Arboricultural Consultation

Proposal:	**Location:**
Change of use from Agricultural to Garden and Construction of Outhouse	Spillers Yard Keyston
Case Officer:	**Application:**
OM	25/80003/COND

Observations/Conditions

Much of the site is within a Conservation Area, but there are no trees on/adjacent to site that are protected by a tree preservation order. There are a number of trees that could be affected by the development, and remedial measures to prevent this damage are essential.

Although British Standards suggest encroachment only occurs when absolutely necessary, almost the entirety of the project takes place within the Root Protection Areas.

I would suggest that design should have included the outbuildings, and hard surfacing outside of the RPA's, and that specialist methods now have to be adopted in order to make the scheme work. This will result in significant additional cost, complexity and risk to the retained trees, when the initial design stage should have been based around avoiding these areas.

The mapping shows a Construction Exclusion Zone and protective fencing being installed around the Root Protection Areas of the trees, but then almost the entire development takes place within these areas. This would seem rather contradictory.

As work, resurfacing and outbuildings will be located under the crowns of the trees, I would also expect additional pressure to be exerted on the trees for inappropriate pruning in the future. Ash trees are likely to shed small branches regularly particularly once heavily pruned, so I would also expect pressure for removal.

5. Condition. No development, demolition, clearance or preparatory operations (including excavations and archaeology), hereafter referred to as "the works", shall commence on site in connection with the development hereby approved, until an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved Tree Protection Plan shall be implemented before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site in connection with the works, be retained intact for the duration of the construction works and only be removed or altered with the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. Any trees, shrubs or hedges covered by the agreed protection measures, which die or become severely damaged either from natural causes or as a result of the construction works; during the construction works or within five years from the completion of the construction works, shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Replacement planting to be undertaken by the end of the next available planting season

The approved tree protection measures shall be implemented before any equipment, machinery, or materials are brought on to the site in connection with the works, be retained intact for the duration of the construction works and only be removed or altered with the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs or hedges subject to the protection measures which die or become severely damaged within five years from the completion of the construction works shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.

Reason: This is a pre-commencement condition to ensure that initial site operations do not harm any trees, shrubs and hedges to be retained on and adjacent to the site (and if necessary their replacement) in the interests of visual amenity, and to enhance the character and appearance of the site in accordance with Policy LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

6. Condition. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Recommendations found within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd dated 20th March 2024 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 17th April 2024.

Reason: To complement or enhance features of biodiversity value in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

Recommendations:

Support discharge of Condition.

The applicant has now provided an updated Arboricultural Method Statement detailing products, and installation methods that should protect the trees and soil. I am happy that as long as this is complied with, the impact on the trees should be limited.

I have concerns about the design as expressed above, and the necessity for any encroachment into the root protection area. Clearly the Construction Exclusion Zone in this case cannot be complied with, and the installation of the protective fencing is unlikely to be completed as it prevents access and completion of the works.

As such, I would reluctantly support the Discharge of this Condition on the assumption that the plans provided are complied with during the construction process.

Signed: NS	**Date: 17/03/2025**