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Appendix 4

Pre-Application Advice Letter, April 2015

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015 **Our Ref**: 2015/1125/PRE Your Ref: **Contact: Elaine Quigley** Direct Line: 020 7974 5101 Email: Elaine.Quigley@camden.gov.uk

Drew Meakin **Thomas Croft Architect** 9 Ivebury Court 325 Latimer Road London W10 6RA

**Dear Drew** 

Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding the erection of a three storey rear extension (lower ground, ground and first floor) and a mansard roof/terrace, and excavation of a sub-basement following demolition of the existing three storey plus mansard annexe building. Your email was accompanied by existing drawings and photo pack submission 02 rev A dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015, proposed drawings pack submission 02 rev A dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and design and access statement submission 02 rev B dated 18<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Amended existing section A-A (33FS-010 rev A) and amended section B-B (33FS-011 rev A) were submitted on 27/03/2015.

The response is given specifically in relation to the potential development of the site as suggested by the pre-application documentation submitted. Should your pre-application scheme be altered this advice may become redundant; and this advice may no-longer be considered relevant if adopted planning policies at national, regional or local level are changed or amended; other factors such as case-law and subsequent planning permissions may also affect this advice.

The following advice is based on the site visit that was attended by Hannah Walker on 18th March 2015 and myself and Claire Brady of Historic England on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. The letter has been broken into sections for the ease of



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

Tel 020 7974 4444 Fax 020 7974 1975 env.devcon@camden.gov.uk www.camden.gov.uk/planning

#### Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) **RESPONSE TO ENQUIRY, REFERENCE 2015/1125/PRE** 33 Fitzroy Square, London, W1T 6EU

dealing with each of the planning considerations. The sections do overlap and need to be read collectively in order to provide a comprehensive response.

#### Introduction

This Grade I listed building forms part of a symmetrical terrace of 8 houses. The building is by Robert and James Adam and is of high significance, in particular for its contribution to the palace front on the south side of Fitzroy Square, as well as its architectural and historic interest. The site is located in the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.

The building was comprehensively refurbished following the consented change of use from the London Foot Hospital to a single dwelling house in 2006.

#### **Proposals for the rear annexe**

This area of the building forms part of the main house in terms of accommodation, however it has a distinct character and reads as a separate element within the overall composition. Although the annexe has received a sensitively designed new mansard roof facing Conway Street, the overall fenestration pattern and door arrangement were maintained. Proposals to revise the position of the doorway and to modify the window and door designs to more closely match the neighbouring buildings on Conway Street were resisted by the Council, who sought to retain the unique and independent character of the annexe, albeit with new sympathetic ground floor window units.

It is now proposed to demolish the annexe and to build a new structure in its place, consisting of three storeys (lower ground, ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor) and a mansard roof/terrace, beneath which would sit a sub-basement for storage purposes. Internally the floor levels would align with those of the main house so as to improve circulation between the two elements of the building. The proposed elevation would reflect this alignment, with a stucco band running through below the 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows and 6 over 6 sash windows throughout that match the proportions of those at ground floor level on the main house. The front door would be re-positioned further north and narrowed to more closely reflect 18<sup>th</sup> century proportions. At roof level the mansard would be set back so that a roof terrace could be incorporated behind the front parapet wall, facing onto Conway Street.

It is considered that the annexe adds to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Historic England are of the view that the Conway Street elevation makes a significant contribution to the setting of surrounding listed buildings and serves to tell the story of the growth and development of this area. It is the Council's view that the existing annexe is a fundamental part of the listed house demonstrating the incremental building over of the rear garden and the development of Conway Street as a response to the economic conditions of the period and the changing fortunes of the area. The fabric would appear to date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century – the 1834 map shows the footprint of the annexe in place although it is clear that the ground floor had

been remodelled during the 20<sup>th</sup> century prior to the Ptolemy Dean refurbishment. Given the age of the fabric this is of intrinsic historic and architectural value. It is acknowledged that there is a visible break in the brickwork elevation of the annexe but this is a clear indicator of the phased development of the site. Furthermore, architectural remnants such as the front door arrangement to the annexe offer some evidence of the building's long history of non-domestic use, including its decades of hospital use and more briefly as the home of the Omega Workshop.

