

Arboricultural Report

Great Offley House

Kings Walden Road,
Offley, Hitchin,
SG5 3EA

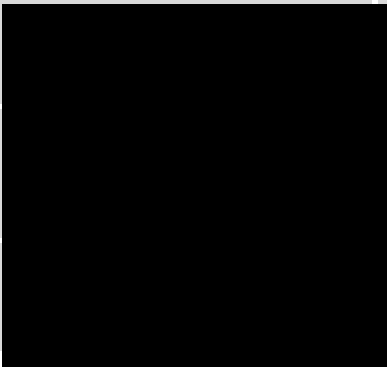
MH10757

March 2026

Document Amendment History

Version	Status	Date	Amendment to This Version
1	Issue	11.03.2026	

Document Approval

	Name	Title	Signature	Date
Author:	Kurt Langley	Senior Arboricultural Consultant		11.03.2026
Reviewer:	Luke Allwright	Principal Arboricultural Consultant		11.03.2026
Authorisation:	Jon Collins	Head of Consultancy		11.03.2026

Contents

1. Project Brief 4

2. Methodology 5

3. Report Validity 6

4. Limitations..... 7

5. Designations 8

6. Results..... 9

7. Photos 12

8. References 15

Appendix A	Tree Shedule Terms
Appendix B	Tree Schedule
Appendix C	MH10757-001 – Great Offley House Tree Survey Map

1. Project Brief

- 1.1 This arboricultural report has been prepared on behalf of the owners of Great Offley House in support of a Section 211 notice relating to this address within the Offley Conservation Area (Effective 06.10.1969).

Maydencroft Limited was instructed to inspect the trees identified for removal and pruning, assess their condition, and provide arboricultural justification for the proposed works. The proposals relate to selected trees within the site and include tree removal and associated arboricultural works for reasons of safety, condition, suitability, and general arboricultural management.

The recommendations within this report are based on a ground level inspection and reflect the condition of the trees at the time of survey, together with their relationship to the site and surrounding land use.

The survey was undertaken on Wednesday 11th of March by the following Arboricultural Consultant who is a permanent employee of Maydencroft

Name	Title	Qualifications
Kurt Langley	Senior Arboricultural Consultant	Lantra Professional Tree Inspection Level 3 Extended Diploma in Countryside Management Level 4 Diploma Arboriculture

- 1.2 The extent of the survey was established via an aerial image confirmed by the owner, with the red line in *Figure 1* below denoting the boundary within which trees have been surveyed. Whilst onsite additional trees were highlighted for works and these have been included in the Tree Schedule and Map in appendix B & C.



Figure 1: Aerial image of Great Offley House and surrounding area(with the red line indicating the survey area)

(Source: Google Earth 2026)

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The rationale for the tree survey was to carry out an assessment of all trees within the highlighted area of Great Offley House that were identified as requiring works or removal, see *Figure 1*, in preparation of a Section 211 notice being submitted.

A ground-based inspection only was conducted using the Visual Tree Assessment methodology (VTA) detailed in “The Body Language of Trees” (Mattheck & Breloer, HMSO, 1994). This level of inspection does not involve any climbing. Each individual tree was inspected separately and an assessment made of its condition. Any problems with individual trees were noted and remedial work recommended. All trees requiring works or removal have been tagged with a numbered metal disc, to help aid identification on the ground for contractors.

- 2.2 The information gathered has been used to create a comprehensive *Tree Schedule* (Appendix B), which includes a record of all trees highlighted for surveying that were found to contain significant defects, unsuitable for the location or requiring remedial works. The schedule is supported by a *Tree Survey Plan* (Appendix C) showing the location of all trees.
- 2.3 Stem diameter is measured at 1.5 m height with a diameter tape. For trees with between two to five stems, the combined stem diameter is calculated by finding the square root of the sum of the stem diameters². For trees with more than five stems, the combined stem diameter is calculated by finding the square root of the sum of the mean stem diameter² multiplied by the number of stems.
- 2.4 Heights and radial spreads are estimated values measured in metres (m). Wound sizes and cavity depths measured in millimetres (mm) are measured with a ruler, tape measure or probe to allow for future monitoring.
- 2.5 The location of trees was mapped using a Samsung Galaxy Active5 Tab handheld GPS device with accuracy of between 1-3 m.
- 2.6 All tree work recommended in this report should be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010, and to the latest industry guidelines by competent and fully qualified tree surgeons.

