

2018/2445/P - 6 Albert Terrace Mews

Agent Response to Objection from Patricia Callaghan, Labour Councillor for Camden Town with Primrose Hill Ward, dated 30th July 2018

We appreciate that Cllr Callaghan has shown an interest in this application however, given her public office, we find it unusual that there was no attempt to contact us, in order to ensure a balanced assessment, prior to issuing her public comments.

We respond to the concerns raised, as follows:

Loss of Housing

The advice we received from our pre-application consultation on 25th April 2018 with Camden stated 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”.

We therefore disagree with Cllr Callaghan’s comment that the application does not comply with policy H3.

Ancillary Accommodation

We are unclear as to why, specifically, the noise of a “staff house” would impact on neighbours. In any case, the owner’s intention is for the property to provide guest accommodation. Albert Terrace contains five bedrooms and the owners are a young family of six and therefore guest accommodation is required for visiting friends and relatives.

Level Access

We disagree that lowering the floor level is *“out of keeping”* for the following reason:

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 Cllr Callaghan’s 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.

Unique Mews House

We disagree that the proposal creates a *“blemish in the heart of a conservation area”*.

6 Albert Terrace retains no external historic features (or materials!) and has been extensively, and unsympathetically, altered over many years. We are proposing to return much of the historic fabric back to the property and struggle to understand why re-establishing these historical features would cause a “blemish” to the conservation area. Below I have attached a current photograph of the property which clearly shows how little has been preserved of it's original ‘mews’ character.



The unsympathetic alterations include, amongst others, the following

- a. altered window and door openings, including steps
- b. use of PVC frames
- c. concrete roof tiles
- d. rendered finish
- e. large barge board fascias
- f. clumsy roofline junction between the original mews house and the later extension
- g. the loss of roofline parapets

We are concerned that Cllr Callaghan's comments may not have had the benefit of a site visit and may be the subject of lobbying from local constituents who are, understandably, resistant to another building site. Of course Cllr Callaghan also represent the owners of this property (as she does me, as a resident of Primrose Hill) and whilst we would have welcomed a meeting with her prior to her posting a public objection we would still like to invite her to the property so we can further present our proposals. Our hope would be that given the above, and the benefit of a site visit, she might be minded to withdraw her objections.

A copy of this response has been sent to Elaine Quigley, the application's Planning Officer, and to Cllr Callaghan.

We trust these comments are of assistance.

Yours faithfully

Humphrey Kelsey
12th August 2018