



Attn: Mr John Burningham  
5 East Heath Road  
Hampstead Heath  
London  
NW3 1BN

8<sup>th</sup> October 2018

**Ref No: 1810/0435**

**Re: Arboricultural Retention Removal Impact Assessment with Recommendations**

**Site: 4 East Heath Road, Hampstead Heath, London, NW3 1BN**

---

Dear Mr Burningham

Instruction information:

As commissioned, Ashmore Arboricultural Services Limited [AAS] have undertaken a review of the information provided by Mr David Mercer of DVM Architects. Further to our inspection of the photographic evidence, verbal discussion and site visit on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October, AAS are to make an assessment as to whether we consider the small Yew trees forming the hedge have any significant amenity outside the site, if their removal would have a significant detrimental impact on the broader amenity of the conservation area and if the trees forming the hedge are worthy of tree preservation order protection. The proposed small rear single storey extension is located close to the boundary wall of the garden, which also forms the rear boundary of the neighbouring property located in Heathside and where appropriate provide any recommendations to aid in the implementation of the scheme which has been submitted to support the planning application currently registered with Camden Planning Department as the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

Background:

Previous discussions between the client's architect and the LPA regarding the construction of a single storey rear extension would result in the removal or potential removal of the small yew hedge and the LPA advised that they required an independent impact assessment and amenity value assessment to determine which of the trees within the hedge were of sufficient amenity that they should impose restrictions on the proposed scheme. The trees are located in the rear garden of 4 East Heath Road and form a hedge which has been regularly trimmed and pruned on the side of the hedge within the garden but less frequently on the side closest to the neighbouring garden in Heathside. The trees are located in small raised low-rise planter within the terrace area which is adjoining the boundary wall. The historic garden wall between the properties is formed by a dense brick wall that retains a level difference of 0.5m between the two sites. The two Yew trees appear of good health from the inspection made and consist of two small maturing specimens with very dense branch structures that combine to form the compact hedge which has been maintained as a hedge which is stepped in height. Boundary walls can deflect roots of trees and adjust their root pattern, and it is anticipated that the Yew trees have been present for a considerable period but are unlikely to have significant root activity outside the site with the majority of the roots having been retained or deflected back within the site. AAS have been asked to make an independent assessment of the amenity value of trees that form the hedge, reviewing the trees' condition, their immediate surroundings, the impact of their potential loss on the amenity of the conservation area and worthiness of retention and protection.



Further to our inspection, we have reviewed the information provided and details given during our discussion. It is noted that the LPA may have concerns regarding the loss of hedge but the assessment is to be based on current BS5837 standards and best practise guidance.

#### Assessment & Evaluation:

Yew trees are common place throughout London and are very prevalent within North London and are able, as a species, to mature to a very significant age. It is noted that the trees were planted to form a small decorative screen close to the existing house and were intended as a compact hedge and given their spacing and planting location this is likely to be correct. Yew trees as a species, are able to grow to significant dimensions and upon maturity can form a broad evergreen canopy if not regularly pruned which would not be appropriate for these trees so close to the rear of the property if they were not regularly maintained as a hedge. Due to their vigorous nature and ability to tolerate regular pruning they are often managed with cyclic pruning to form hedges, or topiary specimens and they can also tolerate some degree of root disturbance as well. Both trees have been extensively and regularly pruned for many years and have formed a two level hedge stepped between 2.5m and 3.5m in height (approximately). The maturity of two Yew trees and the proximity of the substantial historic boundary wall makes it likely that the vast majority of the roots of the tree would be retained within the site, and given the position of the hedge this would not make it possible to retain the hedge when constructing the extension and it would not be possible to guarantee that there would not be significant or detrimental impact to the tree if efforts were made to retain them and work around them. Therefore, the location of the proposed extension would need to be assessed giving full consideration to the removal of the yew hedge.

The Yew trees clearly form a regularly maintained hedge and while an interesting garden scale feature within the garden, they are not of substantial significance to the broader amenity of the broader conservation area. In addition, under the statutory powers granted to the LPA such specimens of low broader amenity and forming a hedge are not worthy for the grant or inclusion within a Tree Preservation Order [TPO]. Based on a visual assessment of the hedge this is a small feature and is not significant or visible from a public place and is negligible within the context of the broader conservation area and there should be no valid arboriculturally related reason for the LPA to refuse the proposed scheme based on the loss of the small Yew Hedge. Given the age and size of both trees the proposed extension is clearly within the area identified for the Root Protection Zone within BS5837, however the trees are not materially significant enough to warrant refusal of the scheme.

While on site it was noted that there is a mature Horse Chestnut (Possibly Red Horse Chestnut) over 9.5m from the boundary between the properties and given the distances from the closest point of the extension and the dimensions of the tree, the proposed extension would be outside the root protection area of the tree and the scheme would not have an influence on this tree which is located within an adjoining neighbours garden in Heathside.

#### Analysis and Recommendations:

There are no significant trees located on site close to or near the location of the proposed extension, there is however a small 3.5m high (reducing to 2.5m high) hedge, that has been regularly trimmed and well maintained. The two trees that form the hedge even if assessed separately rather than as individual trees would be considered as low grade category C specimens that should not be



considered of sufficient merit to hinder or restrict appropriate development. The Yew hedge is not worthy of the imposition of a TPO and its removal would not have a material impact on the broader amenity of the Conservation Area, nor would it have an impact on the broader amenity of the area as it has no significant visual impact outside the confines of the site.

Given the distance from the proposed extension to the neighbours Horse Chestnut tree there would not be impact or proximity issues with the tree's root protection area. The historic garden boundary wall foundations and changes of level would further exclude there being any impact from the proposed extension affecting the neighbour's tree.

Should neighbouring properties raise concern of the loss of the screening value provide by the small hedge it would be possible for the adjoining landowners to plant a similar feature to screen the proposed extension. They have sufficient open ground and space available to plant such a hedge and they would be able to manage and control its screening potential.

It is recommended that permission from the LPA should not withhold planning approval for the proposed extension on tree removal or arboricultural impact related grounds and for the Yew hedge removal to be granted as part of the LPA's planning approval.

Conclusion:

Having viewed the data and information provided it is our balanced view that it would be possible to approve the scheme proposed, taking full account of the loss of the Yew hedge and implementing the recommendations outlined above, that it should be possible to implement the scheme without any significant loss to the broader amenity of the area as the Yew trees are not worthy of retention and protection.

It is advised that we consider that Camden LPA should not object to the proposed single storey extension on negative tree impact grounds and allow the scheme to be implemented, as there should not be any significant detrimental impact on the trees or the broader conservation area subject to any other planning constraints.

Only the removal of the Yew hedge is required to implement the proposed scheme, which should not be a sufficient material planning reason to withhold planning approval.

I trust you find our assessment sufficiently clear and if we can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip E Wood', written over a horizontal line.

Mr Philip E Wood  
Principal Consultant  
For & on Behalf of AAS Ltd  
*BSc (Hons) LAM*

## Site Visit Photographs Oct 2018

### Rear Garden hedge location illustrating small scale of Yew Hedge



### Position of Yew Hedge to be Removed



### Neighbouring Horse Chestnut outside of RPA



## End of Assessment & Recommendations