

Dan Simon

25 West Hill Park  
Highgate  
London N6 6ND



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Regeneration and Planning  
Camden Council  
2nd Floor  
5 Pancras Square  
London N1C 4AG

Dear Sirs,

**Applications for 26 West Hill Park, N6 6ND, 2017/5176/P and 2017/5178/P**

I am a resident of West Hill Park, and have seen the objection made by West Hill Park Management Co Ltd to these applications. I fully support the objections, but wish to make two additional points.

Two applications have been lodged in respect of 26 West Hill Park, application ref. 2017/5176/P for a side extension, and application ref. 2017/5178/P for a major lower ground floor/basement extension. These should be considered together, as it is not clear that these are exclusive. If permission is granted for both applications, both might be implemented, with an even bigger and more unsightly addition to the existing building.

The access proposed in the Design and Access Statement goes straight through the root protection area of a veteran oak in the rear garden of 26 West Hill Park. This point is made in the West Hill Park Management Co objection to the lower ground floor/basement extension 2017/5178/P, but not in relation to the side extension 2017/5176/P. It should be made in respect of both applications, as the access for the building works as shown in the Design and Access statement for both applications would go straight through the root protection area.

The development would appear to cause significant damage to the oak. The arboriculture report attached to the application acknowledges that this may be so, but believes that the damage would be manageable. This tree has a TPO. The report states that 16% of its root protection area will be affected by the proposals. It then claims that a small existing retaining wall will effectively reduce the root protection area. This claim does not take account of the fact that the retaining wall does not go all the way to the rear boundary of the property with Merton Lane. Neither is the claim supported by evidence that roots etc will not go under the wall. So there is a significant possibility of damage to the root system of this tree.

BSI 5837/201 states that:

*7.1 General*

*7.1.1 Construction within the RPA should accord to the principle that the tree and soil structure take priority, and the most reliable way to ensure this is to preserve the RPA completely undisturbed. Soil structure should be preserved at a suitable bulk density for root growth and function (of particular importance for soils of a high fines content), existing rootable soil retained and roots themselves protected.*

*7.1.2 The ability of a tree to tolerate some disturbance and alteration of its growing conditions depends on specific circumstances, including prevailing site conditions, and in general, the older the tree, the less successfully it will adapt to new conditions.*

The tree is a very old and very fine tree, and construction should not be permitted to damage it.

The proposed mitigation measures are in any event bordering on the ridiculous. A tree protection zone during construction is proposed, but part of this is the area between the Merton Lane boundary and the rear of the proposed structure, which is identified in the Design and Access statement as the entrance for all the work for both applications.

Yours faithfully

Daniel Simon