

2019/3818/L
3 Fitzroy Square, W1T 5HG

We live at 2 Fitzroy Square and are the immediate neighbours to the south of 3 Fitzroy Square.

While we have no objections to the minor amendments to the plans for the main house, we do object to the alterations to the external appearance of the mews, and we do strongly object to the addition of a room linking the mews building and main building at first floor level.

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF MEWS BUILDING

The application states that “The changes to the mews facade are intended to make the mews more sympathetic to the historic setting and the character of Grafton Mews.”

However the changes do the opposite of this - the proposed bronze roof and windows are considerably *less* appropriate than the previously consented slate roof and timber framed windows, and would look out of place in this historic mews in a conservation area.

OVERLOOKING

The proposed amendments (as well as the previously consented scheme), introduce roof terraces and inhabited rooms with fully glazed elevations which will severely overlook both the internal rooms and external amenity spaces of 2 Fitzroy Square at very short distances and from above. This is in contravention of policy A1 6.4 (Visual privacy and outlook) of the Camden Local Plan 2017 as well as policies 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 of the Amenity CPG 2018. Although the proposed first floor link is referred to as a covered walkway, it is in fact the size of a room, and referred to as a library on the plans.

Objections were made to this aspect of the plans consented in 2012. This resulted in the unsatisfactory ‘solution’ of the wall between the terraces on the mews buildings being raised. This was meant to prevent lateral overlooking between our properties. But this new proposed extension contradicts those modifications and provides a fully glazed direct view from a living area directly down onto not just our roof terrace but into our own property which is fully glazed at ground floor level next to the terrace. It completely invades the privacy and enjoyment of our terrace and interiors. If it is allowed to be built at all it should certainly not be fully glazed, but regularly fenestrated, as is the main house.

As can be seen from the mocked-up pictures on p36 of the ‘Planning Heritage and Design & Access Statement’, and with reference to our own photo of the current layout (both below), this newly proposed extension significantly increases the overlooking of our property and blocks virtually all of the sky that can be seen in the right hand picture. The proposed ‘covered walkway’ would run across in the sunlit area in the photo on the right, with a floor level only just below the eaves height of the current mews house at number 3.

DAYLIGHT

The scale and bulk of the proposed scheme and amendments will impact the availability of daylight to several rooms in 2 Fitzroy Square, as well as the terrace. The council should require the submission by the applicants of a daylight report in accordance with BRE guidance as required by section 6.5 of the Local plan 2017 and section 3 of the Amenity CPG 2018, in order to ensure that the additional bulk of the proposed amendments will not breach the required levels.



Proposed



Current view from ground floor, no 2

USE OF LIVING SPACES

This application states that “The walkway will return the piano nobile to its original intended role as the house’s principal living space and will ensure this arrangement is preserved for the future.” However in the plans for no 3 consented in 2012, the kitchen was in the ground floor of the mews building, with direct access onto the garden terrace and to a dining area at the side, as well as the formal dining room in the ground floor of the main house. The first floor of the mews house was intended to be a ‘home office’. The decision to change the layout and to put the kitchen/diner in the first floor of the mews is what has caused the ‘problem’ that the new building of this ‘covered walkway’ is supposed to solve. It is not an inherent problem in the building itself. In no 2 Fitzroy Square we have the kitchen in the upper floor of the mews house and find it is easy to get from the first floor mews kitchen to the piano nobile by going via the ground floor link, and without it detracting from the role of that area as the house’s principal living space.