Pagham, PO21 4NR

Proposal: 1no. horse chestnut (T1) reduce canopy by 2m leaving a finished height of 8m and 8m spread, remove deadwood. 1no. horse chestnut (T2) reduce canopy by 2m leaving a finished height of 8m and 7m spread, remove deadwood. 1no. horse chestnut (T3) reduce canopy by 2m leaving a finished height of 8m and 7m spread, remove deadwood. Reduce extended limb over holiday park sign to 6.5m, remove end weight and bring back into canopy shape

Reasons given: Trees of low amenity value and heavy pedestrian traffic.
Building encroachment (T1 only).

Comments on Application:

3x Horse chestnut / *Aesculus hippocastanum*

Height: average 12m, Radial spread: average 6m, Age class: Mature

T1 appears to be in a fine physiological condition. Perhaps benefiting most from group cohesion/shelter and displaying an attractive crown profile. Light branches close to building. Large old tear-out wound at crown-break.

T2 appears to be in a fair physiological condition. Like T3 it has erratic form, no doubt shaped by exposure to coastal winds but also some evidence of historic poor pruning/storm damage (irregular unoccluded wounds and subsidiary stem/scaffold limb truncation).

T3 appears to be in a fair physiological condition. Moderate crown density and localised tip dieback (pronounced on S aspects) may be strongly associated with exposure to salt-laden winds.

These trees form a cohesive group offering mutual protection. They are visually impressive in the landscape and of high public amenity value.

Conclusions:

These trees require careful management that respects their age and vulnerability to environmental factors and disease progression.

The principle of initiating whole crown reduction pruning to mitigate risk of large-part failure is sound.

My assessment of height and spread differs slightly from that provided by the applicant/agent. I assume they have measured crown spread by diameter rather than radius.

It is important to avoid excessive loss of crown volume from pruning.

The applicant proposes a 2metre reduction of top height and spread. If the full extent of meterage is applied on all aspects (even when based on my own more extensive crown volume assessment) that would exceed the recommendations in British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work -Recommendations; 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.

The removal of dead branches is an exception and does not require notification to or prior consent from the local planning authority.

Recommendation:

As it stands, I am unable to support this application. I **would like the applicant to be invited to agree to a revised proposal** (such as described below) **as part of the current application so as not to incur further delay.** Such work would improve conditions at the site whilst preventing a diminution of the trees' landscape and public amenity value:

T1-T3 incl.

- *Reduce height and radial spread of crown to leave a minimum of 10metres and 5metres respectively.*
- *Remove small diameter branches (<60mm diameter) as necessary to achieve maximum 1metre clearance from all around light column/head, building and to ensure unobstructed view of holiday park sign.*

If the applicant agrees to the above proposal, then I would be able to recommend APPROVAL subject to the following condition:

Condition to Be Applied to All Approved Works: -

Condition 1

Part a) 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

Part b) 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 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*

Advisory:

The optimum time for undertaking significant pruning of horse chestnut is during the late spring to summer period (May to August).

Due to the relatively small amount of branch length reduction permitted it could be very challenging for a climbing arborist (tree surgeon) to complete this work satisfactorily from a rope and harness. The appointed contractor may need to utilise a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP).

