

Laura Hazelton

From: Zoe Chan Eayrs [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 August 2021 16:45
To: Laura Hazelton; Nick Baxter; Elizabeth Beaumont
Cc: Daniel Farrand; Zenab
Subject: Replies to comment for cellar and ground repairs

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

Dear Laura,

We have read the letter from Mr Cunningham dated 12 August who we believe has been contacted by neighbours at 109 and 113 and wish to provide the following responses.

We would like to point out the following:

1) The building at 111 Frognaal was not listed for its connection with the Caros and many of the changes they made have been agreed between us and Camden as harmful to the listed building. While it is understandable that Mr Cunningham may be saddened by changes to the studio as he remembers it, this is irrelevant to the balancing act previously carried out between us and officers over the last four years and the resulting current proposals which have demonstrable benefits to the character and integrity of the original historic fabric. (It is important to note that Caros art studio, to which he refers, was removed in the 21st century prior to us buying the house and replaced with an unauthorised studio flat and shower room for his carer)

2) It is clear from his words that Mr Cunningham is relying on hearsay rather than actually being aware of what is being and has been carried out at the property.

3) Mr Cunningham's statement about us digging a basement is in error but again this is unsurprising. We believe that the cellar was partly infilled at the latest during Caro's initial works in the 50s and 60s (but could have been at any time prior to the conversion and insertion of the floated floor in the 50/60s the exact timing is unknown), in any case before Mr Cunningham became studio director. It is therefore not surprising that he was only aware of the *known part of the cellar*. We ourselves did not know of the backfilled part of the cellars' existence prior to the structural investigations in relation to the sagging ground floor and structural issues above. The unauthorised steel modern access hatch and ladder which he states to have been put in with Sir Anthony (without consent), is still how the cellar is accessed, and the cellar is still not habitable too and is still used as storage. Thus not a basement. These works were instructed by our engineer and haven't created any habitable area.

As an additional note, the works and alterations we propose as a whole (the alterations to which he refers) seek to reinstate character to the listed building. This is to the benefit of the listed building and not its detriment.

When the house was first converted most of its historic 18th and 19th century fabric and historic features front and back were removed. The loss of the original ground floor level replaced with a raised timber floated floor and removal of the original stable doors and windows in particular destroyed the legibility of this old stable block and gardeners' cottage. In addition the use of concrete and cement renders have irreversibly damaged the original brickwork. Some of these works included:

20th century Alteration and Extension works included:

- ∞ Removal of the original roof and replacement roof built
- ∞ New box back dormer
- ∞ Flat roofs inserted throughout
- ∞ Removal of the original stable doors and blocking up with modern doors and windows
- ∞ Removal of historic sash windows and replacement with modern ones
- ∞ Removal of original internal doors
- ∞ Removal of much of the rear facade
- ∞ Removal of the rear south transept
- ∞ Removal of original floor joists and floorboards throughout most of the house
- ∞ Removal of the original staircase
- ∞ Two storey Extension overlapping the historic transept
- ∞ Concrete renders and modern paints throughout

Additional Unauthorised works carried out included:

- ∞ Insertion of steel access and ladder to the cellar
- ∞ Removal of the original ground floor and insertion of floated timber ground floor and insertion of steps up to the lower ground floor
- ∞ Removal of Caros Art studio space
- ∞ New kitchenette and shower room inserted in the south transept
- ∞ New bathroom and floor inserted on the upper ground floor of the south transept
- ∞ Removal of internal walls
- ∞ New upvc greenhouse in front of the historic 18th century rear transept
- ∞ Infilling of the stable door with modern glazing and door in the south transept.
- ∞ Rear modern window between two transepts

It was clear that the original ancillary stable block and gardeners cottage was in need of much renovation in the 20th century to convert it into a home for the young Caro family at the time, and the itemised works above (authorised and not) enabled the house to be brought into habitable use by the Caros. This work enabled the Caro family to enjoy the converted stable and cottage as a cherished family home for many years as a result. But it did lead to the loss of most of the buildings original features and character as part of its conversion. In addition, subsequent unauthorised works following the Smithsons conversion also damaged the historic asset and its character. Mr Cunningham seems to be misinformed about the impact the 20th and 21st century works had on the original historic building and its character.

Of the few original features remaining we can confirm that the original front courtyard cobbles remain, as does the front door and front gates and all the other listed historic features that Mr Cunningham has said Sir Anthony Caro valued when he lived at the house. This is in addition to the two sash windows in the front elevation.

Our renovation and repair works seek to keep any original features and reinstate lost ones, to improve the house's character from when we purchased it. This has been developed with officers and are supported by the local community and include but are not limited to the following:

Proposed improvements include:

- ∞ Reinstatement of the original ground floor
- ∞ Reinstatement stable doors
- ∞ Reinstatement of historic sash windows on the front elevation (replacing modern ones)
- ∞ Reinstatement of the sloping roof on the rear elevation
- ∞ Removal of the damaging extension which overlapped the historic 19th century transept
- ∞ Removal of the unauthorised studio flat and shower room
- ∞ Removal of the unauthorised uPVC greenhouse
- ∞ Removal of concrete and cement renders throughout
- ∞ Reinstatement of natural lime and clay based renders, plasters and paints which are suited to the historic fabric of the stable block and gardeners cottage

When we bought the house it was in a very sorry state in 2017 and the Caro family sought to sell it and not restore it themselves. It sat empty and on the market for over a year prior to us purchasing it and officers were witness to how outmoded and in need of renovations the house was in. We bought it and have invested four years of love and energy since then into trying to bring the building back into use by our young family whilst doing the best we could to improve the listed building in any way possible with officers guidance.

Our works seek to reinstate the original Georgian character and reverse unauthorised works, all with the intention of updating the house for 21st century use and bringing the house sensitively back into use by our young family whilst also improving its repair and character. Contrary to Mr Cunningham's claims otherwise, we have a deep respect for the historic fabric and our works are supported by much of the local community as a result. The repair works in question were not the digging of a new basement but the reinstatement of a previously hidden part of the cellar which he could not have known about. The works have also safeguarded the listed building from damage, were instructed by a professional structural engineer and are confirmed to improve the character of the listed asset by reinstating the original ground floor level which was a key feature of the original stable block.

We are very saddened by Mr Cunningham's letter which does not seem to be fully informed of the benefits of our restoration works as a whole nor registers the benefits of the repairs which have safeguarded the listed asset. As officers know we are in constant communication about every detail of our renovations already and continue to be. In addition, delays related to current applications are actually harming the listed building (which is exposed to the elements) and affecting our family life whilst we wait.

Separate to this please can you reattach the many letters of support from adjacent neighbours and the local community who have reviewed all of our cellar and ground floor repairs and renovation proposals in depth and support them, many have told us they had contacted you to reattach their support letters when the submission was first put in and these did show up on the portal originally (we believe there are about 9 of them) but they are not now appearing on the planning portal.

Kind Regards,

Zoe

Sent from my iPhone