

**Consultation Response from KC,
Trees**
2022/93021 Gomersal House, Lower Lane, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, BD19 4HY
**Erection of kitchen extension and detached garage with home office over [within a
Conservation Area]**
Date Responded: 21/11/22
Responding Officer: Nick Goddard
Responding Ref: TPO 47/80

The proposals are in two distinct parts from a trees perspective. With regards to the alterations to the existing property I would have no objection to the kitchen extension as this is not considered to be close enough to influence the significant trees on the site.

With regards to the garage and parking area I am concerned that alterations to the ground levels, foundations and the proximity of the building would have an impact upon the adjacent protected trees. The proposed levels for the garage and parking area are 1m lower than the existing levels suggesting significant excavations are proposed up to the existing wall even before foundations need to be dug.

The tree report submitted shows that an 80cm deep trench has been hand dug along the line of the proposed garage, circa 1m from the wall. It notes that no structural roots were found but it appears from the photos that many feeder roots of the adjacent trees were present, and these were severed along the length of the trench. The feeder roots are crucial to a tree's survival and is why the root protection area defined by BS5837 extends beyond just protecting the structural root plate of a tree. I do not accept the tree report's suggestion that removal of the ground to develop the garage will have no negative impact upon the protected trees.

Considerations should also be given to the rooting area not within the proposals and it is worth noting that to the east of the boundary wall the rooting area has been affected historically by use as a parking area that has been upgraded in recent months. This may also have affected the root growth of the trees and means the rooting area in the site is all the more important.

The potential impact is not just limited to the rooting area of the trees but also the overhanging canopy. The tree report submitted suggests a crown lift of 2m is required and would not be harmful to the trees however I am unsure whether the 2m lift proposed has taken account of the 1m reduction in site levels. The proposed elevations for the garage would bring the structure too close to the tree canopies and result in an unacceptable pressure to prune or fell the trees in the future.

The concerns regarding the constraints, impacts and protective measures to avoid harm to trees adjacent to the garage was raised in pre-application advice in 2021. At present the proposals do not meet Local Plan policies LP24, LP31 and LP33 because of the design and impact of the garage on the protected trees which contribute to the character and setting of the Conservation Area.

There is potential for the proposals to be altered to enable it to be acceptable. The garage should be moved away from the trees to leave sufficient rooting area undisturbed for the trees. There is a possibility that the feeder roots cut by the trenching undertaken will redevelop over time but this will require a retaining element to be introduced to the design to enable the rooting area to remain intact. If the design can be altered to give sufficient room for the rooting area then a detailed methodology should be provided to show how the rooting areas will be protected during construction.