

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PLANNING)**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2023/1749/TC
Location: St Thomas a Becket Church Northaw Road West and Vineyards Road Northaw EN6 4NW
Proposal: Pine (Pinus sp) x 1 (024041) remove deadwood
 Yew (Taxus sp) x 1 (024046) crown lift to clear 2.5m
 Lime (Tilia sp) x1 (024047) Remove low growth from stem and repollard to previous pruning points
 Yew (Taxus sp) x 1 (024048) Trim branch rubbing against adjacent memorial to prevent damage
 Conifer (Cupressus sp) x 1 (024050) crown lift to clear 2.5m
 Ash (Fraxinus sp) x 2 (024051 & 024052) to crown reduce by 25%
 Yew (Taxus sp) x 1 (024055) remove low growth from stem
 Yew (Taxus sp) x 1 (024056) trim branches back from building to clear 1.5m
 Cedar (Cedrus sp) x 1 (024057) Fell, decay in the stem and tree showing signs of stress. Stump will not be ground.
 Lime (Tilia sp) x 1 (070360) Fell, small middle tree that is interfering with growth of adjacent trees which have better form. Stump will not be ground.

Officer: Ms Emma Griffin

Recommendation: No Objection

6/2023/1749/TC

Context	
Site description	St Thomas a Becket Church Northaw Road West and Vineyards Road Northaw EN6 4NW
Relevant planning history	<p>Planning</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2017/0796/TPO Decision: Granted Decision Date: 13 July 2017</p> <p>Proposal: Crown lift 2 London Plane trees by between 2.5m & 4m, crown lift 3 Yew trees by upto 3m and remove branch from 5th plus light trim and shape 2 Yew trees, crown lift 5 Linden trees by upto 2.5m and removal of epicormic growths from 5 Linden trees, remove climbing plant from two Ashes trees and deadwood Cedar tree covered by TPO 5</p>
Consultations	
Consultations do not apply to Trees within Conservation Area applications in accordance with the Tree Regulation Order and therefore any response cannot be considered.	
Main Issues	
Whether the tree(s) merit a Tree Preservation Order	<p>An assessment is required of the amenity value of the tree(s) and whether it/they help to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>The assessment considers the condition of the tree, its retention span, relative</p>

public visibility and other factors – such as, but not limited to, whether it is part of a group, has historical importance and, has good form.

The Pine trees (024041) condition and suitability is considered to be **good** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **large** with **clear** visibility to the public. Deadwood removal is exempt from requiring consent to remove.

The Yew trees (024046) condition and suitability is considered to be **good** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **small** with **clear** visibility to the public. The tree is sited adjacent to the footpath, the crown lift is to clear obstruction to pedestrians.

The Lime trees (024047) condition and suitability is considered to be **good** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **large** with **clear** visibility to the public. The tree has been reduced before and the regrowth is of a size and length that requires to be reduced again. The basal growth removal will remove obstruction and allow for clearer visibility across the churchyard. There are larger pieces of deadwood within the crown nearer to the path, these would be removed during the crown reduction.

The Yew trees (024048) condition and suitability is considered to be **fair** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **small** with **clear** visibility to the public. The request to prune one branch which is touching and likely to damage the adjacent headstone is considered appropriate. This is a low growing branch and would not negatively affect the tree with its removal.

The Conifer trees (024050) condition and suitability is considered to be **fair** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **20-40** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **medium** with **clear** visibility to the public. The tree is sited close to the boundary wall with branches extending over the adjacent public footpath. The request to clear the lower branches over the footpath to clear obstruction is considered appropriate.

The Ash trees (024051 and 024052) condition and suitability is considered to be **fair** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **20-40** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **large** with **clear** visibility to the public. The two ash trees are sited in close proximity to each other and have grown to produce a combined crown and gives the appearance of one singular tree. These two ash trees have been reduced before to reduce excess weight as both trees have a side that is suppressed by the other tree. The 25% crown reduction would reduce these trees back to the previous reduction points.

The Yew trees (024055) condition and suitability is considered to be **good** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **large** with **clear** visibility to the public. The tree is sited adjacent to the church with lower growth beginning to touch the church wall. Clearance to prevent damage is considered appropriate.

The Yew trees (024056) condition and suitability is considered to be **good** with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately **40-100** years. The trees overall size can be classed as **large** with **clear** visibility to the public. The tree

	<p>is in close proximity to the church with branches extending towards the church wall. These branches are beginning to touch the wall and may cause damage, pruning to create a 1.5m clearance is considered appropriate.</p> <p>The Cedar trees (024057) condition and suitability is considered to be poor with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately less than 10 years. The trees overall size can be classed as large with clear visibility to the public. The cedar is a strong feature of the churchyard but has been subject to basal decay for a while. This decay is visible by a large section of bark delamination at the base and a clear line of bark cracking up to 6m from ground level. A sound check around the base of the tree has confirm decay and some hollowing around the buttress roots. The tree is in close proximity of the church and the adjacent road, its removal is considered appropriate. The stump to be left in situ preserves the ground of the churchyard and provides a habitat feature to the area.</p> <p>The Lime trees (07063) condition and suitability is considered to be fair with a remaining useful life expectancy of approximately 20-40 years. The trees overall size can be classed as medium with difficult visibility to the public. The lime is growing between two larger and more mature lime trees, this specimen has a strong lean towards the adjacent property and due to suppression has a poor form. Its removal to facilitate better growing conditions for the better two limes is considered appropriate.</p> <p>The trees at the churchyard are in clear view to the public and the trees have been inspected in line with the councils Trees and Woodlands Strategy. The recommended works following the inspection were issued to the St Albans Diocese to gain their consent before applying for Conservation Area consent.</p> <p>Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council were notified of the application and have contacted the case officer to advise that they have thoroughly reviewed the application and have no comments or objections to make.</p> <p>At the time of the case officers site visit, the case officer met the Church Vicar who discussed the works and the reason for the stump to be left in situ for the cedar. No other comments were received and under Conservation Area, these cannot be considered but queries were answered where possible.</p> <p>The works are considered appropriate for the health and condition of each tree.</p>
Conclusion	
From the above considerations, it is concluded that the tree(s) are not appropriate for a Tree Preservation Order.	

DRAWING NUMBERS

The development/works shall not be started and completed other than in accordance with the approved plans and details:

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
		Tree sketch	18 August 2023

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details.

Determined By:

Mr Chris Carter
28 September 2023