

PROPOSED INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO 7 ALBANY STREET, REGENTS PARK
HERITAGE STATEMENT
NOVEMBER 2015

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1.0 Introduction

Description of Alterations

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement supports the request for Listed Building consent for the proposed internal alterations at 7 Albany Street, London.

Site Context

- 1.2 The property is located within the Regent's Park area and falls within the administrative boundaries of Camden Borough Council.
- 1.3 The property is located within the Regent's Park Conservation Area and is Grade II listed. The property forms part of a terrace complex comprising basements with 4 storeys above built by M Crake in 1826. This terrace forms part of the frontage of buildings, which makes up Albany Street.
- 1.4 Albany Street lies in the South East corner of Regent's Park, bounded by Marylebone Road, Park Square East and St. Andrews Place.

Content of Submission

- 1.5 This supporting statement provides details of the proposal and explains the heritage context for the proposed alterations. The document sets out the heritage planning policy context and assesses the proposals against the current adopted development plan and other relevant material considerations.
- 1.6 The application is also supported by the following documents and plans:
- Completed listed building consent forms and certificates of ownership
 - Application drawings prepared by Caballero including:
 - Existing and proposed floor plans
 - Site location plan
 - Design and Access Statement prepared by Terence O'Rourke with Caballero
 - Structural information prepared by Taylor Whalley Spyra Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers.
 - Schedule of Works prepared by Zenon Builders

2.0 Relevant History

- 2.1 Many properties in central London are subject to renovation proposals to meet the needs of a contemporary lifestyle. In many cases these properties often have a heritage value and there is a need to balance the aspirations of the owners with the stewardship of the asset. There are many examples where such change has been undertaken with care and the resulting refurbished property provides a sustainable solution to the need for housing in the city; equally there are examples where change is poorly executed with significant harm to the country's heritage asset. 7 Albany Street is no exception to the current need for renovation, but it is the intent of the applicant that this should be carried out to the highest standard and that the heritage value manifest in the heritage fabric is protected.
- 2.2 In this case the applicant is aware of heritage constraints and has sought advice from the date on which the property was acquired, including a review of planning and listed building policy and has designed the proposal in compliance.
- 2.3 The advice offered included an examination of recent decisions in the vicinity of the site. The relevant and recent planning history highlights that there have been numerous successful listed building consents for both internal and external works to the listed buildings along Albany Street. The planning history search has not, to date, highlighted any relevant applications in relation to the property at 7 Albany Street.
- 2.4 The most recent and most relevant history is 13 Albany Street, which gained consent, subject to Section 106 Legal Agreement, to create a basement level extension and enclosed courtyard, as well as some minor internal alterations at basement, ground and first floor levels, in 2013. This development shows that alterations to a house similar to 7 Albany Street are in principle, acceptable.
- 2.5 The full planning history of the immediate area is set out in appendix 1 as context for this proposal.

3.0 The Proposed Alterations – Principles of, and justification for, the proposed works

- 3.1 The proposed works seek to make alterations to internal portioning within 7 Albany Street to create a more efficient living environment. The design and access statement, which accompanies this statement, contains detailed information regarding the alterations and design detail. The structural report that also accompanies this submission provides detail of the structural proposals, which are presented within the plans as contained within Appendix A of the structural report, and consist of insertion of steel beams where it is proposed to remove loadbearing walls.
- 3.2 Building regulations have been taken into account as part of the assessment of proposed works and a residential sprinkler system would be fitted throughout the property (re: Part B1 2.12-2.14).