3. Report Validity

- 3.1 This report has been prepared solely for the purpose of supporting a Section 211 notice in respect of the trees identified within it and relates only to the condition of those trees at the time of inspection on the 11th of March 2026. The assessment is based on a visual inspection from ground level and reflects the visible arboricultural conditions present at that time. Trees are dynamic living structures, and their condition can alter for reasons including weather, soil conditions, physical damage, disease, decay progression and normal biological development. Should the proposed works not be undertaken within a reasonable period of the inspection date, or if site conditions materially change, further arboricultural review may be necessary before works proceed.

4. Limitations

4.1 *Timing of Surveys*

This report is based on a ground-based visual inspection only, undertaken during the late winter period. At the time of inspection, seasonal conditions were such that deciduous trees were generally without leaf cover, which can in some cases assist with visibility of the main branch structure, overall framework and certain structural features. Equally, the absence of foliage may limit the ability to fully assess crown density, leaf size, colour, and other indicators of physiological condition that are more readily apparent during the growing season.

4.2 *Nesting Birds*

Active bird nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and as such it is an offence to damage or destroy any active nests which includes nests being built and eggs. Bird nesting season runs from March to September inclusive, although it should be noted that birds can sometimes nest outside of this period. Wherever possible, tree work should be conducted outside of bird nesting season. However, if this is not viable and operations must be undertaken during this timeframe, a qualified ecologist should then conduct a survey to identify if any such nests are active before any tree works commence. If nesting birds are found to be present during operations, tree work should be halted until the nest is no longer active.

4.3 *Ground Based Survey*

The assessment recorded in this report is based on a visual inspection of the trees from ground level only. No climbing inspection, invasive investigation, internal decay testing, or below-ground assessment was undertaken unless otherwise stated. The report is therefore limited to those features visible at the time of survey, and it is possible that defects or conditions not apparent from ground level may exist.

5. Designations

5.1 Tree Preservation Orders

After reviewing the North Herts Council website and viewing their interactive online map, it has been confirmed that they are currently no Tree Preservation Order designations effecting the site.

Trees offered statutory safeguarding with Tree Preservation Orders are protected under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, and as a result, application to undertake tree related works must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) at least 8 weeks in advance, and their permission must be granted in writing prior to commencement.

5.2 Conservation Areas

After reviewing North Herts Councils online interactive map, it has been confirmed that Great Offley House is situated within Offley Conservation Area, which came into effect on the 06.10.1969.

Trees in Conservation Areas are protected under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), and as a result, notification of intended works must be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) at least 6 weeks prior to the commencement of any operations via a Section 211 Application.

