

From: Barbara Abraham

Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 8:21 PM

To: Planning; Tom Little

Subject: Objection to Planning Application 2023/5192/T - 37 Lancaster Grove NW3 4HB

I am writing on behalf of the Belsize Society to object to the proposed felling of the copper beech at 37 Lancaster Grove. This is a magnificent mature tree, one of the finest in the Belsize area and rightly has the protection of a TPO. The beech is visible from a considerable distance, providing high visual amenity and is valued in the neighbourhood. Such a mature tree provides habitat for a variety of wildlife and makes a significant contribution to the absorption of air pollution. Felling such a tree would be detrimental to the character of the neighbourhood and conservation area, and felling must be the very last resort, once all other options have been explored. We are not convinced that all options have yet been thoroughly explored.

Arbtech's report records that the tree has "fungal fruiting bodies consistent with *Ganoderma resinaceum*" and some type of bracket fungus can indeed be observed from the street at the base of the tree. Arbtech's identification of *Ganoderma resinaceum* is based on visual observation only, rather than biological analysis, but *Ganoderma resinaceum* is relatively rare in the UK and can be confused with other fungi. At present there is no evidence that the fungus has taken hold so it would be inappropriate to take precipitate action based on the worst possible scenario. We request that biological analysis is carried out to establish definitively the particular fungus present and that Camden's tree specialists give careful consideration to the situation.

The various surveys all consider that the roots of the beech tree are probably contributing to the subsidence, but the surveys indicate that the subsidence is predominantly affecting the exterior of the house - the front steps, path and garden walls. Whilst there are differing emphases in the various 2023 and 2024 investigations undertaken, it appears that there has not been significant deterioration since the last 2021 application (2021/0075/T).

The possibility of using a root barrier, which could improve the situation whilst preserving an important tree, has been put forward as a solution but has not been fully explored as an option.

Yours sincerely

B A Abraham

Comments made by B A Abraham for

The Belsize Society of
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