- 3.3 The work will also require a Party Wall Agreement and will need to be undertaken carefully so as not to damage existing features.
- 3.4 On the ground floor, some internal walls will be removed to open up the living area. The internal wall surrounding the staircase and wall to the lounge are proposed to be removed on the first floor. The bathroom on the second floor will be moved to the second bedroom, which will allow the existing bathroom space to be opened up to serve as a wardrobe to the master bedroom. The third floor follows a similar process by relocating the second bathroom to simplify the living space and to create additional storage space. It should be acknowledged that much of the walling and partitioning to be removed is not original and it is not proposed to remove any historic building fabric. Aesthetic changes include taking down of ceilings and cornices, fireplace surrounds and ceramic tiles to floors, as well as replacing and strengthening timber floors and other repairs such as to joists in floors, dry rot and wet rot remedial works, that will take place if required. The schedule of works that accompanies this submission provides full details of the refurbishment of the property.
- 3.5 We believe the new arrangement of the living space will continue to allow the building to be “read” in the form it was built and has since evolved.

4.0 Heritage – the impact of the proposal

- 4.1 The property is located within the Regent’s Park Conservation Area and is part of a Grade II listed group; 1-17 Albany Street and their associated railings (listing entry number 1378592). The property was first listed as part of this group on 06.03.1973, with the most recent amendment to the listing made on 11.01.1999. The listing description is stated on Historic England’s website as:

“Terrace of 17 houses. 1826. By M Crake. Stucco. 4 storeys and basements. 2 windows each. Round-arched doorways with pilaster jambs carrying cornice-heads; radial patterned fanlights and paneled doors. Recessed sash windows, 1st floor with console bracketed cornices and continuous cast-iron balconies. Main cornice at 3rd floor level. Secondary cornice and blocking course above attic storey. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with tasselled spearhead finials.”

- 4.2 It is evident from the listing details and the way in which other properties in the group have been treated, that the listing is primarily focused on the external appearance of the property and its contribution to the street-scene and local character. This proposal does not intend any change to the outward appearance of the property beyond any reasonable repair uncovered during the scheduled works.
- 4.3 It is acknowledged that the property’s internal elements also form part of the technical listing and it is these changes that comprise the application to the planning authority.

Heritage Guidance and Planning Policy

- 4.4 Section 12 of the NPPF discusses ‘*conserving and enhancing the historic environment*’. Within this section, paragraph 128 states that the significance of the heritage asset affected and the level of detail submitted should be in line with the

importance of the heritage asset, at a minimum the historic environment record should be supported. The works proposed at 7 Albany Street will not affect the exterior appearance of the property and therefore will have no significant impact on the character of the local area and conservation area.

- 4.5 Planning guidance outlines that when a building becomes listed it is listed in its entirety, which means that both the exterior and interior is protected. Therefore listed building consents are required for: *'alteration or extension of a listed building in any manner (including internal) which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.'* Guidance also states that *'conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets, as listed buildings in everyday use'*. The proposed alterations to 7 Albany Street will allow the internal space to work more efficiently in modern everyday use while conserving the essential character of the property, the important elements of heritage fabric and also the setting and character of neighbouring properties.
- 4.6 From our professional experience, we believe that the internal changes proposed (movement of later internal walls) require listed building approval, but are compatible with the aims and objectives of applicable policy and guidance.
- 4.7 Policy CS14 of the core strategy promotes high quality design and states that the Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by requiring development of the highest standard of design, preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings.
- 4.8 Within the development policies document, policy DP24 continues the theme of policy CS14, and confirms that the Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design. The development will be expected to consider character, setting, context and form and scale of neighbouring buildings as well as the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed. With specific regard to Listed Buildings, Policy DP25 seeks to preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, permission will not be granted where it considers this would cause harm to the special interest of the building. In respect of Conservation Areas DP25 seeks to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 As set out above, this proposal if approved will create a more efficient living environment for the existing and future occupants of 7 Albany Street. The supporting material, plans and assessments demonstrate that the changes are of material benefit to the residents of the property, whilst conserving the character of the property, the character of Albany Street and the terrace of houses that surround this site.
- 5.2 The proposed alterations have been carefully designed to ensure that they will meet the requirements and aspirations of the government in terms of the NPPF, in accordance with the guidance and it is felt that there should be no reason why listed building consent should not be granted and an approval would represent positive planning.