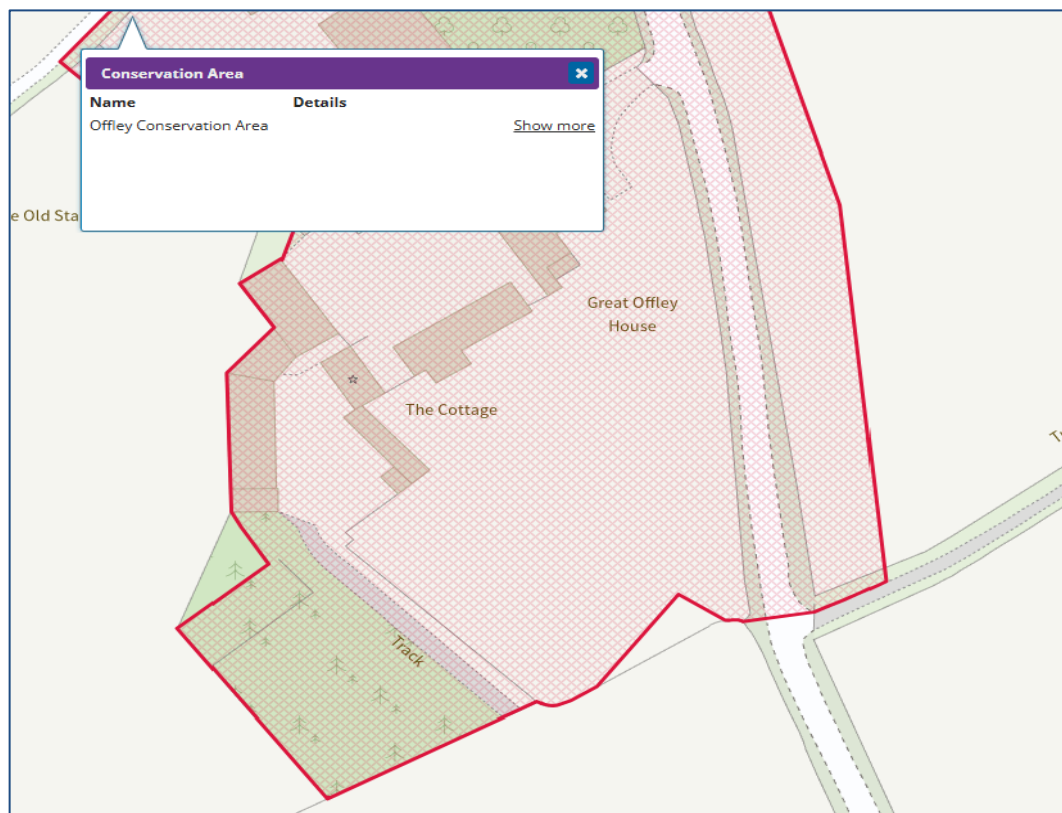


Figure 2: Online interactive map confirming the existence of Conservation Area
(Source: www.north-herts.gov.uk)

6. Results

6.1 All Tree Works

Details of all works can be found within the [Tree Schedule](#) (Appendix B) accompanying this document.

6.2 Proposed Tree Removals

T2– Common yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Removal of T2 is proposed based on its limited arboricultural merit and constrained relationship with the surrounding site. The tree is a small, semi-mature specimen with a twin stem arising from ground level and is located immediately adjacent to maintained lawn and recently reinstated tennis courts. In this position it makes only a limited contribution in landscape and amenity terms. Whilst recorded as being in fair structural and physiological condition, the tree is of modest scale and has restricted presence within the wider setting. Having regard to its size, form and limited public visibility or wider landscape contribution, its removal is considered reasonable in the context of the proposed management of the site.

T96 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

Removal of T96 is proposed due to its poor relationship with the adjacent tennis court and the constraints arising from its existing form and position. The tree is an early-mature beech located close to the eastern boundary of the reinstated tennis court, growing from the top of a raised bank. It has a trifurcated stem with included unions and compression forks between the western stems, giving rise to an adverse structural feature within the main framework. In addition, low hanging branches extend directly over the tennis court and the crown is one-sided, with canopy biased to the east of the stem. Although the tree was recorded as being in fair condition overall, its structural form is not ideal, and its position is increasingly incompatible with the adjoining recreational use. On balance, removal is considered justified in arboricultural and site management terms.

T134 – Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)

Removal of T134 is proposed as the tree is of only moderate quality and displays a poor relationship with neighbouring trees and the adjacent tennis court. The tree is a semi-mature specimen positioned close to the western side of the newly reinstated court. The crown is described as asymmetric and formed in mid-level association with neighbouring beech, which limits its individual form and long-term suitability. Minor deadwood is also present within the crown. Whilst the tree is in fair structural and physiological condition, it offers only a moderate contribution and is not especially notable as an individual specimen. Taking account of its form, limited separation from adjacent trees and its position immediately beside the tennis court, removal is considered to be a reasonable management proposal.

