

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Harriet Sanders.....

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

25/02420/TCA

G1: Sycamore, Elder - Fell. G2:
Sycamores - Reduce by approx 1.5m
and sever ivy

Beka Associates
Old Charlton Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 2DA

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan

1.0 Policies

2.0 Site History

2.1 Non relevant.

3.0 Representations

3.1 n/a

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 Site and Surroundings

4.1.1 The site is occupied by Beka Associates. Due to a change in levels, a retaining wall runs along the north western boundary of the site. The retaining wall accommodates the change in levels between the Beka Associate's car park which sits at a lower level than the neighbouring property Ashurst. The trees relevant to this application are sited on top of the retaining wall near to the site access.

4.1.2 The site is within a Conservation Area.

4.2 Proposal

4.2.1 G1: Sycamore, Elder - Fell.

4.2.2 G2: Sycamores - Reduce by approx 1.5m and sever ivy.

4.2.3 The applicant has submitted additional information in the form of a structural inspection report that was undertaken due to concerns regarding lean and brick deterioration of the retaining wall. The survey identified lean, bow and cracking occurring in the wall. The report considers that the root system of the mature elder on the upper part of the wall has probably started to place pressure on the wall. The wall will provide little support to the lever arm of the tree swaying in high winds. The report concludes that the mature elder could be considered a health and safety risk as it could topple in windy conditions. The report recommends that the tree should be removed.

4.3 Key Issues

4.3.1 The key issues in determining this application are:

- the amenity value of the tree/trees;
- the impact of the proposed work on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- any justification for the proposed work.

4.3.2 G1 consists of a mature elder tree and modest sized sycamore. It is proposed to fell these trees. As set out above, the elder is considered to be a health and safety risk. Both trees are potentially compromising the structural integrity of the retaining wall.

4.3.3 The elder tree is visible from the street and does make a modest contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, the justification to fell the tree is supported for health and safety reasons. The sycamore is modest in size and does not make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the streetscene. The justification for its removal is also supported to prevent further damage to the wall. The removal of the trees would be a modest loss to the streetscene but adequate trees remain in the area to compensate for the loss including the sycamores at the entrance to the site.

4.3.4 G2 consists of two sycamores. The trees make a positive contribution to the streetscene due to their prominent location at the entrance to the site. It is proposed to reduce the trees by approx 1.5m and sever the ivy. This is supported. The proposed works are remedial and will improve the health and longevity of the trees.

4.4 Conclusion

4.4.1 The proposed felling of G1 is required for health and safety reasons and to prevent further damage to the retaining wall. There is no objection the felling of G1. The proposed works to G2 would not result in any unacceptable adverse impact to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There is no objection to the proposed works to G2.

4.5 Alternative Options

4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 No objection.

Signed  Ben Glover	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 7 October 2025	