

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

26/01651/TCA

T1: Beech - Crown reduction by 4m in height and 3m lateral reduction to suitable growth points.

29 Sollershott West
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3PU

Submitted Plan Nos

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

20/01934/TCA - Fagus sylvatica - Remove 2 large hanging limbs. 2 x Prunus - Remove.
2 x Fraxinus excelsior - Reduce height to suitable points approx 8-10m. Fraxinus excelsior - Fell. Fagus sylvatica - Reduce large limb. – No objection

3.0 **Representations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site**

T1 Beech (applicant's plan) is located in the rear garden close to the East boundary fence. The tree is visible to the public realm mainly from Broadway which passes to the rear of the property. The site is within the Letchworth Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

T1: Beech - Crown reduction by 4m in height and 3m lateral reduction to suitable growth points.

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 tree is visible to the public realm.

4.3.2 T1 Beech is a mature tree of significant age with a large spreading crown. The tree is showing early signs of age related defects, with evidence of previous large limb loss and a crown appearing slightly thinner than normally expected, although this could be a result the recent very hot/dry weather. Two main co-dominant stems arise from the area of crown break with signs of included bark at the union, which has been present from early life and is not necessarily a hazard. Full inspection of the union was not possible from ground level, but the inclusion appeared to extend down into the main stem as it has increased in size with tree growth suggesting a possible defect exists. The tree shows signs of having crown pruning administered previously, but this seems confined mainly to the area of crown over the garage building rather than the entire tree.

4.3.3 Beech do not form true heartwood and so internal wood can be readily colonised by decay when exposed to the atmosphere. The presence of dormant buds and the ability to produce adventitious buds is inconsistent within this species and therefore these pruning works should not exceed previous reduction points where barriers to decay are likely to already exist. Responsive regrowth can be unpredictable and absent altogether in heavy pruning operations, particularly in older Beech trees.

4.3.4 However, a reduction is regarded as necessary to reduce the risk of further limb failure and to reduce the stresses on the main union. Care should be taken that any natural bracing if present within the crown is not severed as this may predispose the tree to future failure. The amenity of the tree will be negatively affected, but due to the tree's age, size and proximity to nearby buildings and the public realm it is deemed necessary to aid retention of the tree by reducing failure potential.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The proposed works would not result in any adverse impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the Letchworth 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  Thomas Howe	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 5 August 2026	