

**Consultation Response from KC,
Trees****2023/93386 Spen Valley High School, Roberttown Lane, Roberttown, Liversedge, WF15 7LX****Erection of new office building and extensions and alterations to existing Lodge building****Date Responded: 30/01/2024****Responding Officer: D. Atkinson****Responding Ref:**

Thank you for the consultation and I apologise for the late reply.

The proposed development sites are constrained by existing mature trees.

The design and access statement does comment on the trees and says:

“Whilst there are some mature trees near to the proposed extension, previous tree works/tree maintenance has been carried out. With regards to the proposed staff office building, we are currently assessing a pile foundation design for the solid concrete floor slab. This can be designed in such a way to reduce the impact on the nearby trees. Furthermore, the area of trees, to the West of the proposed building, are a good distance away and based at a significantly lower level at the base of the steep grass embankment. As such we contend, they will not be affected by the development, either directly, through root disturbance, or indirectly, through overshadowing or other nuisance to users of the educational building. We therefore considered that the proposal complies with LP33 of the Kirklees local plan.”

Their contention maybe right, however it isn't clear who has assessed the respective sites and trees and what information the contention was based. Is the above the assessment from an arboriculturist?

A tree survey should be undertaken by an arboriculturist to record information about the trees on or adjacent to a site. The results of the tree survey, including material constraints arising from existing trees that merit retention, should be used (along with any other relevant baseline data) to inform feasibility studies and design options. For this reason, the tree survey should be completed and made available to designers prior to and/or independently of any specific proposals for development.

Where proposed development is subject to planning control, which is the case here. A tree survey should be regarded as an important part of the evidence base underpinning the design and access statement. Accordingly, local planning authorities should not rely on planning conditions to secure a tree survey, as by this stage in the formal planning process its findings might not be capable of influencing design, potentially resulting in uncontrolled arboricultural impacts.

Overall, there is a holding objection from a trees perspective. This is because the proposal doesn't appear to comply with the adopted Kirklees Council Local Plan LP33.

This is because, it doesn't appear to have complied with relevant national standards regarding the protection of trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