In general terms the proposed elevation is a polite composition, including appropriate fenestration and brick arches. However, it is considered that the proposals would homogenise the overall elevation of the building to Conway Street, detracting from the existing juxtaposition between the Adam side elevation and the more irregular, varied and independent character of the annexe.

The proposal also includes the addition of a mansard roof with a roof terrace facing Conway Street. The mansard would be set back from the parapet line in a manner that is entirely out of keeping with the pattern and form of traditional mansards within the area, and would appear incongruous and out of keeping as a result. It is appreciated that this would avoid existing overlooking into neighbouring properties along Fitzroy Square however this arrangement already benefits from planning permission and listed building consent and any amenity benefits would not outweigh the harm to the external appearance of the listed building and the wider Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.

It is understood that the proposed rebuilding of the annexe would also include the relocation of the lift that is currently located just beyond the main staircase, and obscures a large proportion of the attractive arched window on the rear elevation. It is appreciated that the relocation of the lift would create better views through the building by removing the lift doors that are visible from within the main stair compartment. It is also understand that the lift would be included within the envelope of the proposed rebuilt annexe and would not protrude above the roof as it currently does. Nonetheless, it is considered that these benefits would not outweigh the harm caused by the loss of the annexe and its intrinsic value and interest.

#### **Internal alterations**

It is noted that there are proposals to replace some of the decorative features within the building. Many of these were introduced during the late 2000s refurbishment works and in some cases do not reflect the original age and character of the listed building. The reinstatement of more appropriate features would be welcomed.

The 1<sup>st</sup> floor plan shows a wider opening to the side of the chimneybreast, linking the rear room with the annexe. This should be retained in its existing narrower form so as to maintain the distinction between the main house and the annexe.

Various plan form changes are proposed at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels. It is understood that some of these partitions were inserted or altered as part of

the refurbishment works. It is noted that the dividing wall within the front room at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level is to be removed. A wall was in this position prior to the conversion works and it is understood that it is likely to be historic. The presumption would be in favour of retaining this wall. The reinstatement of the wall between the front and rear rooms in a more appropriate position is likely to be acceptable, however it should be confirmed that this is the original position (with reference to archive plans and the 2006 consent drawings).

At 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level a new partition is to be inserted into the front room. This is likely to be acceptable. The proposed plans mark many of the partitions in red (new), although it appears that they are in the same position as the existing walls. Original and historic fabric should be retained wherever possible.

#### Basement

The proposal would include the excavation of a sub-basement under the proposed three storey rear extension. To accompany any application (in order to validate the application) a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) would need to be submitted with the application. This is in line with CS13, DP22, DP23 and DP27. This is supported by CPG4 and Arup guidance for subterranean development 'Camden geological, hydrogeological and hydrological study'. Please see the <u>website</u> for more information.

The BIA would be subject to an independent review and would need to be funded by the applicant. In particular please note that the need for BIA's to be undertaken by <u>suitably qualified professionals</u>, which is paramount (see CPG4 and Arup report for details of the required qualifications). In additional all BIA information is required prior to the registration of the application.

Furthermore, it has in recent months become standard practice for 'basement construction statements' to be secured via s106 agreement, which typically follows on from the findings of the independent reviews of the BIA.

### Amenity

Policy DP26 seeks to ensure that the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties is protected. It states that planning permission will not be granted for development that causes harm to the amenity of occupiers and neighbours in terms of loss of daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy.

