

[REDACTED]

From: Victoria (Yahoo!) [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2019 15:43
To: Planning
Subject: RE: YOUR REF: 2019 / 4491 / T URGENT REQUEST FOR REJECTION OF TREE FELLING

[REDACTED]

September 19 2019

Dear Camden Regeneration and Planning Development Mangement/Tree Team,

Ref: 2019/4491/T

I received your letter of September 5 only a few days ago as it was delivered in error to the flats above.

I want to express my extreme concern about the application to cut down two Sycamore trees immediately behind my garden (referred to as T1 and T4) at Fitzjohns Mansions, 10 Netherhall Gardens.

I got your letter just after a bundle of documents from a company called Oriel about the two poplar trees in my garden, as well as the two sycamore trees in the garden behind mine. They refer to our trees as as T2 and T3. Oriel are acting as a Tree Mitigation Co-ordinator on behalf of Ruth Tamir at Flat 6, Fitzjohns Mansions who wants to cut down the trees in her garden. They are actually suggesting cutting down our two Poplars too.

Their documentation includes an **Arboricultural Assessment Report** that recommends felling and treating the stumps of: T1, Sycamore; T2, Poplar; T3, Poplar; and T4, Sycamore. It notes that the condition of both T2 and T3 is "poor"; with T3 "smothered in ivy".

I completely dispute this assessment. At this moment of Climate Emergency these trees, like all the others in this very leafy road in a Conservation Area are an important asset for the neighbourhood's clean air and health. There are no less than four schools in the immediate vicinity, which makes this responsibility particularly heavy. Our two poplar trees are carefully looked after by a well-known tree surgeon, and were pollarded this April as part of their regular monitoring. Camden records will show the permission granted for this work. The ivy grown on them is trimmed and cared for by our gardeners to form a screen for our house and garden and nesting places for birds and insects.

The documentation from Oriel explains the attempt to cut down these 4 trees by a claim to an insurance company for "very slight" subsidence in Flat 6, Fitzjohns Mansion. There are two reports included.

The **Engineering Appraisal Report related to this** describes the nature and extent of the damage, and under **Significance**, the Report notes "The level of damage is **very slight**, and is classed as category 1 in accordance with BRE Digest 251 – Assessment of damage in low-rise buildings." This is the lowest level of damage recordable. In **Onset and Progression**, it is noted that the property owner "advised that damage first commenced in September 2018. We consider that the damage has occurred recently. It is likely that movement will be of a cyclical nature with cracks opening in the summer and closing in the winter." Under **Monitoring**, it is noted that, "Level monitoring has been underway since January 2019. The level monitoring generally demonstrated a slight recovery of the rear projection between January and May. Such a pattern of cyclical movement is generally indicative of vegetation related clay shrinkage subsidence. The level monitoring exercise is to continue." Under **Recommendations**, the felling of "the Poplar tree located to the rear of the property" is suggested, to "mitigate against further movement". It makes no mention of a second Poplar; nor does it mention

Sycamores. Under **Repairs**, it notes that "If the street (sic) tree is not removed then it may be necessary to consider underpinning of the foundations of the property in the area of damage, in addition to structural crack repair and redecoration..."

The lack of consistency between the two reports seems to me most unprofessional:

The **Arboricultural Assessment Report** recommends the felling of two Sycamores and two Poplars. The **Engineering Appraisal Report** recommends the felling of one Poplar and no Sycamores, and then mentions a "street tree".

The **Arboricultural Assessment Report** does not qualify its assessment of the condition of the Poplars as poor. And as I have said, I do not believe that anyone looking at them properly would come to this conclusion.

The **Engineering Appraisal Report** says that the damage is "very slight" and that movement is likely to be of a cyclical nature, which is generally the case in such circumstances. Apparently monitoring has shown a slight recovery between January and May. The Report suggests that if the Poplar is not removed, then underpinning of the foundations in the area affected "may" be necessary. Other London boroughs, I am told, require at least 12 months monitoring prior to making recommendations. Is this also Camden's rule?

The Camden Council's website about Tree Removal shows how rare it is allow tree felling:

"We only remove trees if they are

dead or dying; dangerous; involved in tree related subsidence claims, but only as a last resort."

I would like to ask that this request to fell the trees is rejected, and that Camden's own Tree Team make an independent assessment of the four trees and of these two reports (with their contradictory recommendations) which threaten the two mature, beautiful and health-giving poplar trees in our garden. I would welcome a visit from the Camden Tree Team at any time. My phone numbers are: [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

Victoria Brittain