

From: Margaret Caselton

Sent: 25 March 2025 13:06

To:

Subject: Re: Application ref: 2025/0868/T

Importance: High

COMMENT:

I strongly object to the felling of The Black Poplar (T1).

This species of native tree (*Populus nigra*) has recently been highlighted in the national news. BBC News referred to it as 'the rarest native tree in Britain'. The National Trust has created a Living Library/gene bank to save it - and its plight has been featured in the Guardian, Independent and other media.

T1 is a magnificent example of a healthy, well established Black Poplar. It is lush and leafy in summer, sculptural in winter and provides valuable habitat. shelter and necessary shade for local biodiversity - wildlife and flora to flourish throughout the year. It is highly visible in our neighbourhood and can be seen from the rear windows of houses including Belsize Park Gardens, Belsize Grove and from the top third of Primrose Gardens. It contributes immensely to the landscape and character of this conservation area and is a visual marker of the seasons.

Its presence brings many of us a feeling of calm and well being. The sound of the rustle of its leaves in summer, the fascinating activities of the many species of birds that inhabit it and sing from its topmost branches in Spring. Already the threat of losing it is causing local people anxiety.

T1 provides an essential screen of privacy and shade in summer from buildings which directly overlook 10-14 Belsize Grove (Ormonde Court) and 16 and 18 Belsize Grove. The rear elevations of buildings in Belsize Grove face south and now suffer from intense solar glare and excessive heat in summer. The location of T1 helps cool our interiors and protects us from this solar glare. In this, and many other ways, its presence assists combat climate crisis.

T1 also helps absorb traffic noise and pollution from busy roads and bus routes on nearby Haverstock Hill and Englands Lane.

The arguments for felling this tree '*to eliminate the need for continual maintenance*' and '*to prevent the tree becoming a nuisance in the future*' are insubstantial and would be a sad epitaph for such a beautiful healthy tree. In my opinion, Black Poplar T1 should be give TPO status not felled.

Comments made by margaret caselton of Flat 11 Ormonde Court, 10-14 Belsize Grove, NW3 4UP