

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00056/TPO	T2: Horse Chestnut - Reduce to leave a standing stump of just over 2m above ground level . T5: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2.5m . T6: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m. Inspect canopy for decay and report findings . T3: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m. T4: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m.	The Millstream 97 Cambridge Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0JH

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan Tree Survey and Photos

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

Various applications regarding these trees.

3.0 **Representations**

None

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

T2-T6 5x Horse Chestnuts (applicant's plan) subject of this application are all located on the East side of the river bank to the SW corner of the site, close to the pub garden. The trees are highly visible to the public realm. The site is not within a Conservation Area but the trees are included in G3 of TPO/132.

4.2 **Proposal & Reason**

T2: Horse Chestnut - Reduce to leave a standing stump of just over 2m above ground level .

T5: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2.5m . T6: Horse

Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m. Inspect canopy for decay and report findings . T3: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m.

T4: Horse Chestnut - Re pollard back to historic pruning points, approx 2m.

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 to justify the works were included with submitted supporting tree survey from Evoke Tree Services Ltd.

4.3.2 The group of Horse Chestnut trees are a line of regularly pollarded trees that appear to have been managed in this way for some time. Re-growth from previous pollarding operations is fair with it being stronger in the healthier specimens, indicating the trees have mixed vigour but, on the whole, have responded reasonably well to previous works. The proposed pollarding works to T3-T6 will have a short-term negative impact on the amenity of these trees, but cyclical pollarding minimises the size of dysfunctional wood resulting from delayed pruning operations, is good arboricultural practice and is in-line with the previous management of these trees.

- 4.3.3 The trees were once large specimens, but have been reduced substantially in the past, to then be managed as pollards. These past works along with the age of some of the older specimens has contributed to the long-term decline in some of these trees, which is now particularly evident in T2. Evidence of *Kretzschmaria deusta* is present in this tree as stated in the tree report, which can leave it's structural integrity questionable and highly unpredictable. A reduction to leave a standing stump of just over 2m above ground level will help mitigate this, with some epicormic growth visible at this level, but the death of the tree after such a reduction is highly possible. Retainment of existing epicormic growth at the finished reduction level may help maintain channels of functional tissues between roots and shoots aiding survival prospects.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The pollarding of trees T3-T6 does not exceed previous management of these trees and so is justifiable. The reduction of T2 may result in the death of this tree, but it is in poor condition, positioned very close to the pub garden and with the presence of the fungal pathogen a high chance of stem failure exists. Therefore, refusal of this application 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** subject to the following conditions:-

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  Naomi Reynard	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 30 January 2026	