

Planning Officer: Lynnyrd Wolfe

Planning Application Ref: R/70/20/T

Location: 1 The Oaks, Rustington, BN16 2UP

Description of works: Reduce height of 4no. sycamore trees to approx. 13.5m

Reason given: Safety concern

Comments on Application:

4x(?) Sycamore / *Acer pseudoplatanus* Height: 15-20m Spread: 0-5m Age class: Early mature

- These trees were observed from the public bridleway immediately west of the property, Jervis Avenue and Preston Paddock. The view of main stems and their unions was severely restricted due to inaccessibility from the west (dense vegetation, ditch and high boundary fencing).
- There appear to be four individual trees, two of which may be twin stemmed. In any case, they are all likely to be constituents of Group8 (TPO/R/2/89). There is evidence of two historic stem failures at height.
- Collectively they represent a significant constituent of a much larger group feature, their high canopy being visible from numerous surrounding properties and to users of the public highway and estate access roads (footway and carriageway) - as such they have amenity value.
- Outwardly and from distance they appear to be in fair physiological condition. Upper crown density is low and typical of other sycamore in same age class and size range, in the immediate locality; suggests prevailing coastal conditions are the dominant factor in their growth/form potential. All appear to have unmodified and visually attractive group/shared crown profile (natural, true to species type) for their setting.

Conclusions:

- These trees are important constituents of an established long line of trees which help define the character of the area and represent a significant public amenity.
- The tree work proposed in the application has not been justified on arboricultural grounds. The health and condition of these trees (incl. reason for recent failure of one stem) has not been detailed in support of the work proposal, rather it is left for us to assume is a response to perceived threat.
- The tree surgery proposed in the application would result in excessive reduction of the tree's landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.

Recommendations:

- I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team