

In case of enquiry contact Mrs Diana Oviatt-Ham  
Direct Dial 01223457145  
Fax 01223457139  
E-mail: diana.oviatt-ham@cambridge.gov.uk



The Resident

17 September 2010

Our Ref DOH

Dear Resident

**Cambridge City Council: Active Communities  
Management of Trees on Open Spaces: Alexandra Gardens**

I wrote to you on 3 September 2010 concerning the proposed tree works to three London plane trees growing on Alexander Gardens. I am writing to you now to acknowledge that the Council has received a response from you and to advise you that you have the right to speak at Planning Committee on 22 September 2010. The details for which are set out at the close of the letter.

I would like to thank you for taking the time and trouble to write, the Council welcomes your comments and concerns. All your comments and representations will be reported to Committee in order for Members to be aware of the public view and to inform their decision making. There have been many responses to the consultation letter and I am taking the opportunity of writing a generic letter to all those who made representations as it is not possible to respond to you each individually.

**Independent advice**

The Council has sought independent advice. A firm of structural engineers has assessed all the evidence available and met the engineers for the other party involved to discuss the matter in depth. The Council's independent engineers have concluded that the building is suffering structural damage which is attributed to the moisture take up of the London plane trees growing on Alexandra Gardens.

**Alternative tree works**

The trees were reduced in volume by 30% in March 2009. Unfortunately, the reduction was not sufficient to abate the subsidence and following the dry period last autumn further movement occurred.

**Tree barrier or works in the highway to prevent root encroachment.**

The Highway Authority will not allow the installation of a root barrier within the carriageway. The Council's independent structural engineers do not support the installation of a root barrier because it will be impossible to install and maintain a secure barrier. Any barrier will have to be fixed around existing underground public

Mr Simon Payne  
Director of Environment  
Cambridge City Council  
P O Box 700  
Cambridge  
CB1 0JH  
Telephone 01223 457 200



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

utility services allowing spaces for the roots to penetrate and the repair of these services will breach it further.

**Plant and establish replacement trees before felling.**

The property has been damaged because the trees are taking up water and changing the ground conditions, as long as the trees remain in place further damage may occur.

**Underpin the property**

The Council's insurers support the two proposed options. If the Council does not follow the report's recommendations it is likely that the Council will lose its insurance cover in relation to this and other claims of damage relating to these trees.

**If the trees are removed the ground will swell and heave will occur with potential structural problems.**

The structural engineers for the property in question and the City Council do not anticipate problems associated with heave.

**If the trees are removed the ground will move as the roots die and cause further structural problems.**

The roots will die and rot away, there should be no adverse ground movement.

**No solid evidence as to the damage caused.**

There is well documented evidence to support the request.

**Trees are too far away to cause a problem.**

The evidence provided shows live roots against the property. The roots have been analysed as London plane.

**Site of former brick works**

The structural engineers have discounted the use of the site as a former brickworks as causing the structural damage.

**Right to attend Planning Committee on 22 September 2010**

As someone who has commented on the proposals you have the right to speak at committee. The Council has adopted a policy to enable members of the public to speak at meetings of the Committee. To be eligible to speak you must meet the following criteria:

- You have submitted a written representation relating to the application,
- and**
- You have registered with the Committee Manager that you wish to speak at the meeting by **12 noon** on the day before the meeting.

To register your request to speak please contact Glenn Burgess, the Committee Manager for Planning Committee on 01223 457169 by **noon of 21 September 2010**. You may attend the meeting even if you do not wish to speak.

Planning Committee meetings begin at 9.30am and are held in Committee Rooms 1 and 2 of the Guildhall, Cambridge.

The following procedure has been agreed:

1. A person can speak once on an application **for up to 3 minutes** (with the Chair having discretion to extend this time limit). The Chair will determine the order in which applications will be considered and announce this at the beginning of the meeting.
2. The number of persons permitted to speak on each proposal will normally be limited to **one from each side** (i.e. either in objection/or in support of an application). Where several people wish to speak on a matter, the Chair will normally ask for one person to act as spokesperson for the group. Only where the group have different points of view, is the Chair likely to agree to more speakers.
3. Anyone can speak on a proposal provided they have made written representations and have registered the intention with the Committee Manager prior to the meeting. Speakers need not confine themselves to points raised in their written representations.
4. Applicants or their representatives may speak on the proposal provided they have registered the intention with the Committee Manager prior to the meeting.
5. The procedure shall be applied fairly by the Chair who has sole discretion on the interpretation of the procedure.

In helping you decide whether you wish to, or indeed need to speak at the meeting you can view Planning Committee reports on our website [www.cambridge.gov.uk/councillors/comtabl4.htm](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/councillors/comtabl4.htm). Alternatively a hard copy can be sent to you on request. Please note the reports are available 5 working days prior to the date of the meeting.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Diana Oviatt-Ham  
Principal Arboricultural Officer