## (i) Overlooking and loss of privacy

Minimising overlooking to the existing neighbouring occupiers could be a challenge in any proposal to extend/alter the existing building owing to existing urban grain context. You identified during the site visit that there is already a degree of overlooking from the existing second floor terrace that allows views into the windows in the rear elevation of the neighbouring property at no. 34 Fitzroy Square as well as the windows of its ground floor rear extension. However this proposal would include new windows openings at upper ground, first and second floor level on the north eastern side elevation. The number of new window openings on three floors together with the fact that the new extension would be located closer to the boundary with no. 34 would worsen the level and degree of overlooking than the existing context. I am of the opinion that this would raise significant overlooking/privacy concerns. Normally we would discourage the installation

of any window openings on the flank elevation of a new extension that adjoins the boundary with neighbouring properties in order to minimise any overlooking or loss of privacy. You are encouraged to reconsider this part of the proposal by restricting any window openings on the flank elevation to lower levels within the extension (lower ground floor). If any window openings are proposed on this elevation they should be to rooms that are non habitable (for example stairwells) so that they can incorporate obscure glazing.

## (ii) Outlook / sense of enclosure

Similar to the overlooking/privacy comments above, ensuring that the outlook of neighbouring occupiers is maintained and will not lead to an increased sense of enclosure or overshadowing is paramount. A variety of written commentary and visual information (annotated photographs) will need to be submitted at the time of any application for officers to consider this matter further.

## (iii) Daylight and sunlight

A daylight and sunlight assessment will need to be submitted as part of any future planning application. The neighbouring buildings, particularly no. 34, will need to be tested to ensure that the proposed development would not lead to significant loss of daylight and sunlight to these existing occupiers.

## Noise and disturbance

Plant rooms are shown to be located within the lower ground floor vaults. This equipment would need to be supported by a full acoustic report (to show compliance with the Council's Environmental Health Noise standards) and detailed drawings (elevations and floor plans to denote the exact extent of the plant. The acoustic report would need to contain the following information:- (i) background noise levels at present (ii) manufacturers' details and noise output from the proposed plant (iii) whether the proposed plant would comply with Camden's noise standards in relation to nearest noise sensitive facades (5-10db below background levels) e.g. residential properties including a spreadsheet calculation of noise prediction that demonstrates theoretically that Camden's planning conditions will be met (iv) any means of attenuation or isolation necessary to ensure that the proposed plant complies with nose standards (e.g. acoustic screens). Please see policies DP26e (supporting text paragraphs 26.6 and 26.7), DP28 (and supporting text) and DP32 (and supporting text) and CPG6 Chapter 2 and 4 for more information in respect of noise / disturbance matters.

### Other matters

The proposed drawings show that there will be rooms within the existing house for use by a member of staff that could be converted into a selfcontained flat with its own front door accessed from Conway Street. A condition would attached to any planning permission to advise that if these rooms are separated from the main house into a separate self-contained flat planning permission would be required.

## Mayor of London CIL/Camden CIL

The Mayor of London CIL came into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 and the Camden CIL came into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. The proposed development would appear to be CIL liable as the proposed extension creates 100 sq. m net

additional GIA floorspace over the existing annexe building. As part of the application you will need to denote the sq. m size of the extension (both GIA and GEA). The amount charged by the Mayor CIL is £50 per sqm in LB Camden. The amount charged by the Camden CIL is £500 per sq. m.

#### Conclusion

It is proposed to demolish the existing rear annexe building of the selfcontained dwelling and construct a three storey rear extension with mansard roof and excavation of a sub-basement. It is also proposed to undertake internal alterations to upgrade the internal space to modern day living requirements. Concerns have been raised regarding the demolition of the existing annexe and its loss would not be supported by the Council. You are strongly advised to reconsider this crucial element of the scheme to retain and adapt the existing annexe building. You are also advised to reconsider the design of the proposed new mansard by removing the proposed roof terrace fronting onto Conway Street.

