

From: Nick Alexander
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 4:22 PM
To: Planning
Cc: Judith Cook; Tree Matters
Subject: Felling a tree in a conservation area.

For the attention of the Tree and Landscape Officer, London Borough of Camden

dear Sir/Madam

I and my wife Judith Cook have lived in Bartholomew Villas since 1977. There is a beautiful tree, *Arbutus unido*, in our front garden, planted when tiny about 30 years ago. It has grown vigorously and is now damaging the front boundary railings and the separating brick wall to no34. We are getting ready to make an application to Camden Planning for permission to repair and restore the boundary structures, but full restoration depends on our being given permission to fell the tree.

Some background information:

Our house is at the end of a terrace of four houses, nos 28-32. They were built in 1863 and followed soon after by a similar terrace of houses to the North, nos 34-42, separated by a side passage belonging to no 32. The houses are all similar: three storeys with strip cellars below their staircases and small gardens at front and rear. Nos 32 and 34 are single family dwellings.

They are not listed but are in Camden's Bartholomew Estate Conservation Area.

There are trees in the pavement and most front gardens are planted with shrubs and small trees. Our *Arbutus unido* is more vigorous than most and taller. It dominates the West side of the street, particularly when the street lime tree has been pollarded as shown in a recent photograph - *Photo 1*.



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t is a very beautiful tree and much loved by us and our neighbours. We have tried for years to keep it in check by regular thinning and reduction, but it will not be restrained.

We have consulted our tree surgeon, Jason Dollimore/Tree Matters Ltd, and a couple of years ago discussed the situation on site with an officer from your Tree Section.

The general opinion was that the tree does not seem to be in danger of falling and there is no evidence of structural damage to either of the houses. But the roots have undermined no32's front railings and gate
- *Photo 2.*



The trunk is now supported by them - *Photo 5.*



The gate can no longer be closed and the trunk overhangs the path at head level.

And we suspect that the roots must also have contributed to visible movement in the garden wall brickwork between no32 and no34 -
Photos 3 & 4.





For these reasons, and with great regret, we are now hoping to apply for permission to restore the boundary structures after felling our tree.

I am writing to you in the Tree section, via Camden Planners, to find out whether or not felling will be permitted.

- If the answer is yes, we will be able to apply to carry out full restoration of the railings and gate and of repairs to the separating wall.

- If it is no, we will have to submit a different scheme with support on the railings maintained but the entrance gate moved clear of the tree.

We prefer that the tree is felled, as within a couple of decades it will probably have to be anyway.

Either way, we would want to talk again to our neighbours before making a final decision.

You are welcome to visit. The tree is out in the open and I am at home most days

sincerely

Nick Alexander

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