

From: ILIE ZUBASCU
Sent: 24 November 2023 11:27
To: Planning
Cc: Azusa Zubascu; Paul James
Subject: Objection to Planning Application 2023/4773/T

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To Camden Planning Department
Subject: Objection to Planning Application 2023/4773/T

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to express our objection to the above-referenced planning application for tree works within the Belsize Park conservation area. While we fully support the maintenance and health of trees, our concerns stem from the broader context of recent developments and the handling of the 9-11 Belsize Grove applications (including application 2022/2863/P and the un-authorised reported construction), which compel us to view this application with considerable scepticism. The 9-11 Belsize plot, that is directly behind a few Howitt Road households and was an oasis of peace, privacy and calmness has now become a nightmare with increasingly frightening prospects. The plot has had an awful lot of activity recently, we believe, undermining the very essence of the Belsize Park conservation area . Application 2022/2863/P has been met with many objections from both sides of the plot (Belsize Grove and Howitt Road). This application was followed by an un-authorised construction strikingly similar to the one proposed in the Application 2022/2863/P. It's really baffling how the Council is not making a link between these and now the new Application 2023/4773/T objected here through this email.

Conservation Area Infringement and Tree Health:

We recognise the importance of tree health and maintenance. However, given the perplexing developments associated with the 9-11 Belsize Grove application, we are concerned that this tree work application may be another attempt to undermine the integrity of the conservation area. The preservation of trees should not be used as a pretext for activities that ultimately harm the conservation area's ecological and aesthetic values.

Duty of Care and Notification:

The council's duty to inform all affected parties of such applications appears to have been neglected. The absence of proper notices, especially on Howitt Road, is a significant oversight, indicating a failure in the council's statutory duty.

Height and Light Impact:

The height of recent constructions, including unauthorised structures, has adversely affected the natural light for neighbouring properties. This is a clear violation of the 'Right to Light' law, which protects the rights of residents to sufficient natural light. Paul James has lived at 45 Howitt for over 45 years.

Failure in Planning Process:

The planning process for the current and previous applications seems flawed and lacks transparency. This raises serious concerns about the procedural integrity and the council's commitment to upholding planning regulations.

Environmental Impact and Independent Assessment:

The proposed tree works, coupled with recent unauthorised developments, have led to substantial environmental degradation. We propose that an independent tree surgeon agency or specialist, selected by the council, be commissioned to investigate the actual state of the conservation area. This is crucial to ensure an unbiased assessment, especially since the photos provided in the application do not align with the long-term residents' accounts of the area's condition.

Precedent and Purposeful Construction:

The construction of unauthorised structures, such as the 'gazebo' (which is not a gazebo if you look at the drawings and Application 2022/2863/P documents), seems to be a strategic move to set a precedent for further development. Allowing these structures to remain could potentially weaken conservation efforts and pave the way for more aggressive future developments.

Public Awareness and Council Response:

The lack of adequate response from the council to multiple complaints and public concerns is alarming. It is essential for the council to address these issues with the urgency and seriousness they deserve.

In light of these concerns, we urge the planning department to reconsider this application. It is imperative to maintain the conservation

area's integrity and ensure that all developments within it are conducted transparently, legally, and with due consideration for the environment and local community.

Thank you for considering our objection. We look forward to a prompt and constructive response.

Sincerely,

Ilie Zubascu,
Azusa Tsuji
and Paul James

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