**Response to Tretec document dated 06/11/2020**

Thank you for the Tretec response (dated 06/11/202) to my comment submitted 25/10/2020. My comment requested that Camden Planning add as a condition to any approval to application 2020/3681/P, a requirement that measures be taken to avoid application of materials to the site that might prove toxic to the adjacent hollyoak tree. I have replied to specific points in the Tretec response in points 1. to 3. I conclude with a request in the final paragraph below.

1. The Tretec response indicates that reassurance should be drawn from the fact that the tree has not been affected by previous constructions (garage at Gardnor house and existing basement of 49 Willow). Dates for those constructions are not provided but the Tretec response indicates that they date from many years ago (“the original foundation trench which must have been dug by hand all of those years ago”). Building materials and practices may have been very different in those times. Inferences regarding lack of potential effect on the tree of materials applied to the proposed building work, cannot, therefore, be drawn based on these two previous constructions works.
2. The Tretec response refers to the fact that Camden Planning have considered the Tretec report in the context of previous planning request (2020/3203/P). 2020/3203/P was an application for a more limited design for 49 Willow’s extension, that was submitted on 10/08/2020, 6 weeks before the current submission for a more extensive extension (2020/3681/P, submitted on 23/09/2020). Of note, there is no reference on Camden Planning’s website that the process around 2020/3203/P considered either the tree or the Tretec report. However, whether Camden Council did, or did not, consider the report in the context of earlier application 2020/3203/P is not relevant to the concerns that I have raised in my comments of 25/10/20 because application 2020/3203/P did not involve changes to the existing basement (rather it involved changes to the floors above basement level).
3. The Tretec response proposes that the holly oak tree is not susceptible to damage because its root system does not breach the party wall. This is not a concern that I raised in my comment of 25/10/2020. My concern is rather that the tree root system of the hollyoak is exposed through extending below the party wall limit, or through being adjacent to the plane of the party wall. There is description in the Tretec response of the basis for their report’s conclusion that the roots of the Holly Oak have not penetrated the area below the proposed basement extension, and that they do not draw water from that area. Although these observations are useful, they are inferred, not demonstrated. The depth of the inspection pit is not provided but, based on the photo provided, appears to be shallow.

Based on all of the above bases, the suggestion in the final paragraph of the Tretec response that the LPA “can condition check membranes to be placed at the edge and base of excavation prior to pouring concrete” is very welcome. Can Camden Planning please include this as a condition if the application is approved. Can Camden Planning please also include a further condition requesting that measures will be taken to avoid application of materials to the site that might prove toxic to the tree root system.

Thank you.