DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: …Sam Dicocco……

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
18/00215/TCA	Prune Plum tree and Damson tree (T1 and T4) by approx 20%. Removal of Apple tree (T2), Apple bushes (T3), Plum trees (T5, T6 and T7) Hawthorn tree (T8) and Ash tree (T9) .	5 Croft Lane Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1AS

Submitted Plan Nos

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 No publication necessary.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is located on the north side of Croft Lane, and contains a two storey, semi detached dwelling. The site hosts a small rear garden, with a slightly larger front garden, which is currently enclosed by a tree line along the frontage.

4.1.2 Croft Lane lies within a Conservation Area. There is a deliberately planned avenue of trees along a grass verge on the south side of Croft Lane. There is no footpath or tree planting along north side of Croft Lane.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The proposal would see a 20% reduction in a Plum tree and a Damson tree within the rear garden of No.5 Croft Lane. The proposal also seeks to remove 4 apple trees within the rear garden, as well as 3 Mirabelle Plum trees, a Hawthorne tree and an Ash tree along the sites frontage.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues in determining this application are; the amenity value of the trees; the impact of the proposed works on the on the character and appearance Conservation Area; any justification for the proposed works; and whether, taking full account of the above, it would be expedient and just to cover the trees with a Tree Preservation Order.

4.3.2 There are no concerns in relation to the works to trees T1, T2, T3 and T4. The pruning works to trees T1 and T4 are for management only, so a full assessment of the value of the trees is not warranted at this stage. The trees covered by T2 and T3 are not of high amenity value considering their visibility or any other factor.

4.3.3 Trees T5, T6, T7 and T8 are highly visible within the street scene. Individually and collectively, it is not considered that these trees are of high amenity value. They are not of significant size or form, they are not rare and have no historic value, contribute little to the immediate landscape and therefore have little to no significance in respect to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.3.4 Tree T9 is considered the highest quality tree of those proposed for works within this application. It is not considered that the individual tree is integrated or benefits at all from trees T5, T6, T7 and T8 assessed above despite the close proximity. It is clear that the tree is under threat by reason of the proposal to fell, and therefore, dependent on the assessment of the amenity value of the tree, including public benefit, it is considered expedient to make a Tree Preservation Order.

4.3.5 Tree T9 is a large Ash tree with good form. It is located at the front of the site, in the south corner. As such, it is in a prominent position and highly visible from the surrounding area. The Ash tree is not a rare specimen within the area.

4.3.6 In terms of the trees cultural and historic values, within Letchworth Garden City residential areas, the arrangement and type of trees and the use and size of verges tends to relate to the status of the roads. In some roads the character is formal with regularly placed avenues of trees. In others there is a natural arrangement of trees either along the road side or within front gardens.

4.3.7 Croft Lane does host a grass verge, on the southeast side of the street, which hosts formally placed trees. The last tree within this formal layout and grass verge is opposite the host site. The northwest side of Croft Lane, where the site is located, has a much less formal arrangement in relation to tree ‘placement’. There is one other tree in a similar location along the southwest side of Croft Lane, however, on balance, it is not considered that these two trees indicate a layout of cultural or historic value in the context of Letchworth Garden City Conservation Area.

4.3.8 Given the extent of other trees within the immediate area, it is not considered that factors such as climate change or nature conservation would weigh in favour of the preservation of the Ash tree. Furthermore, and for the same reason, the extent of trees in the immediate area limit the contribution of this tree to the amenity value of the collective trees within the area, and reduces any potential public benefits from further protection of the tree.

4.3.9 Considering the above discussion, and the high threshold of the removal of the tree having to have a significant impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public, it is considered that in this case, the Ash tree is not of such amenity value to warrant the making of the Tree Preservation Order.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The trees proposed to be felled do not hold such significant amenity value and do not have such a contribution to the character of Letchworth Garden City Conservation Area as to overcome the justification for the works or justify the making of Tree Preservation Orders. Accordingly, there should be **NO OBJECTION** to the proposed works.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That **NO OBJECTION** be raised in regards to the tree works proposed.