

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00965/TCA	T2: Mulberry - Crown to be reduced by 3m, lateral reduction to clear the overhang on the gravestones, crown thinning by up to 30% removing poor condition growth and unsuitable growth points.	St Mary Magdalene Church Kings Walden Road Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3DX

Submitted Plan Nos

2.0 **Site History**

08/01051/1TCA - Remove one Laurel and one Holly tree. Raise canopy of three Horse Chestnut Trees and one Beech Tree to five metres above ground level of church yard. - No objection

26/00971/5DN - Cherry - Fell to ground level - No objection

3.0 **Representations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site**

T2 Mulberry (applicant's plan) is located in a prominent position within the church yard to the South of the Church building and SE of the lychgate. The tree is highly visible to the public realm and to surrounding properties. The site is within the Offley Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

T2: Mulberry - Crown to be reduced by 3m, lateral reduction to clear the overhang on the gravestones, crown thinning by up to 30% removing poor condition growth and unsuitable 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 highly visible to the public realm.

4.3.2 T2 Mulberry (black species) is not regarded as a rare tree, but rather infrequent and occupies a prominent position easily visible to the public realm from Kings Walden Road. The tree has reasonable form and is of mature size for this species. The tree is multi-stemmed which is not unusual and the crown spreads and hangs low over nearby gravestones. The main unions from where the multiple stems originate consist of a several tight forks that appear included indicating a potential weak point in the tree and an increased chance of collapse, although this is perhaps more common in *Morus alba*. A 3m crown reduction will reduce the leverage stresses on these unions, especially when the tree is in full leaf and laden with fruit, mitigating the risk of potential collapse. The works will have a negative impact on the amenity of the tree, but are necessary to ensure its integrity, longevity and is anticipated to cause only a short-term loss of amenity.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed works would not result in any unacceptable adverse impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the Offley 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  Melissa Tyler	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 8 May 2026	