



J BUTTERWORTH PLANNING LIMITED



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Date: 15 June 2017  
My Ref: 17017  
Your Ref: 2017/1169/P

Dear Sir / Madam

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

**Planning application for removal of the existing coal lifts and adjacent balcony railings and installation of new balcony railings (the 'proposed development') at Bracknell Gate, Frogna Lane, London, MW3 7EA - Ref: 2017/1169/P**

I write in relation to the above planning application for removal of the existing coal lifts and adjacent balcony railings and installation of new balcony railings (Ref: 2017/1169/P) at Bracknell Gate, Frogna Lane, London, MW3 7EA which was submitted on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and registered as valid on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017.

Following the Council's related consultation exercise, it is understood the coal-lifts were noted as rare examples within the Conservation Area. It was the Council's opinion that some of these lifts should be retained within any external refurbishment of Bracknell Gate.

Subsequently, a suggestion that the lifts to Blocks A & C should be retained, but those related to Block B would be allowed to be removed. The applicant requested an extension of time to the determination of this application in order to consider this compromise. An extension until 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 was granted.

Accordingly, the applicant has spent the last three weeks assessing the following, in relation to this suggestion:

- i. The condition of these coal-lifts;
- ii. The cost complication of coal-lift retention; and
- iii. The contribution made by the coal-lifts towards the conservation area.

**Condition**

Although elements of the condition of the coal-lifts were included within the previously submitted structural assessment into the balconies, the applicant has completed an extensive photographic survey of the lifts. These images are attached below.

Furthermore the operations of all three lifts has been assessed. Both of these assessments have found the existing condition of the lifts to be in a very poor state of disrepair, with rust to structural frame brackets, fusing of running cars to the rails, and should Bracknell Gate wish to use the lifts, the majority of the constituents of the systems would have to be replaced, as their condition is too corroded to be repaired.

**Cost Implication**

Further to the condition survey, costs have been obtained for the replacement of the balconies – which are unsafe to use because of their condition, which also jeopardises additional fire escape routes, whilst leaving the lifts within a non-operational state [This was specified as Bracknell Gate has no use for the coal-lifts given the new central heating system].

This exercise found a near doubling of the costs related to simply replace the existing systems with a straight balcony - i.e. the scheme as submitted for planning permission – and are therefore beyond the resources of the applicant to complete. In this respect it is clear that there are no alternative schemes which are viable.

**Conservation Contribution**

In this respect please find enclosed a Heritage Impact Assessment to accompany the application. The submitted Assessment should be read in conjunction with the Planning & Heritage Statement and confirms that Bracknell Gate does not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. At best, Bracknell Gate, could be regarded as making a neutral contribution.

The Report also considers that the removal of the coal lifts will not cause any harm to the heritage asset and that the proposed new balconies will be elegant replacements that have the potential to enhance the existing building.

In this respect, both the Heritage Impact Assessment and Planning & Heritage Statement confirm that there are no conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan or the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Further to the above, therefore, it remains the applicant’s request that the balconies and coal-lifts be allowed to be removed due to the prohibitive nature of the costs to refurbish / replace the coal-lifts; the increased amenity space as well as ease of fire egress their removal provides; and the limited focus the conservation area assessment gives to the coal-lifts.

It is therefore requested that the Council considers the above and continues to determine the application and there are no reasons to refuse the application on conservation grounds.

If you require any more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

