

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

26/01969/TPO

2x Sycamore - (Amended) Reduce crown size back close to previous reduction points and not beyond, removing all re-growth and leaving points of shoot/branch origin intact.

21 The Avenue
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG4 9RJ

Submitted Plan Nos

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

Various tree works applications at the site the most recent:

18/00337/TPO - T1, T2 Sycamore – Fell -Refused

18/01377/TPO - T2 & T3 Sycamore - Reduce height by up to 3m and reduce lateral limbs to shape approx 2.5m - Conditional consent

20/00370/TPO - T1 Field Maple - Crown reduce by 3.5 m from the top and approx 2 to 2.5 m from the sides. – Conditional consent

3.0 **Representations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

Email of 27/08/2026 confirms the 2x Sycamore marked by ‘T’ (applicants plan) are located in the south-east corner of the rear garden of the property, close to the footpath connecting The Avenue and Chiltern Road. The site is within Hitchin Conservation Area and the trees are protected by T2 and T3 of TPO/104.

4.2 **Proposal & Reason**

2x Sycamore - (Amended) Reduce crown size back close to previous reduction points and not beyond, removing all re-growth and leaving points of shoot/branch origin intact.

Reason: Safety

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 original proposal mis-identified tree species and failed to clearly locate the trees. The proposal was also regarded as vague in this instance and open to interpretation. Therefore, the applicant was given the opportunity to amend the application to the above proposal and confirmed acceptance of this in email 20/09/2026.

4.3.2 2x Sycamore are mature trees growing adjacent, with a shared crown spread. They have been pruned moderately hard in the past and now present regrowth of approx. 6m from these points. Adventitious shoots arising from dormant buds at the point of pruning can form weaker attachments than branches that grow overtime as part of the

trees natural form and development. Therefore, regular pruning of this regrowth can mitigate the potential risk for failure of these stems, which increases with size.

- 4.3.3 Pruning exposes wounds to the atmosphere that are then open to desiccation and other alterations in physiological function; making conditions suitable for micro-organism ingress and pathogen colonisation. Pruning before regrowth becomes too large reduces the size of dysfunctional wood exposed and ensuring pruning does not exceed previous points, where barriers to infection are likely to exist, limits the negative effects on the long-term health of the trees.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed works to TPO trees appears reasonable and necessary in maintaining the trees in a safe condition. There will be a negative impact on the visual appearance of the trees, but this is anticipated to be short-term only. The proposed does not exceed previously consented works and therefore refusal would be hard to justify.

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** for the following reasons:-

1. 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).

2. 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: 2 October 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: 2 October 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: 2 October 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: 2 October 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: 2 October 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: 2 October 2026	