

Planning application: 27 Dukes Avenue, N10 - HGY/2022/2764 - Objection

I object to this application, which is to destroy a large London plane tree that makes a significant and positive contribution to the environment, street-scene and quality of the Muswell Hill conservation area.

This tree has been a limiting constraint in a number of recent planning applications for developments in the garden of 27 Dukes Avenue/40 Methuen Park and no doubt the property developer would welcome removal of this tree.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that only minimal and insufficient maintenance work has been undertaken to contain any damage that the tree might be causing. Some tree-works were carried out in 2021 (see CON/2021/0038), which were intended to reduce the height of the tree and thereby restrict tree-root growth. In practice, the work undertaken was limited to minor trimming of only one side of the tree, as if the intention was to make the tree an unstable hazard. See photo and my submission asking for enforcement action:



"This photo was taken in May 2021, after 'crown reduction'. It shows the tree even more out of balance and at-risk damage in the street below. Perhaps the owners want an excuse to have it taken down so that they can have free reign to develop in the garden."

I believe earlier assessments by the council's tree officers concluded that the tree was healthy and unlikely to cause damage. Perhaps all that is called for now is a reduction in its size, which should restrict tree-root extension. Also to note, this dry summer has produced cracks in buildings with shallow foundations on shrinkable clay sub-soils as found in Muswell Hill.

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