



61B Judd Street
King's Cross
LONDON
WC1H 9QT

bloomsburylives.co.uk

15th January 2020

2019/5276/P

Alyce Jeffery
5 Pancras Square
King's Cross
LONDON
N1C 4AG

Our consultation response to application 2019/5276/P.

The BCAAC is the advisory committee for all developments in Camden occurring within conservation areas south of Euston Road, with the exception of Hatton Garden. This application concerns alterations to 8 Percy Street.

8 Percy Street is a well-preserved Georgian townhouse, built c. 1768, and is Grade II listed under 1113260. The building lies within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.

The proposals are to replace a staircase leading to the basement level, replace a railing support, and to make some interior alterations.

The reason given for the replacement of the staircase is that it is dangerously corroded and its steep pitch mean it no longer complies with building regulations. The replacement would therefore comply with building regulations, and the current railing is therefore required to be removed to give adequate headroom. The interior alterations are not explained, nor are they described in detail.

I visited the property and inspected the staircase, and compared it with those in the local area, including many similar properties on the same road. Whilst there I spoke to an employee of the adjacent building about the application.

It appears likely that the house was originally built without a staircase to the basement level. This is supported by a number of houses in the area currently without a staircase, and the fact that those with staircases are modern in character. Those with modern staircases have had their railing support modified in varying ways to accommodate headroom. It is highly likely that some of these modifications are unauthorised.

The staircase to 8 Percy Street is significantly different in character to those in the area, and appears to be of architectural value. The patterned texture of the surface and small holes for drainage are interesting in appearance and are unlike any similar surfaces found in the twentieth century. The steepness of the pitch also suggests the staircase is historic, and the staircase is itself made from iron of thick gauge, explaining its corrosion. Although I am no expert in historic staircases, I would

conjecture that it is Victorian. Upon inspection, the staircase did not appear to be dangerously corroded, only superficially rusted.

The railing support also appears to be a rare original of architectural interest, with most similar examples in the area being modifications. We would like to remind you that the railings are specifically noted as being of interest in the listing, and we would consider the support to form a part of that interest.

The handrail to the staircase is a very recent addition which is likely unauthorised.

The interior changes are not properly explained and the historic value of the interior has not been assessed by the applicant. We would remind you that 189 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by an application.

In conclusion, although the alterations, to the best of our knowledge, cause less than substantial harm to this heritage asset, there is no convincing justification to allow this harm. Furthermore, in our view, the applicant has not adequately described the significance of the heritage assets affected.

We recommend that this application is rejected.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Owen Ward', written in a cursive style.

Owen Ward