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FORMAL OBJECTION: 3.5 Storey Rooftop Extension to 18 Stukeley Street

The Seven Dials CAAC objects to the application at 18 Stukeley Street for a four storey rooftop extension.

While buildings of this type can be amenable to rooftop extensions, they must be of an appropriate scale and design to complement the existing building and wider conservation area. Rooftop extensions should not dominate in terms of scale, should be massed sensitively, and designed in a way clearly influenced by the host building.

Scale

It is our view that at four storeys, this building could accommodate a two storey rooftop extension at most.

The CAAC also notes that significant invasive structural works are required to strengthen the foundations of the building to accommodate the increased load. This suggests that such an ambitious extension is inappropriate for this building regardless of design and conservation issues.

The CAAC would likely object to proposals of this scale regardless of design alterations.

Design

It is our view that the design of the extension pays very little regard to the character of the host building and the wider conservation area, and would cause harm to the existing building and wider townscape.

While the raising of the parapet to match existing is faithful to the existing building, the 2.5 storey extension above appears entirely alien to the appearance of the building, conservation area, and Central London as a whole.

The proposed fenestration is simply inappropriate in proportions and design and the use of Staffordshire blue bricks as the wall finish is also entirely inappropriate. Any fenestration should be regular to match the existing building and finish should be in materials traditional to the surrounding environment, namely London stock and lead.

We do not agree that the design intention should be to contrast with the existing building and wider townscape. The design emphasis should be on creating an anonymous intervention which harmonises with the existing building and wider area. A rooftop extension should be clearly subservient to the existing building and clearly read as being an extension rather than an entirely separate entity.

In terms of massing each storey above parapet should be set back to minimise streetscape impact, and consideration should be given to sloped Mansard style exterior walls.

Conclusion

We remain open to giving more detailed design advice in anticipation of a revised scheme. The Seven Dials CAAC maintains a formal objection to this scheme as stands, and would rescind an objection on condition of reduced scale and significant exterior redesign.

Bloomsbury Conservation Areas

Advisory Committee

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