

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		08/04/2010	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		19/03/2010	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Hannah Walker				2010/0844/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Sovereign House 212-214 Shaftesbury Avenue London WC2H				Refer to decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Part dismantling and like for like rebuilding of terracotta balcony over entrance to undertake repairs to embedded steel beams and to investigate cause of movement of balustrade.							
Recommendation(s):		Grant Listed Building Consent					
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		Site notice – 1 response The Covent Garden Community Association responded with 'no comment' on the application.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		N/A					

Site Description

This Grade II listed building dates from 1902-08 and was constructed by C Fitzroy Doll, surveyor to the Bedford Estate and the local District Surveyor. The building is of brick with exuberant terracotta dressings and decorations and was originally built as shops with showrooms and offices on the upper floors. The building is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

None relevant to this application.

Relevant policies

B6 – Listed Buildings

Assessment

This application is for the dismantling and rebuilding of the terracotta balcony at 1st floor level above the main Shaftesbury Avenue entrance.

The balcony has been subject to movement with a gap of approximately 30mm recorded between the baluster top rail and its junction with the main elevation of the building. The baluster, plinth and dentil course on each side of the balcony have lifted and the entire structure is live and potentially dangerous.

It is proposed to remove and store for re-use all of the existing terracotta balusters, plinth and dentil course. The embedded steelwork and its connection with the main steel fascia beam is to be examined and any corroded sections repaired. Ferrous cramps found in the balustrade components are also to be removed and replaced with new stainless steel cramps once the balcony is reconstructed. Any small scale repairs are to be undertaken using a 'plastic' repair compound to match the surrounding material. The terracotta units are to be re-bedded using a 1:3 lime mortar mix. The mosaic tiles to the floor of the balcony are to be lifted and then re-laid once exploratory and repair works have been completed, with any damaged tiles replaced on a like for like basis.

The existing drainage from the balcony consists of a small outlet to the rear. The fall of water back towards the building is likely to be contributing to the corrosion of embedded steel and ironwork. It is proposed to create two 20mm diameter weep holes to the front of the balcony. I have some concerns about allowing water to drain from the balcony in this manner and the impact of future water ingress on the elevation of the building. However, there are limited opportunities to drain the water back through the building and no conveniently located downpipes to link into. Furthermore, given the small surface area of the balcony and that any water is likely to be thrown clear of the building, on balance I am satisfied with this part of the proposal. The weep holes are very modest in size and will be coloured to match the surrounding terracotta. As such they are unlikely to have any adverse impact on the appearance of the building.

Due to the nature of the damage, the full extent of the works is not quantifiable at this stage. It may be that further works to stabilise the balcony may become apparent once the structure is fully opened up. A condition is to be added requiring the submission of these details, if applicable.

The proposed works are carefully conceived and are considered appropriate and proportionate to the apparent damage. Given the projection of the balcony above the pavement and the extent of its deflection, the works are considered acceptable and will ensure the ongoing stability of the building. As such, its special architectural and historic interest will be preserved. Recommend approval.

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