T135 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

Removal of T135 is proposed owing to its constrained form, existing defects and close relationship with the reinstated tennis court. The tree is an early-mature beech with an asymmetric crown formed in association with neighbouring maple. Minor deadwood is present within the crown, and the east side of the crown extends directly over the newly reinstated tennis court, with lower branches occurring at approximately 2 metres above ground level. The tree also has multiple stems arising from the crown break at around 1.5 metres, which further affects its overall form and management suitability in this position. Although the tree is recorded as being in fair condition, it is not an especially well-formed specimen and its crown spread and structural arrangement are

not well suited to its immediate setting adjoining an active recreational area. Its removal is therefore considered justified.

T9 – Bay (*Laurus nobilis*)

Removal of T9 is proposed due to its poor form, heavy epicormic growth and unsatisfactory relationship with adjacent built structures. The tree is a semi-mature bay comprising multiple stems and is located close to the southern side of a building and immediately east of a brick wall. It has un-managed growth within the understorey, extensive epicormic growth throughout, and a crown spread extending over a sloping oil tank and adjacent brick wall. The crown is also noted to lie within less than 0.2 metres of contact with chimneys on the adjoining building. Whilst recorded as being in fair condition, the specimen is of limited individual merit and appears to have developed in a constrained manner within a confined built setting. Given its form, proximity to structures and limited wider amenity contribution, removal is considered appropriate.

6.3 Proposed Tree Works

T109 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

The proposed works to T109 comprise crown lifting to approximately 2.5 metres above ground level to allow improved access to the swimming pool area and to provide appropriate clearance beneath the canopy. T109 is a mature beech in good structural and physiological condition and is considered suitable for retention. The tree is positioned close to the entrance to the swimming pool area, where low branches currently impede movement beneath the crown. The proposed works are limited in extent and are intended to improve functional clearance whilst retaining the tree's overall form and contribution to the site. The works are considered proportionate and consistent with good arboricultural management.

T143 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

The proposed works to T143 comprise a crown reduction of approximately 2 metres from the crown height and radial spread. T143 is a semi-mature beech located on the southern boundary of the site, immediately north of the fence and footpath. The tree is recorded as having a dense crown and stem growth, and in this boundary position a modest reduction is considered appropriate to contain the crown and improve its relationship with the adjacent footpath and boundary. The proposed reduction is relatively minor in relation to the size of the tree and would retain the specimen as a boundary feature whilst allowing for more appropriate ongoing management.

T144 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

The proposed works to T144 comprise removal of a lower lateral limb and reduction of the overextended crown back toward the main stem. T144 is a semi-mature beech situated on the southern boundary of the site close to the footpath and tennis court. The survey records an overextended lateral limb on the north-east side extending directly over the tennis court and footpath. The proposed works are therefore justified to reduce encroachment into these actively used areas and to improve the tree's spatial relationship with its surroundings. The works are localised and targeted and would allow the tree to be retained in a more suitable form for its position.

T147 – Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

The proposed works to T147 comprise crown lifting to approximately 2.5 metres above ground level together with a crown reduction of approximately 2 metres from the crown height and radial spread. T147 is a semi-mature beech located on the southern boundary of the site adjacent to the footpath. In this position, the proposed lifting and reduction are considered appropriate to improve clearance and to contain the canopy within its immediate setting. The works are modest in scale and would maintain the

tree as part of the boundary planting whilst improving its relationship with pedestrian movement and surrounding site use. The proposal is considered reasonable and in accordance with normal arboricultural management practice.

6.4 *Additional management*

T143, T144 and T147

Dense ivy growth is present to the stems and crowns of these trees. Ivy severance at the base of the stems is proposed as a routine management measure to assist with inspection and longer-term management.

T147

Moderate deadwood is present within the west side of the crown. Removal of significant deadwood is proposed as a routine maintenance operation in the interests of both health and safety and good arboricultural management.

