

Litherland, Jenna

From: Litherland, Jenna
Sent: 10 August 2012 12:27
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: 2012/3339/P - 70 Oakley Square

Dear Graham,

2012/3339/P - 70 Oakley Square

Further to our telephone conversation this morning here is the detailed assessment in relation to the above application.

In order to access the new balcony from the main body of the house it is proposed to remove the existing window and the section of brickwork beneath it. This is a double hung timber sliding sash, in a 6 over 6 configuration. The window appears to be original, with slender glazing bars and no sash horns. The window opening is flanked by a historic architrave and shutters.

The existing window is an attractive original feature that contributes to the character of the ground floor living spaces. Its replacement with French doors would involve the loss of historic fabric at principal floor level. This would detract from the appearance and historic and architectural integrity of the listed building and consequently its special interest.

No objection is raised 'in principle' to the addition of the balcony and stairs to the garden. These are relatively lightweight and permeable in their appearance and would be situated unobtrusively on the building. Furthermore, no objection is raised to the overall design of the replacement French doors which are often a feature in this location. The specific concern relating to this proposal is the loss of the original window and the harm to the significance of the listed building.

The heritage statement that has been submitted suggests that the works to the fabric of the listed building will only have "a very minimal effect" and that they are "entirely reversible". Although the window is only one element of the rear elevation of the building this analysis downplays the significance of fenestration to both the internal and external appearance of a listed building, particularly at principal floor level. Furthermore, once the historic fabric is removed the works could not reasonably be described as reversible.

The NPPF is clear that "*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.....any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification (s.132).*" Given that the proposal will result in the loss of original fabric, this is considered less than substantial harm and section 134 of the NPPF applies, namely that "*....this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*" Camden's LDF policy DP25 is also clear that the Council will only grant consent for alterations where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the listed building. It is considered that whilst the creation of improved visual and physical links with the garden are desirable, they are not essential to the ongoing beneficial use of the building. Whilst a heritage statement has been submitted that addresses the issue of the window to be removed, this justification is not considered to outweigh the harm to the special interest of the listed building that results from the loss of this original feature.

As such it is considered that the proposed removal of the sash window to the rear elevation at ground floor level, by virtue of the loss of historic fabric, would harm the integrity and appearance of the listed building to the detriment of its special architectural and historic interest.

I hope this is of assistance. If you have any further comments I would be grateful if you can email them to me on or before Monday 20th August.

Regards,

Jenna

Jenna Litherland
Senior Planning Officer - West Team

10/08/2012

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