

## Great Waltham Parish Council – Recreation Committee Meeting

### Briefing Note: Item Review Reports and quotes relating to the trees at Great Waltham Recreation Ground (Upper Moors end) and propose next steps

At the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on Monday 6th October 2025 the following agenda item was discussed, the following extract from the minutes reports:

*Consider the options and recommend actions in relation to a member of the public's request to reduce the height of the trees at the Upper Moors end of Gt. Waltham Recreation Ground.*

*The last Writtle Tree Consultancy report from December 2023 was reviewed and showed at that time all trees in that area were in good or fair to good condition. Two residents concerns about the height and spread of the trees was discussed. It was agreed the advice of a tree surgeon would be useful regarding reducing the height and spread and that the whole bank of trees should be reviewed to ensure a good visual aspect.*

*Resolution: Clerk to contact Writtle Tree Consultancy to request for a quote to review all the trees and prepare a report for late 2025.*

*Resolution: Clerk to request JCM to review the areas of work and submit suggestions on actions.*

In line with the second resolution JCM undertook a survey of the trees in question and submitted a quote for two options:

#### Option 1

Ash die back is becoming more a problem within Essex and the spread is increasing yearly, with this in mind a proactive option could be to fell the Ash trees 552,554, no tag and 557, this will create large gaps in the tree line but will allow light into the properties behind, I would also fell within in this bracket of works Twin stem Ash, 1 x lime and 1 x small oak located behind the garages (TG1)

All timber and waste will be removed from site.

£1,700.00 + VAT

#### Option 2

Thin and reduce

Fell some of the ash trees 552, no tag and 557 reduce all other trees by 4-5 metres along this boundary. Mobile elevated hoist on site.(MEWP)

£2,950.00 + VAT

Additionally, as agreed at the October meeting, both options were forwarded to Writtle Tree Consultancy for consideration ahead of the scheduled inspection.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 Writtle Forest Consultancy carried out a tree condition survey of the trees owned and managed by the Council including those referred to above.

The report provided an assessment of the trees' health and condition and reported that those detailed above were in fair, and fair to good condition and stated no works presently required. They did not state a position regarding the removal of the trees to improve lighting to adjacent properties.

The consultancy report was reviewed at the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026. The following extract is reported from the minutes:

*Review the 2026 Writtle Forest Consultancy report on the trees and agree next steps.*

*The inspection is undertaken every 2 years to highlight any tree works that are needed to continue good stewardship of the trees on land owned or leased by the Council. The report makes recommendations for work that should be completed within 6 months and 12 months. This inspection follows on from recent complaints by two residents whose gardens adjacent to Great Waltham recreation ground are shaded by tall trees at certain times of the day. The consultancy report did not provide advice on the shading issue.*

*Resolution: Share the Writtle Tree Consultancy report with JCM for a quote on the work recommended in the report including trees numbered 550 and 558 and quote separately to reduce the height of the trees at the Hatchfields end of Great Waltham recreation ground by 4-5 meters.*

*Resolution: Clerk to contact the two parishioners who raised the issue of reduced light into their gardens and update them on the outcome of the report and the committee's next steps.*

In line with the resolution the report was forwarded to JCM who subsequently submitted the following quote - not to remove any trees but to reduce the height of the trees by 5m:

### **Tree works Hatchfields Boundary**

Scope of works.

Trees located on the boundary of Hatchfields up to the start of the garages and only including 1 x Oak tree within garage section to be reduced by 5 metres in height.

Trees will become a domed uniformed height. all tree will be reduced to the form a pollard, growth points will be kept where possible.

all waste will removed from site.

Works will not be completed until ground conditions allow for vehicle access onto playing field. Hoist on site.

£4,360.00 + VAT

To understand the impact of pollarding an on-line search reported the following:

*'Pollarded ash trees grow back rapidly, often producing new shoots within weeks of winter pruning and reaching significant regrowth of 1.5–2 meters per year. They typically require re-pollarding every 3–5 years due to vigorous regrowth, with substantial crown recovery occurring in that same timeframe.*

*Growth and Recovery Details:*

*Initial Growth: New shoots generally appear in the spring immediately following a winter pollard, with 50–100cm of growth common in the first year.*

*Growth Rate: Ash trees are vigorous responders, showing regrowth rates of approximately 1.5 to 2 meters per year.*

*Maintenance Cycle: Pollarded ash trees usually require trimming every 3-5 years to maintain the desired size and shape, as they become quite expansive within 5 years.'*

**Summary:**

It is understood that five properties back onto the recreation ground and could be affected by shading to a greater or lesser extent.

The request made by two residents was to reduce the height of some or all of the trees to allow more light into their gardens.

Neither resident requested tree removal and one of the residents specifically requested trees were not removed to avoid the potential for ground movement.

Writtle Tree Consultancy reported in January 2026 that all trees are in fair and fair to good condition

Pollarded trees, in particular ash trees will re-grow quickly and will require ongoing maintenance (which will need to be considered as extra expenditure in future budgets).

**Options:**

There are currently 11 mature trees of various sizes and species between the Hatchfields pedestrian access gate and the start of the garages adjacent to the recreation ground and currently five options to consider:

1. Page 1, option 1 – remove 7 trees leaving the remainder at their current height  
£1,700 + VAT
2. Page 1, option 2 – remove 3 ash trees and reduce the height of the remaining trees by 4-5m  
£2,950 + VAT
3. Page 2, option 3 – remove no trees but reduce height of all trees by 5m  
£4,360 + VAT
4. Take no action at this time and continue to manage the condition of trees in line with tree consultancy advice
5. Seek further quotes/take further advice

It should be noted that trees of various species and heights extend past the area addressed in this note (behind the garages adjacent to the boundary) and may need to be included in any future maintenance considerations.

Additionally, it should be noted that one or two trees beyond the recreation ground boundary (possibly within the adjoining properties gardens) could also be restricting light into gardens and are outside the scope and options in this briefing note but if addressed may improve the situation.