7. Photos



Figure 3: **T109**, Beech tree identified for crown lifting



Figure 4: **T109**, Low branches



Figure 5: **T2**, Yew identified for removal



Figure 6: **T96**, Beech identified for removal



Figure 7: **T96**, included union of west side



Figure 8: **T143**, Beech identified for 2 m reduction



Figure 9: **T144**, 2 m reduction & limb removal



Figure 10: **T147**, Beech identified for 2 m reduction



Figure 11: **T134**, maple Identified for removal (left)



Figure 12: **T135**, Beech identified for removal (right)



Figure 13: **T9**, Bay encroaching on oil tank



Figure 14: **T9**, Bay encroaching on wall

8. References

British Standards (2010); BS3998:2010 Tree work- Recommendations

Mattheck, K. and Breloer, H. (1994); *The body language of trees*

Lonsdale, D. (2000); Hazards from trees – a general guide

Lonsdale, D. (2013); Principles of tree hazard assessment and management

Caveat

This survey does not guarantee that trees which have not been recorded for remedial work are safe and will not fail. Extreme climatic conditions can cause serious damage even to healthy trees. A survey of this kind therefore seeks to lower the overall risk of damage or harm due to trees and contributes to fulfilling the landowner's responsibility and duty of care in taking reasonable steps to manage their trees. However, regular surveys are recommended to manage the on-going risk.

Disclaimer

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the commissioning party only, unless agreed in writing by the author. No other party may use, make use of, or rely on the contents of this report. Maydencroft Limited accepts no duty or responsibility, including negligence, to any other party and disclaims all liability of any nature whatsoever to any such party in respect to this report.

Copyright

The copyright of this report, its text, images and intellectual content remain the sole ownership of Maydencroft Limited. The report should be used for its original agreed purpose only and it is specifically prohibited to transmit the report to any third party, by paper or any electronic means, unless agreed to in writing by Maydencroft Limited.

