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[REDACTED]
Dear Mr Williams,

2023/1709/PRE – 23 Prince Albert Road

I refer you to your pre-planning application enquiry 2023/1709/PRE at 23 Prince Albert Road, London, NW1 7ST. Thank you for sending the documents detailing the proposed alterations to the property.

Proposal

Erection of glazed extension to flat roof of building, enclosure of 2 x existing balconies at seventh floor level to form internal space, erection of new balcony at seventh floor level within alcove, and associated alterations including replacement of brick balustrading with metal railing at sixth and seventh floors.

Site description

The host building is an eight-storey residential building constructed in the 1960s on the north side of Prince Albert Road, close to the junction with Albert Terrace. The property is sub-divided into flats and this pre-application refers specifically to the sixth and seventh floors, as well as the roof terrace, all of which is under single ownership and use. The site is not listed but is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and is identified as a negative contributor to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The property is also located in close proximity to the designated public open spaces of Primrose Hill and Regent's Park.

Relevant planning history

Application site

2017/2382/P – Replacement of existing single glazed aluminium windows & doors on all elevations with like-for-like double glazed windows & doors. **Certificate of lawfulness granted 18/05/2017.**

2016/0449/P - Replacement of existing single glazed aluminium windows & doors on all elevations with like-for-like double glazed windows & doors. **Certificate of lawfulness granted 27/09/2016.**

2014/4027/P - Retention of 4 x air conditioning condenser units, timber decking and a glass balustrade, a fireplace flue and rainwater pipes, 2x rooflights and a freestanding hot tub and planters in connection with use of the roof as a terrace to existing flat (Class C3). **Granted 02/09/2014.**

9300952 - The external alterations to the main building including alterations at roof level to replace existing stair enclosure with new roof access; enclosure of balconies and glazed enclosure at 7th floor; alterations to the entrance. **Granted 12/08/1994.**

9300951 - Alterations and extensions at sixth and seventh floor levels plus extension at eighth floor level to residential flat and to ground floor entrance. **Refused 22/04/1994.**

Reasons for refusal:

- The proposed extensions at roof level would result in excessive bulk and height and would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the building and conservation area.

8502187 - Retention of a roof terrace and stair enclosure above flat 12 and the provision of a roof terrace and stair enclosure above flat 13. **Granted 15/07/1986.**

TP23753/20260 – The erection of an eight-storey block containing one two-room and 11 three-room flats, and two six-room maisonettes at No. 23, Prince Albert Road, St. Pancras. **Granted 11/02/1963.**

Relevant policies and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

- **A1** Managing the impact of development
- **A2** Open space
- **D1** Design
- **D2** Heritage

Camden Planning Guidance

- CPG Amenity (Jan 2021)
- CPG Design (Jan 2021)
- CPG Home improvements (Jan 2021)

Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2000)

Assessment

The principal planning considerations with regards to the proposal are the following:

- Design and conservation
- Neighbouring amenity

Design and conservation

Local Plan Policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. Policy D1 requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance, and character of the area. Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas.

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement 2000 states that roof extensions and alterations are unlikely to be acceptable where they would be detrimental to the form and character of the existing building and/or be prominent, particularly in long views and views from the parks. The statement also makes clear that materials should be designed to match the existing buildings.

23 Prince Albert Road is noted in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area statement as a negative contributor to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Negative contributors are described in the statement as those that have "inappropriate qualities such as bulk, scale, height, materials, the way in which they address the street or application of architectural details. The host building is considered to contribute negatively to the conservation area in particular due to its bulk and scale; the building is clearly notably taller than surrounding buildings and is highly visible from a number of views, including from within Primrose Hill and Regent's Park, both of which are public open spaces.

Although the existing building is a negative contributor, there is a consistency in the design and materials used throughout. All parapet walls across the eight floors are constructed of red brick, and as such it is considered that the replacement of the parapets to the sixth and seventh floor balconies with another material would disrupt and be detrimental to the overall appearance and coherency of the property, exacerbating the negative contribution that the building makes to the conservation area. The infilling of the alcove at seventh floor with a new balcony would also disrupt the consistency of the building and the uniformity that is otherwise present at every level below. In addition to this, it would add visual clutter to the alcove, which is otherwise free of infilling additions.