I hope this information this of use to you. The advice in this letter is an officer's informal opinion and is without prejudice to further consideration of this matter by the Development Management Team or to the Council's formal decision.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine Quigley Senior Planning Officer **Planning Solutions Team – Development Management** 

Appendix 5

Pre-Application Advice Letter, January 2016

# Samantha Humphrey

From: Sent: To: Cc: Subject:

Dear Drew,

Further to the pre-application advice letter from Elaine Quigley dated 17th April 2015, and following my site visit to the building with you and others from your team on 23rd November 2015, I write with further pre-application advice on your planned scheme.

I'm sorry that these comments come to you somewhat later than I had intended, but they have required a great deal of reflection. As you will read, I consider the heritage impacts of your proposals to be very finely balanced in planning terms, particularly as they affect a Grade-I listed building and a sensitive part of a conservation area.

My comments are confined to design and conservation issues, since the relevant planning matters are essentially unchanged since our previous pre-application advice.

I understand the principal changes to your proposed scheme since our last pre-application advice was issued to be the retention of the elevation of the annex building to Conway Street with the mansard raised and parapet correspondingly built up. You propose to add a fourth window to the first floor of the annex and a third dormer-type window to the mansard. You also propose to insert new floors behind the Conway Street façade of the annex to match the floor levels in the main house. These plans are summarised in Options G and F on Sheet 144, which you sent to me by email on 23rd November 2015.

The response is given specifically in relation to the potential development of the site as suggested by the pre-application documentation submitted so far. It is given without prejudice to the decision on any planning application which will be made by the London Borough of Camden. This advice may no-longer be considered relevant if adopted planning policies at national, regional or local level are changed or amended; other factors such as case-law and subsequent planning permissions may also affect this advice.

# The site

33 Fitzroy Square is a Grade-I Listed end-terrace house terminating the palatial frontage of the 1790s southern range of Fitzroy Square, designed by Robert Adam. In the 1930s it was occupied by Roger Fry as the headquarters of his Omega Group. For most of the twentieth century it served as the London Foot Hospital. In 2006, permission was granted for a renovation by Ptolemy Dean which made substantial changes to the building's historic fabric and its envelope, particularly at the upper levels and through the installation of mansard roof extension on the annexe building which fronts Conway Street.

# **External alterations**

Stroud, Alfie <Alfie.Stroud@camden.gov.uk> 07 January 2016 12:44 Drew; Tim Miles Quigley, Elaine 33 Fitzroy Square - further pre-application advice

Your intention to retain the whole of the annex elevation to Conway Street is welcome. The proposed slight alteration of the existing windows with the insertion of sills to more closely match those on the side elevation of the main house is likely to be acceptable since those in place are not historic.

The blind bay at the first-floor level of the annex elevation recalls the erection of the annex in two phases, which are also marked in the join in the brickwork in this area. The insertion of a new window in this space to match those adjacent will give an appearance of regularity to this piecemeal extension. In our pre-application advice to you we noted the importance of the juxtaposition of the annex elevation with that by Adam, and it was also the view of Claire Brady of Historic England that the existing window arrangement on the annex elevation should be retained. For these reasons, a fourth window at first-floor level is unlikely to be acceptable. A third dormer window to the mansard, however, would affect only modern material and would not detract from the independent and irregular character of the annex elevation and is likely to be acceptable.

The 980mm of height you propose to add to the annex mansard threatens, by incremental increases in the height of the annex, to negatively alter the character and appearance of Conway Street and so harm the Conservation Area. The 2006 permission for the construction of the mansard noted that it would remain two storeys clear of the top of the main house and one storey clear of the top of No. 10 Conway Street. This clearance would be reduced though not eradicated by your proposals. You propose to build up the parapet correspondingly, which would do slight harm to the annex building, which has its own significance as part of the listing. Of the two options for additional parapet height, I consider the smaller parapet in Option G slightly preferable – but this judgement depends on the eventual proportions.

