

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/2825/L	Lee Dianda	12 Conway Street Flat 2 London W1T 6BE	05/07/2016 08:49:18	COMMNT	<p>I object to Listed Building Application Ref: 2016/2825/L (I am also objecting separately to Planning Application Ref: 2016/2046/P; though I think there some overlapping issues; a few points have been repeated.) I am particularly concerned about the proposal to construct an extremely deep basement, extending two storeys beneath the existing basement/lower ground floor level and to lower the ground floor. The proposal would cause significant harm to the local area, and to the listed building. It would be flatly contrary to the development plan.</p> <p>19 Fitzroy Square is a Grade II* listed building forming part of a terrace within the conservation area. For some years it was in use as offices.</p> <p>Under the present proposals the applicant proposes to undertake very extensive demolition and excavation work to create a very substantial basement containing a swimming pool and various other facilities. I would note at the outset that it is clearly not the case that such development is required to make the residential conversion viable. As far as I'm aware, there is huge demand for houses such as this, without any increase in floor space, let alone the need to create a swimming pool deep beneath ground level. This is relevant to the impact on heritage assets since there is absolutely no public benefit derived from these proposals, and accordingly no justification for the harm that would be caused to the listed building and conservation area. It goes without saying that the accommodation provided by the house without the proposed basement pool would be more than adequate to meet the needs of a single dwelling/family home. I think the heritage impact would also be negative if this were a preliminary step to dividing the building into two residences or converting to flats.</p> <p>The applicant seems to pay little attention to the harm to the listed building which would be caused by these proposals. It goes without saying that subterranean swimming pools form no part of the historic floor plan of this Grade II* listed building. The proposals necessitate considerable harm to the historic fabric. As the Council notes in its draft Plan (6.137):</p> <p>“The addition of a floor level beneath the original lowest floor level of a listed building (basement, cellar, or vault) may affect the hierarchy and historic integrity of the floor levels within the building. The development of a basement beneath a listed building can also necessitate the removal of significant parts of the original structure and fabric of the building.”</p> <p>I am also concerned that the proposal to lower the floor, as well as add the basements, poses a risk not only to the heritage character of the building but also a risk of damaging the building itself. As I've indicate in relation to the risk to my own property, though risk assessments may be undertaken, there is no guarantee that the fabric of 19 Fitzroy Sq won't be damaged. I cannot see that the risk can be justified. All the more so given that the proposed changes actually have a negative impact on the heritage aspects.</p> <p>The application indicates that the 2 storey portion of the building is a later extension. However, it is not a modern extension and is therefore part of the history of the building. The idea that it could simply be knocked down or dramatically altered is alarming.</p>