The construction of glazed enclosures to the existing balconies either side of the central column at seventh floor level would be acceptable in principle, though only if both were constructed at the same time. The host building does benefit from a symmetrical form, so given that both of these balconies are proposed to be enclosed, and the enclosure of balconies either side of the central column is already a feature of the building, this could be supported. However, the acceptability of the works would also be subject to quality of the proposed detailed design; all materials should match the existing building so that the enclosures would read as a natural continuation rather than an incongruous addition. Given the scale of the host building, these enclosed features are considered not to add unacceptable bulk or massing.

The glazed extension to the flat roof of the building would not be considered acceptable. As previously noted the building is highly visible from the street and other key local views and the existing glazed structure to the roof is already visually prominent. Further extensions to this would be insubordinate to the building, add unnecessary bulk to the roof, and increase the negative impact that the building has on the conservation area. An expanded glazed conservatory and extended roof deck would constitute visual clutter that would cause harm to the conservation area and would not be considered acceptable. This is particularly pertinent given how visible the site is from public space, which is further detailed in the following section of this advice. Any future application should remove this aspect of the proposal, along with the changes to the brick parapet walls and the new infill balcony.

Neighbouring amenity

Local Plan Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring that the impact of development is fully considered; it seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes loss of privacy through overlooking, loss of outlook, and implications on daylight and sunlight. Policy A2 (Open space) seeks to protect, enhance, and improve access to Camden's parks and open spaces, and aims to resist development that would be detrimental to the setting of designated open spaces. CPG 'Amenity' and CPG 'Public Open Space' provide specific guidance with regards to these factors.

The proposed works would not result in any overlooking or privacy impacts, as they would not create new opportunities for views into any neighbouring windows or habitable rooms. The proposed infill balcony at seventh floor level and the extended conservatory at roof level would have the potential to cause harmful daylight and sunlight impacts. Although a daylight and sunlight assessment has been provided at pre-application stage, it does not consider the impact of the works on the fifth floor of the building and below. The justification for this lack of detailed assessment is that the works are so minor that the impact would be negligible, however this justification and level of information would not be sufficient at application stage, and the Council would require a daylight and sunlight assessment to at least consider the impacts on the dwellings at fifth floor level. If adequate information was not provided, then the potential for amenity impacts on neighbouring residents would be likely to serve as another reason for refusal (alongside the negative design and conservation impacts detailed in the previous section). Should the parts of the proposal deemed unacceptable in design terms be removed from a future application, then a daylight and sunlight application would likely not be required, as the enclosure of the inner balconies alone would be considered not to cause harm to neighbouring amenity.

The proposal as it currently stands would result in development that would add to the bulk and scale of the building roof, resulting in a building and roof design that would be even more incongruous than currently exists at the site. The building (and particularly its roof) is clearly visible from Primrose Hill, and to a lesser extent, Regent's Park. Both of these public areas are designated open spaces within the Camden Local Plan, and as such development that would negatively impact on their setting would not be supported. The nature of the proposed works and their clear visibility in key local views, and particularly from multiple positions within Primrose Hill, would be detrimental to the setting of that open space, and so would not be supported for this reason.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed works would be mostly unacceptable in principle. The extension of the conservatory structure at roof level, the erection of the infill balcony and the replacement of the brick parapet walls at sixth and seventh levels would all be unacceptable changes that would disrupt the consistency of the building's design and harm its overall appearance. Although the building is already designated as a negative contributor to the conservation area, the proposed changes would exacerbate rather than alleviate the impact of the building on the conservation area and would also add further visual clutter to it. It has also not been demonstrated to a sufficient enough extent that the infill balcony and conservatory structure would not result in daylight and sunlight impacts that harm the amenity of neighbouring residential units. The aforementioned elements of the proposal would also impact on the setting of nearby open space, and therefore would also not be considered

acceptable for this reason. All of these features should be removed from any future application, as the above concerns would all warrant reasons for refusal.

The enclosure of the balconies at seventh floor level on their own would be considered acceptable provided that both were completed so that the overall symmetry of the building is preserved. Officers recommend that a follow-up pre-application meeting or the submission of amended plans takes place once the applicant has assessed the advice given above in order to ensure any proposed development has the best chance of success as part of any future full planning application submission.

Planning application information

Planning Application for Full Planning Permission

Provision of Metric Scaled Floor plans, roof plans, elevation drawings, section drawings

Provision of a Design and Access Statement

Provision of a Daylight and sunlight assessment that references all adjoining properties at a minimum Statutory Fee of £206 (accurate at the time of publication of this advice note)

This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document, please do not hesitate to contact Sam FitzPatrick through the email or number above.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

Sam FitzPatrick

Planning Officer

Planning Solutions Team