

Delegated Report

Officer

Tom Little

Application Number(s)

2020/5278/T

Application Address

o/s 2 St Paul's Mews
London
NW1 9TZ

Proposal(s)

VERGE O/S FRONT: 1 x Silver Birch (T1) - Fell to ground level.
1 x Norway Maple (T2) - 20% Crown reduction removing no more than 1.5m in height and 1m lateral growth to shape. Pruning all growth to suitable growth furniture where possible.
1 x Norway Maple (T3) - Fell to ground level.
1 x Whitebeam (T4) - Fell to ground level.

Recommendation(s):

No Objection to Works to Tree(s) in CA

Application Type:

Notification of Intended Works to Tree(s) in a Conservation Area

Consultations

Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	Site notice	No. of responses	1	No. of objections	1
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>1. I am writing to object to the proposed felling of three beautiful trees, Silver Birch (T1), Norway Maple (T3) and Whitebeam (T4). These lovely established trees, scarce in this area, are an asset and add beauty to St Paul's Mews and this historic part of London and Camden conservation area. It has been shown trees help absorb pollution which is extremely important in an urban environment. These trees also help provide cover and living environments for birds and other wildlife.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	None					

Assessment

As the trees are not covered by a TPO and are therefore subject to a section 211 notification of intended works to trees in a conservation area, unlike a TPO application there is no requirement to give reasons for the proposed works. A section 211 notification gives the LPA six weeks to consider objecting to the proposed works. If the LPA wishes to object then it must serve a tree preservation order on the relevant trees. There are several criteria that must be considered when assessing the suitability of a tree for a TPO which can be broken down as follows (taken from the current planning practice guidance that LPAs use when assessing a tree):

Visibility

The extent to which the trees or woodlands can be seen by the public will inform the authority's assessment of whether the impact on the local environment is significant. The trees, or at least part of them, should normally be visible from a public place, such as a road or footpath, or accessible by the public.

In this case, the trees in question are not visible or have very low visibility from a public place, they are not considered to provide significant visual amenity to the public.

Individual, collective and wider impact

Public visibility alone will not be sufficient to warrant an Order. The authority is advised to also assess the particular importance of an individual tree, of groups of trees or of woodlands by reference to its or their characteristics including:

- *size and form;*
None that the four trees referred to in the notification is particularly large or noteworthy examples of their species.
- *future potential as an amenity;*
Largely due to the configuration of the adjacent buildings and the gated nature of the mews, it is not likely that the trees would become visible from a public place within their lifetimes.
- *rarity, cultural or historic value;*
None is of a rare species or of any known cultural or historic value.
- *contribution to, and relationship with, the landscape;*
It is considered that the trees make a reasonable contribution to the landscape to the rear of the properties, however the lack of visibility from the public realm significantly reduces the weighting that this can be given when considering a TPO.
- *contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.*
The tree is considered to make a reasonably positive contribution to the character of the conservation area however this is limited to the mews and rear gardens agar grove. There are other larger trees within the rear gardens of Agar Grove

Other factors

Where relevant to an assessment of the amenity value of trees or woodlands, authorities may consider taking into account other factors, such as importance to nature conservation or response to climate change. These factors alone would not warrant making an Order.

The trees offer some benefits in terms of reducing pollution, absorbing CO2 and wildlife habitat however the current legislation does not put sufficient weight on to these factors to justify serving a TPO.

On balance, due to the lack of visibility it would not be expedient to bring this tree under the protection of a TPO.