

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

Dear Sir/Madam

24 March 2021

Ref: Felling of trees outside 130 Greencroft Gdns Nw6 3PJ. APPLICATION Reference: 2021/0970/T

I am the owner of Flat 2 (upper ground) of 130 Greencroft gardens. I was informed recently of the application for the felling of the two trees on the front garden of our house. The notification was unexpected since we had no previous notifications or warning from our neighbors. Furthermore, it was difficult to believe that an impact so severe leading to such decisive measures, did not manifest (as soil movement) in the area surrounding the trees in our garden.

As an owner of Flat 2 of 130 Greencroft Gardens, I want to register my opposition to the Felling of the two Lime Trees (*Tilia platyphyllos*) in the front garden of no 130.

I moved at Greencroft gardens in 1992 and I remember at the time the first impression of the property; two large healthy trees enclosing the front garden, delineating the street and providing a sense of privacy in a relatively dense part of London, contributing at the same time to a district character to the particular stretch of the street. During all these years, the trees did not change in scale, due to its regular management on the base professional advice commissioned every year, and continued to add value to the property and the South Hampstead Conservation Area.

The potential of a damage to the infrastructure of our property from the routes of the trees was a possibility I considered initially when I bought the property in the early 1990s. Regular inspections every year and during refurbishments of the house over the last 30 years showed absolutely no signs of any movement or interference of the tree routes within the garden (paving or wall of tree surrounds, steps etc.) the pavement, the front elevation of 130 Greencroft gardens, drainage infrastructure, foundations or substructure of the garden area.

The clay subsoil suggested by the survey submitted as part of the application, explains the potential movement to the steps of 128 Greencroft Gdns, but there is no way in my experience to verify how far such a fluctuation in humidity and soil behavior relates to the roots of a tree despite the presence of those in the subsoil. Other conditions such as drainage/pipe leakages, substandard rainfall management of the garden area or simply variant rainfall in the particular year could easily cause fluctuation on the behavior of the subsoil. Clay soil is, in the best case, 'inconvenient' to the construction of building elements without special consideration in the construction of foundations and an appropriate drainage management plan.

The distance from the tree tanks and the total luck of damage in our garden suggests that the cause of cracks of the steps of 128, in my view, is a much more complicated condition, which cannot simply be rectified by the felling of the two trees.

One other significant aspect, which need to be weight in the case of interference with the trees, is their value to the conservation area. They are significant three-dimensional structural elements of the townscape of the South Hampstead Conservation Area character; they are an integrating element and impact decisively on the perception of

scale and morphology of the street. The significance of 'green infrastructure' is very much recognized by the 'South Hampstead Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy' issued by Camden Council and adopted in February 2011, as a district condition in support of the conservation value of the area (<https://www.camden.gov.uk/south-hampstead-conservation-area>). Map 8. 'South Hampstead CA Tree Character' (attached below) suggests continues presence of green along both pavements of all streets in the area (attached below).

The impact of tree felling to the geometry of the tree, and on what Map 8 presents, is obvious at other segments of Greencroft Gdns and particularly of the section toward Finchley road and before Fairhazel Gardens. Trees were removed over the years in front of a number of properties without been replaced, followed soon after by the demolition of garden fences and the establishment of on plot /off street parking on the front gardens with a striking impact on the atmosphere and character of the street. The danger of the trees disappearing either because of ageing, luck of interest in their management or desire for off street parking is real and needs to be considered seriously by the Council. One can begin to suggest that the image represented by Map 8 of the Management Plan does not, or very soon will not, represent the reality of this very distinct part of London.

I would again like to register my opposition to the felling to two large healthy streets which I am absolutely convinced, can be managed and continue to contribute significantly to our enjoyment of the place as well as the value of the South Hampstead Conversation Areal.

Yours sincerely

Lora Nicolaou

Flat 2, 130 Greencroft Gdns, London NW6 3PJ

Lora Nicolaou (PhD)
Architecture & Urbanism,
Professor (elect) of Architecture & Urbanism, Frederick University

Urban Planning and Development Unit
www.frederick.ac.cy/updu

