

From: Eleanor Pole [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 February 2016 10:29
To: Planning
Subject: 2016/0466/T and 2016/0454/T

FAO Mr James Remmington, Trees

Dear Mr Remmington,

I wish to object to the proposed tree works at 9a Gainsborough Gardens. I live next door at no. 8, and the lime tree is actually my tree, which leans over the boundary fence. I had an overhanging branch removed from the tree on my neighbours' side, by agreement with them, and other maintenance carried out by Mr Venables, having obtained permission from the council. There is no significant ivy on the trunk of the tree, as I have previously had this removed, and I can see no need to subject the tree to further pruning. Neither the owner, who lives overseas, nor his manager, nor his tenant, nor the tree surgeons, Wassells, have been in touch with me to consult me or seek my consent to this work on my tree, which I consider to be un-neighbourly.

In addition to my position as next-door neighbour, I have been given responsibility by our residents' association, Gainsborough Gardens Ltd, for liaison with the gardeners who maintain the street, and for supervising any proposed maintenance to the trees within the central garden. In this capacity, I commissioned a review of the health of all of the trees in the gardens a couple of years ago. The experienced arboricultural officer who carried out this work, Peter Holloway, also reviewed a previous application by the owner of 9a, to move this tree 2.5 metres to enable him to build on the site (to which the Council's tree officer had offered no objection). Mr Holloway also advised us on the owner's last application, refused by the Council, when he stated that contrary to the tree surgeons' (Barrells') claims, the tree was healthy and strong, and was not susceptible to weak forks, as claimed. Indeed, the appeal officer found that the crossed forks added to the strength of the tree.

I wrote in 2014 to object to the proposed reduction of the ginkgo tree, which had been refused by the Council but had gone to appeal, stating: "Gainsborough Gardens is notable for its harmonious architectural scheme, but also for the collection of magnificent trees, many of which date from the 18th and 19th centuries, and which retain much of the original landscaping from the heyday of the Wells". The landscaping and houses of Gainsborough Gardens are exceptionally interlinked, since the existing trees, already old by the 1880s, were consciously retained and significantly impacted the development of the street on this historic site. Therefore the trees in the street have a further significance, beyond their recognised contribution to the character of the conservation area, and the visual amenity they provide to the residents of Gainsborough Gardens and Christchurch Hill, and to visitors to the Heath, which borders 9a at the south side. The ginkgo is one of the Gardens' most spectacular trees, and 9a itself one of the most important houses.

As you are aware, the trees in this garden have been the subject of a highly unusual number of planning applications in recent years, and it would seem that the owner is seeking to reduce the trees by stealth and attrition. To attempt repeatedly to overturn the professional views of the Council's tree officers and the PINS appeal officer, when moderate pruning and maintenance has been permitted in the recent

past, appears arrogant and disrespectful. I note that the owner has employed a succession of reputable tree firms - Civic Trees, Barrells, Wassells, among others - to try to satisfy his objectives, rather than retain a firm to manage the trees methodically.

The owner has cited our house as a reason for reducing the tree, and I would like to state that we do not feel remotely overshadowed by the ginkgo, nor does it cause us any inconvenience whatsoever. We do not want it to be reduced, and feel that continually pruning and reducing the tree is harmful to the health of the tree, its visual amenity, and the appearance of the street and the wider area. It is visible from a wide range of perspectives locally.

I would urge the Council to refuse the application, for the works to the ginkgo, lime, birch and beech, and refer to previous applications in recent years. The 2011/3262/T report noted that the beech had already been unbalanced due to previous reductions, resulting in harm to the visual amenity and contribution to the conservation area, and that the birch had a high level of contribution by virtue of its attractive shape and crown spread. Gainsborough Gardens residents feel that adequate reduction has been permitted over recent years, and the application for these trees should be refused.

Yours sincerely
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