

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

26/00486/TPO

T1, T2: Beech - Remove 3m.

The Chapel
Highbury Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 9RW

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

13/00086/1TPO - Fell 1 Copper Beech tree (T1) – Conditional Consent

18/01550/TPO - Various tree works including reduction and removal. – Conditional Consent

18/03099/TPO - T1, T3, T8 Beech - Remove. – Conditional Consent

3.0 **Representations**

None

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

T1 subject of this application is located to the NE corner of the building while T2 Beech (applicant's plan) is located near the front of the property close to the East boundary. The trees are visible to the public realm and neighbouring properties. The site is within Hitchin Conservation Area and the trees are included in TPO/069.

4.2 **Proposal & Reason**

T1 - Beech Remove epicormic growth Reinspect basal area Upper crown retrenchment - minor Asymmetrical crown growth habit - weight bias to NW Grown since last reduction. Remove 3m

T2 - Beech Sparse crown Leaning stem habit ≤ 10 deg. towards N Asymmetrical crown growth habit - weight bias towards N Remove 3m

4.3 **Key Issues**

The key issue for consideration is whether the reason provided justifies proposed works and the appropriateness of these given that the tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

4.3.1 T1 is a large mature tree that has been previously reduced, with reasonable regrowth present considering the species and good bud formation. 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 shoots is inconsistent within this species and therefore the proposed pruning works should not exceed previous reduction points where barriers to decay are likely to already exist. T2 is showing signs of decline with a sparse upper crown and dead wood present. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the trees condition means a reduction by 3m is required to reduce risk of declining/dead limbs being shed and may also serve to stimulate regrowth in the lower crown to aid the retention of this tree.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The proposed works are necessary and in accord with previous consented works and refusal would be hard to justify. A condition to ensure works to T1 do not exceed previous reduction points is required.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

4.6.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:-

1. Pruning works to T1 shall not exceed the most recent previous reduction points, to ensure the works are not detrimental to the long-term health of the tree.
2. The works shall be carried out to conform to British Standard 3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work and in a manner so as to ensure that the natural and aesthetic appearance of the trees are maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that the works are undertaken to an acceptable standard which will not harm the health of the tree(s).

3. The works shall be undertaken only by a competent and suitably qualified arboricultural contractor or tree surgeon as capable of carrying them out to an acceptable standard.

Reason: In order that the works are undertaken by a suitably qualified contractor.

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	

Signed <i>Paul Chaston</i> Paul Chaston Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 April 2026	