

CLIVE FOWLER ASSOCIATES

Tree Consultancy

52 Pilgrims Lane

London

NW3 1SN

30th September 2020

Dear

**Evergreen Magnolia Tree (*Magnolia grandiflora*) in the Front Garden of
52 Pilgrims Lane, London, NW3 1SN.**

I write further to our recent correspondence in relation to the above tree and my visit to your property on the 28th September 2020. The purpose of my visit was to inspect the said magnolia tree and to provide an opinion as to whether or not it is suitable for long term retention, having regard to its location.

I understand that trees at this property are protected by virtue of the site being located within a Conservation Area and therefore Local Authority permission will be required before any works detailed in this letter are undertaken. This inspection was undertaken from ground level only and all measurements are approximate. Further details of the tree and its approximate location are provided in the attached Tree Survey Schedule and Tree Location Plan. I also attach photographs taken during my visit.

The Tree.

The tree in question is a young evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) which grows in the front garden of the property and to the south west of the stairs leading to the dwelling. It is located in a narrow open border of

approximately one metre in depth and within 0.54 metres of the brickwork beneath the stairs. The tree is located approximately 1.5 metres from the nearest part of the front bay window and 1.9 metres from the nearest part of the main wall of the house.

It is situated within 0.7 metres of the retaining wall (to the lightwell) to its south and it was noted that the capping stone in proximity to the tree has been slightly dislodged, probably as a result of direct root growth from the tree. A crack was also noted in the brickwork beneath the stairs and adjacent to the small window within such structure (to the south east) at a distance from the tree of 0.95 metres and a smaller (older) crack was noted to the north of the structure at a distance of approximately 0.7 metres.

A clearly visible and extant gas pipe is located to the trees north at 0.3 metres and I also understand that water and electricity services run beneath the base of the tree at a depth of approximately 0.5 metres.

To the west of the tree the garden has been covered with Yorkstone paving and it was noted during my visit that this had lifted in a number of places, probably as a result of root growth from the ornamental cherry tree that is also located in the garden and at a distance of approximately 2.8 metres from the subject tree (in a far more prominent position).

The tree itself appears to be in good condition and has a stem diameter, when measured at 1.5 metres from ground level, of 12 cm and a crown radius of 1.4 metres to the north, 1.2 metres to the east, 1.25 metres to the south, and 1.4 metres to the west. It has been fairly heavily reduced in the past at a height of approximately 2.6 metres and has since regrown vigorously to a height of 4 metres. Due to the confined space that this tree has been planted in it has been necessary to regularly clip back the regrowth from the above pruning points in order to retain access to the garden and dwelling. At the time of my inspection, no significant defects or obvious signs of disease were noted in this tree and it subsequently appears to have a long life expectancy.

Discussion.

I understand that you have recently submitted an Application (the service of six weeks written Notice) to the Local Authority in relation to the removal of this tree which you subsequently withdrew, due to the receipt of objections

from a number of interested parties and I have had the opportunity to view such comments. Reference is made to the prominence of this tree when, in fact, it is the flowering cherry (located close to the front boundary) and which it is intended to retain, that is far more visible from public vantage points (including the junction of Denning Road). The subject tree, which has to be contained in size due to its location within a restricted growing space and the requirement for unhindered access to the house and garden is, in effect, little more than a large shrub and I therefore do not agree that it contributes significantly to the 'green corridor'. I also do not consider that it would be 'expedient in the interests of amenity' (Town & Country Planning Act 1990 – as amended) to include it within a Tree Preservation Order.

Although there is a gap in the tree cover in Pilgrims Lane adjacent to your property, which could be improved with Local Authority street tree planting, overall, the tree cover in this area is good, with two ash, a sorbus, and a group of lime trees noted to the front of properties to the north east of the site, two ornamental cherries and a flowering ash to the south of Denning Road and close towards the junction with Pilgrims Lane, and several limes, gleditsia, silver birch and ash to the front of properties /in the public footpath areas in Pilgrims Lane to the south west of the subject property. This leads me to conclude that the removal of your magnolia would not have a significant impact upon public amenity.

Conclusions.

The above magnolia has unfortunately been planted in an unsuitable location close to the stairway leading to your house where its growth hinders access to your property and garden and therefore requires containment. As a result of this, it would not be possible for the crown of this specimen to be permitted to develop any further than it has at the current time and its potential amenity value is subsequently stalled. The Royal Horticultural Society's 'Plant Finder' details this species ultimate size as 'higher than 12 metres and wider than 8 metres' and I regularly encounter mature specimens with stem diameters in excess of 35 cm. This growth potential is obviously incompatible with the subject trees location.

This tree also appears to already be causing direct structural damage to the adjacent retaining wall to its south, a problem which will obviously increase as

the base and root crown of the tree develops further. This, combined with the very close proximity of gas, water, and electricity services justifies the removal of this tree.

