

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2014/5338/P	Mrs Lesley Stevas	Flat 7 57 Christchurch Hill	12/09/2014 08:32:15	OBJ	<p>I am making a strong objection to this proposal on the grounds of proposed tree removal, that will not only result in a significant detrimental change to the character and appearance of the immediate location but also to the conservation area as a whole.</p> <p>I would like to suggest that the information given within Phelps Associates tree survey and arboricultural implication assessment about the large and characterful Horse chestnut tree (T1) is wrong and therefore the reasons for its removal are simply not valid. If this tree is allowed to be removed for these reasons then it would set a dangerous precedent within the borough that would pave the way for the removal of important trees under spurious circumstances and/or poor arboricultural reports.</p> <p>Nothing in the arboricultural report suggests that the proposed re-development impacts on any part of the Horse chestnut (roots, trunk or canopy), which is growing in the neighbouring Churchyard, nor too does any part of the tree impact on the proposed re-development (apart from shading which is dealt with within paragraph 7.7), so why should this tree be removed because of this application?</p> <p>The report states that "Due to the condition of the tree it is advisable as part of the application to remove this tree." but fails to actually say what the condition of the tree is!</p> <p>Paragraph 10.3 states:</p> <p>"The Horse Chestnut tree T1, is in full public view and on land which borders [sic] a road. The tree has been reduced in the past (see photos), and the canopy is in full bloom and not showing signs of decline. However, there is a ganoderma spp. bracket near the base of this tree, it also has a large cavity with possible ustulina deusta and/or Polyporus squamosus. There are also other signs of bacterial infections and cankers appearing on one of the main leading branches. Due to the condition of the tree it is advisable as part of the application to remove this tree."</p> <p>I would like to draw your attention to a few key points in this concluding statement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the canopy shows no signs of decline; therefore the physiological condition of the tree might be normal? 2. the tree has been pruned in the past; so does this not suggest that it is being successfully managed in terms of health and safety? 3. the presence of a single fungal bracket at the base of a tree does not signify anything other than that further investigation is required to determine the nature, extent and associated risk of any decay that might be present (this has not been carried out in this case). 4. The species of Ganoderma is not investigated or confirmed, different species of Ganoderma affect trees in different ways; e.g. it is known that spread of Ganoderma applanatum can be confined to already dysfunctional tissue, meaning that this species does not always cause further decay than what is

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already present. Indeed some trees live in symbiosis with fungi for many many years.

5. There is no confirmation or assessment about the other "possible" fungi that are mentioned; "ustulina deusta and/or Polyporus squamosus" seems to be a stab in the dark as both species of fungi are very different in appearance and nature. Also a doctor would not euthanize a patient on the "possibility" of an ailment!

Further to the above the tree survey has totally failed to pick up on the significant historical, cultural or ecological values that this tree holds. It has been classified as a "C2" tree, which in terms of the system used means that it is a tree "of low quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 10 years". I would argue the case that this tree has much longer to live than 10 years and could possibly meet the criteria of a veteran tree (therefore given "A3" status). Indeed with a trunk diameter of 1.5m it would most certainly have been planted at around the time of the construction of the church (completed in 1852). I myself have seen owls nesting within the tree and there are many features which could be used by bats and other animals.

In general the report is poorly written, in that it is full of grammatical mistakes and has obvious omissions. For this reason I have no confidence in its content and do not trust that it has reached accurate conclusions. Has the author correctly assessed that there will be no detrimental impacts on the trees? I would ask that Camden Council looks very carefully at all the proposals in relation to the trees before making a decision on this application. I also ask that the trees are retained and that a Tree Preservation Order is made to protect them.

Yours sincerely.

Lesley Stevas.
