

Submission: Not Object

Comments: As the applicant seeks permission in principle, there is insufficient information regarding the layout, scale and construction of the proposed development to enable a full assessment of potential impacts to trees. In the absence of a proposed layout, tree survey, arboricultural impact assessment and method statement prepared in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations, it is not possible to determine whether development could be accommodated without harm to trees located on and adjacent to the site.

Notwithstanding this lack of detail, the site itself contains trees protected by Tree Preservation Order SM.147 (Group 001) and is enclosed by mature trees both within and outside of the Leek Conservation Area. The character of the site is therefore heavily influenced by surrounding tree cover. It is noted that a significant number of trees have since been removed, outside of the Conservation Area, adjacent to the site, which alters the character of the site.

Without the detailed plans, a thorough assessment at this stage is not possible. Therefore, no objection is raised in principle. However, we recommend that we are consulted at the technical details stage to determine if a sustainable relationship between the proposed development and the trees to be retained on site can be achieved. It will be necessary at the technical details stage to assess the impact to the trees on site and indeed the relationship between the trees to be retained and the proposed development.

Conclusion and recommendations: In summary, it is not possible to give a comprehensive assessment of the relationship between trees and development, without proposed plans and detailed tree surveys, impact assessments and method statements. It is likely that the site may accommodate some development, subject to the details particularly concerning the layout and scale of that development. It will be necessary to demonstrate that a sustainable relationship can be achieved between the retained trees on site and the development, particularly trees protected by TPO. Therefore, the design should achieve sufficient space to retained trees on site, to prevent harm or loss both to the trees and the character of the Conservation Area. Careful consideration will need to be given to the construction of the site access, to prevent harm occurring to the protected trees. The existing site access currently runs through the root protection areas of those trees.