10 Regents Park Road – 2020/4218/PRE

**Significance and building and scope of proposed works**

10 Regent’s Park Road is a block of ten flats designed by Erno Goldfinger for a co-operative of residents between 1954-6. Located within Primrose Hill Conservation Area, the building is distinctive due to its contrasting modern architectural style and materials.

The property was listed in 1998 (Grade II). The list entry is expansive and gives a useful insight into why the building is considered of architectural significance. The listing also notes:

*The flats are also important in their own right as one of Goldfinger's most successful and least altered domestic works, and as a most interesting example of how ten flats could be provided on a tiny gap site.*

The building has recently suffered from serious water ingress and certain aspects (fire safety, roof covering and rooflights, and M&E in particular) are now showing the limitations of their design as well as dysfunction as a result of their age.

This pre-application request is to consider:

1. Fire safety improvements;
2. Roof refurbishment;
3. M&E kitchen extraction up-grade; and
4. Security.

In the light of the observation that this is one of Goldfinger’s least altered domestic works it is important to unpick what elements and architectural details particularly contribute to the significance of the building and what may be considered a routine element that might be generic to any\ property constructed in the 1950s.

The overall significance of the building is succinctly summarised in the *Design, Access and Heritage Statement* produced to support this application.

**Relevant legislation, policy and guidance**

* Town and County Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990
* National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)
* National Planning Policy Guidance
* LB Camden Local Plan (2017)
* LB Camden Planning Guidance
* Historic England Guidance
* Primrose Hill Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy

**Assessment**

General

Given the observation within the list description that this is one of Goldfinger’s least modified domestic buildings every effort should be made to ensure that further detail is not lost.

The issues presented are real and understood. That said the preference is for retention and up-grading of original components wherever possible over like-for-like replacement, however it is also understood that in some instances replacement or redesign may well be the only practical option.

Features which are unique to the apartment block such as the central staircase, internal metal doorframes, the bi-directional folding door between the kitchen and the living room in some flats, the polycarbonate flat letters and numbers identify units on the communal stair, the original paint scheme should be retained and where necessary repaired/refurbished.

Flat owners are encouraged to reinstate/repair significance elements that have been lost or damaged as part of the general refurbishment of the building.

Fire safety

The catastrophic fire the consumed Grenville Town in 2017 is a stern reminder of the importance of fire safety. 10 Regent’s Park Road was built in a different time and by modern day standards the fire safety of the block can be seen to be compromised.

Compartmentalisation within the building is inadequate. Proposed interventions are supported but should be visually unobtrusive/ design appropriate and the minimum necessary to achieve the necessary fire regulation standards needed.

Up-grading of doors should be achieved without obvious visual change.

Self-closing ironmongery should be of a design to match the era and architectural ethos of the building.

The installation of wireless fire detection and radio-linked smoke alarms is supported although the location of these units will need consideration.

Roof refurbishment

The roof whilst being a fundamentally important part of the building is of standard construction and appears to utilise commonplace elements. It is therefore felt that the roof covering (which has failed), the rooflights, roof lantern and access hatch are functional elements which are part of the building but not identified as major contributors to its significance. The repair/up-grading of the roof is supported. It is also accepted that the roof lantern will require to be modified with the inclusion of an up-stand. There are also design issues with the roof and thus the increase in the fall of the parapet gutter is also supported as is the redesign of the roof access hatch which in its current form is quite frankly dangerous.

M&E kitchen extraction

The current kitchen extraction system is considered a utilitarian part of the building and not a major contributor to its significance although an integrated system incorporation into the design of the building is novel. The replacement of the existing system has the advantage of reducing its visibility at roof level and the noise level within the building.

Security

The issue of building security and access to properties occupied by the common man was a matter yet to be conceived of as a problem in the years after WWII. Thus security is confined to lockable doors. Whilst I am sympathetic to the perceived need for camera security a location needs be identified which provides sufficient surveillance without obtrusive presence.

**Planning and listed building consent applications**

Certain aspects of the proposal will need to be worked up and additional information will be required as part of a listed building consent/ planning application but in general the work outlined in this pre-application request is supported.