

**Consultation Response from KC,
Trees**

2025/93528 80, Marsh Lane, Shepley, Huddersfield, HD8 8AS

**Demolition of existing dwelling and annex and erection of 3 detached dwellings with
associated access and parking**

Date Responded: 27.01.2026

Responding Officer: Hazel Irving

Responding Ref: n/a

A combined tree survey and AIA report (ref. TSC LTD 007 AIA) has been submitted in support of this planning application.

The site is currently a residential plot with one house sited within a generous garden. The proposal is to demolish the existing building and construct three large new homes (each with 4+ bedrooms), which would be accessible via an access road which would run along the western boundary.

The tree survey records **7 trees of Cat B** quality and **2 trees of Cat C** quality. Of these, 7 trees are within the site. From a desk-based study using aerial imagery it appears that most of the trees and other established vegetation were removed prior to the tree survey. This represents a significant loss of canopy cover within the site, as well as a loss of environmental, ecological and amenity value. The removal of vegetation has also changed the private, leafy character of the site from the street. Species previously present along the frontage with Marsh Lane included: cherry, oak, eucalyptus and spruce.



Aerial imagery showing previous tree cover on the site (Google Maps)

The proposed site plan ref 2574-D-20-003, dated August 2025, proposes three small trees, to be planted within the modest front gardens, with no further details regarding species or size. Considering the number of trees which have been removed, this proposed tree planting is insufficient.

Trenching to a depth of 0.4-0.6m, has been carried out within rooting areas along the western boundary. Severed roots are clearly visible in the photographs included within the arboricultural report, including structural roots of T3. It is noted that the trench extends right up to the stem of T3.

Damage to trees, such as severing root plates, and tree removals prior to development disregards the planning process and is viewed in a dim light by the planning department. Ordinarily the constraints of the site should be assessed first and after this, the design of the layout should be informed by these constraints, as laid out within BS5837:2012. This is to ensure that trees worthy of retention can be safely and sustainably incorporated into any proposed layout and/or adequate mitigation tree planting can be specified.

The evidence provided to suggest that there are no roots from T4 and T5 entering the site is insufficient, as no formal botanical root identification was carried out by a relevant expert. Furthermore, the soil environment was disturbed prior to the destructive trenching investigations by the removal of other trees and vegetation in the vicinity. Seeing as no stumps are visible in the photos it is assumed that these have been dug out, including the Scots pine mentioned within the report. This disturbance would have damaged the soil environment before the trenching was carried out.

There is no doubt that any roots belonging to offsite trees T4 and T5 which were present have now been severed where trenching has taken place. The excavations were carried out to a maximum depth of 0.6m, which is the depth to which tree roots are mainly expected to be present.

It should not have been assumed that the foundations of the boundary wall would prevent the roots of T4 and T5 from entering the subject site, and indeed the arboricultural report does not exclude this possibility. It is written within the report that the excavation of the trench was carried out 0.4m away from the wall to minimise potential root damage to T5. This suggests that the arboricultural consultant considered it possible for roots to be found beyond the wall, entering the site.

On a separate matter, it is noted that there is little space between the Plot 1 and T1 and T2. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment Plan dated 20/12/2025, shows no working space allowed between the Plot 1 and the tree protection fencing (TPF) surrounding T1 and T2. This is likely impracticable and could result in the TPF being removed during construction. This would create a foreseeable opportunity for accidental damage to occur to T1 and T2.

T1 and T2 are not at their mature size, and it is likely that the edge of the canopy of T2 would require remedial pruning away from the building on Plot 1 in the future. In line with BS5837: 2012, good design accounts for the projected final size of retained trees, not just their current form. Buildings should be adequately set back from retained trees to avoid foreseeable issues from developing in the future.

There is an objection to the proposals from an arboricultural perspective. The proposals conflict with the NPPF and local plan policies LP33 and LP24(i):

- *NPPF p.136 states that “Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure (...) that existing trees are retained wherever possible.”*
- *NPPF p.187 requests that “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [...] recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”.*
- *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.”*