March 2026

Appendix A

Tree Schedule Terms

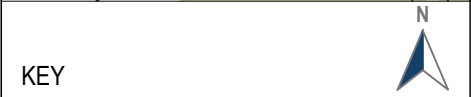
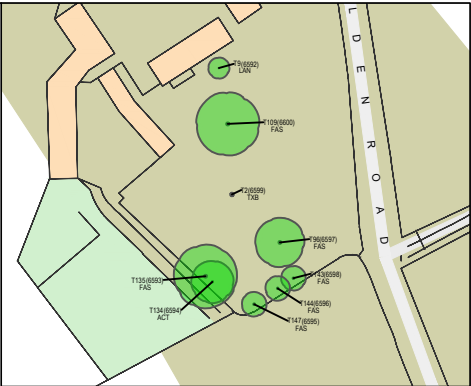
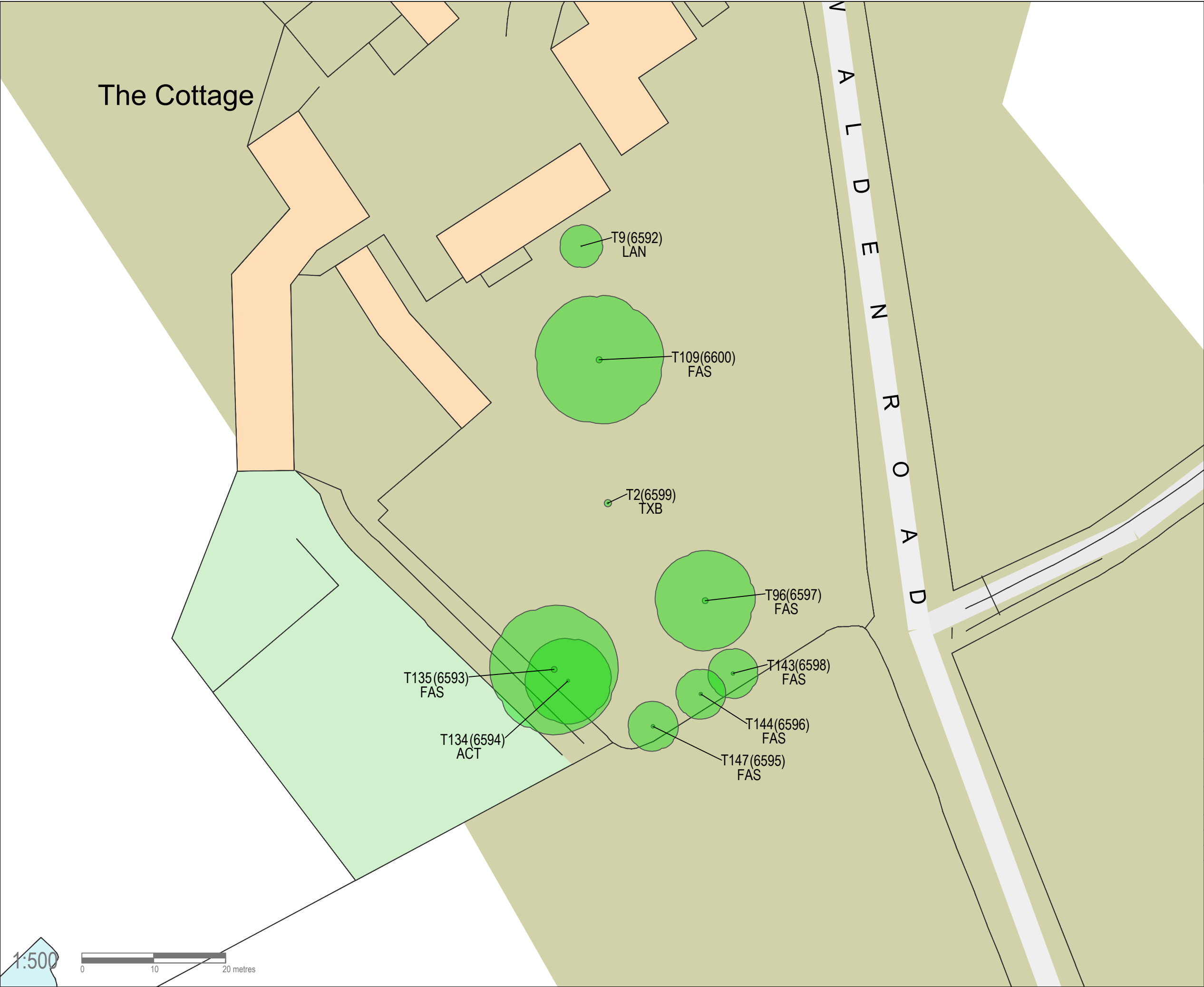
Tree Ref.	Code used to identify each tree on the Tree Survey Plan
Species	The common name for each tree
Height	The height of the tree in metres
Age Class	The age of the tree recorded as follows
Young	Recently planted or establishing tree
Semi-mature	Established tree which has yet to reach its full growing height
Early Mature	A tree which has reached its maximum potential height, but still increasing in both stem diameter and crown spread
Mature	A tree which has reached its likely maximum crown size
Over-mature	A mature tree which has ceased to grow or is in decline
Veteran	An over-mature tree of high value due to age, size and other factors
Stems	Number of stems present (i.e. is the tree a multi-stemmed specimen)
Stem ø mm	Diameter of tree stem in millimetres, recorded at 1.5 m above ground level; this figure is used to calculate the RPA
RPA (m)	The radius of the tree's Root Protection Area in metres
Crown Spread	The extent of the tree's crown to the north, south, east and west, in metres
Crown Height	The height of the crown as measured from the ground to the north, south, east and west, in metres
Condition	A general assessment of the tree's structural or physiological condition as either good, fair, poor or dead
Minor Deadwood	Deadwood with a diameter of less than 25 mm
Moderate Deadwood	Deadwood with a diameter between 25 mm and 50 mm
Major Deadwood	Deadwood with a diameter greater than 50 mm
OPM	Oak Processionary Moth
FFB	Fungal fruiting body
PRF	Potential roost feature

