

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2015/6119/T	Adam Tyrrell	15c Hampstead Lane London N6 4RT	02/12/2015 19:08:09	COMMNT	Your Ref. 2015/6119/NEW

Dear Sir or Madam

Re. Mature Ash Tree in the front garden of 15 Hampstead Lane, close to the border of 13 Hampstead Lane; Application by occupant(s) of 13 Hampstead Lane to remove it.

I write to object to the proposed removal of the tree situated in the front garden of 15 Hampstead Lane. The tree forms part of my outlook to the street.

I dispute whether there is any genuine argument in favour of the tree's removal contained in the application. Quoting section 7: "This is a fairly mature Ash tree, probably self-seeded, that is very high and growing very close to both the houses, and also beginning to push the wall to the pavement out. We feel the tree needs to be removed."

There is a slight bulge in the front garden retaining wall of Nos. 13 and 15, but to attribute this to the tree is mere speculation. The high ground level on the garden side of the wall would appear to be a more obvious cause, but neither is this definitive. There are examples, visible in the vicinity, in which garden walls are less than fully vertical and in which no large tree is present; equally, there are cases in which a large tree is present in very close proximity to a wall without detriment to the wall. Would it not be advisable first for independent opinion to be sought as to whether the tree is responsible for the front wall's tilt and whether there is a means of improving the front wall (if indeed the wall needs any attention) without removing the tree, before moving to the conclusion that the tree should be removed?

The tree's proximity to the houses is not in itself a problem, and I note an absence of any representation in the application that the tree has caused any defects in the structure of the houses.

Distinct from the above points, however, I would contend that there are various additional reasons to avoid removal of the ash tree.

A large part of the appeal associated with dwelling in a location such as Highgate village is the semi-rural nature of much of the environment, which includes amongst its characteristics a number of mature, deciduous trees. These help to define the feel of the area and to integrate development, which includes buildings from disparate periods. Unfortunately, although some parts of Hampstead Lane are amply endowed with such trees, the section from the corner of The Grove (around number 5 Hampstead Lane) to number 19 contains very few mature, deciduous trees. Instead, it is characterised by, on the north side of the road, mostly coniferous trees, and on the south side (where this ash tree is situated), many treeless gardens. The removal of this tree would take this deficiency even further in the immediate vicinity, rendering it relatively bleak, and impairing the character and appearance of this conversation area.

The amenity value of this elegant tree in such a context is considerable. On this fairly busy road, along

Application No: **Consultees Name:** **Consultees Addr:** **Received:**

Comment: **Response:**

which many buses travel each day, the ability of such trees to screen against being overlooked and against noise, particularly when in leaf, and to clean the air, is of great utility to inhabitants.

I contend that as a result of these considerations, the removal of the tree should occur only as a last resort and after exhausting all alternative means of dealing with any problems it causes, if any.

Finally, I must question some of the information entered into the application. The applicant, who resides at 13 Hampstead Lane, states in section 3 that the tree is located at 13 Hampstead Lane, even though in section 4 it is stated that ownership resides with number 15. This would appear to be in conflict. It seems plain enough to me, visually, that tree resides at 15; certainly, its trunk rises from the ground in the front garden of 15, but the actual location could no doubt be confirmed more formally.

Section 2 of the application names as 'agent' Mrs Bridget Harrison, who lives at 15A and in whose garden the tree stands. I suggest that you contact her to clarify her actual position in relation to the application, but my understanding is that she is against it and that she played no part in submitting the application. If being listed as 'agent' were to suggest that she supports the application, or that this is a joint application by both 13 and 15 Hampstead Lane, this entry could be highly misleading.

Yours faithfully

Adam Tyrrell
