

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	21/02/2018
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	
Officer		Application Number(s)		
Alfie Stroud		2017/7064/L		
Application Address		Drawing Numbers		
<p>Rose Cottage Vale of Health LONDON NW3 1AX</p>		<p>Location Plan; Site Plan; (All Version C, ref: PP-06614983) CF-DR-135-1-0100- F, CF-DR-135-1-0500-F, CF-DR-135-1-0600-F; (All Version C, ref: PP-06614983) CF-DR-135-1-1100-G, CF-DR-RVH-1-1500-E, CF-DR-135-1-1600-E; Schedule of Works, Rev. F, Chimney (December 2017); Opening Up Report (171212_135_REP_OpeningUp, December 2017); Structural Report (Cambridge Architectural Research Limited); Building Survey Report (Warmans); Design & Access Statement 4 (171218_135_REP_DAS_4, December 2017); Heritage Statement (Architectural History Practice).</p>		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
		Alfie Stroud		
Proposal(s)				
Alterations to existing chimney and associated changes to layout of ground and first floor of existing rear outrigger				
Recommendation(s):				
Application Type:	Listed Building Consent			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
Summary of consultation responses:	None					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	None					

Site Description

Grade II – first listed 1974

Two cottages. Early C19. Weatherboarded. Pantiled roof. Two storeys. One window to each cottage. Main entrances on east side. Left-hand cottage with wood trellis verandah supporting first floor. 1st-floor balcony with canopy; French windows to both (first floor architraved). Right-hand cottage with French doors to ground floor with pointed lights and architraved casement to first floor.

INTERIORS: not inspected.

Rose Cottage, like its neighbour, has a (possibly later but certainly very early) part-two part-one storey rear extension in the typical position of a closet wing, constructed of timber frame with single skin brick infill.

Relevant History

Rose Cottage

LW9903031 - Renewal of roof structure of single storey rear addition – Granted

2017/3531/P - Replacement of existing casement window to south-east elevation with double glazed French doors; replacement of existing rear door with new double glazed door – Granted

2017/3681/L - Internal and external alterations including replacement of existing casement window to south-east elevation with French doors; replacement of existing rear door; repairs and alterations to footings and balustrade of first floor balcony; replacement of uPVC guttering and downpipes with cast iron; installation of telescopic vents to front and rear elevations of main reception room; creation of a bathroom at first floor level; installation of a timber floor build-up at first floor level; like-for-like replacement of all internal linings; new and enlarged loft access hatches and levelling of uneven floors – Granted

2017/5070/PRE - Pre-application advice, including counsel against demolition of the rear wing chimneybreast

2017/7062/L - Strengthening of foundations under existing flank wall to rear outrigger, replacement of existing floor build up with solid floor build-up – Granted

2017/7063/P - New lime based render and external wall insulation to replace existing render finish to walls of existing rear outrigger – Granted

2018/0887/L - New lime based render and external wall insulation to replace existing render finish to walls of existing rear outrigger – Granted

Woodbine Cottage

9470290 - Works of alteration as shown on drawing numbers A3 01-07 inclusive; WB/W1 WB/W2 WB/W3 A3/09 letter of 9th December 1994 as revised on 02.11.94 and 12.12.94 – Granted
[Removal of analogue chimney breast from rear extension]

Relevant policies

Local Plan

D2 Heritage

NPPF

Paragraph 134

Assessment

Description

Rose Cottage and Woodbine Cottage are paired cottages of the early nineteenth century, with two-storey single-plan adjoining front ranges, timber-framed and weatherboarded, and long projecting rear wing in the typical position of a closet wing, enclosing a staircase compartment and with a recessed lobby in the angle of the two wings.

The rear wing of Rose Cottage is timber framed with single-skin brick infill, and is currently covered with a modern cementitious render. Its fabric and that of the timber staircase compartment and ceiling suggest multiple phases of construction. Its different materiality and manner of construction would appear to suggest that it is of later date than the front wing of the cottage, but equally (as confirmed by historic mapping) that it is of the early/mid nineteenth century. The submitted Heritage Statement considers this in further detail, and establishes that the rear wing stands in the typical position of the kitchen and scullery range for a domestic cottage of this type.

Approximately two-thirds of the way down the length of the rear wing, a substantial brick-built hearth forms a partition between two rooms, with a small historic doorway separating it from the flank wall. At ground-floor level, the chimneybreast contains a hearth deep enough to contain an iron range and opening into the innermost room of the wing. This chimneybreast rises to the first floor, where it contains two historic fireplaces, and terminates in a chimneystack in the roof above. The chimneybreast is plastered, but opening-up works suggest its historic brick construction is historic and little altered.

