

From: genevieve poirier
Sent: Monday, July 29, 2024 8:11 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Application reference 2024/2742/T

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write in respect of application reference 2024/2719/T and lodge this objection, within the permitted 21 day period specified.

I am a resident and property owner at 6 Doughty Street. My property, and the community more broadly, will suffer irreparable harm if the application is granted.

The application relates to a request to extend a lapsed permission (2022/0419/T) to fell two centuries-old plane trees – both of which are protected by TPO.

Both trees are similar in size and character as the Great Plane in Brunswick Square. They are visible from the surrounding streets; provide a carbon sink; and generally contribute to the heritage and amenity of the conservation area in which they are sited. The council would not countenance permitting felling the Great Plane (one of the “ten great trees of London”) and there is no reason why the council should take a different view several streets away due merely to one party’s private interests pushing for the trees’ destruction.

The applicants had their opportunity to fell the trees; they failed to act within time. The lapsed permission was, in my submission, wrongly granted in 2022; now that permission has been allowed to lapse, the mistake should not be repeated by renewing the permission.

The grounds on which the lapsed permission was granted were incomplete and insufficient – in particular as to geotechnical survey. There has been no effort to renew or improve those analyses. The risk of heave affecting multiple neighbouring properties on both Doughty Street and Doughty Mews is considerable. The geotechnical reports (procured by the applicant) were incomplete on their face, with the retained surveyors recording that they did not drill the required number of core samples in the soil and were not sure of the soil content in respect of all of the site, such that they could only make assumptions about heave.

If the permission is renewed, the trees are felled, and the surrounding properties are damaged, multiple claimant parties will commence actions for compensation from all of the council, the applicants, and One Housing.

As against that risk, the applicants have been offered numerous potential solutions for the damage that the trees occasion. One of these options was as simple and as cost effective as removing a layer of brick – which would apparently give the trees another 50 years' to expand before the question would need to be revisited.

By rejecting the application to renew, the council can encourage the applicant to re-look at options that do not adversely affect the community or remove these irreplaceable and (rightly) protected trees.

I urge the council to reject the application.

Sincerely,

G Poirier

6 Doughty street

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