

# Charlotte Street Association

39 Tottenham Street  
London W1T 4RX  
email: [csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk)

Regeneration & Planning,  
Development Management,  
London Borough of Camden,  
Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 8ND.

7<sup>th</sup> December 2017

For the attention of Laura Hazelton, Planning Officer.

**By email to:** [planning@camden.gov.uk](mailto:planning@camden.gov.uk)

Dear Laura Hazelton,

**Re: reference 2017/6080/P: Cyclone House, 27-29 Whitfield Street, London W1T 2SE:**

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Change of Use of Basement, Ground Floor and 1<sup>st</sup> Floor to flexible Retail, Business and Non-residential Institutional Uses (Classes A1/B1/D1); and 2nd Floor to Office Use (class B1a); erection of single-storey roof extension (i.e. new 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) to create additional Office space (i.e. class B1); rooftop plant enclosure (at new 4<sup>th</sup> floor level); facade alterations including new (additional) front entrance, replacement windows, infill of lightwell at basement level; and removal of rendered panels and application of limewash to existing brickwork.

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Our Association wishes to make comments and objections as set out below, concerning the above new planning application:

Our comments and objections are similar to those that our Association made on the previous schemes. The Design & Access Statement says that the decision on the previous application (2016/6495/P) was the subject of a judicial review and was quashed “... *due to claims that the Council did not follow correct procedure*”. Our understanding is that the reasons for the decision being quashed were more than procedural matters.

The Design & Access Statement also goes on to say that this application is identical in all respects to the previous application except for “... a different aesthetic approach to the existing render and to the top floor extension.”

In fact, it is this quite different “aesthetic” approach, especially to the new top floor extension, that makes this a different scheme from the previous one, including the impact on the setting of the Listed Building next door at 1 Colville Place; we object to, and comment on, this aspect in more detail below.

**1. Setting of the Listed building: objections to proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor and 4<sup>th</sup> Floor:**

- (a). We wish to object to the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension together with the proposed large 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Plant Room. As in the previous applications, we think that the bulk of these two new extensions is seriously detrimental to the setting of the Listed Building next door at no. 1 Colville Place, when viewed from the long view in Whitfield Street, and from the public open space of Crabtree Fields.

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(b). The applicant's different "aesthetic" approach to the top floor (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) extension:

We also wish to object to the design of this new 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor extension, because its vertical emphasis will make it appear to be even taller than the previous scheme; the framed construction/aesthetic is out of keeping with the character of the existing building, the setting of the Listed Building and the character of the Colville Place terrace buildings; and the floor to ceiling glazing will not give it the expected "lightness", for the reasons set out as follows.

The Summary of the Design & Access Statement, the applicant states that "... the only difference is the facade treatment and the aesthetic design of the roof extension ..." (new 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension).

Although the applicant says that the scheme is identical in terms of its size, height, bulk, scale and massing, it needs to be said that scale and apparent size are not just due to the volume of a building. The "architectural" scale and apparent size of a building are greatly affected by way the facade is designed in terms of proportions, the way the different building elements are handled, and the materials. In this instance, this different "facade treatment and aesthetic design" are not minor – it is a considerably different scheme.

In the previous scheme, the design of the new 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor extension was with windows in a solid wall ("hole in the wall") reflecting the design character of the existing building, as well as the terrace in Colville Place.

In the current scheme, the framed construction gives a quite different feel in character and proportions - the strong vertical emphasis makes the new storey taller and thus even larger relating to the setting of the Listed Building.

In addition, the large amount of glazing will not give the hoped-for "lightness" – such glazing invariably appears dark and thus solid against the sky when viewed.

(c). The Proposed "Elevation 2" drawing (drwg no. 51517-P-61 Rev M) gives the wrong impression because the front elevation of 1 Colville Place is shown in the same grey tone as the back of the Goodge Street buildings, as though all these buildings are in the same plane. The back of the Goodge Street terrace buildings are set well back (some 16 metres) and not seen in the long view in Whitfield Street.

It should be noted that, on this drawing, Goodge Street building is still incorrectly labelled: the building labelled as "21 *Whitfield Street seen beyond*" is in fact "21 **Goodge Street seen beyond**".

(d). A truer impression is given in the elevation drawing Proposed Colville Place Elevation as shown on page 6 of the Design & Access Statement where the back of the Goodge Street buildings (again still incorrectly labelled as 21 Whitfield Street) are shown in white.

Thus, this drawing more truly shows the considerable bulk of the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension and the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Plant Room in comparison with the Listed Building of 1 Colville Place.

(e). Viability of scheme without the need for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor extension:

Although we have commented in some detail on the design of the proposed Extension and the affect on the setting of the Listed Building next door, we also wish to query the need for this Extension in terms of overall viability of the scheme - our impression is that the refurbished scheme is perfectly viable without the need for the Extension.

**2. The render and proposed limewash to brickwork:**

- (a). We strongly object to the removal of the existing render

We are not at all convinced that it can be removed without damaging the surface of the brickwork. Any repair to the brickwork will, inevitably, not have the natural finish of brick. The render appears to be a "hard" render; thus it is likely to be difficult to remove easily and especially to do so without damaging the surface of the existing bricks. It would be much better to retain/refurbish the existing render.