The harm to the Conservation Area that would be cause by the raising of the mansard would not be mitigated by concealing the relocated lift shaft within its additional height, since the existing lift shaft is not visible from the street. The additional height of the mansard is, however, recognised to be critical to achieving the relocation of the lift itself without its overrun becoming visible from the street, and so to relieving the disfiguring impact the existing lift has on the highly significant main staircase of the house. This is further discussed below.

The alterations to the envelope of the annex would do harm to the Listed Building and to the Conservation Area, so the planning balance with these elements of your proposals is a very fine one. I would encourage you to investigate the possibility of reducing the overall additional height you propose, in order to minimise harm.

## Internal alterations

I am not aware of any information in the draft Heritage Statement by Montague Evans which states the age of the floor structures within the annex, but these at least appear to reflect the original floor levels in this part of the building. While the alteration of floor levels in the annex is not unacceptable in principle, I consider the proposed alterations to the floor levels to raise two problems:

- would be compromised.

• On the first floor, the new kitchen room would have a floor level very slightly above the proposed sills of the windows on the Conway Street elevation. While I note that the windows of the side elevation of the main house and the front of No. 10 Conway Street have full-height windows at first-floor level, those at this level of the annex were not intended to sit at floor level, and so the architectural and historic integrity of the annex, as viewed from the street,

• More consequentially for the special interest of the Listed Building, on the ground floor, the room in the annex presently used as a kitchen would get a ceiling height equal to that of the principal room on the ground floor of the main house. This would be inappropriate to its inferior status among the rooms of the house, and inappropriate to the independent character of the

annex building in which it sits, disguising evidence of the distinct function it has had historically and obscuring easy understanding of the original plan form and volumes of the Adam house.

These harmful impacts mean that, as envisaged by the present proposals, these alterations to floor levels are unlikely to be acceptable.

We discussed on site the possibility of correcting the slightly compromised relationship of the rear wall of the house to the main cantilevered staircase, especially as it rises to its upper levels, based on historic evidence. This would be a benefit to the Listed Building. A still greater benefit would be the removal of the unsightly lift shaft from the rear wall of the staircase. You propose to relocate the lift, and replace its lobbies on the rear of the staircase with access to the rooms of the annex. This is likely to be acceptable, though great care will be needed in the way the new spaces relate visually to the main staircase. I note also that at second floor level the proposed connection appears larger in area than the lift structure it would replace.

You propose to remove the partition from the second-floor front room. I think it is possible – in the absence of firm evidence of the existence of a partition wall in this room in the nineteenth century, and in light of the two fireplaces within its volume and the unusual fenestration of the front elevation – that this room was originally partitioned. Nonetheless, in the absence of firm evidence of this and since the machine-cut timbers in the studwork revealed by your opening up work show this partition to be relatively recent, the removal of this wall in order to create an enlarged bedroom is likely to be acceptable. As noted in our previous pre-app advice, we would prefer to see the lateral partition in this room returned to its historic position, which seems likely to be that it occupied pre-1913 as indicated by your historical development plans.

On the third floor, you propose a partition wall, meting the front wall behind the mullion of the Diocletian window. This is likely to be acceptable. Elsewhere, your strategy for reorganisation of spaces is acceptable in restricting alterations to modern fabric, much dating from the scheme consented in 2006, and concentrating new partitions for service spaces on the lower floors within the annex rather than within the historic room volumes of the main house.

Throughout, you propose to apply decorative details more appropriate to the date and style of the house than did the 2006 scheme, and this will be welcome.

I hope that these comments are clearly comprehensible and help you to understand our thinking about what this listed house needs to sustain its unusual degree of historic significance while serving as a family home.

Yours,

Alfie

Alfie Stroud Senior Planning Officer - Design & Conservation Regeneration and Planning Culture and Environment London Borough of Camden

Telephone:020 7974 (x)2784Web:camden.gov.uk

2 Floor 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG

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