

No.	Species	Comment
1.	Sycamore group	Approximately 9 metres tall, close to the neighbouring house. The proposal calls for their removal.
2.	Silver Birch	A poor tree, suppressed by tree 3. The proposal calls for its removal.
3.	Lime	This tree is approximately 13 metres tall and 620 mm diameter, which gives it a root protection area (RPA) radius of 7.5 metres. (See the discussion about Lime cultivars below.)
4.	Group.	Mainly Sycamore but a nearly-dead Holly and a hollow Cherry can be seen in the midst of the Sycamores. The trees are all considerably smaller than the Lime tree 3. There has been much fly-tipping at the base of the trees.
5.	Lime	This tree is coppice growth. There are several smaller stems that have grown from the stump of a now removed tree. this tree would require the same RPA as tree 3. There has been some significant soil disturbance at the base of this tree. (And with trees 6 to 8 as well.) It seems a new footpath has been installed alongside the highway and this has almost certainly caused root damage to the road side trees. The plan seems to call for the garden area to be paved, which means almost all of the RPA will be paved.
6.	Sycamore	Coppice growth, will require a similar RPA to tree 3, and if the garden is paved; as tree 5.
7.	Sycamore	More coppice growth, as tree 6. Additionally, there is a drain inspection chamber at the base of the tree. if this is to be relocated or modified, root damage is inevitable.
8.	Group	Mainly Sycamore, the largest is a similar size to tree 7, and will require a similar RPA. The plans do not require quite as much paving nearby as the previous trees, but the building will be within the RPA.
9.	Ash	A small twin stemmed tree, the plans require its removal. There is a strong chance that this tree will become infected with Chalara Ash Dieback. Saplings at the opposite side of the site are already infected.
10.	Group	Sycamores, smaller than previous trees but will still require a 6 metre radius RPA.
11.	Ash	A decent tree but with some large low branches that will need to be removed. Some signs of Chalara. The plans call for its removal.
12.	Group	Mainly Sycamore with some Holly. The plans call for their removal. Similar to group 1. A Holly tree appears to be dying.

The site appears to have suffered a lot of fly tipping over many years. Although it is unlikely that this has greatly affected any single tree, the machine that has scraped off the site has clearly caused damage to the roots of trees.



Photograph 1.

Photograph 1 is a view of the north east corner of the site, taken looking northeast wards. I've included this photo to try and show the scraped ground. It's not clear here but there were some significant tree roots damaged when this was done. They can be seen in this photo, looking rather like sticks on the ground, but they are in fact roots.



Photograph 2.

Photograph 2 shows the base of tree 6, Sycamore coppice growth. It also shows what appears to be a new pavement. The installation of this pavement must have caused significant damage to nearby trees.

From what I could tell from the photos on Google's street view facility, there might have once been a pavement between the site and the road, but it seems that this was considerably overgrown and the new pavement must have been installed by digging out for a new sub-base.



Photograph 3.

Photograph 3 is a screen grab from Google showing the site edge in August 2024. This is looking south down Cross Street.

Photograph 4 is a view looking roughly north west from the end of Cross Street, and showing tree 5. This tree probably suffered root damage from the construction of the pavement.

Tree 5 is coppice growth as with tree 6. It's likely that these trees were cut down and then allowed to regrow from the stump. Coppice management of trees is an underappreciated ability of broad-leaved trees. There are numerous examples of coppiced trees along the UK's highway verges, and even in gardens.



Photograph 4.

Coppice management of woodlands was once widely practiced and was an extremely efficient way of producing usable timber and numerous by-products. The advantages of coppice management are numerous; it eliminates the need for replanting, the dense growth is good cover for wildlife, and the rapid growth that follows a cutting coup, almost certainly sequesters carbon from the atmosphere more rapidly than a newly planted tree. More detail on the coppice management of trees and woodlands is outside the scope of this report, but understanding how some trees came to be multi-stemmed is useful.



Photograph 5.

Photograph 5 shows the trunk of tree 3, a Lime tree. My presumption is that the two Limes on the site are the same cultivar, planted at the same time. There are two species of Lime native to the UK and unsurprisingly, a hybrid between the two. The hybrid is known as Common Lime and as the name suggests, more commonly found than either of the parents. (Broad-leaved Lime and Small-leaved Lime.)

Hybrids can be inconsistent in their appearance and numerous named cultivars (cultivated varieties) are sold that have been selected for specific characteristics.

This is a Common Lime and seems to be a selected cultivar, I'm not sure which, but I don't think it is essential to investigate this any further for this report. Tree 3 is a decent specimen but the large branch, to the left in photo 5, seems to be growing with included bark, which is a potential weakness.

Photograph 6 is a view looking east along Overdale Avenue. Tree 2 is the Birch rather dominated by tree 3.



Photograph 6.

Tree 2 is indicated for removal to create parking spaces. Birch is not a long-lived species and growing in the position it is, even if there was not a development proposal, this tree would probably have only a short future life. The fly-tipping at its base will not have improved its prospects.

