

From: jane deighton
Sent: 28 July 2023 15:17
To: Planning
Subject: Application ref 2023 2820 T Objectors Comments 5 of 5 emails

Dear Camden team

Application to fell two ash trees in rear area of Hillway Garage.

Comments of Jane Deighton 1 Hillway N66QB. This is next door to the Garage Documents referred to have been forwarded in separate emails

Could you please tell me the process? Will an officer attend the site?
Is this an officer or member decision? Is there an appeal process?

The area: This is a conservation area.

The Trees:

1. The 2 ash trees are visible to the general public from both the lower end of Hillway/Swains Lane and from Church walk
2. The 2 ash trees are large (one larger than the other) beautiful and well formed.
3. They are very healthy looking. They are also rare and for this reason alone the Council might want to take every step to protect them. As the Council will know ash trees in the country are being wiped out by ash die back. There is no sign that these trees are suffering from it all. It seems to me that there are no other ash trees in the vicinity. It is unlikely that these trees will catch ash die back naturally.
4. The trees – with a very little help from a conifer that grows in Number 3 – screen our household from a huge dirty coloured brick wall of the flats of the corner of Swains Lane and Church Walk.

Without these trees the view from the back of our house would be like one of a neglected industrial landscape – dominated by the two large asbestos cement roofs of the Garage and this enormous dirt coloured brick wall. The trees save us from that view. (This can be seen in the photos that have been forwarded)

5. The trees located as there are at the bottom of the hill are visible and form a screen for residents and passers by from all angles

The grounds for the Application:

The Applicant gives 2 grounds for wanting to fell these trees which I would like to comment on in turn.

Ground 1 : “tree has started to crack the back wall of the building”.

(i)The application does not state which tree.

(ii) The applicant has put in no evidence whatsoever of its claim.

On a visual inspection from Number 3 no crack can be seen – (However I should say that this was a partial inspection as that area is covered with ivy)

(iii) I would ask therefore that this ground be disregarded

Ground 2: “and has also started to envelop the roof of the building which is made of Asbestos. The roof is currently intact but the tree is starting to put big pressure onto the roof sheets and there is a very big risk that the trees will crack the asbestos and release fibres into the air”

At first glance this could be a persuasive ground but on analysis it really is not – and at the very most it could perhaps trigger the obtaining of have independent evidence.

(i) The Applicant lays emphasis on the potential health and safety risk of the asbestos. I have been in touch with the Asbestos Compliance Unit of Camden Council. Steve Marley of the Unit advised me that the asbestos roof is made up of “asbestos cement roof sheets”. Asked about the risk they may present he said this: With asbestos you must also consider the likelihood of asbestos fibres being released from the source material, cement is a dense material with the fibres forming the matrix of the product and so is harder to release large quantities of fibres, there are thresholds for safe levels of airborne fibres as determined by the HSE, as these items are outside these levels will always be very low if not zero.”

So it would appear that even if the trees cracked the asbestos there is a low risk of any danger. (Steve Marley’s email will be forwarded)

(ii) As of now there is no crack on the asbestos – and the Applicant does not claim otherwise.

(iii) Furthermore the reason given by the applicant that the asbestos may crack (ie that tree has started to envelope the Asbestos roof and is starting to put big pressure on the roof,) is flawed in various ways:

- . The applicant does not say which tree is being referred to

The photograph shows that the bark of one tree on the roof edging . This edging is about 1 ft wide.

There is no evidence of any effect whatsoever (cracking or otherwise) on the edging or to the roof it is attached to

There is no evidence that this edging (as opposed to the rest of the roof) is made of asbestos

The photograph tends to suggest that the bark has been on the roof edging for some time without having done any damage. We can derive from that either that there is unlikely to be damage at all or if there is to be any it will be very

gradual and give the applicant ample opportunity to raise this fact with the Council to apply for permission to do works to the tree at that point.

