

## A Guide on How to Comment on Treework Applications & Notices of Intent

The planning legislation provides for two main types of protection to trees:

- For trees which are included in a Tree Preservation Order, a treework application for formal council consent is required for their treatment (pruning or felling) unless special circumstances apply;
- For trees in a Conservation Area (but not included in a Tree Preservation Order) a more general type of protection applies, whereby it is normally necessary to give the council written notification of proposed treework - a 'Notice of Intent'

Your council is committed to consulting neighbours and other parties who could be directly affected by treework applications and Notices of Intent. We want to hear your views so that we can take them into account when considering applications to treat tree(s) included in a Tree Preservation Order or notices of intended treework. This guide explains how to find out more about a treework application or Notice of Intent, how to make your views known, what matters the council can take into account and what happens to your comments.

### How to view a treework application

- **Online: [www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-applications](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-applications)**

You can search for new applications via the above link. Please allow one week from the date of a consultation letter, site notice or press notice for the associated documents to appear online. To view documents, click on *Related Documents* then *View associated documents*.

- **Planning Reception, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London N20 0EJ (tel: 020 8359 3000)**

Opening Times: 9.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 5.00pm on Monday to Friday, except Bank Holidays and Christmas / New Year period. No appointments are required.

### **Documents will be available in electronic format only.**

A duty planning officer will be available to help you from **9.00am to 1.00pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** to give general advice.

You may also be able to see the planning officer dealing with the application but, as officers are often out on site, it is necessary to make an appointment by contacting our Planning Trees Administration on 020 8359 4725 or First Contact on 020 8359 3000. The officer can help explain the proposed treework and provide general guidance, but to ensure the application is dealt with fairly, the officer has to remain impartial. Please advise Planning Trees Administration or First Contact of the nature of your query, as it may be possible to deal with the matter by telephone.

### What matters can be taken into account

Applications to treat tree(s) included in a Tree Preservation Order would usually be considered on the basis of amenity, taking account of the reason(s) put forward for wishing to undertake the works, together with factors such as the condition of the tree(s) and previous treatment. The most common of these include:

1. The impact on the surrounding area and adjoining neighbours
2. Overlooking and loss of privacy
3. Effect on nature conservation

## **What matters cannot be taken into account**

Often people wish to comment on matters that cannot be taken into account because they are not controlled by planning legislation. Common objections include:

1. Loss of property value
2. Private issues between neighbours such as land covenants, land and boundary disputes, damage to property
3. Problems associated while treeworks are being carried out, such as noise, dust and disturbance (if you are experiencing these problems the Environmental Health Section may be able to help)

## **How to put your views forward**

We want to hear from you whether you are supporting or opposing a treework application. To make sure your views are not misinterpreted we can only accept comments in writing and preferably online ([www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-applications](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-applications)). Before writing to us you are strongly advised to view the application details online or at Planning Reception.

You may also wish to write to your Local Councillor, MP or London Assembly Member, whose name and address can be provided by the planning officer dealing with the application. Also, if a number of people share your views you may wish to organise a petition or a joint letter.

## **What happens to your comments?**

Comments will be acknowledged when an email address or a stamped self-addressed envelope is supplied. All those making written comments will be informed of the decision within ten days of it being made.

Any written comment you make about an application will be placed on the public file. This means that:

- Your comment, name and address will form part of the application documents and will be available for inspection
- Anonymous comments will not be considered
- Letters marked in confidence will be considered and will not be routinely disclosed. We will undertake necessary redactions, including the name of the occupant, before considering disclosure. We will, however, leave postal addresses on the letters.
- Your comment, name and address will be stored electronically and may be published online. Any signature, email address and telephone number will be removed before publication.

We advise that you refrain from including details of a personal nature in your correspondence.

Planning managers have powers to decide some applications and they will take your written comments into account. When an application has to be considered by a Committee, planning officers will write a report which includes a recommendation and a summary of comments received. The report will be presented to the appropriate Committee, which is made up of elected ward Councillors.

In some circumstances you may also be given the opportunity to speak at the committee meeting. For more information on speaking at these meetings please contact the planning officer handling the application as soon as possible. The Committee will consider your comments along with the other planning issues relating to the case. The Committee are not bound by the planning officer's recommendation. It may grant or refuse planning permission.