**15 Mecklenburgh Square, WC1N 2AD**

**Design and Access Statement – Project Proposal**

**Background**

15 Mecklenburg Square forms part of a terrace of 24 properties on the east side of Mecklenburgh Square.

The property (freehold) is owned by Goodenough College, a postgraduate residential community located across several buildings on Mecklenburgh Square. It forms part of the wider College estate. Flat 1 provides accommodation for the College’s Director and the remaining two residential flats, 2 and 3, are commercially tenanted on short-term lets.

Mecklenburgh Square was built as part of the residential townhouses developed on the Foundling Estate, 1792-1825. The east side of the square, which includes number 15, was completed between 1810 and 1820, designed and built as a row of single residences. The terrace was listed Grade II\* in 1954, and number 15 in 1974 (entry 1113118). It is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, within sub-area 12 ’Coram’s Fields/Brunswick Center’. It is characterised by 3 decorative stucco blocks separated by plain brick façades and tied together by continuous stucco render at ground level. The terrace suffered extensive bomb damage during World War II with number 15 destroyed by incendiaries. It was rebuilt in *fac-simile* in the late 1950’s and rearranged to accommodate flats. There are consequently no original heritage features remaining either inside or out, and the new internal plan layout bore no resemblance to its Georgian origins.

Over the years, 15 Mecklenburgh Square has been modernised and converted into various configurations of flats. The most recent renovation, carried out in 2008, resulted in its current configuration as three separate dwellings: Flat 3 (lower ground floor) self contained 2 bedroom flat with living area and kitchen, Flat 2 (front ground floor) 1 bedroom flat with kitchen/living area, Flat 1 (rear ground floor and 1st to 3rd floor) 5 bedroom flat with kitchen, drawing room and utility areas. The internal decoration is in Georgian style expressed through details such as skirtings, dado rail, cornices and panelled doors.

**Proposal**

This proposal aims to provide a minimal impact, low-cost solution to meet the needs of our current and future College Directors by providing a suitable residence for large families as well as satisfying the spatial requirements of the College Director, who works part of the time from home. We aim to achieve this through limited interventions to the fabric and arrangement of the building, resulting in the integration of two of the three flats into one single dwelling while retaining the current building footprint, as it is clearly neither desirable nor feasible to extend the premises due to space and access constraints. A much needed restoration and refurbishment of the existing fabric will be carried out. The proposed changes will not modify in any way the elevations or historical character of the building.

To achieve the desired goal, our proposal will incorporate the small ground floor flat (Flat 2) into Flat 1 to form a single dwelling accessed directly through the ground floor front door, encompassing ground to third floor levels. This reconfiguration will provide Flat 1 with two additional rooms, Dining Room and Home Office. The lower ground floor, flat 3, with its independent entrance will remain unaffected.

Flat 1 will retain its current primary use as a five-bedroom family dwelling. The additional rooms will provide the much-needed capacity for the Director to work from home, welcome visitors, hold meetings and host small receptions. In the current configuration, there is no dining room and the sole reception room which serves as a family room, can only be accessed through the kitchen, making it unsuited for the Director’s official duties.

The selective and modest internal alterations proposed, include:

**Ground Floor:**

1. Flat 2 – repurposing the bedroom as a dining room and reinstating the door opening that provides direct access from the entrance hallway.
2. Flat 2 – retain and extend the kitchen, removing the bathroom and connecting lobby area. Install new kitchen units and relocate the door opening that provides direct access from the main entrance hallway.
3. Main entrance hallway – remove the internal lobby double doors that currently serve as the entrance to Flat 1
4. Flat 1 – create a new WC in the under-stair store.

**First floor:**

1. Remove of the existing lobby and WC and form a new door opening providing direct access from the landing to the drawing room.
2. Repurpose the kitchen as a Home Office and move the existing door from the landing to suit.

**Second and third floors:**

Works are limited to refurbishing bathrooms with new sanitaryware, wall and floor finishes. In two instances the doors to the bathrooms will be relocated but re-used.

**Generally:**

The mechanical, electrical and plumbing services will be adapted to service the above alterations.

Full redecoration throughout including new floor coverings to spaces affected, retaining the current c.2008 Georgian style doors, trim, dado rails, cornice and baseboard.

We will carry out external repairs to the roof, replacing defective lead linings, damaged slates and defective pointing. The windows will be repaired and repainted.

*August 2024*