

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) Assessment

Location	Sollershott Hall, Letchworth Garden City.
Description	TPO assessment of 5 No. black pine trees.
Client	Henry Thomas, Graduate Planning Officer of North Hertfordshire Council (NHC)
Surveyor	James Jeffery <i>Dip Arb L4 (ABC)</i> Assistant Arboricultural Consultant, (Maydencroft limited)
Qualifications	Lantra Professional Tree Inspection, Level 4 Diploma in Arboriculture, Level 3 Extended Diploma Arboriculture.



Figure 1. Map showing the location of the 5 No. black pines outlined in red.

Survey methodology

A visual assessment of all black pine (*Pinus nigra*) trees along the eastern boundary of Sollershott Hall was carried out on the 15th of November 2022, with a focus on 5 trees, (outlined in red above). The five black pines were identified by the use of the map provided by NDC and the yellow markings present at the base of the five trees which matched the location of the trees on the map. The inspection was carried out using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) methodology, this is a ground-based assessment with no climbing.

The survey was undertaken to ascertain if the tree group in question meets the criteria to be designated with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), in order to ensure their long-term retention adjacent to Sollershott Hall private apartments.

Species composition

The five trees form part of a row, comprising black pines predominantly of a mature age.

Description

The group forms part of a cohesive row of trees located on the verge between the private access road for Sollershott Hall and the neighbouring private property boundary to the east. At the northern end, this row adjoins a separate row of predominantly black pines mixed with some Scots pines, which runs to the west along the north boundary of Sollershott Hall. Both rows provide significant landscape and amenity value to the residents of Sollershott Hall and the local area due to their cohesive nature and size.

At the time of the assessment, all five trees were in good condition, presenting signs of good vitality and no significant structural defects. Three of these trees were smaller and of slightly poorer quality when compared to the remaining thirteen trees in the wider group. The reduction in quality is due to these trees having small, suppressed crowns in relation to their tall stems, asymmetrical crown forms weighted to the west over the access road, and moderately leaning stems.

Conclusion

Following the inspection and assessment of all five black pines, it was deemed that they should be considered an integral part of the whole group which provides significant amenity value to the local area. This assessment has concluded that not only the five trees identified by NHC but the entire row are suitable for the statutory designation of a Tree Preservation Order. This decision is justified due to the prominence of the group, its cohesive nature and its amenity value. This approach will also prevent potential future issues in identifying which trees within the group are covered by statutory designation and which are not.

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Photos



Figure 2. Image showing the 5 black pines.



Figure 3. Image showing the suppressed, asymmetrical crowns of 2 of the 5 black pines.



Figure 4. Image showing the suppressed crown of 1 of the 5 black pines.



Figure 5. Image showing the moderately leaning stem and asymmetrical crown of 1 of the 5 black pines.