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**2023/2957/PRE: 28 Chalcot Square, London, NW1 8YA. Internal and external refurbishment and alteration of a grade II listed building.**

Dear Ms. Davis,

Thank you for submitting a request for pre-application advice in respect of listed building consent for works to the above property. Following our site visit of 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 I have assessed the proposals and find as follows.

### **Site and Significance**

28 Chalcot Square is a GII listed terraced house of the 1850s. All the houses in the square are listed at GII and Number 28 falls under the group listing of the east side (Numbers 20-28). The significance of the site includes its architectural design and materials, planform, evidential value as a mid-C19th terraced house, its group value with the other houses in the square, and its positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

### **Assessment of Proposed Works**

The structure for the following assessment of the works has been taken from the applicant's pre-application submission document for ease of cross-reference.

#### **FRONT LIGHTWELL AND STAIR**

It is proposed to replace the existing front staircase (modern pressed metal painted black) with a similar staircase. This would be acceptable subject to detail. It is proposed to replace the existing painted timber single glazed door and window to the main front room with a double glazed replacement of the same general design. While double glazing in C19th listed buildings is generally difficult to support the existing and proposed door are so obviously modern that it is likely to be acceptable subject to detail. It would also have the advantage of enabling the removal of the internal security grille, although given that there is no reinstatement of the historic window to this location, the advantage of this is relatively limited in its impact. The lightwell works essentially preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and preserve the significance of the listed building.

## REAR GARDEN, EXTENSION AND STAIR

It is proposed to replace the modern black metal external stair with another black metal staircase of similar appearance. This essentially preserves the existing condition and is acceptable. It is proposed to replace the rear door to the stair with a double glazed rear door. Given that the existing door is clearly of the late C20th and its replacement would be of the same appearance it is likely that double glazing could be supported in this location, and again it would allow for the removal of internal security grilles.

A one-storey rear extension is proposed at lower ground level, roughly 1.8m deep, To enable the creation of a rear bedroom in connection with works of re-ordering to the basement planform. There is already access to the garden via a set of C20th doors, which the extension would capitalise on. However, there is further loss of brickwork proposed in order to use the space as a bedroom. It has been demonstrated that in order to fit a small double bed and retain access to the garden a vertical section of brickwork would have to be removed. It is accepted that this is one of the most concealed parts of the façade, and that its historic appearance has already been altered by the creation of the doors. However, it is advised that as much brickwork as possible is retained and that any justification for its loss is clearly set out at application stage.

The proposed extension is modest in scale and the form and materials of the roof, combined with the use of brick for the facing, would ensure that it reads as an ancillary structure and remains subservient to the main rear elevation of the building. It is significantly less deep than the modern closet wing and would not significantly reduce the amenity space of the yard or the appreciation of the setting of the rear elevation of the C19th parts of the listed building.

## LOFT, REAR ELEVATION UPPER LEVELS

No changes are proposed to the fundamental structure of the roof, but it is proposed to replace the covering. It is assumed the covering is Welsh slate and therefore expected that any replacement covering will also be Welsh slate. The existing materials will need to be identified in any application for listed building consent. Only damaged Welsh slate should be replaced, any whole slate must be retained and reused (although not necessarily in precisely the same position).

At third level, a new double-glazed fixed window is proposed within the upper level of the staircase. While views of the rear roof slope are limited, any new window would clearly have an impact on the interior. However, it is noted that the entire roof was replaced in 1970 (H10/11/14/9454 approved November 1970) so there presumably no timber within the roof older than c.50 years. An additional opening over the stair could therefore be achieved without the loss of historic fabric. If a dormer window were to be permitted it would need to be a timber sash window to match the adjacent. However, a sash window in this location seems historically unconvincing (given the height of the ceiling above the landing) and a conservation style rooflight is more likely to be acceptable.

The two existing rear windows at 3rd floors are currently in poor condition. They date from 1970 and their replacement is acceptable in principle. However, they are also clearly designed to reflect the appearance of the historic parts of the building and their replacement in double glazing would not be acceptable. Secondary glazing or thermally improved single glazing would be acceptable.

The proposed rooflights are acceptable in scale, location and appearance and there is no concern regarding the works of proposed internal roof insulation.