The Garage Warehouse Roof

- (i) The warehouse roof is in a questionable state – this state had nothing to do with the trees
- (ii) The photograph provided by the applicant shows – to the bottom right what looks like corrugated metal that has been placed on the roof and is being held down by bricks. There are in fact two or three other areas similarly patched up. (Photos showing this will be forwarded)
- (iii) The wood structure holding up the roof above the wall of the warehouse is rotten all along it. (Photos showing this will be uploaded if we can do that)
- (iv) Thus the roof demands attention now – quite independently of the trees.
- (v) Clearly the design and material used in a new roof and its relation to the trees (or of a new building if this is what the applicant intends)looking into the future is a matter for a different application and a different decision.
- (vi) As a corollary to that the argument that trees should be felled to protect the roof is something of a nonsequitor

· The suggested means of felling the trees

- (i) I would hope that the argument against felling is so strong that the Council will not have to consider this aspect. However the applicant writes that steps will be taken to prevent damage during the felling. The Council will want to weigh the credibility of this claim against the actions of the Garage on 29 May 2023 when staff there clambered all over the roof to prune down large branches - there was little or no protection of the roof against the branches falling (and I understand no permission from the Council to do this) (Photos showing this will be uploaded if we can do that)

Conclusion

There are strong positive reasons for keeping these trees.

There is no good reason to fell these trees. It is possible there may come a time, probably years away, when the trees get bigger that there might be viable grounds but it is at that time and not now permission should be sought. And at that time any application, in so far as relies on the condition of the roof, should be judged in light of the low risk status of the asbestos cement roof, the work that needs to be done on the roof irrespective of the trees and any other plans the Applicant may have for the garage

In any event this or a similar action cannot be properly approved absent any expert evidence in light of the doubts thrown on the claims in it not least by Camden's own asbestos compliance unit.

Please do contact me with any further questions and in any event should you be minded to approve this application.

Many thanks

Regards

Jane Deighton

From: jane deighton
Sent: 28 July 2023 15:13
To: Planning
Subject: Fwd: app 2023 2820 T ref jane deighton 4 Hillway garage damaged asbestos roof

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Steve Manley**
Date: Tue, 25 Jul 2023 at 15:54
Subject: RE: Hillway garage damaged asbestos roof
To: jane deighton, AsbestosCompliance

Hi Jane,

Your welcome,

For anything that falls outside of the council jurisdiction you would be best contacting the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) directly. They may be able to advise you or in some cases help if there is an issue.

With regard to definition of damage, small break on corners and scratches are considered low damage, medium damage is large breaks, and high damage is where there is visible debris and the source material is in poor condition.

This is defined in the HSG264 Asbestos the surveying guide. Can be found on the HSE website for free download. It's a bit of a read though.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg264.htm>

There are other publications than the one stated above would be your best source.

With asbestos you must also consider the likelihood of asbestos fibres being released from the source material, cement is a dense material with the fibres forming the matrix of the product and so is harder to release large quantities of fibres, there are thresholds for safe levels of airborne fibres as determined by the HSE, as these items are outside these levels will always be very low if not zero.

Let me know If you require anything further.

Kind Regards

Steve Manley
Asbestos Compliance Officer
Property Services
Supporting Communities
London Borough of Camden

79 Holmes Road
London NW5 3AP

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

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From: jane deighton

Sent: 25 July 2023 12:04

To: AsbestosCompliance

Subject: Re: Hillway garage damaged asbestos roof

Hi Steve, I have just thought of another question further to my first response to your email. Could you point me to the definitions of what amounts to heavy damage to asbestos cement roof sheets?

Many thanks, Jane

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Hi Jane,

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The roof is made of a cement based product, I cannot see from the picture any damage to the cement roof sheets. The wood is rotten as you mention, this does not appear to be damaging the cement roof sheets (from what you have shown me)

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Asbestos Cement roof sheets are considered a low risk item and can remain in place unless heavily damaged. I do not believe this building is managed by Camden so unfortunately we have no jurisdiction to step in to enforce any action.

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If you have any other information available I can review it and maybe assist further.

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Kind Regards

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Steve Manley
Asbestos Compliance Officer
Property Services
Supporting Communities
London Borough of Camden

79 Holmes Road
London NW5 3AP

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

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From: jane deighton

Sent: 25 July 2023 10:38

To: AsbestosCompliance

Subject: Hillway garage damaged asbestos roof

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Dear team

I live at 1 Hillway N6 6QB. Behind me and adjoining 3 Hillway is a warehouse belonging to MayFair gallery and in the grounds of the Hillway Garage. The asbestos roof of the warehouse is damaged. You can see from the pictures that the wood supporting it is rotten, that parts of the roof have been covered with bricks and sheets of metal or wood in what appear to be temporary repairs, and on occasion, staff clamber over the roof, pulling up Ivy et cetera that is going on it.

Could you please let me know what you can do about this?

Many thanks, Jane Deighton

For your information, the owners appear to have applied for permission to fell trees – those trees seem to have little if anything to do with the worrying state of the roof

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Garage roof May 29 2023



2. State of roof wooden structure





3. Showing patches to roof on left and middle right

