

2018/2445/P - 6 Albert Terrace Mews

Agent Response to Objections received from Henrietta Goodden and David Thomas, Neil Chappell, Daniel Stillit, Gavin Hunter, Jenny McCrick, Daniel Widdicombe, Dr Caroline Cooper and Thomas Woodcock, dated variously

A number of these objections also include objections to applications 2018/2225/P and 2018/2342/P which relate to 6 Albert Terrace. I will respond to those various comments in a separate note under each of those applications.

Broadly speaking the concerns raised regarding this application fall into 4 areas as follows:

1. Use as Ancillary Accommodation and Loss of Six Homes.
2. Lowering the Floor by Approximately 350mm to Create Level Floor Access.
3. Joining the Property to 6 Albert Terrace to Create an “Amalgamated Super-Home”.
4. Disturbance, Disruption and Traffic.

I will respond to each of these in turn.

1. Use as Ancillary Accommodation and Loss of Six Homes

The advice we received from our pre-application consultation on 25th April 2018 with Camden, the statutory authority in this matter, confirmed that the proposal,

“would comply with policy H3 (Protecting existing homes) as it would not result in the net loss of two or more homes. Such a proposal would not normally require planning permission, however any application for demolition, or alteration and extension, of the mews property, should make it clear in that the proposal is for conversion of no. 6 Albert Terrace Mews to ancillary accommodation”.

We have therefore made it clear in our application that the proposal involves conversion to ancillary accommodation.

We do not agree with the specific claim that this proposal will lead to the loss of six homes.

The principle fact is that 6 Albert Terrace Mews and 6 Albert Terrace are separate properties, under separate title, with independent planning histories from each other. Specifically, we do not believe a 2003 consent (PEX0300139/P) at a separate property, namely 6 Albert Terrace, reinstating that property to a single family dwelling (which we assume complied with housing policy at the time) can subsequently be engaged to prejudice the current application at 6 Albert Terrace Mews, on the basis that housing policy may have changed. In effect it would be attempting to (i) utilise current housing policy to re-evaluate a 15-year old consent and (ii) apply this evaluation to an separate property both of which would not appear to be valid due process.

2. Lowering the Floor by Approximately 350mm to Create Level Floor Access

We are proposing to level the floor by approximately 350mm to create level access. This is not out of context within the mews as some objections claim.

Nos. 1-6 Albert Terrace Mews were originally designed as ancillary stable blocks, coach houses and subsequently garages, to their respective Italianate villas on Albert Terrace and access into the ground floor spaces was inherently 'level' for obvious reasons, therefore contrary to some comments, level access is a key historic feature of Albert Terrace Mews and mews properties generally.

We are intending to replace the pair of PVC framed french doors and the associated steps, neither of which are original, with a large timber garage door-type panel to the ground floor mews elevation. This large panel is intended to reference the original historic coach house doors through scale, material and positioning. Access via the original coach house doors would have been level and therefore level access through this proposed garage door-type panel is wholly 'in keeping' with the historic architecture of the mews. It should be noted that where original garage doors still exist in the mews they are still characterised by level access.

Furthermore there are two other very positive benefits in creating level access which are as follows:

- a. It enables us to reduce the level of the existing roof terrace therefore materially reducing it's current visual impact on the wider conservation area.
- b. Level access into a property is clearly considered a very positive benefit for elderly, ambulant disabled and wheelchair access.

3. Joining the Property to 6 Albert Terrace to Create an "Amalgamated Super-Home"

There is no intention, proposal or application that considers joining the two properties with any physical structure. The two properties will share the garden and there is no suggestion that they are to be physically linked otherwise, above or below, ground. Such a proposal would be wholly detrimental to the conservation area and would likely impact the limes trees which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

This appears to be a 'wild' assumption tenuously born from a proposal in a separate application (2018/2225/P) for 6 Albert Terrace to stabilise the footing of a section of the rear garden boundary wall. Whilst this is specifically a matter for that application we would still like to clarify the following:

The boundary wall that fronts the lime trees has a very shallow footing of about 20cm and the roots of the large limes are causing the wall to move which is creating a potential health and safety issue. Structural cracks and heave to the wall are now noticeable. The owners wish to avoid any future collapsing of the wall and therefore we consulted both the structural engineer and the arboriculturalist on how we could stabilise the wall without damaging the tree roots. They both advised that the footing needed to be deeper but that given the root location the best course of action was to support the footing and wall on piles situated between each tree (avoiding the roots) providing long term stability.

This process would be an expensive one and one that provides a clear benefit to the community by removing a potential hazard. If the wall is rebuilt as is (and with the existing bricks) then is it hard to see why improving the footings is a cause for objection.

Piecemeal repairs to the visible cracks in the wall, as suggested in one objection, would not provide the required long term structural stability.

We are unclear as to how the process of stabilising a short section of garden wall suggests that there is a plan to amalgamate the properties into a "*palatial home*". It does not and there is no such plan.

We ask that this application be reviewed on what is actually being proposed and not on any sensational assumptions that have been raised.

4. Disturbance, Disruption and Traffic

If this application is approved, we are committed to minimising the impact of the construction process. Pursuant of this an associated application for this property, currently pending registration, is accompanied by a robust CMP which demonstrates how impacts from the movement of goods and materials will be minimised during the construction process. It also demonstrates that implementing the scheme would not harm local transport routes. If approved, this CMP would be an enforceable document.

We trust these comments are of assistance.

Yours faithfully

Humphrey Kelsey
12th August 2018