

Response to Arboricultural Holding Objection

Application ref: 2025/93438

Site: Arena Young Peoples Centre, Moorlands Road, Dewsbury, WF13 2LF

This response is submitted on behalf of the applicant to assist the Local Planning Authority in resolving the arboricultural holding objection. The applicant and project team are keen to work collaboratively with the Council to ensure that tree retention, site safety and accessibility considerations are appropriately balanced.

Further clarification has been provided by the Landscape Consultant and is illustrated by Sketch SK1, which has been prepared to simplify and clearly demonstrate tree relationships and potential mitigation measures.

1. Arboricultural Information and BS5837:2012

The applicant acknowledges the Council's request for arboricultural information in accordance with BS5837:2012. The updated submission package has been prepared with full regard to the Standard and includes:

- Tree survey and Tree Constraints information
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)
- Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)
- Tree Protection Plan (TPP)
- Schedule of tree works and protection measures

To assist clarity and ease of review, this information has been consolidated into a single coordinated drawing package, prepared at an appropriate scale, with all Root Protection Area calculations and dimensional data undertaken in full accordance with BS5837.

2. Access Layout and Design Rationale

It is important to note that the entrance arrangement and road alignment are driven primarily by safety considerations, in particular:

- Providing a safe and direct pedestrian route into the site, segregated from vehicle movements
- Allowing an appropriate swept path for emergency vehicles
- Ensuring safe access and egress for vehicles, with improved visibility for vehicles exiting the site onto the public highway

The current layout represents a carefully considered balance between these requirements and the retention of existing trees. Any adjustments to the access alignment therefore need to be assessed carefully to ensure that pedestrian safety, emergency access and visibility standards are not compromised.

3. Tree-Specific Responses

G1

It is respectfully considered that the proposals would not result in material harm to this group. Works are confined to the edge of the group, where ground cover is predominantly bramble and ivy, and would not encroach significantly into the functional rooting area.

T1, T2, T13 and T14

The removal of these trees is directly related to the agreed site layout. It is noted that T2 comprises a group of small, low-quality stems of limited arboricultural and amenity value.

T6, T7, T8 (off-site) and T9 (off-site)

The extent of Root Protection Area affected is limited and represents a small percentage incursion, which is commonly managed successfully through standard mitigation measures. The Arboricultural Method Statement demonstrates how these impacts can be appropriately controlled during construction.

T10, T11 and T12

These trees experience comparable levels of impact but were not specifically referenced in the objection, further indicating that the overall level of impact across the site is modest and consistent.

T15 (off-site linear tree feature)

As shown on Sketch SK1, the perceived impact on this tree line could potentially be eased through a modest adjustment to the access road alignment, subject to confirmation that such an amendment would remain acceptable in terms of pedestrian safety, emergency vehicle access and vehicle visibility.

4. Future Growth and Ongoing Management

The comments regarding future tree growth are noted. The applicant considers that:

- The relationship between built form and retained trees is typical of this type of development
- Periodic and prudent tree management is a normal and appropriate part of long-term site stewardship
- Several trees appear not to have been actively managed historically, and modest intervention would be beneficial
- The proposals are not considered to give rise to unreasonable future pressure for pruning or removal.

5. Levels and Boundary Treatment

Proposed Design Refinement – Southern Boundary Retaining Wall

As a further measure to minimise arboricultural impact, the applicant is now proposing a king post retaining wall along the southern edge of the new access road and the northern edge of the adjacent patio area.

The introduction of this retaining wall would allow level changes to be accommodated in a controlled and localised manner, thereby reducing the extent of excavation and ground disturbance within the vicinity of retained trees. This approach is considered to provide a more efficient and tree-sensitive solution when compared with more extensive regrading or sloped embankments.

The king post retaining wall has been selected specifically as it can be constructed with minimal encroachment into Root Protection Areas, using appropriately spaced posts and construction techniques that can be set out and controlled in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement. This design refinement therefore represents a proportionate and pragmatic response to the site constraints, whilst retaining the necessary access geometry to ensure pedestrian safety, emergency vehicle access and safe vehicular ingress and egress.

Final details of the retaining wall, including construction methodology and relationship to retained trees, can be agreed in consultation with the Council's Tree Officer and secured by condition if considered necessary.

6. Conclusion

The applicant remains keen to work constructively with the Local Planning Authority to resolve the holding objection. It is considered that:

- The submitted arboricultural information complies with BS5837:2012
- Tree impacts are limited, clearly understood and capable of mitigation
- The access arrangement is fundamentally driven by safety and operational requirements
- Any remaining matters can be appropriately addressed through minor amendments or planning conditions
- It is therefore respectfully requested that the Council reviews the additional information and Sketch SK1 with a view to withdrawing the arboricultural holding objection.

Notwithstanding the above, the applicant recognises that certain detailed matters, including final construction methodology, tree protection measures, minor access alignment refinements and confirmation of levels, may be appropriately secured by planning condition. The applicant is content for such details to be submitted for approval prior to commencement or prior to above-ground works, as considered reasonable by the Local Planning Authority. This approach would ensure that the development proceeds in full accordance with BS5837:2012, while allowing sufficient flexibility to finalise technical details in consultation with the Council's Tree Officer and Highway Authority.