Appendix B- Great Offley House Tree Schedule

Tree Ref	Tree Tag	Species	Scientific Name	Age Class	Height (m)	Stems	Stem Ø (mm)	Average Radial Crown spread (m)	Condition		Category	General Observations	Recommendations
									Structural	Physiological			
T109	6600	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Mature	13	1	870	9	Good	Good	Reasonable	Tree is located 4 m southeast of entrance to swimming pool, with low hanging branches impeding access; Small amount of ivy on the stem; Good overall condition.	Lift crown to 2.5 m to allow for access to swimming pool area and for mower to operate under canopy
T2	6599	Common yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Semi-mature	3.5	2	240	0.5	Fair	Fair	Reasonable	Located 0.1 m west of maintained lawn and 1 m east of recently reinstated tennis courts; Twin stemmed from ground level.	Remove tree to ground level
T96	6597	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Early-mature	19	3	840	7	Fair	Fair	Reasonable	Located 2 m east of newly reinstated tennis court, growing on top of 0.5 m high bank; Trifurcated stem with included union and compression fork between western stems; Low hanging branches directly over tennis court; Cohesive crown with neighbouring beech to the east of stem.	Remove tree to ground level
T143	6598	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Semi-mature	11	1	480	3.5	Ivy	Fair	Reasonable	Located on the south boundary of site 0.5 m north of fence and 2 m south of footpath; Dense ivy clad stem and crown.	Carefully sever ivy at base of tree and strip all ivy from tree; Reduce crown by 2 m
T144	6596	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Semi-mature	11	1	460	3.5	Ivy	Fair	Reasonable	Located on the south boundary of site 0.5 m north of fence and 1 m south of footpath; Dense ivy clad stem and crown; Overextending lateral limb on northwest side of crown directly over tennis court and footpath.	Carefully sever ivy at base of tree and strip all ivy from tree; Remove lowest lateral limb directly over tennis court back to the main stem.
T147	6595	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Semi-mature	11	1	510	3.5	Ivy	Fair	Reasonable	Located on the south boundary of site 0.5 m north of fence and 0.5 m south of footpath; Dense ivy clad stem and crown; Occluding wounds on stem at 2 m height (not significant); Moderate deadwood present in west side of crown over footpath.	Carefully sever ivy at base of tree and strip all ivy from tree; Remove deadwood (over 25mm diameter); Lift crown on north side to 2.5 m; Reduce crown by 2 m.
T134	6594	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Semi-mature	10	1	450	6	Fair	Fair	Reasonable	Located 2 m west of newly reinstated tennis court; Ivy on stem and into middle crown; Asymmetric crown form with cohesive crown with neighbouring beech; Minor deadwood present in crown.	Remove tree to ground level

Appendix B- Great Offley House Tree Schedule

Tree Ref	Tree Tag	Species	Scientific Name	Age Class	Height (m)	Stems	Stem Ø (mm)	Average Radial Crown spread (m)	Condition		Category	General Observations	Recommendations
									Structural	Physiological			
T135	6593	Common beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Early-mature	15	1	830	9	Fair	Fair	Reasonable	Located 2 m west of newly reinstated tennis court; Ivy on stem and into lower crown; Asymmetric crown form with cohesive crown with neighbouring maple; Minor deadwood present in crown; East side of crown is located directly over newly reinstated tennis court; with lower branches at 2 m height; Multiple stems have fused at crown break at 1.5 m.	Remove tree to ground level
T9	6592	Bay	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Semi-mature	6	25	150	3	Fair	Fair	Reasonable	Located 1 m west of oil storage tank, 3 m south of building and 0.1 m east of brick wall; Unmanaged with significant epicormic growth throughout understory; Crown encroaching on storage oil tank and adjacent brick wall; Crown is less than 0.2 m from contacting chimney on adjacent building.	Remove tree to ground level



KEY

Trees identified for Works

Tree Key

ACT	- Field maple
FAS	- Common beech
LAN	- Bay
TXB	- Common yew

Client	Afolami		
Project	Great Offley House		
Title	Appendix C - Tree Locations		
Scale	1:500 @ A3	Drawn	KL
Date	March 2026	Checked	LA
Drawing No.	MH10757-001	Rev	-

MAYDENCROFT[®]

Maydencroft Limited, Maydencroft Manor
Gosmore, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7QA

t +44 (0)800 157 7707
e info@maydencroft.co.uk
w www.maydencroft.co.uk

1:500

0 10 20 metres