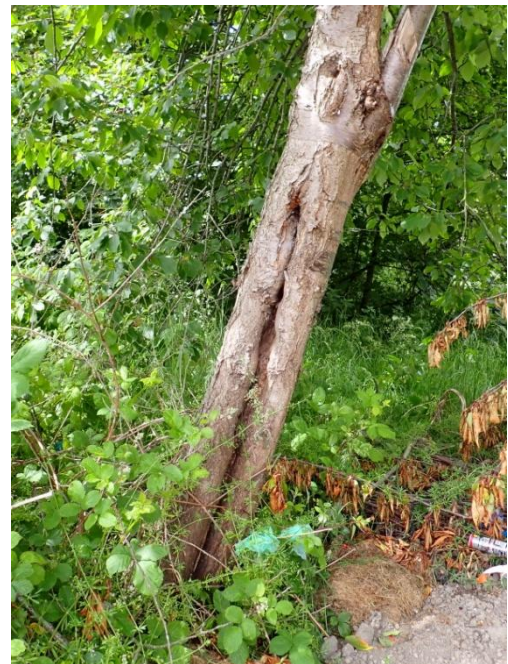


Photograph 7.

Photograph 7 is a view of the south eastern corner of the site, taken from the opposite side of the road.

While the proposal shows all these trees retained, there isn't much that is worth retaining in group 4.

Photograph 8 is a view of the trunk of the Cherry tree in group 4, which is damaged and decayed. The Holly tree in the group is also almost dead.



Photograph 8.



Photograph 9.

Photograph 9 shows tree group 1, taken looking roughly north. Even if these trees were not indicated for removal, it's likely that the occupants of the neighbouring property would be seeking some work to reduce the crowding of their house.

Photograph 10 shows group 1, taken from within the site looking south.



Photograph 10.



Photograph 11 was taken looking east from within the site and shows trees 6 & 7.

Photograph 11.

Photograph 12 shows group 12 in the north west corner of the site, with more fly tipping. The proposal calls for these trees to be removed.



Photograph 12.



Photograph 13.

Photograph 13 is a view looking east down Underwood Avenue and shows tree 11, the Ash with a long branch reaching over the road. There's another low branch that seems to have been inexpertly pruned. This tree is also indicated for removal.

Chalara Ash Dieback is likely to affect this tree; as mentioned above

This concludes my tree related observations for this site.

Discussion.

Sites like this are difficult. While the layout shows trees retained, in reality almost everything proposed will be within their RPAs and it's hard to see how the site could be developed without impinging one RPA or another. There is also the problem that works already undertaken must have impacted upon several trees' RPAs. The question that really needs to be asked is firstly "can steps be taken that will reduce the effect of the proposal on nearby trees?" and then "are the trees so important that they should be allowed to stand in the way of an important development?"

There are systems of building near trees that can mean there is minimal excavation, but there will always be some root disturbance and even the altering of soil levels and the rain water that reaches the soil, can affect nearby trees. I also note that this proposal contains several areas where it seems hard landscaping is to be installed (presumably to accommodate the eventual residents), which might also affect established trees. My point here is that we could go to some lengths to utilise low impact building systems, but these are not bound to be successful, and where trees are already compromised, the chances of success are further reduced.

To address the problem of how important the trees are, we really need to use a system of "amenity valuation" to try and appraise precisely how important the trees really are. A local planning authority is supposed to have a system of amenity valuation in order to help them

make these decisions in relation to Tree Preservation Order¹ matters. So what is needed here is an amenity valuation for all the trees. While the site is superficially a woodland oasis surrounded by housing, it's not really woodland and there are plenty of other similar trees in the surrounding area. Also there is more green space within 500 metres of the site and agricultural and forestry land not much further away.

The scarcity of trees will always be part of any tree evaluation or amenity appraisal system and from that point-of-view, these trees are not out-of-the-ordinary. If the species present were better suited to their surroundings, or particularly rare their amenity value might be higher, but as things stand the trees can be regarded as no more than typical.

So if we weigh up the pros and cons here, we will arrive at the conclusion that there is nothing about them that means they should stand in the way of a proposal.

Taking the above into account, my advice is that the best way of ensuring that this site makes a contribution to the local landscape in the future is to remove them all and replant when development work is over. I don't think we can avoid the fact that nearly all the trees are already compromised by ground works and susceptibility to disease (the Ash) so the best option is to remove and replant.

In my opinion planting the site with Hornbeam trees in place of 4, 8, and 10 would be pragmatic, perhaps with mixed (native) hedging along the boundaries. Hornbeam is a native species and grows well in urban areas. It is also not particularly disease prone and the Forestry Commission website does not have any alerts about impending diseases. Mixed native hedges are much more desirable than Privet or Leyland Cypress and invariably prettier as well.