Significance

While the front wing contains the principal domestic rooms in the cottage, and is the element most featured in historic depictions of the cottage, the rear wing is scarcely much later in date and is highly likely to have been constructed to contain the kitchen and other ancillary rooms. It is as such an integral element of the historic domestic functioning of the cottage through its past. Among the elements of the cottage, its historic fabric, plan-form, volumes, layout, and fixtures and fittings are of significance.

The chimneybreast and stack – one of only two in the cottage – is a cardinal architectural element of any traditional domestic building, as is a staircase, roof or entrance lobby. The demolition of the analogue chimneybreast in Woodbine Cottage in the 1990s increases the significance of this remaining element as part of the historic and architectural special interest of the pair of cottages, revealing their traditional methods of construction and historic domestic living arrangements.

Assessment

The proposals would demolish the chimneybreast and adjacent partition wall with doorway, resupporting the defunct chimneystack in the roof above. New vertical structural steels would be inserted on the flank and party walls on either side of the location of the existing chimneybreast, with the steels on the party wall concealed by nibs forming a false hearth at ground floor perpendicular to the original. At first floor, storage would be contained within their depth, and the removal of the fireplaces would facilitate formation of a partition in the front-most room to form a bathroom and further wardrobe.

The removal of the chimneybreast at ground-floor level would entirely combine the volumes of the two historic cellular rooms, and the proposed false hearth would appear centred between them on the party wall. This would create an arrangement wholly atypical of any range of historic domestic service rooms and more suggestive of a single principal reception room, and would thus distort the spatial hierarchy of the house and obscure the way it functioned historically. On the inner face of the flank wall, the build-up to contain the steels would appear as a shallow projecting element much wider than a nib that might typically be understood to indicate the location of an historic partition wall, so leaving no clear trace of the historic plan-form.

The need for proposed vertical structural steels reveals the way the proposals would compromise the original and traditional structural design of the house, in which the brick stack supports its own weight as well as performing a secondary structural function within the timber-framed wing. The invasive structural intervention would for the first time introduce the non-traditional standing structural elements within this traditionally constructed timber-framed wing. Whereas the lately-approved application for construction of a concrete raft slab to replace the historic floor build-up was driven by correction of structural failure caused by decay and movement, and will be sufficient to resupport the integral historic standing structure above floor level, this proposal is driven by a wish to reorganise living spaces.

Precedent

The 1994 consent (9470290) for the chimneybreast standing in the equivalent position at Woodbine Cottage was presented with very similar new structural arrangements and reorganisation of plan-form. As such, the demolition and new structural intervention achieved no remedial effect for the historic structure but was a self-contained proposal to reorganise living spaces, like that considered here.

This permission was granted over twenty years ago, in the early years of the application of PPG15, and before the introduction of the guidance on the balance of heritage harm against wider public benefits, and the special place of the preservation of heritage in the wider planning balance, introduced by PPS5 in 2010 and subsequently reaffirmed by the NPPF. That permission anyway appears to have disregarded the clear guidance about resisting removal of chimneybreasts in paragraph C61 of Appendix C of PPG15.

Given the clearly comparable form and construction methods of the rear wings of the two cottages, the loss of the analogue chimneybreast at Woodbine Cottage has increased the contribution to the historic and architectural special interest of the listed pair made by the chimneybreast at Rose Cottage.

Conclusion

By irreversible removal of and structural intervention to functional and decorative historic fabric, subversion of the historic spatial hierarchy through loss of functionality and a construction of a distorting new arrangement, and by loss of designed historic room volumes and plan-form, the proposals would significantly diminish historic and architectural interest. The proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the listed building.

The NPPF states the following in paragraph 134 with regard to harm:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

There is no public benefit to outweigh the harm caused by the proposals.

The justification for the proposals presented in section 6 of the submitted DAS in the main presents arguments for the limited extent of and mitigation attached to the harm that would be caused. Only “spatial benefits” linked to the living preferences of the current owners and accruing entirely to them, and the “opportunity” to add a lateral structural tie for the flank wall are claimed as benefits. These being private or incidental in nature, they do not constitute public benefits either compatible with the conservation of the listed building or justifying its alteration.

The application is recommended for refusal.