I hope the above is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Clive Fowler, Dip. Arb (RFS), F.Arbor. A, Tech. Cert.Arbor.A

Attached –Tree Survey Schedule

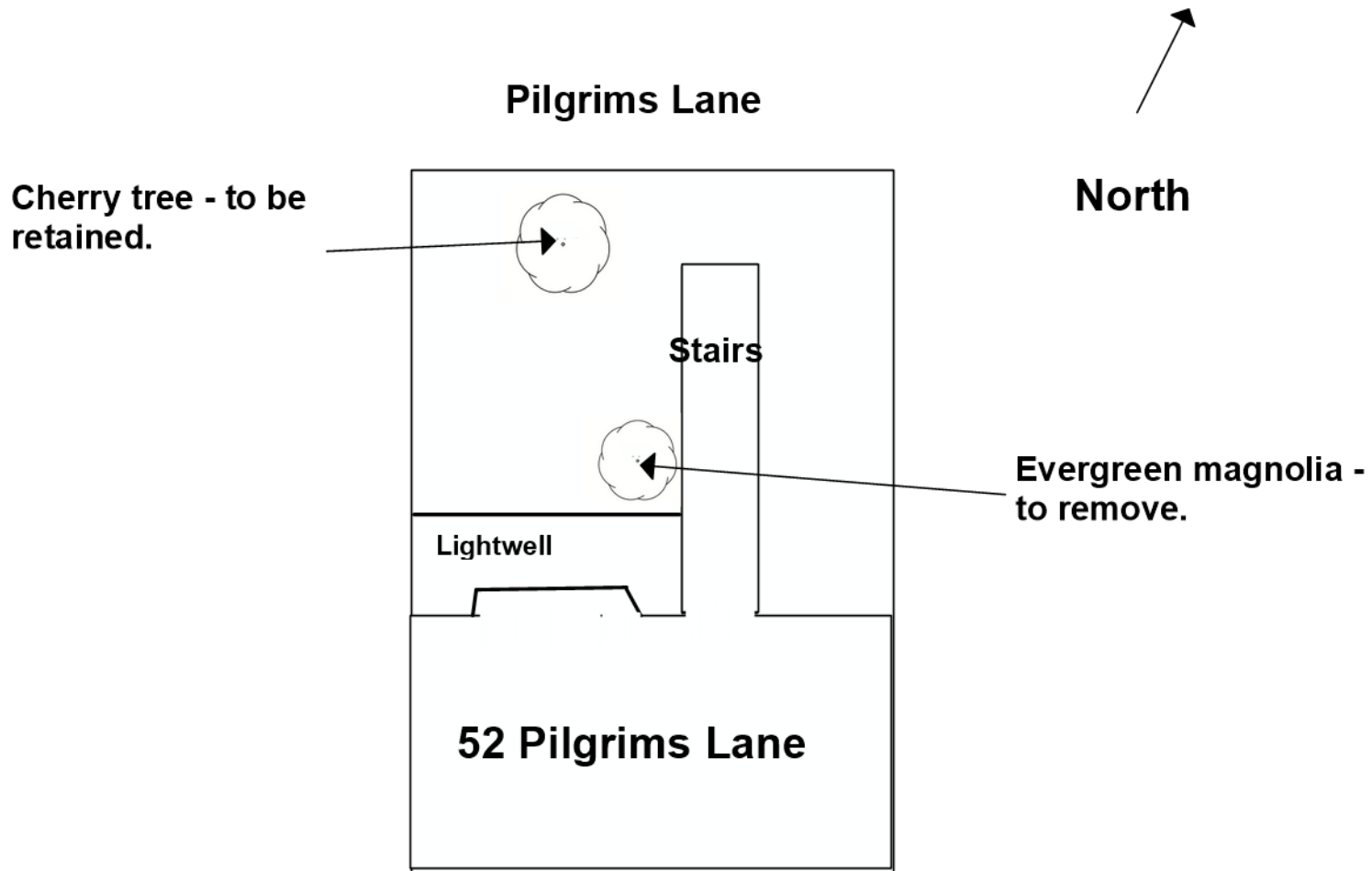
Tree Location Plan

Photographs

Clive Fowler Associates: Tree Inspection at 52 Pilgrims Lane, London, NW3 1SN.

No.	Species	Diameter @ 1.5 m (cm)	Age Class	Crown radius (m)	Height to 1st branch (m)	Crown height (m)	Height (m)	Condition / vitality	Estimated remaining contribution (years)	Category	Works	Notes.
1	<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	12	Young	1.4 north 1.2 east 1.25 south 1.4 west	0.6 north west	0.55	4	Good	30>	C 2	Remove.	Grows within 0.5 metres of wall beneath stairs to house. Previously cut back at 2.6 metres - with dense regrowth from such points which has subsequently been regularly clipped back to allow access / contain growth. Partially suppressed to the north west by flowering cherry. Slight trunk incline towards the south west due to close proximity to stairs and subsequent search for light. Pruning stubs scattered throughout crown. Small girdling root noted to the south west. Located close to retaining wall to the south east and is highly likely to cause direct structural damage to it as it develops further. Some minor displacement of associated capping stone on wall noted in proximity to tree. Gas pipe in close proximity to the north of tree (0.3 metres from base - water and electricity pipes also in close proximity). Crack noted in brickwork beneath stairs at 0.95 metres from base of tree and to the south east. Old crack in same structure to the north at approximately 0.7 metres. Other cracks noted in bay (old). Some disruption to paving - likely to be caused by adjacent cherry tree.

Notes: Diameter at 1.5 metres refers to trunk diameter. Categories are as defined in BS 5837 (2012) - **A = High quality** - **B = Moderate quality** - **C = Low quality** - **U = Less than 10 years life expectancy - poor quality**. Crown height clearance / height to first branch = from ground level - Estimated remaining contribution = probable life expectancy as assessed at time of inspection. All measurements are approximate.



**Tree Location Plan
52 Pilgrims Lane.
Sketch Plan only - not to scale.**



Photograph 1 - Tree from the north east.



Photograph 2 – Showing proximity to wall and dislodging of capping stone.



Evergreen magnolia

Cherry (to be retained).

Photograph 3 – Showing tree (and cherry tree) from the north east.



Cherry (with magnolia in background).

Photograph 4 – Taken from junction with Denning Road – demonstrating that the view of the magnolia is largely obscured by the retained cherry tree.