

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

RE: Enclosed Fire Escape Stair Extension

To whom it may concern,

A second visit to the above property was undertaken on the 24th January 2024 after concerns were raised regarding the historically added, enclosed fire escape stair.

An initial visit was carried out on the 7th June 2023. A number of concerns were raised generally for the full structural survey requested. The inspection was made for this survey at ground level, with the aid of binoculars and was visual only. Access into the fire escape stair was blocked due to safety concerns.

A full list of recommendations can be found in the relevant structural survey report.

The aforementioned second visit was undertaken while building works are commencing on the property. Access was made for an internal inspection to the stairwell.

Upon review, it is now apparent that the stair has moved significantly more than noticed with the limited access of the structural survey (additional pointing had been added to the external corners to cover the full extent of the damage).

Proposals from the structural survey outline underpinning and general brick stitching repairs, including strapping to the original building.

It is within our professional opinion, following the second visit, that the repairs could either be dangerous to carry out (i.e. underpinning), or could apply a negative impact to the existing and original structure. i.e. vibration and plant use near to the area.

Between the two visits, there has been increasingly frequent bad weather and storms, including sub-zero temperatures, likely further causing damage.

The structure is located directly on a public pavement which also leads up to a school.

Tell-tales have been installed to monitor for any progressive movement, however there is no way of knowing if or when further, potentially detrimental movement, could occur.

Construction traffic is planned to pass close to the damaged structure as planned with the refurbishment of the property in question. Vibration from such vehicles could cause further movement.

Temporary propping would be extensive and likely extend into the road of Thurloe Street for a considerable amount of time - if repairs were considered. Access to site and the school through the remaining roads to be reviewed.

Further development is currently in review which would plan on the removal of the stair in the future.

It is therefore recommended that the stair is deconstructed in a safe manner as soon as possible.

The below points are considered with this recommendation:

- Safety to public – including school children
- Safety to workers undertaking eventual repairs
- Fundamental defects to the stair extension
- Timescales for possible road closures and temporary works
- Protecting temporary works and limiting access
- Cost of (proposed temporary) repair works versus long-term development proposals

The public risk aspect is of most concern and we urge this is progressed through Planning and the Local Authorities' relevant departments with the upmost urgency.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Russell
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Managing Director