

ALTERING YOUR PROPERTY

Any proposal to alter the external appearance of a house must have written permission from the Formosa Amenity Board. This includes any proposals to make developments that require planning permission as well as minor developments that do not require planning permission. Even if a householder has planning permission from Westminster Council, no alterations may be undertaken without the explicit written permission of the Formosa Board, and if carried out without permission, the Amenity Company can force it to be undone.

Provisions of the Rent Charge Deed

All freeholders must comply with the rules in the [Rent Charge Deed](#) and constraints to be observed when making external alterations.

The key provisions of the Rent Charge Deed in relation to alterations can be summarised as follows:

- All buildings surrounding the Formosa Garden, plus the shops on Formosa Street, the Prince Alfred pub and the Colonnade Hotel are within the scope of these provisions
- No alterations to the external appearance of buildings (including colour scheme) can be made without prior written consent from the Amenity Company
- No new buildings or structures (including aeriels) can be made without prior written consent from the Amenity Company
- External paintwork shall be maintained in good order (normally renewed every 5 years) in colours to be determined by the Amenity Company
- No signs to be erected without prior written consent from the Amenity Company

Aims of the Board

Under the Rent Charge Deed the Formosa Board must approve all alteration proposals and seeks where possible to use proposals for alterations as opportunities to standardise the external appearance of buildings in line with the [guidance notes](#) below. This means that even if proposals are in line with existing features of other properties, approval may not be granted – precedents will not necessarily be followed. Proposals that comply with this guidance will normally be approved by the Board, but the Board reserves the right to refuse approval for any reason.

The Board has considerable legal powers over all the freeholders. In practice this means that if a freeholder or one of his tenants makes a change to his property that has not been approved (in writing) by the Formosa Amenity Company, they can force it to be undone. Any contravention could result in a householder being required to re-do works (at his/her own expense) so they comply with the decision of the Formosa Board, and in addition he or she would have to pay any legal and surveyor's fees of the Formosa Amenity Company. The ultimate sanction for Formosa Amenity is to seize control of the Freehold, which it is entitled to do if any rules, including planning rules, are broken by freeholders.

Process

1) Residents considering any alteration should arrange an initial discussion with the Board on any proposed planning matter prior to going to the expense of hiring architects or builders or putting together formal planning applications. This can be arranged through Crispin Sampson-Bancroft at Westbourne Block Management Limited (see [contacts](#) below). Any such advice is for guidance purposes only and will not be binding on the Board or Formosa Amenity.

2) Applications for changes to the external appearance of properties should be submitted to the Managing Agent, Westbourne Block Management Ltd. Applications should include an overview of the proposed works together with 'before and after' plans, drawings, photographs and/or sketches to clearly illustrate the changes that are proposed. For minor works clear hand-drawn sketches may suffice but for major changes (particularly those that require Council planning permission) full architect's drawings will be appropriate.

3) Applications are considered by the Board as a whole at regular Board meetings. Responses to all applications will be made within six to eight weeks of submission depending on when the next Board Meeting has been scheduled.

4) No application is considered approved until the Board has issued a formal, written response.

5) In the event of an application to Formosa being refused, the Board will provide reasons for refusal and outline any amendments to the proposed work that will be required to secure approval.

6) In the event of approval, work can go ahead, subject to the granting of any planning, listed building and building control consents required from Westminster City Council.

7) Applications may be submitted to Formosa Amenity in parallel with any application for planning permission or building regulations approval from Westminster City Council, although applicants should recognise that any amendments required by the Formosa Board may require consequential changes to applications to Westminster.

8) All approvals granted by Formosa shall be valid for 1 year from the date of the formal written response issued by Formosa.

9) All approvals will be granted to the existing freeholder applicant and approvals will become void with change of freeholder ownership. The new freeholder owner will need to reapply for existing or new planning permissions.

Managing agents: Westbourne Block Management Limited, 19 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2 6LG. Crispin Sampson-Bancroft is Formosa's main contact.

GUIDANCE NOTES

Objectives

In setting out this guidance, the Formosa Board is aiming to achieve a look and feel for the area that is in keeping with the original, Victorian, style but that recognises modern lifestyle needs and the opportunities presented by modern building techniques. In general, simple solutions will be preferred to over-ornate ones, and proposals that align with existing building lines and styles will be preferred over those that stand out as significantly different from existing structures.

Applications that fully comply with these guidelines will normally be approved by the Board, although the Board reserves the right to reject any application for any reason.

General

- It is the householder's responsibility to ensure that any consultants (e.g. architects or designers) and workmen (e.g. builders or decorators) are correctly briefed in line with these notes.

- Listed Buildings - it is the householder's responsibility to ascertain whether or not their property is listed. If it is, the householder should contact Westminster's listed building officer to discuss any proposals, remembering that the Council may have more specific requirements than these general notes. Any conflict between the Council's requirements and this guidance should be reported to Formosa Amenity for resolution before any application for Listed Building Consent is made. A copy of any Listed Building Consent should be submitted to Formosa Amenity with the application for the approval from Formosa Amenity.

