

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	20/09/2016
			Consultation Expiry Date:	11/10/2016
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Helaina Farthing			1. Full Planning Permission: 2016/3434/P 2. Listed Building Consent: 2016/3803/L	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
Flat A 22 Harrington Square London NW1 2JJ			See Decision Notice.	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Erection of external cement staircase to lower ground level following demolition of existing staircase at dwelling house and introduction of staircase mesh railings (Retrospective).				
Recommendation(s):		1. Refuse Conditional Planning Permission 2. Refuse Listed Building Consent		
Application Type:		1. Full Planning Permission 2. Listed Building Consent		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	0	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>A site notice was displayed from 03/08/2016, expiring on the 26/08/2016 and a public notice was published in the Ham & High from the 05/08/2016.</p> <p>No letters of objection have been received.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups comments: Camden Town CAAC	<p>The Camden Town CAAC was notified. To date no response has been received.</p>					

Site Description

The application site is located on the eastern side of Harrington Square, located within the Camden Town Conservation Area. Whilst Harrington Square has been much altered, the eastern side in which the application site is located remains largely intact. The eastern side comprises of a stucco-trimmed yellow stock brick terrace dating from 1834 with arched first-floor windows set in stucco panels.

The terrace on the eastern side of Harrington Square is noted as a key vista in the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. The building is a Grade II listed building.

Relevant History

EN16/0493 - The ground floor and basement maisonette converted into 2 flats, and new concrete stairs have been built from the street to the new basement flat. Case remains open and the proposed application is to regulate the unauthorised works.

Relevant policies

NPPF 2012

London Plan (2016) (Sections 7.4 Local Character and 7.6 Architecture).

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010

CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development

CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP24 Securing high quality design

DP25 Conserving Camden's Heritage

DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

CPG1 Design (2015; Section 2, 3, 4 and 5)

CPG2 Housing (2015; Section 4)

CPG6 Amenity (2011; Section 2,3,4,5,6 and 9)

Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2007 (pg. 27)

Assessment

1.0 Proposal

1.1 Retrospective planning permission (see relevant history) is sought for the proposed external cement staircase to lower ground level following demolition of existing staircase at dwelling house and the introduction of mesh railings to the staircase.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 The main planning consideration relates to design.

3.0 Design

3.1 The Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan maintains that the eastern side of Harrington Square is largely intact and is identified as a key view/frontage in the Camden Town conservation area (page 27). Similarly, CPG1 (Design) paragraph 6.25 states that front gardens shall retain or re-introduce surface materials and boundary features, especially in conservation areas, such as walls, railing and hedges. If new materials are to be introduced they should be complementary to the setting. In particular paragraph 6.37 notes that railings should make

a positive contribution to the appearance and character of the development site and the street scene.

3.2 The front stairwells to the terraces on the eastern side of Harrington Square have been subject to alteration over time. Therefore the retention of the external cement stair case to the lower ground floor is considered to be acceptable and in keeping with similar front alterations to listed building properties long the terrace. Given its positioning and taking into account the similar alterations that have occurred along the terrace, the demolition and retention of the cemented stairwell is considered acceptable and does not harm the character and appearance of the listed building or the wider conservation area.

3.3 Whilst it is noted the majority of this scheme represents appropriate alterations, a significant and highly visible element is unacceptable and substantiated in the following paragraph relating to the staircase mesh railings. It should be noted, however, that advice has been provided to the applicant to remove the staircase mesh railings. It is considered in this circumstance, given the enforcement involvement and principal objection to the mesh railings, that a condition to remove the staircase mesh railings is not appropriate.

3.4 With regards to the retention of the staircase mesh railings, it is viewed that these are an incongruous addition within the front lightwell and would be visible from the street. As a result the mesh railings associated with the staircase are considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the special interest of the Grade II listed building.

3.5 The existing staircase railings along the terrace, apart from the exception of no. 18 Harrington Square, maintain a much simpler treatment with solely vertical balustrades. A review of the planning history confirms that the mesh railings at no. 18 Harrington Square were erected without planning permission and therefore have not been subject to the policy test that this application will. Subsequently, the staircase mesh railings are viewed as an inappropriate addition that are not complementary to the existing staircase railings along the terrace and are not considered to be acceptable in the current form.

3.6 Section 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013 requires for buildings in conservation areas that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. It is considered that this proposal (the associated the retention of the staircase mesh railings) will harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and this heritage asset. Considerable importance and weight has been attached to the harm and special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.66 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.0 Amenity

4.1 Policy CS5 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. Furthermore Policy DP26 seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission to development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, overlooking, outlook and implications on daylight and sunlight. CPG6 seeks for developments to be "designed to protect the privacy of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree" and that the Council will "aim to minimise the impact of the loss of daylight caused by a development on the amenity of existing occupiers."

4.2 Given the location of the staircase and associated mesh railings and the positioning at the lower ground level in conjunction with the size and materials, the proposal is not considered to harm the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of access to sunlight and daylight, outlook or privacy.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The proposal is considered to detract from the appearance of the listed building and would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Refuse planning permission.

6.2 No immediate formal enforcement action recommended. Given that the bulk of the scheme is considered acceptable, immediate formal enforcement action is not considered the most appropriate action. Rather other informal enforcement action, at the discretion of the Council, is recommended to remove the mesh railings.