

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/03169/TPO	Sycamore - Remove	9 Ransom Close Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9AX

Submitted Plan Nos

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

Various relevant to the management of the Sycamore tree

3.0 **Representations**

None

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

The Sycamore subject of this application is located near the North boundary at the rear of the property, and is closest tree to the NW corner of the house. The site is not within a Conservation Area but the tree is within Area TPO/001. The tree is partly visible to the public realm from Ransom Close and Dale Close and is visible to surrounding properties.

4.2 **Proposal & Reason**

Sycamore - Remove

“We would like to remove a tree that is very close to the house. The branches almost touch the roof and we are concerned that the tree is that close to the house that the bigger it gets the more likely it is that the roots may interfere with the foundations”

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 The reasons provided for the works were not supported by additional information as is required in an application where:

“Alleged damage to property - e.g. subsidence or damage to drains or drives” is ticked “Yes” on the application form.

“If Yes, you are required to provide for: Subsidence - A report by an engineer or surveyor, to include a description of damage, vegetation, monitoring data, soil, roots and repair

proposals. Also a report from an arboriculturist to support the tree work proposals. Other structural damage (e.g. drains walls and hard surfaces) - Written technical evidence from an appropriate expert, including description of damage and possible solutions.”

- 4.3.2 The Sycamore is mature and is considered to be almost at full size with any further increase in size likely to be at a slow rate. Potential foundation damage is not purely down to tree size and position, but dependent upon a number of factors including soil type/shrinkability, foundation design, local weather, tree species and by its very nature is highly unpredictable. No supporting evidence was supplied with the application to prove damage was being caused by this tree and it would not be reasonable to remove it just because it is positioned close to a property. The tree has been reduced previously with significant regrowth in excess of 2m present indicating good vitality. The crown is now growing close to the property but was not in contact with it.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 No supporting evidence has been provided to justify removal of this tree. The tree has been previously reduced and a new application for a repeat of these works would mitigate the issues of branches growing close to the property.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 Submit a new application to reduce overall crown size back close to but not inside previous reduction pruning points.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **Refused** for the following reasons:-

1. No detailed justification has been submitted in support of the application for its removal. Thus, in the absence of any compelling evidence being produced for the removal of the tree in terms of its health, condition or relationship to the surrounding buildings there is insufficient justification for consent to be granted and the felling of this tree would be harmful to local character and amenity.

Signed  Anne McDonald Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 14 January 2026	