

Delegated Report

Officer

Liam Vincent

Application Number(s)

2025/0910/T

Application Address

24 College Crescent NW3 5LL

Proposal(s)

REAR GARDEN:

1 x Apple (T2) - Reduce crown by 30% back to previous growth point 2m of height and 1.5m of width.

1 x Blue Atlas Cedar (T3) - Fell to ground level.

Recommendation(s):

OBJECTION (part grant / part refuse) to notification of intended works to tree(s) 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 notification of intended works received one response objecting to the works:

- I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed cutting of the Blue Atlas Cedar (T3). Living at 56 Belsize Park, I can attest to the significant positive impact this tree has on our neighborhood. There are already very few trees on our street, and the Blue Atlas Cedar is a vital part of our local environment. Its presence greatly enhances the aesthetic appeal of the area, providing much-needed greenery and contributing to the overall charm and character of our community. Having lived close to the tree, I have not observed any negative impact from it. On the contrary, it offers numerous benefits, including shade and improved air quality. Removing this tree would not only diminish the visual appeal of the street but also reduce these environmental benefits. I urge you to reconsider the decision to cut down this beautiful and valuable tree. Preserving it is crucial for maintaining the natural beauty and ecological balance of our neighborhood.*

The Council receive two responses commenting on the intended works:

- I am seeking clarification regarding the removal of the beautiful blue cedar tree (T3) within our conservatory area. This tree is one of the rarest in Belsize Park and a vital part of our local environment, contributing to biodiversity, shade, and the character of our street. The one sentence claim that it is damaging the wall lacks evidence, and no alternative solutions (such as root management or reinforcement) have been proposed. I urge the council to request a professional assessment, share it with the others, before considering its removal.*
- Re T3: Blue atlas cedar - Fell to ground level as tree roots are cracking in the wall There is no evidence to support this request. Where are the photos? Has an arborist been consulted, and has a report been prepared to substantiate the request? Please could these things be provided?*

CAAC/Local groups* comments:

*Please Specify

For The Belsize Society:

The Blue Atlas Cedar is a fine mature tree that appears to be flourishing, and is a rare example of its kind in the area. It is highly visible from Belsize Park, for some distance along the road. We request that it is given TPO status and that the request to fell the tree is rejected. It is suggested that the tree is implicated in causing cracks in the wall but this seems doubtful as there are more cracks further along the wall away from any trees. Even if it were the case that the tree was causing the cracks, a fine tree like this should take priority over a boundary wall and an alternative solution found to any problems with the wall.

Assessment

The s.211 notification is to prune an apple tree (T2) back to previous points of reduction and to remove a Blue Atlas Cedar (T3) from the rear garden of a private residence on College Crescent, which is within the Belsize Park conservation area.

T2 and T3 are medium (c.6 - 8m tall) trees, situated on the side boundary of the rear garden at 24 College Crescent. Both are highly visible from Belsize Park and College Crescent. Both trees appear to be in good health with no obvious defects or dysfunction. T2 has been pruned previously, but this does not appear to be affecting its vigour and vitality. T3 appears to be in fine form, no obvious sign of previous pruning and adds a high level of visual amenity to the character of the conservation area.

The intended works to T2 are of a maintenance type, and not unusual or disproportionate. As the tree is very close to the rear of the building, re-reducing the canopy of the tree is a reasonable operation and may encourage the retention of the tree.

T3 is specified within the s211 notice to be removed 'as tree roots are cracking in the wall'. No evidence of the roots causing an issue with the wall has been submitted, and no significant structural issue was observed during the site visit.

- The trees are highly visible.
- The trees are not known to be of any cultural or historical importance.
- T3 is a somewhat unusual species in an urban setting such as this.
- The trees are reasonable examples of their species.
- The loss of T3 would greatly reduce the visual amenity of the character of the conservation area.

The Council can either object to intended works and serve a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), or make no objection.

For the reasons stated above, it is not expedient to serve a TPO to object to the proposed works on T2 (apple), but T3 (Cedar) is suitable to be brought under the protection of a TPO.

The Council does not object to the proposed works for T2 (Apple), but does object to the works for T3 (Cedar). The s211 notification is part granted, part refused and a TPO will be served on T3.