

**Consultation Response from KC,
Trees**

2025/91531 land off, Leeds Road, Heckmondwike, WF16 9DB

Demolition of existing semi-detached houses and associated buildings, and construction of 51 dwellings, including associated access and other associated works

Date Responded: 14/08/2025

Responding Officer: Hazel Irving

Responding Ref:

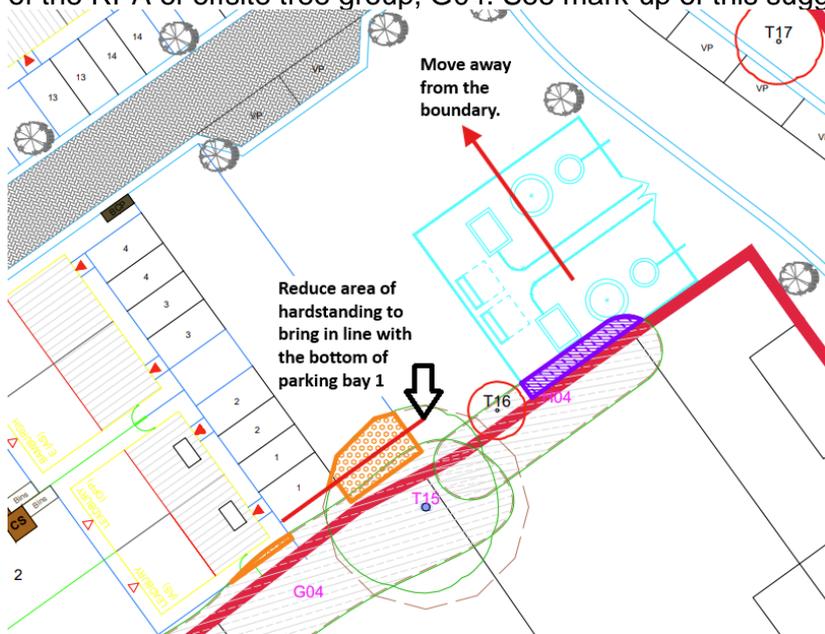
There are no TPOs or Conservation Areas protecting any vegetation within the site nor adjacent to the site. A full suite of reports produced by Arbtech Consulting Ltd, dated May 2025 has been submitted in support of this planning application.

All surveyed vegetation was recorded on the boundaries of the site, yet 10 Cat C items would require removal to facilitate the development of the proposals, and there are impacts to these as well as valuable offsite trees. The density of housing leaves little space for boundary vegetation and offsite trees. This is a particular concern on the western and southern boundaries, where screening trees would be appreciated between the proposed development and existing residential estate.

T3 is a Category B, offsite sycamore and it is proposed to construct a significant amount of new hardstanding within the RPA, exceeding the 20% limit recommended in BS5837:2012. T3 contributes significantly to local amenity and offers many environmental and ecological benefits, therefore the proposals must be altered to reduce the hardstanding within the RPA to avoid long-term detrimental health impacts to the tree. Also, from a resident's point of view it is not desirable to park a car under the canopy of a sycamore, as the tree will naturally shed flowers, twigs and leaves, as well as dripping honeydew on vehicles throughout the summer months. In the worst case, there is a risk that the tree would shed larger branches onto the carpark, as the tree suffers from changes to soil conditions, changes to water availability and compaction due to the excessive new hardstanding in the RPA.

As a note, north of T3, there is another significant tree which overhangs the site boundary, which has not been included in survey. The stem is located within the rear garden of 85 Popeley Road. There are no proposals currently affecting this tree, likely due to the presence of the drainage easement in this area. However, we wish to bring this to the attention of those who will redesign the parking bays adjacent to T3.

The RPA and canopy of offsite, Cat B T15 is also incurred by the proposals. The crown clearance on the north side is recorded at 1.5m and the canopy extends northward for 6 to 7m. Here too, some amendment is required. For example, the area of hardstanding beneath the tree could be reduced to bring it in line with the first parking bay of proposed plot 1. This would also bring the hardstanding out of the RPA of offsite tree group, G04. See mark-up of this suggestion below:



G04 is a group of boundary trees, which are growing offsite. Plot 1 is within the RPA and slightly within the canopy. To accommodate the proposals the canopy would need to be pruned back to the boundary. Buildings should be sited allowing adequate space for a tree's natural development, with due consideration given to its predicted height and canopy spread. In this case there is little space allowed for the development of the canopies of the trees and therefore the future residents of plot 1 would be burdened with the nuisance and cost of maintaining clearance. This could also damage the health of the offsite trees in the long term. More space should be allowed between the boundary and the proposed dwelling to reduce this conflict.

From an arboricultural perspective the structure shown in light blue on the tree impacts plan, located to the west of the access road into the site should be sited northward, outside of the RPA of H4. This would avoid severing the roots and detrimental impacts to the health of the offsite trees and could help to avoid future tree conflicts, caused by overhanging branches.

There is a **holding** objection from an arboricultural perspective, subject to amendments to reduce the impacts to offsite trees, as discussed. The proposal conflicts with adopted Kirklees local plan policy 33 and 24 (i)

LP 33: "The Council will not grant planning permission for developments which directly or indirectly threaten trees or woodlands of significant amenity value.

Proposals should normally retain any valuable or important trees where they make a contribution to public amenity, the distinctiveness of a specific location or contribute to the environment, including the wildlife Habitat Network and green Infrastructure networks. Proposals will need to comply with relevant national standards regarding the protection of trees in relation to design, demolition and construction."

LP 24: "Proposals should promote good design by ensuring:- i) the retention of valuable or important trees"

Please let me know if you would like to discuss and I would be happy to help.

Hazel Irving