

Charlotte Street Association

39 Tottenham Street
London W1T 4RX

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

1st August 2021

For the attention of Tom Little, Tree & Landscape Officer.

By email to:

Dear Tom Little,

Re: ref. 2021/3347/T: 43-45 Gower Street, WC1E 6HH:

Front Garden: 1 x London Plane tree (157) - fell to Ground Level;
3 x Trees Heaven (T158 T159 & T160) - fell to Ground Level.

I am writing on behalf of the Charlotte Street Association, concerning the above planning application.

We wish to strongly object to the loss of these 4 trees, due to the proposal to fell them, for the reasons set out below in this letter.

Introduction, and the applicant's Location Map/Plan:

We should point out that there is a bit of confusion over the location of the trees, due to the inadequies of the applicant's Location Map – it does not appear to follow Camden's guidelines for Location Plans/Maps, which would make this Location Map instantly readable.

Firstly, on Camden's Planning website, the summary description of the application refers to "**Front Garden**" (as copied at the top of our letter). The applicant's Map shows that the trees are in, in fact, **a rear garden** at the back of the Gower Street terrace of houses – in any case, the Gower Street terraced houses do not have any front gardens.

The applicant's Location Map is not clear – the relevant streets have not been labelled up. Although we know the area very well, and are also very experienced at looking at maps, plans and drawings, it took us some time to orientate and puzzle out that the property in question is near to the Gower Street/Chenies Street junction.

Continued to page 2

Re: ref. 2021/3347/T: 43-45 Gower Street, WC1E 6HH - *continued*:

The applicant's Location Map:

- has not labelled up Chenies Street, and does not distinguish between Ridgmount **Gardens** and Ridgmount **Street**.
- Also, the Map does not show any of the relevant house numbers for the Gower Street houses.
- A red rectangle has been drawn around two of the properties – as Camden's guidelines ask that the boundary of the development property is marked in Red, we assume that these are nos. 43 and 45 Gower Street.
- But, the puzzle is that the trees in question are shown on the Location Plan as being in the rear gardens of the **next door houses/end-of-terrace houses** at nos. 47 & 49.
- The only Trees shown in the rear garden (within the Red rectangle) are trees nos. T72 and T73.
- All the other trees (nos. T74, T75, T257, T158, T159, T160 including the trees proposed for felling) appear to be shown in the rear garden of the neighbouring/end-of-terrace properties, which are house Nos. 47 and 49.
- House nos. 43 and 45 are not end of terrace houses, although (as we point out above) the four Trees in question (nos. T157, T158, T159, T160) **appear to be shown in the rear garden of the end-of-terrace houses**.

In the circumstances, and before any planning decision is made, we would particularly ask that a new Location Map is re-submitted to show clearly the relevant house nos, and to show clearly which rear gardens, and thus which trees, belong to which properties.

It is surprising that this Location Map passed the validation process.

Objections:

It needs to be appreciated that the trees in the rear gardens of Gower Street, including the trees in question form part of a "green corridor" of trees and greenery that runs north-south (from Chenies Mews in the North to Store Street in the South) behind Gower Street, and is parallel with Chenies Mews, Ridgmount Gardens and Ridgmount Street.

This green corridor is greatly appreciated by local residents, especially those who live nearby including in Gordon Mansions blocks of flats, Ridgmount Gardens blocks of flats and Chenies Chambers blocks of flats. This has been even more appreciated during the current coronavirus situation when local residents have needed to take local walks and see these trees and greenery during the pandemic.

The proposed felling and the loss of these trees appears to be contrary to Camden's Planning Guidance (CPG) for Trees.

The CPG states that trees are highly valued, and add to health and well being of residents. and encourages the retention of trees and the tree canopy.

It recognises that trees in private gardens (as in this case) contributes to the public townscape of our area. It also recognises that trees are an integral component of green infrastructure networks, to provide corridors alongside routes of walking, again as in this case, as residents take walks along the streets behind Gower Street.

Continued to page 3

Re: ref. 2021/3347/T: 43-45 Gower Street, WC1E 6HH - *continued*:

The application:

The application gives the reason for felling the trees in question “to facilitate landscape improvement” but does not explain what this landscape improvement will be. The application says that the trees in question “do not provide high amenity or environmental values”, but again does not say why.

It also says that “the plane will require regular maintenance as it is close to the building” – we think that this is not a good reason for felling the tree; trees need to be retained and thus do inevitably require maintenance as part of the responsibility of having trees.

The application also says that “the trees of heaven are of low value, as they have been unnecessarily reduced in the past and will require regular maintenance if they were to be retained” – we are not convinced; we think that they should be retained and be encouraged to regrow properly and maintained as necessary.

We are not convinced that that the approach has been to try and retain the trees in question. We strongly object to the loss of any of these trees. The trees should be retained to continue the variety and density of trees in this “green corridor” behind Gower Street.

For all the above reasons, we would urge that the trees are retained and that the application for felling the trees is not granted.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Henderson

On behalf of Charlotte Street Association.

Copy: CSA Committee.
Local Ward Councillors.