

09/09/2026

Dear Gregg,

It is disappointing to note that the non-protected vegetation, originally occurring along the western boundary of the site, has been pre-emptively removed. Whilst we accept that this action was within the legal right of the applicant, we have a legal duty to assess the impact on all trees under planning legislation, regardless of their Preservation Order status. Therefore, this application has already had a significant impact, but one that we cannot now quantify.

The remaining vegetation on site comprises of two English oak trees to the rear of the Scout hut. Because of their size relative to the existing structure, they provide good levels of public amenity in an area largely devoid of canopy cover. These two trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

Under the proposal, the two oak trees are due to be retained, with pruning. However, on initial visual inspection, the level of pruning required to both fit the new structure in and maintain reasonable clearances is considered excessive and could be detrimental to the long term health of the tree.

When assessing the proposed pruning in the application documents, the detail was confusing:

- The proposed site plan states that tree pruning on T2 (tree numbering is not consistent with the arboricultural report) will be by 3.8 metres – we assume this is a localised reduction on the southern side, but is not explicitly stated.
- Paragraph 5.2.1. of the arboricultural report appears to be discussing crown lifting the tree:
“...this means that to achieve the standard 2m clearance above the roof the current building a maximum clearance of 9.15m above ground level is required, whereas the proposed building will require a clearance of 12.80, an additional 3.65m.” So we assume from this that they wish to crown lift T1 (tree numbering is not consistent with other application documents) an additional 3.65 metres.
- The Tree Protection Plan simply states that T1 should be pruned to give the proposed building 2 metres of clearance.

Therefore, our initial visual inspection concerns were not allayed by the submitted documents, which we would have expected to be more detailed and consistent given that the pruning is a significant element of achieving this development.

At this stage, we are uncomfortable with the level of pruning proposed, both visually and as stated. The required *assumed* level of pruning – a nearly 4 metre crown reduction – is significant, and demonstrates that the proposals have not taken full and proper account of the context of the site, as per Policy DM1.