

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2017/0827/T	Elizabeth Varvill (Mrs)	59 Gilling Court Belsize Grove	18/03/2017 13:37:36	OBJ	GILLING COURT TREES Planning Application - 2017/0827/T

I am writing to OBJECT to the proposals, which should not be approved as submitted for the following reasons:

The application is INVALID because London Block Management are NOT the owners of the trees as stated in the application form. The trees are owned by Gilling Court (Hampstead) Limited.

The line of established and mature trees along the frontage of Gilling Court along Belsize Grove forms a very significant group visually within the streetscape, providing screening between the building and the road, and making an important contribution to the ecology of the local area. Every effort should be made for the protection and maintenance of these trees.

If there are trees within the group for which removal is unavoidable due to condition or location, then removal should only be approved in conjunction with proposals for planting replacement trees.

A number of the trees are very close to the front boundary wall and have caused displacement of brickwork around the growing trunks. As done in the past for two large trees, the construction of the brickwork can be simply adapted to accommodate the tree, and this approach should be continued to ensure damage is not sustained either to the tree or the wall, and none of the trees is unnecessarily removed. The front boundary wall is low, and with appropriate small scale adaptation, there would be no risk of ongoing structural damage.

Firs T4 & T7

Whilst it may be accepted that these two fir trees are in poor condition, and their removal may be justified, this should not be approved without proposals for planting replacement trees to maintain the overall line and density of foliage & street screening that benefits both the appearance of Belsize Grove and amenity of Gilling Court.

Cherry T5

The trunk of this tree leans out towards the pavement at the base, but this is not severe, and corrects as it rises so that the tree remains reasonably in line with the boundary and the other frontage trees. It is an important member of the group and, as above, there is a practical solution to adapting of the brick boundary wall to accommodate the trunk to provide room for further growth without future damage to the wall. Aside from this, the tree is in other respects in perfectly good condition. Removal of this mature tree, even with replanting would be a significant and unjustified loss, and the proposal should not be allowed.

With regard to the application overall, I would expect when dealing with trees of this importance that the proposals should be informed and accompanied by a detailed arboriculturist's survey and report. The absence of an expert report casts doubt on the competence of the application.

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2017/0827/T	Barry Fox	22 Holmefield Court Belsize Grove NW3 4TT	20/03/2017 10:11:44	OBJEMAIL	<p>Elizabeth Varvill (Mrs) 59 Gilling Court</p> <p>The way this application to fell trees is being handled by the applicants gives increasing cause for concern.</p> <p>The Gilling Court Directors and Managing Agents (London Block Management) have still taken no steps, e.g. by way of notice or letter, to advise Gilling Court flat owners and tenants of their plan to fell trees on the property. The Directors and Agents also refuse to let anyone post information notices in the common hallway. As 75% of residents in the block are temporary renters, any notice mailed from Camden to individual flats is unlikely to reach the intended flat-owners.</p> <p>As filed with Camden the application is unclear over who is applying. It gives a Gilling Court flat number but without any name; it names Ms Katie Riches (who is employed by Managing Agents London Block Management) as 'Applicant' but in response to my direct enquiry to LBM, Ms Riches has now written 14 March: "The tree application was filed by the tree surgeon, Clear Cut Trees, and not myself."</p> <p>The application as filed says there is no health/danger risk and there is no expert advice. In response to my direct enquiry to LBM, Ms Riches has now written 14 March: "The trees which have been requested to be felled have been deemed to be in poor health by an independent tree surgeon, and so for H&S reasons they should be removed. If not there is the potential for them to fall onto people or the building. Please note that these trees have also been raised separately by the buildings insurer." Therefore I urge Camden to ensure that decisions on something as important as felling trees are not taken on the basis of such a secretive, questionable and badly drafted application.</p>
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