

Objection to application 2014/2623/P: 3 Downshire Hill.

Attention: Hugh Miller, Planning Officer, London Borough of Camden

From: S D Ainger, 8 Downshire Hill, Hampstead London NW3 1NR

16<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

Dear Mr Miller,

**I object to the above application on the grounds of tree preservation.**

The listed trees in the "Existing Tree Schedule" LLD622 TPO 1 and TPO2 are quoted as being the same height which is not true. One is significantly taller than the other and both are landmarks in the area.

In fact, a visual comparison shows that the Leyland Cypress tree is approx., at least, twice the height of the *Prunus cerasifera*.

These trees should therefore be in the A category and not the B category and hence need to be preserved as a feature of the landscape.

The Leyland Cypress can be seen in the Autumn and Winter months from numerous properties in Hampstead and form part of the wild life corridor from the Heath into Hampstead. This is why the large trees at the back of 9DH were preserved. Also please note that the listed trees currently have no minor browning contrary to paragraph 2.1 and appendix no 1 in the report provided by the applicant.

The Existing Tree schedule is therefore misleading. In addition, and contrary to what is written in section 3.2, the proposed scheme proposals are located inside the tree root protection area. This is further confirmed by paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the same report that recommends a methodology for performing operations within the specified root protection areas. This is contrary to British Standard 5837 paragraph 7.4.2.1 that "makes clear that design should not require excavation inside the RPA"

I would oppose the loss and damage of trees which would have a negative impact on the ecology and aesthetics of Downshire Hill and the wild life corridor to the Heath.

Further ore I would want to see an impact assessment of excavation work on the large mature tree on the neighbouring property of 4 Downshire Hill

In summary this application, if it were to be approved, would have a detrimental impact on the natural environment and would put the TPO trees at severe risk of dying.

Yours sincerely

S D Ainger



Dear Mr Miller,

I write in reference to application 2014/2623/P: 3 Downshire Hill.

My fiancée and I live in Garden Flat, 4 Downshire Hill and strongly object to this planning application.

Having taken into consideration various related reports carried out, it is obvious that the intended basement conversion would be a **severe hindrance and incur a severe loss of amenity** not only to my fiancée and me but also to all persons living in properties opposite around 3 Downshire Hill. Furthermore, this is a conservation area full of beautiful, healthy trees and rare birds - this application evidently shows no real consideration for the complexity of the flora and fauna - the tree report, for instance, is full of errors. I list below our key objections:

1) My fiancée and I live in a lower ground floor flat / garden flat next to the intended basement. It is apparent that no drainage has been proposed. Yet we know that borehole measurements carried out ten metres away in Pilgrim's Lane found water at 1.15 metres below ground and during dry weather. These measurements were also carried out during a shorter period than as is instructed under paragraph 2.27 of CPG4. We also now know that there is a spring within a similar distance under a Pilgrim's Lane property. Our flat is downhill from number 3. **In time of heavy rain, our flat is likely to flood.** The Ground Investigation report only effectively considers the water table in dry weather. It is outrageous that more extensive research into wet weather conditions was not carried out. We also gather that a recent planning application for 8 Pilgrim's lane proposed underground water drainage to cope with water overflow - and this application was refused. We have to ask - why is it that this applicant has made no offer for equipment to mitigate water overflow? We would like to know, how will existing drainage cope during heavy rainfall? Will it flood our flat? We note that none of the consultants that compiled the Basement Impact Assessment are qualified Hydrogeologists with Chartered Geologist status from the Geological Society of London as per requirement 2.11 of CPG 4.

2) This is a conservation area. 3 Downshire Hill not only has beautiful and healthy trees, but all around it are beautiful trees. Indeed, as well as young to middle life trees, our property has some very old trees on

it. Some have root systems which go underneath number 3. **There is one particularly old and rare tree at the front of our property and adjacent to number 3. This tree is several hundred years old. A basement conversion would destroy a substantial part of this tree's root system and this old tree would die.** I am aware that such old trees are protected under legislation. Other old trees are also likely to die. Less able to draw nutrients and water from the soil via their intricate and complex root systems which include going under number 3, they two would die. Less trees and dying trees would also mean reduced air quality. The Tree Report is full of inaccuracies, including about the height and health of the trees within the garden of number 3. How are we able to trust an application made on such flawed evidence?

3) It would be false to consider the trees without paying attention to the wildlife and birdlife. Since living in our flat, we have seen Jays, Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, Green Woodpeckers, Blackbirds, Robins, Magpies, Blue Tits, Wood Pigeons, Goldfinches, Redwings and on one occasion - a Kestrel which had strayed over from the Heath. **Some of these such as the Kestrel and the Redwing are rare in this part of the country.** All live or have happily passed through our garden and the trees in number 3 and on the other side to us. The dense concentration of trees in and around our property provides welcome relief to all these birds. If you take away the trees next door, you take away a key part of the ecosystem. The noise of any building works would further drive them away. Foxes also live in the rear garden of our property. We have seen and hear cubs playing on the lawn on a nearly daily basis. This building work would also drive them away.

With these thoughts on the conservation of the area, we are aware that the application would go against:

- CS 5 (Managing of growth and development)
- CS 13 (Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards)
- CS 15 (Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity)
- Policies DP 24 and DP 25 (conserving Camden's Heritage).

4) Our property is a listed house. We have real concerns that a basement conversion would damage the property.

5) The application is antisocial. Scant regard has been made for any of the neighbours to 3 Downshire Hill. The noise would be severely disruptive, dust would fill the air and we alongside all our neighbours - including some very elderly and fragile neighbours - would at times be driven to distraction by the duration and noise of the building work. It would in no way engender a better and stronger community and could even be a health hazard. Has any account been taken of the Public Health considerations?

6) It is apparent that our property will also be blocked at times by lorries parking or moving about on Downshire Hill. Will, at any time, a lorry block our driveway? We know there is no detailed traffic management plan and access to our home is likely to be hindered.

7) We would like to know what the plans are for the construction of the proposed basement? We have seen no detailed plans.

8) The proposed basement conversion is a few doors down from a busy and active GP surgery. Conversion work would severely disrupt the surgery and patients.

9) We understand that an independent assessor has been instructed to review a Basement Impact Assessment. We object to this on two points. Firstly, that on the basis of the old trees in the vicinity and the conservation area alone, the application should be rejected. Secondly, that at no point were we the neighbours able to play a role in the selection process for an independent assessor.

We would like to reiterate our strong objections to the above planning application and would like to be informed of any decision.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hudson and Lucy Panton