External facades

• Colours

- All stucco and render must be painted in Magnolia (British Standard Colour Code 08 B 15). It is not acceptable for stucco or render areas to be painted white. All woodwork apart from street-facing front doors must be painted White (BS 00 E 55).

- Note that woodwork that has been painted black or magnolia in the past will be expected to be repainted in white as properties are redecorated in the five yearly cycle.

- All metalwork, including railings, stairs and pipes on brickwork, are to be painted black.

- Pipes on stucco and rendered walls must be painted Magnolia

- The main street-side front door may be painted a colour of the householder's choice, but should be in keeping with the overall look and feel as mentioned above and subject to any more specific requirements for listed buildings.

- **Brickwork and Stucco**

- All existing exposed brickwork areas are to remain as exposed brickwork while all existing stucco areas are to remain as stucco. Brickwork should not be painted.

- Existing stucco areas are neither to be reduced (removal to expose brickwork) nor extended.

- New construction should be in keeping with existing adjacent brickwork or render/stucco.

- Repointing of brickwork should be undertaken in a colour of mortar that matches existing pointing.

Alterations:

- **Extensions and structural alterations**

- Any proposed extension or external structural alteration must be in keeping with the adjacent building in terms of scale, material, windows, architectural detailing, and colour of the finishes. Roof extensions should generally be contained within the pitch of the existing roof, with properly formed dormer windows. Velux-type roof lights will not normally be approved. Flashings should be properly formed in lead, and stepped into the brickwork where necessary.

- Subterranean basements or any development under the garden WILL NOT BE approved

- **Windows and doors**

- Replacement and new windows and doors (eg in any new extension) must be constructed in wood and match the design of those of the existing building. Windows should normally be vertical sliding sash windows. Modern 'mock' sash windows that look similar to traditional windows when shut but, instead of sliding vertically up/down, are hinged to open outwards, are not acceptable. U-PVC, plastic or metal windows and doors are not acceptable.

- Any works to existing sash windows should be repaired to match existing traditional sash windows.

- Existing window openings should not be changed in size, either by making them wider or taller (including removing the brickwork under the window).

- New window and door openings should align with existing ones, both vertically and horizontally.

- Windows should not be removed or the opening bricked up.

- The design of doors and French windows (either to replace existing or new) should be consistent with those in existing adjacent properties. On the garden side, simple designs with single panes will be preferred over ornate designs with multiple small panes. Street-side front doors should be of a design that is consistent with adjacent properties.

- **Metalwork**

- Alterations to external staircases and balustrades should match adjacent existing ones.

- New external staircases and balustrades should either copy an original Victorian-style example or consist of plain elements, including plain vertical balustrade rods.

- The original upper floor balustrades to Warrington Crescent should be retained. If parts of the staircase or balustrades are missing, then copies of adjacent panels should be made to infill missing areas to match the original.

- Railings and gates should copy original examples or consist of plain vertical rods.

- Rail head cappings, vertical rods and gates should be maintained and replaced with ones of a matching design where missing.

- Railings should not be removed and where missing shall be replaced.
- Wooden structures, e.g. fences, latticework etc. in place of railings are not acceptable.
- Brick structures, either plain or stuccoed in place of railings are not acceptable.
- External security grilles may be installed to street side basement and garden side ground level openings. Their design should be simple and consist of straight vertical rods. External grilles should not be installed to any upper floors.
- External concertina-type security gates are not acceptable externally at any level.
- Roller shutters are not acceptable internally or externally.

- **Garden Walls**

- The height of plinth walls and railings should be consistent with those of adjacent properties. For example, on the Castellain Road side of the garden the railings are taller than those on the Sutherland Avenue side: the height of any new or modified garden walls should match these heights.
- Railings on the top of plinth walls should also be of a consistent height and design along a run of houses and comply with the requirements for railings set out above.

- **Roof Treatments**

- Proposals will be reviewed on a case by case basis with key considerations given to the alignment of new and existing windows and what effect the proposal will have on the roofline.

- **Miscellaneous**

- TV Aerials and Satellite Dishes. The guidelines to be followed are set out in some detail by Westminster City Council. They should be sited so that they are not visible at street or garden level. Only one satellite dish per house will be approved, so if multiple flats wish to have satellite dishes they will need to coordinate to meet this requirement.
- Air Conditioning Units. These must not be attached to exterior walls or be visible from ground level.
- Externally run cabling: External cabling for satellite dishes, TV aerials, telephones etc. should be avoided if possible, but where unavoidable it should be dark in colour on brick buildings, or match the colour of the stucco on stucco buildings. Cabling must be neatly fixed in vertical and horizontal runs only.
- Garden Paving: Paving should be of a subdued colour and preferably of a natural material. Wooden decking is unlikely to be approved.
- Street side entrances: New tiling or stonework on the approaches to street-side front entrance doors should match the style and materials of adjacent properties.
- Garden sheds: Should be unobtrusive and painted/stained a black/neutral colour.

Review

This guidance will be reviewed from time to time by the Formosa Board and any changes published for consultation to freeholders before they are implemented.