

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Francis Mabbett.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01936/TCA	T1: Chestnut: Reduce in height by approx to 4m above ground. T2:, T3: Beech - Fell. T4: Holm Oak - Fell. T5: Sycamore - Reduce in height by approx 4m and crown spread by approx 2m. T6: Sycamore - Reduce in height by approx 4m and crown spread by approx 2m. TG7: Group Sycamore/ Yew - Reduce in height by approx 3-4m.	South Priory Fish Hill Royston Hertfordshire SG8 9LB

Submitted Plan Nos

2.0 **Site History**

Various tree works applications at the site, the most recent:

11/02305/1TCA - T1 Horse Chestnut, reduce crown by approximately 50%; T2 Sycamore, reduce crown back to previous points (approximately 4 metres); T3 Beech, reduce crown by approximately 30%; H1 Yew, trim top and sides; T4 Plum (stump) and T5 Holly, fell; T6 Evergreen Oak, reduce crown by 50%; ; T7, T8, T9, T10 and T11 Sycamores, reduce crown back to previous points to form a more compact crown; T12 and T13 (Neighbouring Lime), cut back to boundary. H2, H3 and H4 Conifers, trim top and sides, H5 Conifer, trim back as hard as possible. Prune one Sycamore by 30% (adjacent to the north east corner of the house) - No objection

14/02554/1TCA - Reduce crown height by approx 2-3m and crown spread by approx 1-2m of one Sycamore tree (T1). Fell one Prunus tree (T2), reduce crown height by approx. 0.2 - 0.3m of Yew tree group (TG3), reduce crown height and spread by approximately 2-3m of one beech tree (T4). Thin crown by approx 15% and reduce crown height and spread by approx 1-2m of one Beech tree (T5), reduce crown height by approx 3-4m of Sycamore/Conifer group (HG6), reduce crown height by approx. 3-4m of one Beech tree (T7). Thin crown by approx 15%, reduce crown height and spread by approx 2-3m of Sycamore tree (T8), clean to remove all dead, diseased and broken branches 2-3cm in diameter and larger and reduce crown height by approx 1-2m of Laburnum group (T9), reduce crown height by approx. 2-3m and reduce crown spread by approx 1-3m of one Sycamore tree (T10), reduce crown height by approximately 2-3m and reduce crown spread by approx 1-2 metres of one Rowan tree (T11), reduce crown height and spread by approx 1-2 m of one Fig tree (SH12) and reduce crown height and spread by approx. 1-2 m of shrub (SH13) – No objection

3.0 **Representations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site**

T1: Chestnut and T5 Sycamore (applicant's plan) are located to the rear of the property between the building and the access driveway to the rear of neighbouring properties, while T2, T3 2x Beech, T4 Holm Oak, T6 Sycamore, are located in area to East of the access driveway. The property borders the Priory Memorial Gardens. The trees are partly visible to the public realm. The site is within the Royston Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

T1: Chestnut: Reduce in height by approx to 4m above ground. T2:, T3: Beech - Fell. T4: Holm Oak - Fell. T5: Sycamore - Reduce in height by approx 4m and crown spread by approx 2m. T6: Sycamore - Reduce in height by approx 4m and crown spread by approx 2m.

TG7: Group Sycamore/ Yew - Reduce in height by approx 3-4m.

4.3 **Key Issues**

The key issue for consideration is the impact that the proposed works would have on the character, appearance and amenity of the Conservation Area.

4.3.1 The trees are partly visible to the public realm.

4.3.2 T1 Horse Chestnut is a large mature tree located close to the property building. It is described in the supporting KG Tree Care report as *“significantly compromised due to fungal brackets and decay within its canopy. Immediate removal is advisable to ensure the safety of the surrounding environment and community.”* The tree expressed the usual symptoms of chlorosis and necrosis in the foliage expected with this species at this time of year, due to infestation by Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner (*Cameraria ohridella*) and the long hot dry summer. The tree has previously undergone a heavy reduction leaving large wounds open to colonisation with likely localised pockets of decay now present, although their extent is not possible to determine from ground level. Evidence of young and old fungal brackets (*Ganoderma* species) were observed at the base of the tree on the south and north side, but these were not large and although they are signs of internal decay its extent is again not clear.

4.3.3 The foliage symptoms of the Horse Chestnut are mainly due to result of the caterpillar infestation, which happens too late in the season to significantly impair the trees' overall health, and the effect is mostly aesthetic. The tree is not dead or dying, however, the presence of bracket fungi suggests decay is likely present and as Horse Chestnut has a soft heartwood with poor resistance to decay, it is likely to progress fairly rapidly with the long-term retention of the tree not foreseeable. This with previous unsympathetic reduction works has negatively impacted the trees form and life expectancy and it is considered not suitable for protection by a Tree Preservation Order.

4.3.4 T2 Beech is semi-mature tree of reasonable size and fair condition. The tree is located central to the site and partly obscured by surrounding tree cover, therefore its removal is unlikely to seriously affect the amenity of the area. T3 Beech and T4 Holm Oak are adjacent to the larger T2 Beech tree and suppressed by its canopy. These trees are poor specimens, with limited public visibility and their removal will have minimal impact on the surrounding area. T6 Sycamore is a semi-mature tree and is also partially obscured by surrounding tree cover, a reduction to this tree is unlikely to have a noticeable impact on the surrounding amenity.

4.3.5 The proposed reduction of T5 Sycamore, which is located out of public view and close to built structures, is unlikely to be detrimental to its health and will prevent the tree from outgrowing its location. The works will have a low impact on the amenity of the surrounding area. The reduction of TG7 is also likely to have a low impact and will serve to bring these trees back to a manageable size.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed works would not result in any adverse impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the Royston Conservation Area.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 No objection.

Signed  Ben Glover	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer	
Date: 9 September 2026	