- (b). We also strongly object to the proposed limewash - such a finish is quite out of character with the immediate area, and does not have the "urban" brick character of Fitzrovia.

We understand that there are sample panels of the limewash treatment on site - we would particularly like to request to see them; and have the opportunity to make further comment on this aspect.

**3. Colville Place elevation of new 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor "green roof":**

- (a). In this proposal, the glazing is much closer to the party wall (only 600mm from the face of the party wall), compared with the previous schemes. We object to this closeness; there should be the previous much greater "separation" in respect on 1 Colville Place, both in terms of the setting of the Listed Building, but also to prevent possible overlooking as well as light pollution to no. 1.

- (b). Glazing/windows overlooking the "green roof":

We are greatly concerned that it is not clear if, or how, the glazing/windows open; and thus how they will be cleaned - nothing is indicated on the drawings or in the documents. There is strong objection to them opening out and allowing access to the roof for possible use as a terrace. The elevation drawing indicates internal balustrades - which presumably would prevent inward-opening windows to clean them.

In the previous scheme, there were Juliet balconies, and with the windows opening inwards. Thus, this avoided the temptation for people to use the new 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor flat roof (which was labelled "Flat Roof for Maintenance Only") as a terrace.

For this scheme, we think it important that there is a similar arrangement with the glazing/windows being inward-opening, and with fixed external balustrades of 1.1M height (or Juliet-type balconies) to prevent access to the roof (other than for maintenance).

- (c). The "green roof" (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor front flat roof):

Unlike the previous scheme, there is no indication on the drawings that there would be access for maintenance only to this new roof (now proposed as a "green roof"). There is strong objection to the roof being used as a terrace, because of overlooking to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor terrace at 1 Colville Place, and the likely noise disturbance (and smoking) to 1 Colville Place and the other nearby houses in Colville Place.

In addition to the provision of external balustrades and inward-opening glazing/windows (as in our para (b) above), there needs to be a Condition that access to this roof is for Maintenance Only, to prevent it being used as a terrace.

**4. Proposed 4<sup>th</sup> Floor terrace:**

This top floor terrace is described as an amenity space, presumably for the 5 floors of office space (B1) together with the A1/D1/B1 flexible uses. A very considerable number of people could use this space, and we reckon could accommodate upto 20 to 30 people.

**4. Proposed 4<sup>th</sup> Floor terrace - continued:**

The level of this rooftop terrace is well above the tops of the Colville Place houses and the Goodge Street terrace buildings; and thus the noise of people on this terrace, especially in the evenings and at weekends/public holidays will carry to the nearby residential houses and flats. Colville Place is wholly residential; and all the Goodge Street buildings (except for two of them) have residential flats above Ground Floor, which look out at the rear.

Thus, as for the previous scheme, there needs to be a **Condition** that restricts the use of this terrace to Monday to Fridays daytime hours only, and not at all on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank/Public Holiday days.

**5. Existing 1<sup>st</sup> Floor and 2nd Floor Roofs at the rear:**

Both these roofs are marked as "green roof". As for the previous scheme, there needs to be a Condition that access to these two roofs is for Maintenance Only to prevent them being used as a terrace and/or for smoking etc.

**6. Proposed Colville Place Elevation:****(a). Ground Floor windows:**

As previously, the proposal is to extend the existing Ground Floor window openings down to floor level. It is not clear if these are opening or fixed windows. If they are full height opening windows, then there is strong objection due to the likely noise nuisance to the nearby residential in Colville Place.

**Conclusions:**

1. There is strong objection to proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension and 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Plant Room - their bulk is seriously detrimental to the setting of the listed building at 1 Colville Place.
2. The new "aesthetic" of the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension, removal of the existing render, and application of limewash to the brickwork, are not minor changes.
3. There is strong objection to the "design" and changed "aesthetic" of the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Extension. Its framed construction is out of character with "solid and voids" character of the existing buildings. Its strong verticality makes it appear even taller; the glazing will not give the hoped-for "lightness"; glazing invariably appears dark/solid against the sky.
4. There is strong objection to the removal of the existing render, and to the proposed limewash to all the brickwork; being out of character with urban Fitzrovia.
5. There is objection to 4<sup>th</sup> Floor terrace as amenity space, without a Condition to ensure that there is not noise nuisance especially in evenings and at weekends/public holidays causing disturbance to the nearby residential
6. There is objection to the Colville Place 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor elevation, because its glazing is now much closer to the party wall/1 Colville Place.  
There is also objection to the Colville Place 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor elevation in conjunction with the front 3<sup>rd</sup> floor green roof - the proposal is likely to encourage use as a terrace, instead of access for maintenance only.
7. Regarding the existing rear 1<sup>st</sup> Floor and 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor roofs (to now be green roofs), there need to be conditions to ensure access is for Maintenance Only.
8. Regarding the proposed Colville Place elevations, there is objection to the lowering of the ground floor window openings, especially if they are opening windows.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Henderson,  
Committee Member,  
On behalf of Charlotte Street Association.

Copy: CSA Committee.