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer

Environment and Climate Change

Figure 4 Diagrammatic illustration of crown reduction

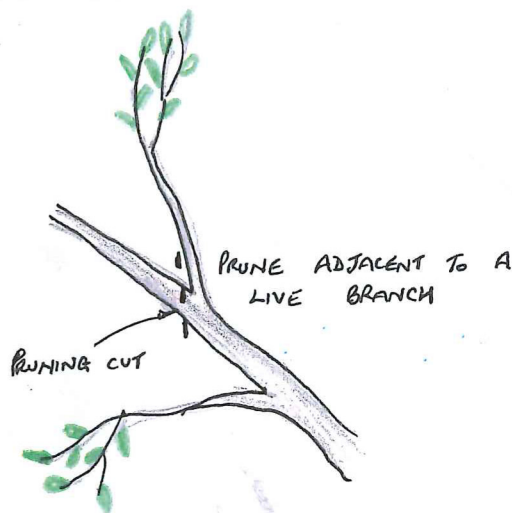
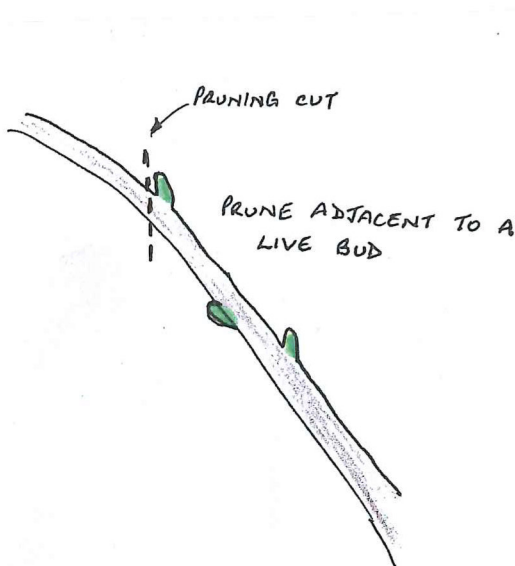
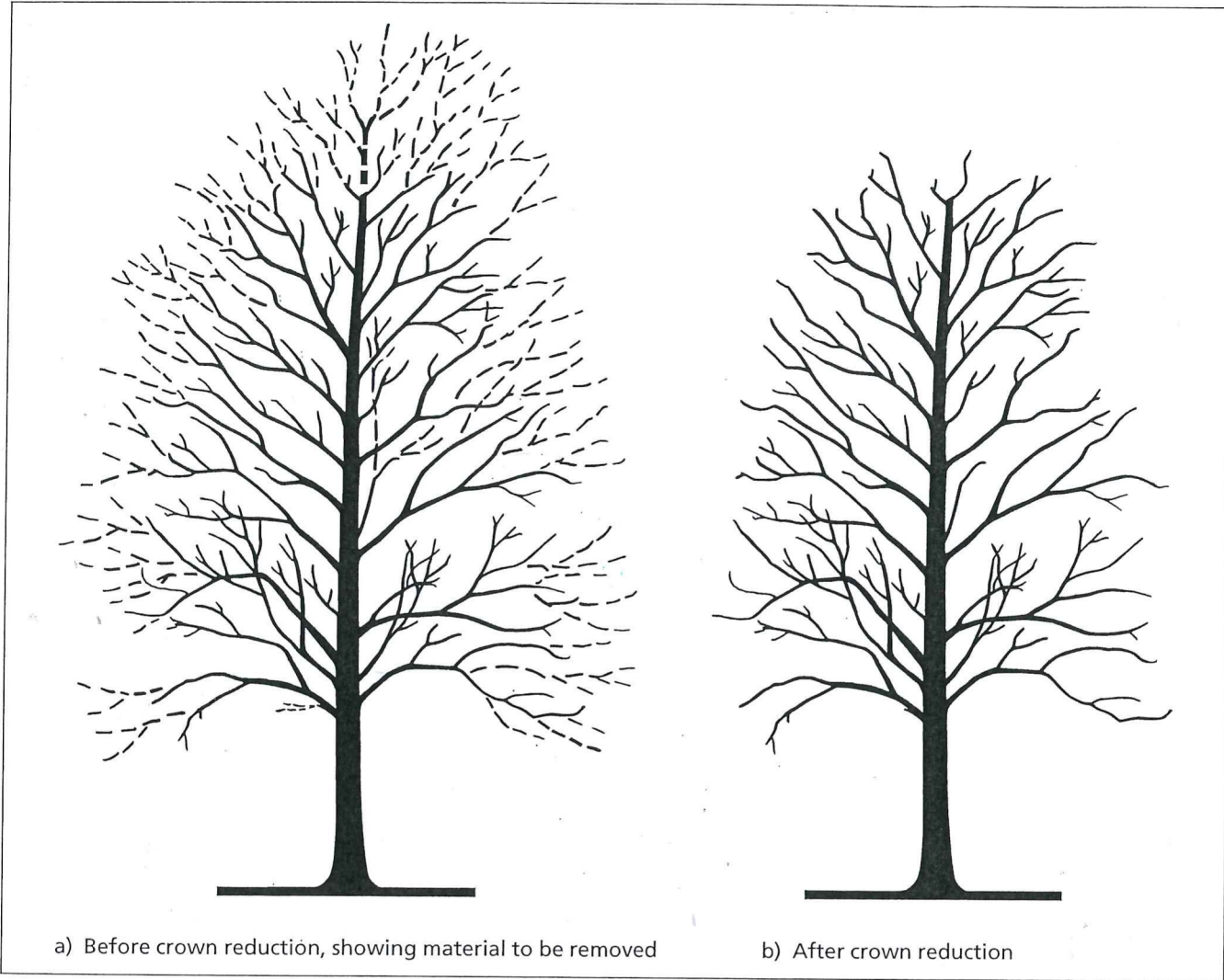


Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

