

Delegated Report

Officer		Application Number(s)					
Liam Vincent		2024/1661/T					
Application Address							
142 Haverstock Hill, London NW3 2AY							
Proposal(s)							
FRONT GARDEN: 1 x Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima) (T1) - Fell to ground level and remove stump.							
Recommendation(s):		Objection to proposed works to a tree in a conservation area					
Application Type:		Notification of Intended Works to Tree(s) in a Conservation Area					
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	12	No. of responses	2	No. of objections	2
Summary of consultation responses:		The Council received two responses from adjoining occupiers to this notification, which can be summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Cities need trees...their removal degrades the environment...causes problems with water absorption...removal is likely to destabilise the wallThe tree protects the building from noise...					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		None received					

Assessment

The Council has received a s.211 notification to remove a semi-mature Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) in the front garden of a private residence on Haverstock Hill, which is located within the Parkhill conservation area.

The notification states that

- the species is invasive
- is causing subsidence to two walls
- is leaning towards cars parked at the front of the property
- is preventing any other plants from growing nearby due to allelopathy
- is causing a nearby wall to crack

The tree is clearly visible from public places along Haverstock Hill – from approximately 40m to the north and 50m from the south, and from midway along Antrim Grove on the opposite side of the highway.

The tree makes a significant and positive contribution to the verdant character and appearance of the conservation area as the end tree of a cohesive canopied group of similarly sized trees in the front garden of the neighbouring property (148 Haverstock Hill). It enriches the ecology of the local area as part of a green corridor, softening the street-scene on a busy and congested main road within the borough, and contributes to improving the air quality there.

The reasons given are not robust enough to justify the removal of the tree:

- Damage to walls is not considered to be a sufficient reason to justify the removal of trees that are worthy of protection under a TPO. It is likely there is a design and/or engineering solution that will allow for the repair of the wall and the retention of the tree.
- The allegation of subsidence of walls is not supported by any evidence.
- There is no evidence to support an issue with the lean of the tree (visible movement of the rootplate, mounding / depression and/ or cracking of soil surrounding the basal area).

The Council objects to the proposed removal, and it is recommended that a Tree Preservation Order be served to protect the amenity the tree provides and to help preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.