

Delegated Report

Officer	Application Number(s)
Tom Little	2020/0164/T

Application Address	
37 Steele's Road London NW3 4RG	

Proposal(s)
REAR GARDEN: 1 x Plane (T8) - Fell to ground level.

Recommendation(s):	Objection to Works to Tree(s) in CA
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Application Type:	Notification of Intended Works to Tree(s) in a Conservation Area
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Consultations

Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	24	No. of responses		No. of objections	5
<p>Summary of consultation responses:</p>	<p>I have reviewed online the details of the proposals related to your above mentioned letter.</p> <p>I have major objections to the radical proposal to fell the London Plane tree in my garden at 37 Steele's Road, mainly on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This is a tree which has been designated as an 'important tree' and classified as having 'A' level value in various assessments in the past. It is over a hundred years old and in an Arboricultural Appraisal Report dated 08.06.2017, the recommendation for its maintenance has been to trim it every few years. I can present copies of relevant reports upon request. 2) This tree is very far away from the property mentioned in the proposals and I would need to see concrete evidence of its roots reaching the foundations of the said property to cause the damage suggested. 3) I have spoken with the owners of the property in question and they are not aware of any such proposals. They mentioned it must be their insurers who have taken the liberty to initiate such action. 4) Many houses on Steeles Road and several others on Chalcot Gardens (the adjacent gardens) have experienced cracks and minor subsidence in recent years, believed to be the result of consecutive dry summers. It is possible that the clay soil would have produced these results without the presence of the trees but to determine this would need a scientific investigation. <p>I therefore request that Camden Council carry out an independent survey to establish the validity of these claims so that due process can be followed. I will be happy to commission a trimming of my plane tree this winter if it is deemed to be beneficial for the neighbouring gardens. However, felling to ground of this tree is something I will strongly object to and will take every possible legal action to prevent.</p>					
<p>CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify</p>	<p>The large area of gardens that lies between Steele's Road and England's Lane is a very striking example of how garden space plays such an important role in this part of Camden. Being as extensive as it is means that large trees have been allowed to thrive and many of the trees in this area continue the scale of the trees in the above two roads, as does the tree in question, in relation to the trees in Steele's Road. There is a continuity of presence and scale here that deserves conserving.</p> <p>This particular tree may be in a private rear garden, but these gardens are looked upon by all the residents of the surrounding houses: hundreds of people. It is surely inappropriate therefore that the tree is categorised simply as a private tree and, consequently, may be rather more vulnerable in the prevailing circumstances than one in the public realm.</p> <p>The tree is a large, mature, London plane that can be seen and enjoyed from almost all the buildings that border this area of gardens. Its removal would leave the absence of a quality that would, were another tree to be</p>					

	<p>planted in its stead, take a hundred years to fill. If it is at all possible, the tree should be valued and saved.</p> <p>We object to this application.</p>
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Assessment

The plane is a large mature specimen, is highly visible from the area to the rear of the properties and is visible from Steele's Road between properties, it provides visual amenity in these areas. It is considered to be a characteristic example of rear garden trees in the area and to make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. The tree also contributes to the urban forest canopy, provides habitat for local wildlife and helps mitigate against the effects of climate change.

The tree works notification alleges that the tree is implicated in subsidence in a nearby building however the supporting documents do not include identification of plane roots beneath foundations or any level monitoring data demonstrating seasonal movement in the damaged property.

It is recommended that a tree preservation order is served to protect the visual amenity the tree provides and preserve the character of the conservation area.