By native hedging I mean, Hazel, Hawthorn, Guelder Rose, and Field Maple. Once established, hedges like this should be fairly easy to manage by clipping. On sites like this, it should be relatively straightforward to import some decent, clean topsoil for trees and hedge planting, and new plants, considerately nurtured, should rapidly establish in such conditions. Mixed hedges have great benefits to biodiversity and should be credited towards any biodiversity net-gain obligations.

Conclusion.

1. The most sensible option for this site is to remove all the existing trees, and replant once building work is complete.
2. Although it would be feasible to try and keep some of the trees, many have already suffered root damage, and further disturbance is likely to lead to decline.
3. The worst-case scenario here is that we try to keep trees and then end up watching them decline slowly over the coming years. Planting new trees in good topsoil, in positions specifically created for growing trees and hedges, is likely to give the best long-term outcome.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas> (This online guidance has the same weight as the NPPF and Councils should follow it.)

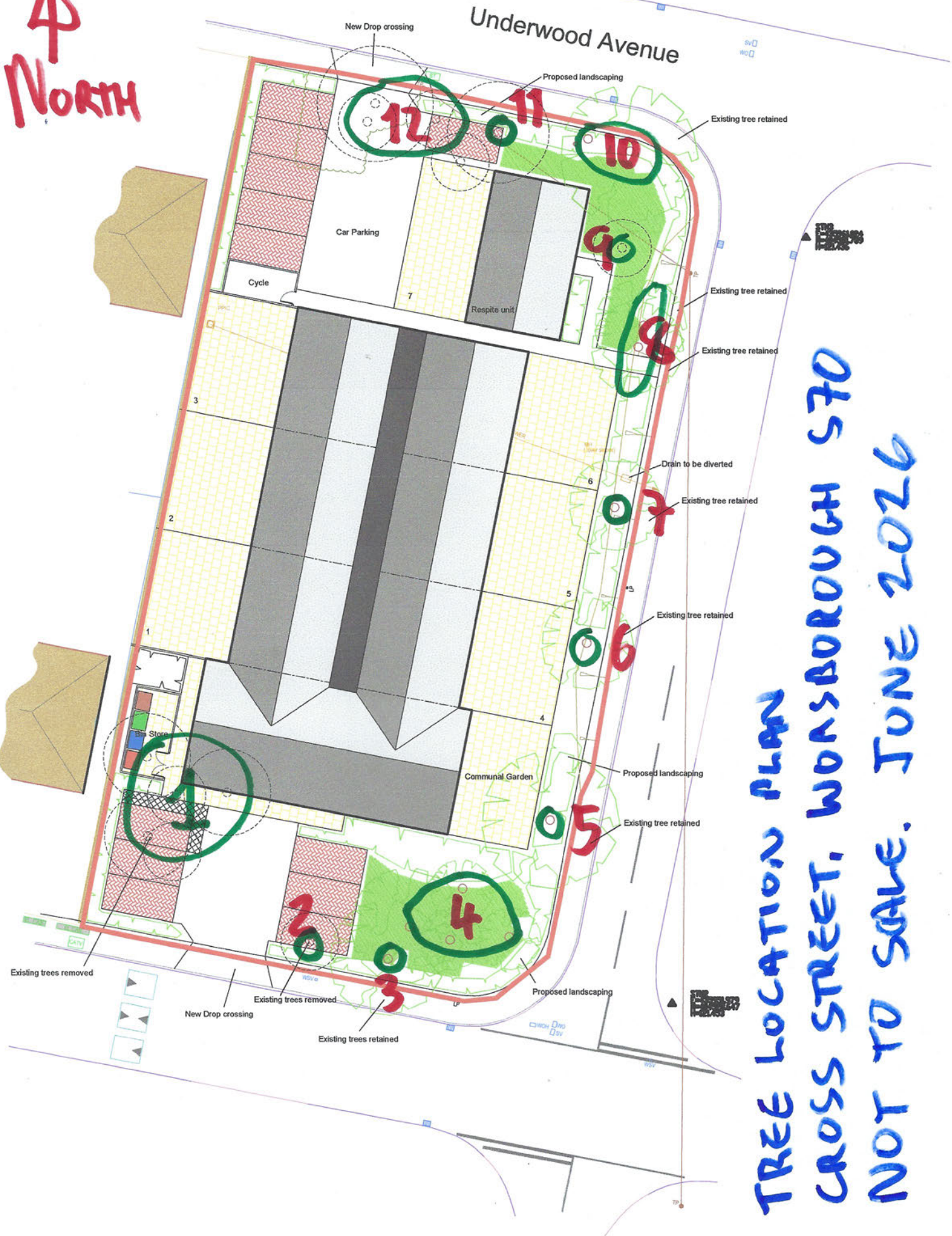
I trust you will find this helpful.



W L Anderson. Dip.Arb(RFS). M Arbor A.

Enclosure: Tree location plan.

A
NORTH



TREE LOCATION PLAN
CROSS STREET, WORSBOROUGH S70
NOT TO SCALE. JUNE 2026