Dear Bianca,

   Thank you again for using the Council’s pre-application service. Both Alfie and I have considered the scheme at length and would like to make the following initial comments. As discussed, we would be happy to talk through our recommendations at a time convenient for you and your client.

Extension beneath the front garden

It is proposed to extend the existing ground floor accommodation to the front of the property.  A new casement window would be installed and opaque walk on rooflight.

The Council’s preferred approach is for basement developments to not extend beyond the footprint of the original building. The proposal is likely to be considered acceptable in planning terms however as it would only extend 1.2 metres beyond the footprint of the existing property.

Given the very limited excavation work it is unlikely that a BIA would be required.  We will however seek the submission of a management plan for demolition and/or construction where basement works are proposed in conservation areas or adjacent to a listed building.

With regard to the proposed x2 opaque rooflights, these are not considered to be part of the established street character and would not be suitable in this location. Furthermore, the front garden is quite shallow and plays an important townscape role. The existing front opaque rooflights at no. 45 Albert Street do not benefit from planning permission.

It is likely that a daylight sunlight report would be required in order that the council may access the quality of the proposed new residential accommodation.

The proposed casement window would be positioned at lower ground floor level and would not be visible in either public or private views; as such this aspect of the proposal is likely to receive council support.

Extending the rear courtyard

The applicant proposes to relocate and extend the rear courtyard by 1.8 metres. Again, it is unlikely that a BIA would be required given the limited nature of the proposed excavation works.

Proposed ground and lower ground floor extension

Extensions should be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation.

The height of the proposed extension combined with the larger footprint increases the visual mass and bulk. We consider that the proposal results in too much additional enclosure, which combined with the increased excavation, has the potential overwhelm the host property. The scheme should be revised to respond to these comments.

The council recommend that the smaller of the proposed rear projections be constructed from glass, rather than brick, which would give the extension a more lightweight appearance.

That said, the design is considered to be of a high quality and has been sympathetically organised so as not to impact upon the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers.

Third floor roof extension

The existing property has a butterfly roof; the applicant proposes to extend the house at third floor level with a flat roofed mansard.

The majority of buildings within the wider grouping have rooflines which are unimpaired by alterations or extension. The proposed third floor addition is therefore considered unacceptable in principle and would result in the loss of significant historic fabric.

The mansard roof extension at no. 61 Albert Street was approved as it did not result in the loss of historic fabric or the original roof form. The original butterfly roof and rear butterfly parapet had been removed as part of approved works to add a second storey rear extension with a roof terrace in 1978.

The NPPF (2015) makes clear the Council’s duty to access the impact of a proposal on the special character of a listed building. Now that the mansard roof extension at no. 45 Albert Terrace has been approved the harm caused has been clearly demonstrated.

Fenestration changes

The council would encourage the restoration of the existing timber sash windows; otherwise you will need to demonstrate to the Council’s satisfaction that they are beyond repair.

I hope the above proves helpful and we look forward to meeting you to discuss our recommendations. If you could supply your response to our comments at least two days before any scheduled meeting that would be much appreciated and will assist us in providing further feedback.