

TREE SURVEY



13 Waterways Business Centre
Navigation Drive, Enfield,
Middlesex, EN3 6JJ



Steven Warner

Date: 4th August 2016

Ref: 025146

Client: Hillary Bach

Site: 1 Elsworthy Terrace, NW3 3DR

Surveyor: James Forrest

I was instructed by the client (of 2 Elsworthy Terrace) to inspect the proposed development plans for 1 Elsworthy Terrace and provide an independent assessment of how this proposal will affect the main trees around the site (T3, T4, T5). Trees numbered as per existing arboricultural survey by Simon Pryce Arboriculture [15/045].

It should be noted that direct access into the site was not possible and therefore site details and measurements have been taken from existing documentation available on the planning section of Camden's website.

The client has informed me that both T3 and T4 are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). These orders prevent the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or destruction of trees, including cutting roots, without permission from the LPA.

Paragraph 1.2 of the arboricultural report states the report as being preliminary in nature which explains as to why certain aspects of tree protection have not been included or have been dealt with in a vague manner. The main area of tree protection that I do not feel has been satisfyingly addressed is that of construction activity within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of retained trees. As far as I can tell, no reports within the available documentation describes in any detail the methodology of excavation, plant machinery to be used, points of access, material storage etc. The only way the arboricultural report addresses these issues is in paragraph 5.7:

"This proposal will involve some excavation, but is a small scale project and there are well developed techniques for excavating in sites like this with minimal disturbance. The most practical access will be from the front, so it will be necessary to pass through the RPAs and working space round the building will also be within them. The trees can be safeguarded by a combination of fencing to prevent access close to them and ground protection in work areas to safeguard underlying roots during the work."



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Again, it should be noted that the report is preliminary and deals in generalities in the absence of any firm details from either the architect or building contractor. For me, these procedures that involve ingress in to the RPA need far more investigation and scrutiny before the proposal can go ahead.

What is not mentioned in the arboricultural report is the effect on T2 and T3, in particular, of a proposed brick wall to replace the wooden fence currently in place between these two trees. Again, this will involve excavation to some extent and needs to be considered.

While I do not doubt the tree measurements taken on site - specifically the stem diameters which are used in the RPA calculations - what is not absolutely clear is the map used for plotting the RPAs [plan ref: 15/045]. The confusion derives from there being 2 scales present on the same map. The original map from Ko Architects is at a scale of 1:125 (at A3) but the RPAs seem to have been plotted as per the rule scale at the bottom of the sheet which is scaled at 1:1. Clarification needs to be sought on this matter to ensure that the RPAs do in fact not extend further into the garden than is currently represented.

Another detail not considered is how the ground conditions will be altered for rooting after an excavation of this order. It is known that the gardens here are affected by the presence of natural springs in Primrose Hill to the south. Excavation works to create two basement levels will undoubtedly alter the status quo that the retained trees have grown up with and, while the true effect is very difficult to quantify, it may well have an adverse impact on these trees – especially as it can be assumed that the vast majority of the fine root structure of T3 and T4, especially, will reside in the garden area.

In conclusion, from an arboricultural standpoint, there is insufficient detail and clarification on the matters raised in this report for the proposal to go ahead without modification. This may well be in the works, but as things currently stand, the evidence is currently not there in the available documentation.