

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02079/TCA	T22: Poplar - Fell to approximately 2m. T23: Scots pine - Fell to standing stump of 4m high. T26: Oak - lift the crown to provide 1m vertical and horizontal clearance from cables. T29: Beech- Reduce crown by 1.5m from branch tips. T36: Sycamore - Lift one branch to give at least 1m vertical and horizontal clearance from the shed (as amended 18/09/2024).	Church Of Holy Trinity Church Lane Weston Hertfordshire SG4 7DJ

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan

1.0 **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 1.1 Tree Preservation Orders and Trees in Conservation Areas 2014
- 1.2 Hertfordshire County Council Tree and Woodland Strategy 2022–2030
- 1.3 North Hertfordshire Council Tree Strategy 2017

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

- 2.1 24/02101/5DN - T1a Oak - Fell to a standing stump of 2m. No objection.
- 2.2 Various other applications exist, full history on case file.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 N/A

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 Holy Trinity Church is a grade I listed building and is within the Weston Conservation Area. There are various trees in the churchyard to which this application relates.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Permission is sought to undertake the following works: T22: Poplar - Fell to approximately 2m. T23: Scots pine - Fell to standing stump of 4m high. T26: Oak - lift the crown to provide 1m vertical and horizontal clearance from cables. T29: Beech- Reduce crown by 1.5m from branch tips. T36: Sycamore - Lift one branch to give at least 1m vertical and horizontal clearance from the shed (as amended 18/09/2024).
- 4.2.2 The amendment relates to the deletion of T1a an Oak tree proposed to be felled and having since been dealt with under the 5-day Notice procedure ref: 24/02101/5DN.

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 work on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; any justification for the proposed work and whether, taking full account of the above, it would be expedient and in the public interest to make a Tree Preservation Order.
- 4.3.2 The trees are identified by number on the submitted site plan and photographs of T22 and T23 have been submitted in support of the application.

- 4.3.3 T22, a Poplar tree is showing signs of being in decline with a number of visible holes in the trunk, the crown is sparse and there is a large insect hole believed to be a hornet moth which can cause long internal tunnels within the structure of the tree resulting in death. T23, a Scots Pine has been struck by lightning at some point in the past with its top missing and is suffering from a lengthy wound which is showing signs of hollowing. T26, an Oak would benefit from a crown lift to ensure clearance from nearby cables and T36, a Sycamore benefitting from one branch lift for clearance to an outbuilding. T29, a Beech would benefit from a reduction to its overall crown by 1.5m as measured from branch tips. All of the trees offer a degree of public amenity value given their positions within the churchyard and also contribute towards the setting of the listed church. Notwithstanding this, the works to the trees is considered justified and would not result in significant harm the character and appearance of the Weston Conservation Area. There would appear not to be any immediate threat to the remaining trees and therefore there is no evidence to suggest further protection is needed by way of a Tree Preservation Order.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed works to the trees would not harm their amenity value to a significant degree and is acceptable. The loss of trees T22 and T23 is acceptable given their condition and as such, would not cause such harm to the character and appearance of the Weston Conservation Area as to overcome the justification for the work.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 **NO OBJECTION** to the proposed work.

- 5.2 Informative added for the re-planting of two trees following the felling of T22 and T23.

1. In an effort to combat climate change, North Hertfordshire Council advises that two native trees be planted within the grounds of the church following removal of the Poplar tree and the Scots Pine tree. Please make sure you are familiar with the planting season which runs from 1st November until 31st March, this will give the trees the best chance of survival.

Signed  Naomi Reynard	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 26 September 2024	