



Planning Services
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Argyle Street
London WC1H 8ND

Sent by email: Ian.Gracie@camden.gov.uk

16 March 2016

Our ref: 16 03 14

Dear Ian Gracie,

2016/1128/L Single storey side extension and insertion of roof dormers, with associated external alterations, landscaping and parking associated with planning application for the change of use of former fire station. Belsize Park Fire Station, 36 Lancaster Road London

Thank you for consulting the Twentieth Century Society on the above listed building consent application. We wish to register our objections to the proposed development for the reasons outlined below.

Significance

Belsize Park Fire Station was completed in 1915 and is by Charles Canning Winmill of the LCC Architect's Department. The building is listed Grade II, and is described in Pevsner as 'one of the most accomplished of the LCC Fire Brigade branch's early twentieth century achievements.' As well as being of national importance, the building makes a key contribution to the local Belsize Conservation Area.

Policy

Paragraph 132 of the NPP states that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.'

Paragraph 3.7 of Camden's Planning Guidance 1 states that development will only be permitted within conservation areas providing that it 'preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.'

Twentieth Century Society Comment

Whilst we welcome the appropriate change of use and the thoughtful retention of original features throughout the building, we have concerns with several aspects of the proposals which we believe are harmful to the significance of the listed building.

Internally, the plan form of the station is of high importance. The Historic England *London's Historic Fire Stations* guidance document of March 2010 states that 'The relationship of appliance bay, watch



room, entrances and stores is of historic importance and presumption is in favour of retaining this form where possible.' (p.10) We consider that the partitioning of the watch-room and the removal of the original wall between the work shop and office would harm this integral relationship, which is expressive of the historical function of the building.

We also consider the lift shaft to be an inappropriate addition. Along with the infilling of an important void in the stairwell which would obstruct views and harm the legibility of the tower space, we do not feel that the extensive use of glass and metal is in keeping with the traditional arts and crafts palette of materials used throughout the original building.

Externally, we consider that the proposed east and west extensions would significantly alter the external appearance of the listed building. The two extensions to the west would disrupt the uniform profile of the building in section, and we do not consider these extensions to be at all in keeping with the elegant, coherent massing of the building as it stands. The double storey east extension is significantly taller and twice the width of the modest storeroom it seeks to replace. We believe that the large gable, prominent fenestration and dormer on this extension would have a considerable impact on the composition of the building.

The proposed addition of dormers throughout the building is of particular concern. The uninterrupted sweep of the east wing roof is a particularly impressive aspect of the listed building. HE *Fire Stations* guide states that 'Roof profiles of fire stations are most commonly an integral part of the overall design. It will be unlikely that... interrupting the roof profiles will be acceptable.' We consider that the insertion of multiple dormer windows across the roof slopes would harm what is an integral part of the buildings significance.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, The Twentieth Century Society wishes to object to the listed building consent application in its current form. I trust these comments are useful to you. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at this office.

Yours sincerely,



Tess Pinto
Conservation Adviser
Twentieth Century Society

Remit: The Twentieth Century Society was founded in 1979 and is the national amenity society concerned with the protection, appreciation, and study of post-1914 architecture, townscape and design. The Society is acknowledged in national planning guidance as the key organisation concerned with the modern period and is a constituent member of the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies. Under the procedures set out in *DDPM Circular 09/2005*, all English local planning authorities must inform the Twentieth Century Society when an application for listed building consent involving partial or total demolition is received, and they must notify us of the decisions taken on these applications.

