

Liz Everest

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 April 2025 15:52
To: Irene Fletcher
Subject: Planning application No: DM/25/0975. Oak Tree (T1)

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18th April 2025

Dear Irene

I hope you are well.

I'm not sure if you remember visiting my property a year or two back. But you gave me some really sound advice about the maintenance of the oak tree in my garden with which I was happy to comply.

The tree is now the subject of the above planning application as submitted by my neighbours at number 19, The Nursery.

I have considerable concerns regarding the above planning application to "trim back overhanging branches to the boundary line"

Yesterday, I was alarmed and a little shocked to receive a paper notification via royal mail regarding the above planning application for this work to be considered. This was the first knowledge I had of the application or of any concerns precipitating it.

I would therefore like to reiterate that the application was **not** submitted by me, and I was not privy to my neighbours intention.

As you may remember, and your records indicate I have regularly had the tree assessed and maintained by well qualified tree surgeons within the constraints of the TPO to which the tree is subject, and following due application to you.

On all occasions the work was financed with difficulty by me.

Work on the tree was carried out to reduce and reshape the crown and remove major deadwood on the following dates:

18/5/2011- Broadleaf Tree Services

14/6/2017- J Lee Trees

15/6/2022 - J Lee Trees

So in my estimation, I have made every endeavour to promote the health and longevity of the tree, and it is with a heavy heart that I type this response.

I have evidence to suggest that previous owners have also afforded the tree similar care and attention. So the tree has been maintained in good health for a very long time.

My concern regarding the planning application as it stands, ie: to "trim back overhanging branches to the boundary line" is mainly as follows:

Our gardens are small. The tree trunk is extremely close to the boundary fence. Therefore I imagine that to trim branches back to the boundary line would require radical amputation of a complete half of the crown.

I approached Justine (J. Lee Trees) for his advice and to address some of my worries (I greatly value his professional advice).

Independent of any suggestion on my part, Justin confirmed my fear that such unilateral amputation would destabilise the tree and impact on its integrity and health.

My more recent layman's thoughts (not Justin's) on this would be that if this extreme work were to proceed on just one side, and the integrity of the tree compromised, then in the interests of the safety of our buildings and residents, it would be better to fell the tree completely. Not a solution I would necessarily embrace at this point as I understand this solution too would have visual, environmental and structural repercussions.

However, at the very least I feel that any work should be carried out sensitively and aesthetically to enhance the safety, health and appearance of the tree. rather than degrade it. I Would not be averse to a fairly radical approach if it were done respectfully and with the stability of the tree assured.

On receipt of the planning notification I did approach my neighbours in the interests of effective communication and neighbourliness and we discussed our mutual concerns.

In terms of living with such a now extremely large tree in the garden, I believe their main concern was the copious amounts of bird excrement in their garden. I was fully sympathetic with this as it can be very annoying.

My particular concern is recent evidence of some damage being done by the increasing extended squirrel family. Also the effects of climate change and increasing episodes of severe weather conditions on the safety of living under such a now very large isolated tree in such a confined space and in such close proximity to the houses.

In support of my neighbours, but also within the interests of conservation, I wonder if their application might generate a holistic approach where everyone's concerns are examined and nature is preserved as much as possible.

One final anxiety that affected me was regarding worries about fiscal responsibility for any work done: (I am now a pensioner dependent on state pension).

I have been reassured that if work is carried out **only** on my neighbours side of the boundary and solely in accordance with their application, then I am **not** liable for the costs of work requested and generated by them. They gave me verbal reassurance on their understanding of this.

I also expressed a willingness to work with them on a mutually satisfactory resolve.

I normally arrange assessment and reduction of the tree approximately every five years. This would make the next assessment /reduction due in 2027.

I would consider bringing this forward to next autumn 2026 if indicated. I have discussed this with Justin.

Finally. As this work would affect me and my property immensely. I would appreciate ;

- 1) full involvement in the progress of the application and
- 2) Thorough assessment and review following any work carried out.

With kindest regards

[Redacted Signature]

