

**Planning Officer:** Mr F Gardner

**Planning Application Ref:** R/234/19/T

**Location:** Various locations Sea Estate Rustington

**Description of works:** Various works to 3no. macrocarpa trees, 3no. holm oak trees, 1no. black/Austrian Pine tree and 1no Monterey pine tree

**Reasons given:** General maintenance

**Comments on Application:**

|                                                          |                |                |                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>1A Monterey cypress / <i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i></b> | Height: 10-15m | Spread: 5-10m  | Age class: Mature |
| <b>2A Monterey cypress / <i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i></b> | Height: 10-15m | Spread: 5-10m  | Age class: Mature |
| <b>3A 2x Holm oak / <i>Quercus ilex</i></b>              | Height: 5-10m  | Spread: 0-5m   | Age class: Mature |
| <b>4A Holm oak / <i>Quercus ilex</i></b>                 | Height: 5-10m  | Spread: 0-5m   | Age class: Mature |
| <b>5A Monterey cypress / <i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i></b> | Height: 10-15m | Spread: 5-10m  | Age class: Mature |
| <b>6A Black/Austrian pine / <i>Pinus nigra</i></b>       | Height: 15-20m | Spread: 5-10m  | Age class: Mature |
| <b>7A Monterey pine / <i>Pinus radiata</i></b>           | Height: 15-10m | Spread: 10-15m | Age class: Mature |

- **1A & 2A** – These are large, mature examples of their type, appearing to be free from obvious structural defect and in fair physiological condition with relatively unmodified and attractive crown profiles. They are heavily exposed to the coastal conditions and enjoy mutual support as companion trees.
- The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) potentially by 3metres respectively would involve the removal of more than two-thirds of their foliar mass. This 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.
- **3A & 4A** – These are semi/early-mature examples of their type, appearing to be free from obvious structural defect and in fair physiological condition. They have heavily modified crowns displaying a formal and controlled appearance, such that they are unlikely to realise their full potential. These are trees of limited amenity value and as such the work proposed is unlikely to be detrimental to the character of the area, although like all trees they are worthy of respect and any work should be conditioned to a high standard.
- **5A** – One of two companion trees, of mature age and appearing to be in a fair-poor physiological state. An old partially occluded 'hazard beam' (longitudinal split) was noted on the lowest limb tending west. This is one of the limbs proposed for removal and so that hazard can be dealt with in good time as well as ensuring adequate overhead clearance above the footway. The proposed removal of six limbs is excessive and not justified, although there is a requirement for low branches to be pruned clear of garden vegetation to prevent direct suppression and facilitate maintenance.
- **6A** - This is a mature example of its type, appearing to be free from obvious structural defect and in fair physiological condition with a relatively unmodified and attractive crown profile. It is located at the southern end of the property's front boundary, a solitary pine and the obvious candidate for this work, which will involve the removal/reduction only of small diameter branches.
- **7A** - This is a large, mature example of its type, appearing to be free from obvious major structural defect and in fine physiological condition with an attractive crown profile. The work proposed would involve a substantial loss of foliage bearing branches and diminish the tree's visual amenity. It has not been entirely justified on arboricultural grounds. The removal of crossing (subordinate) branches is acceptable. Dead wood removal is an exception and does not require

formal planning consent. The maturing black pine opposite is tolerating and not unduly suppressed by contact with limbs/branches from the much larger tree, although it would be acceptable to shorten the tips of those branches which may cause direct damage to its main stem and limb framework.

### Conclusions:

- T1A, 2A, 5A and 7A require careful management that adequately respects their age and vulnerability to environmental changes and disease progression. They are all important and prominent constituents of an established population of trees which help define the character of the estate/area and so represent a significant public amenity.
- Although much of the work is well-intentioned, I find the quantity of foliage bearing branches proposed for removal to be excessive and likely to result in detriment to those tree's ongoing health, vitality and visual amenity.
- There is no obvious arboricultural justification for much of the work proposed. While I can sympathise with concern for the size of such large and aged trees in proximity to residential property, the associated inherent risk can be adequately mitigated with a regular programme of inspection by an arboriculturalist - entirely justifiable for such a large population of high amenity value trees many of which are in advanced stage of maturity.

### Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.
- I would like to see the applicant agree to a revision of their work proposals such as I detail below (in bold), which could address some of their concerns whilst preventing a diminution of tree's landscape and public amenity value:
  - **1A & 2A**      **Remove items from application.**
  - 3A & 4A      Approve as described.
  - **5A**            **i) Remove lowest west tending limb.**  
                     **ii) Remove small branches (<50mm diameter) as necessary to achieve maximum of 1m clearance above established garden shrubs and hedge plants.**
  - 6A            Approve as described.
  - **7A**            **i) Remove crossing (subordinate) limbs to mitigate risk of failure**  
                     **ii) Reduce length (by maximum of 1.5metres) of three limbs, the lowest across north and west aspects, to retard future growth rate but retain enough foliage to sustain themselves.**

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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 condition:

#### Condition to Be Applied to All Approved Works: -

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**

Mark Warwick  
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

