

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2020/5037/L	Alan Chandler	28/12/2020 00:04:45	OBJ	<p>The application is retrospective for a catalogue of alterations to a listed building, which is a criminal offence. The owner is an architect, who knows this to be the case. This is highly disappointing.</p> <p>The question should be - 'would this catalogue of changes have been granted in a listed building application had they not been done already?' There is no proof of the originality of elements removed, so much of the assertions within the heritage statement are unverifiable. Key original features that are prized in other listed buildings are dismissed as unimportant in the accompanying heritage statement - shutters, sash windows, marble fireplaces, floors and internal walls shown in the 'before' photographs are all period correct, appear authentic and have been removed with no demonstrable benefit to the originality or heritage value of the house.</p> <p>What is indisputable is the highly damaging waste pipework installed to the front elevation - indicating that internally services have been relocated requiring this inappropriate intervention to the front facade. No listed building should be given consent for adding a waste water pipe to its front elevation piano nobile, surely?</p> <p>The arrival of HS2 has required extensive negotiation around secondary glazing for acoustic attenuation to Mornington Terrace properties - the replacement of the sash windows to the terrace with double glazed sashes is not an appropriate strategy, hence secondary glazing. The replacement of the windows to this building for double glazed variants is similarly not appropriate. Aside from appearance, the additional weight of the glass in double glazed sashes requires the whole sash box arrangement to be removed - not only the supposedly decayed sliding sashes (no evidence of serious decay is visible in the 'before' photographs). The removal of the entire window also alters the sight-lines as the box and counterweights are much larger - a fundamental alteration not preserving or enhancing the listed building. Careful repair of any decay and the use of secondary glazing would be the appropriate route for this and every other house in the terrace.</p> <p>Of significance is the removal of original walls and roof structure to suit contemporary taste. The extensive interventions are not conservation based, and it is noted in the roof detail drawing that PIR insulation has been fitted between the rafters with timber planking as a visible finish. This is far more than the removal of historic fabric, this is a highly dangerous flammable ceiling on top of the same insulation that caused the Grenfell disaster. In the event of a fire the risk to the upper floors of listed building, its neighbours to whom a roof level fire would spread quickly and the architect's family that lives in this building is huge, and is both a listed building and building regulations issue.</p> <p>Of similar fundamental concern is the basement alterations - buildings of this period have corbelled footings very close to the original basement floor level - the drawings indicate the basement floor (existing) to be 70cm higher than the base of the wall - this is highly unusual and greater proof needs to be shown regarding this detail, as if the walls have been underpinned to create 70 cm extra head height, then this is a significant structural alteration affecting the security of the adjoining properties.</p> <p>Other similarly generic modern rear extensions have been given consent for other listed buildings in the area, similarly vault conversions. These aspects are the least of the issue here. What matters is that architects propose alterations BEFORE they make them, the merits or otherwise are judged based on the ability to assess the harm caused when the original fabric is able to be seen, and that the work is executed according to the judgement of the Conservation Officer. Illegal work requires enforcement, or quickly becomes the expedient way to undermine heritage protection.</p>