

Delegated Report

Officer	Application Number(s)
Tom Little	2021/2691/T

Application Address	
6 Langbourne Avenue London N6 6AL	

Proposal(s)
REAR GARDEN: 1 x Ash (T1) - Fell to ground level.

Recommendation(s):	No 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	3	No. of responses	3	No. of objections	2
<p>Summary of consultation responses:</p>	<p>The Council received two objections and one support from members of the public. The objections are summarised below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We cannot support the proposal to remove an established, healthy ash tree, given the threat of ash die back in the UK. According to the Tree Council, ash die back is likely to affect up to 80% of UK ash trees, causing major ecological impact - by altering the landscape and affecting the valuable habitats of over 1000 wildlife species that inhabit ash trees. 2. Given the climate emergency, we have a societal responsibility to preserve and look after all healthy, established ash trees in order to help minimise species loss, improve the quality of our air and environment, and absorb CO2. 3. It is difficult to see how the removal of this tree would comply with Camden's policy and planning guidance. 4. Living on the Holly Lodge Estate, we ourselves benefit from the proximity of beautiful, established trees that provide a unique and special urban environment. 5. Once removed, trees like this cannot be replaced and would irreversibly change our beautiful local environment. 6. Felling this tree goes against stated City Hall policy which is to increase the number of trees in the capital by 10% by 2050. 7. The tree is a haven for wildlife. We have numerous birds in our garden including woodpeckers, jays, blackbirds and a host of smaller birds such as robins, blue tits, cole tits etc. These birds thrive in the woodland environment created by this large tree and feed on the lichens and insects that live in its trunk. Furthermore, the airy canopy of the tree is known to benefit other plants. The Woodland Trust comment that: "Ash trees make the perfect habitat for a number of different species of wildlife. The airy canopy and early leaf provide optimum conditions for wild flowers which, in turn, these support a range of insects." 					
<p>CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify</p>	<p>None</p>					

Assessment

As the ash is not covered by a TPO it was subject to a section 211 notification of intended works to trees in a conservation area, unlike a TPO application there is no requirement to give reasons for the proposed works. A section 211 notification gives the LPA six weeks to consider objecting to the proposed works. If the LPA wishes to object then it must serve a tree preservation order on the relevant trees. There are several criteria that must be considered when assessing the suitability of a tree for a TPO which can be broken down as follows (taken from the current planning practice guidance that LPAs use when assessing a tree):

Visibility

The extent to which the trees or woodlands can be seen by the public will inform the authority's assessment of whether the impact on the local environment is significant. The trees, or at least part of them, should normally be visible from a public place, such as a road or footpath, or accessible by the public.

In this case, the ash tree in question is not visible or has very low visibility from a public place, it is not considered to provide significant visual amenity to the public.

Individual, collective and wider impact

Public visibility alone will not be sufficient to warrant an Order. The authority is advised to also assess the particular importance of an individual tree, of groups of trees or of woodlands by reference to its or their characteristics including:

- *size and form;*
The ash is not a particularly large tree, it is not in any way a noteworthy example of its species. It would appear that the tree has been pollarded historically and regrown, it is therefore likely that there are structural weaknesses where branches have regrown
- *future potential as an amenity;*
The tree has the potential to grow beyond its existing size, however, its position relative to adjacent buildings will prevent it from ever becoming significantly visible from a public place. It is worth noting that previous management and associated structural weaknesses would mean that regular reductions would be advisable preventing the tree from reaching its potential size.
- *rarity, cultural or historic value;*
The ash is not of a rare species or of any known cultural or historic value. It is acknowledged that the species is threatened by *Hymenosyphus fraxinaeus*, ash dieback and may become scarce in the future.
- *contribution to, and relationship with, the landscape;*
It is considered that the tree makes a reasonable contribution to the landscape to the rear of the properties, however the lack of visibility from the public realm significantly reduces the weighting that this can be given when considering a TPO.
- *contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.*
The tree is considered to make a contribution to the character of the conservation area however this is limited to the rear gardens.

Other factors

Where relevant to an assessment of the amenity value of trees or woodlands, authorities may consider taking into account other factors, such as importance to nature conservation or response to climate change. These factors alone would not warrant making an Order.

The tree offers some benefits in terms of reducing pollution, absorbing CO2 and wildlife habitat however the current legislation does not put sufficient weight on to these factors to justify serving a TPO.

On balance, due to the lack of visibility and structural issues it would not be expedient to bring this tree under the protection of a TPO.