## NEW LOWER GROUND TO GROUND FLOOR STAIR

The original internal connection (i.e. staircase) from main house to basement was removed at some point, likely post-War. It is proposed to reinstate the staircase based on surviving examples in the rest of the terrace. This reinstates historic circulation, historic appearance, and evidential value and therefore better reveals and enhances the significance of the listed building.

## 3RD TO LOFT STAIR

The current stair connecting the 3rd to the loft storage area is steep and it is proposed to replace it. A portion of the loft floor will be removed, to guarantee a clear head height of 2m throughout. All of the fabric proposed for removal post-dates 1970 and is of a clearly modern appearance, and the works are therefore acceptable.

## FLOORPLANS CONFIGURATIONS

The lower ground floor is proposed to be reconfigured. The existing planform has little evidential value and the proposed alterations are slightly closer to the likely original planform in the sense they include a staircase. The planform alteration are therefore acceptable.

At ground floor, it is proposed to fix kitchen door (DG-04) shut. This whilst preserving the architraves and door on both sides. Furthermore, the proposal includes forming a ramp the just outside the kitchen door, to omit the existing very small step that is currently a trip hazard. These alterations are to facilitate the needs of the future tenant who is visually impaired. While fixing shut of doors is normally acceptable, boarding over one side is less sympathetic. However, it is noted that while the architrave is likely C19th the door itself if 1930s or later. While legibility should definitely be retained on the hall side covering over on the room side could be acceptable. There is no objection to the principle of a ramp but it should demonstrated to be easily reversible.

The other alterations to internal layouts chiefly concern removal of modern partitions and boxing in, which is acceptable.

## DECORATIVE MOULDINGS & DOORS

Normally the speculative introducing of ceiling roses into rooms would be resisted but it seems likely that the rear rooms of this property would have had ceiling roses given the front rooms retain them. Therefore taking copies from the front rooms and reinstating roses to the rear rooms would be acceptable.

One of the rooms contains a hob grate. This appears to be considerably earlier than the 1850s but given it is unclear when it was installed it should be retained as it is possible it was installed when the house was built.

Replacement of the modern chimneypieces with appropriate (1850s/60s) style surrounds and grates is acceptable.

The replacement of modern timber doors with new timber doors is acceptable, although all the proposed new doors are two panel doors as opposed to four panel doors (which would be the correct design for the period for the property). However, it is also noted that all of the 1930s two panel doors are being retained, which is certainly acceptable, so matching the new doors to these is likely to be acceptable as a compromise.

## Conclusion

The proposed works encompass the entirety of a large house. Therefore, while this advice has attempted to address the substantial part of the schedule of works, failure to mention any specific element should not be assumed to indicate acceptability.

## Note on use of property

According to Council tax records there is only one property at 28 Chalcot Square.

However, in 1970 permission was granted for the creation of two properties (basement flat and house retained above). An application for planning permission should sufficiently demonstrate the justification for amalgamation. However, it is noted that in heritage terms the optimum viable use of the building is as a single family dwelling and that the proposals do not result in a loss of residential floor space.

### Listed Building Consent application information

**On the basis of the works shown in the pre-application documents planning permission will also be required (rear extension, new external stairs etc)**

Should you choose to submit a listed building consent application which addresses the outstanding issues detailed in this report satisfactorily, I would advise you to submit the following for a valid planning application:

- Completed form – Listed Building consent Application
- An ordnance survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale denoting the application site in red
- Floor plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled ‘existing’ and ‘proposed’
- Elevation drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled ‘existing’ and ‘proposed’
- Section drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled ‘existing’ and ‘proposed’
- Section and elevation drawings (where existing and as proposed) of any window and joinery alterations at an appropriate scale
- Details of new chimneypieces and other ornamental details affixed to the building
- Design and access statement
- Heritage statement
- The appropriate fee
- Please see [supporting information for planning applications](#) for more information.

We are legally required to consult on applications with individuals who may be affected by the proposals and for all external works to a GII listed building. We would put up a notice on or near the site and advertise in a local newspaper. The Council must allow 21 days from the consultation start date for responses to be received. You are advised to contact your neighbours prior to submission, to discuss the proposals.

Non-major applications are typically determined under delegated powers, however, if more than 3 objections from neighbours or an objection from a local amenity group is received the application will be referred to the Members Briefing Panel should it be recommended for approval by officers. For more details click [here](#).

**This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and is not binding upon the Council.**

David McKinstry

Planning (Conservation) Officer

30/08/23