

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 August 2018 13:49
To: Little, Tom [REDACTED]
Subject: Comments re: 32 Merton Lane -Application no: 2018/3331/T

Dear Tom,

I am commenting on this application both as a resident of West Hill Park Estate and a 'passive' member of HCAAC. As a member of the latter I deal only with trees in N6. However the comments here are entirely my own. West Hill Park Estate consists of 45 houses, one of which is 32 Merton Lane (not Road!!) which was built in the early 1970's. I have lived on WHP, together with my partner Dr. Richard Sillitoe, for almost 44 years, longer than most other residents. I am passionate in maintaining WHP as the conservation area it is meant to be.

I wish it to be noted (on record) that no information was available on the website regarding the above application, despite the website saying 'see diagrams and further information'. This is not the first time this has been the case. If Planning@camden.gov.uk genuinely wants to engage with and receive comments from the public and relevant groups (e.g., HCAAC, Highgate Society etc) it should ensure the website provides what it says it will provide. It's hard to comment when one doesn't have the relevant information. I had to request the necessary info specifically. I am glad to say I received it promptly once it was requested.

Summary of my comments re: 32 Merton Lane -
Application no: 2018/3331/T :

Trees:

* The felling of the two Lime trees will be a loss of amenity to both local residents on the West Hill Park estate and to passers by en route

to the Heath. The long row of very tall magnificent trees all with TPO's, on either side of Merton Lane, enhance the road to the Heath and remind us that we are in a beautiful conservation area.

* Simon Causer, the tree surgeon and author of the report for 32 Merton Lane, comments that T.1 is dead. He gives no explanation as to why it is dead. I'm no expert on Lime Trees but a quick look on the internet suggests: [Lime trees may be susceptible to fungal disease](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees...trees/...trees/common-lime/), which can cause root rot and bleeding cankers. [Trees](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees...trees/...trees/common-lime/) can also suffer infestations of aphids, sap-sucking insects and gall mites, including the nail gall. [Trees](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees...trees/...trees/common-lime/) are occasionally affected by wilt, which can be fatal. (<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/trees...trees/...trees/common-lime/>). If T1 is dead because of some disease neighbouring trees could be susceptible too. I make this comment because of the Elm disease on the Heath in the mid 1990's. All the splendid Elms bordering the Heath and Millfield Lane had to be felled. I trust an inspection of the other Lime trees on Merton Lane has already taken place or will take place soon, by Camden?. Every attempt to maintain their existence should be employed if possible. They all have TPO's on them.

* If Camden decides it is really necessary to fell T1, I trust Camden planning will insist on a replacement tree of significance height in the same place. T.1 has a TPO on it.

* Every effort should be made to save T2 which is healthy and thriving and is a particularly large and interesting tree. This tree also has a TPO on it.

* Repairs to the wall of 32 may be necessary because of a possible danger to the public. However perhaps T.2 could be left for another year and then the situation assessed again

after appropriate wall repairs have taken place.
Simon Causer, in his report actually suggests a yearly inspection of the trees is needed.

Boundary Wall:

* Information given on the 'the boundary wall'. I can find no information on the internet about Mayfield House (1869) in Highgate and no detailed evidence was provided in the actual report on Camden's website, so it is hard to comment re: the wall's actual age and historical significance. Regarding the original boundary wall of the convent, my understanding, and that of others on the estate, is that it was higher up on Merton Lane (finishing by 1 WHP). If so, it would appear that the arches, and possibly even the wall itself, were constructed when the houses (31,32,& 33) were built in the 1970's. If so, neither the wall or the arches are of such historical and architectural value as it first appears. The three houses, 31ML, 32ML and 33ML all have two entrances to their properties: their main entrances are on Merton Lane and their second entrances are in West Hill Park estate where their garages are situated.

* Maintaining the wall/arches? Maintenance of the wall is essential to both the safety of the occupants and the public who pass by. Comparing the arches of the three houses, I note with interest there is no problem with the arch on no. 33 despite there being more trees in their garden. The arch at 31 has a climber growing over it so it is impossible to see it's actual condition. Obviously the climber is helping to 'hold it' together! Maybe a climber could be a

solution to 32? The arch of no. 32 clearly has a crack in it. If the wall/arch of 32 needs repairing - it needs repairing! Why wasn't it done a long time ago one might ask? The current owners have lived there for at least 25 years.

* Danger to the public? I cannot comment on the actual danger of the wall at 32 collapsing onto the pavement. I am not a structural engineer. However, it is the responsibility of the owners of a property to maintain it. The safety of the public is, of course, a concern to me. So are other issues such as: protecting all trees especially ones with TPO's; the conservation of West Hill Park estate where we happen to live; to say nothing of the long term future of our planet!!!

Attached documents - see below:

Camden's TPO act 1971 with reference to West Hill Park estate and a copy of the original architectural document which I purchased from Camden's archive about 15 years ago. The section included shows specifically houses 31, 32 and 33, labelled G1, G2 and G3.

Yours sincerely,

Jeannie Billington M.A.
27 West Hill Park

1) TPO act 1971

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2) Original plans of no's 31, 32 and 33 Merton Lane from Camden's archive.

