**1-4 MINERVA HOUSE**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT | HERITAGE STATEMENT**

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**Introduction:**

OMD our client are located at Minerva House, 1-4 North Crescent a Grade II listed building. They are one of the largest and most innovative media communications companies in the world. It was initially formed out of the media departments of three of Omnicom's global advertising agencies: BBDO, DDB and TBWA. OMD is headquartered in New York, with more than 140 offices in 80 countries. Named 2005 Global Media Agency of the Year by Adweek, Global Media Network of the Year by campaign and 2005 Media Agency of the Year in the U.S. by Advertising Age, it has a leading market position in all major world regions and maintains more top market positions than any global competitor.

They have appointed Trifle Creative to design and build a new reception and ground floor space at Minerva House to fit with the change in company culture. Their current ground floor is dated, not client friendly and the space, which was originally open plan when a car show room, has been divided into offices and meeting rooms on the ground floor, they require the space to be open plan and suitable for informal meeting with clients and potential new business. This space will improve the working environment and bring the dated ground floor up to date.

**History of Minerva House:**

The application site is located on the western side of North Crescent, bounded by the Telephone Exchange building (no.5 North Crescent) to the north-east and Glen House (No.’s 200-208 Tottenham Court Road) to the south-west. The lawful use of the building is B1(office); it is currently occupied by a media agency OMD our client.

Minerva House is a Grade II four storey listed building. It was constructed

between 1912 and 1913 and was formerly the car show room, repair workshop and offices of the Minerva Motor Car Company.

The main highlight of the building is its highly decorative curved Portland Stone front elevation, characterised by tall bowed bays with stone mullions and transoms, monumental Doric and Ionic pilasters, broken pediments with decorative cartouches and swags, and a statue of Minerva within a triumphal arch to the centre.

The floors of the building are largely open plan office space, however the second floor of the building is split up into a series of meeting rooms and private offices. The third floor is characterised by the steel frame supporting the large pitched roof that oversails the open plan office.

In the immediate surrounding area Glen House (No.’s 200-208 Tottenham Court Road) and the war memorial to the front of North Crescent are also Grade II listed.

The property lies within London’s Central Activities Zone and within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The neighbouring Telephone Exchange building is classified by Camden Council as a positive unlisted building within the Conservation Area.

In terms of land uses in the surrounding area, there is a notable level of commercial and retail use, with nearby Tottenham Court Road being one of central London’s key shopping streets. The area is also home to a significant residential population. The nearest residential property is no.9 Chenies Street. Furthermore a number of buildings on nearby Huntley Street to the north east are predominantly occupied for residential purposes.

**Surrounding Buildings:**

Glen House (no.’s 200-208 Tottenham Court Road) is located immediately to the west of Minerva House. It shares party walls with the application property to the front and rear of the building. A full height lightwell runs along the central part of the boundary between the two buildings. Glen House is located on the east side of Tottenham Court Road; like Minerva House it is also a Grade II Listed Building. It dates from 1913-1914, it was extended, in facsimile, to the north in 1923. The building has distinctive Art Deco “Mannerist” facades with giant pilasters rising the full height of the upper floors to support a projecting cornice.

The ground floor level does not have a formal shopfront in the traditional sense, and its windows are deeply recessed between simple pilasters with geometric designs to the bases, piers and capitals. They have a simple glazing design, with two mullions and a transom reflecting the more robust design of the windows in the upper floor. The intersections are adorned with paterae and the transoms have a fluted moulding. Below each window sill, there are three timber framed panels framing a grid of glass blocks. These glazed panels were designed in order to provide light to the basement (like the adjacent pavement lights).

The Telephone Exchange (no.5 North Crescent) is believed to have been constructed in 1913. The building was formerly the Museum Telephone Exchange, but is now offices. The accommodation is arranged over Basement, Ground and three upper floors. The third floor is set within a flat-topped mansard. The building is principally of interest for its curved red brick and Portland Stone front elevation, characterised by oversized features, designed in the geometric Art Deco style, including triple key-stones. The main building interiors retain some original features (staircases, concrete columns etc.), but these are mostly utilitarian in design or altered and are of little interest. The most interesting interior is found in the separate, but linked 2 storey building to the rear (apparently also early-1900’s), which has an interesting internal character (open plan space, iron columned structure, fenestration).

Fitzroy House is a 1910’s five storey former warehouse building. It has a curved elevation to the south on North Crescent that is characterised by a brown and red brick façade with white-painted features and interspersed with large triple- light windows. The narrow elevation to Chenies Street has a similar mix of red and brown brick with white-painted features and further triple-light windows. At Ground Floor level there is a rounded arched doorway, where the main entrance to the building is located and, to the right hand side of this door, a gated vehicle passageway gives access to the private parking area to the rear of the property. The rear elevation is similar in design to that of the front elevations, but has been subject to extensive and unsympathetic interventions.

No.9 Chenies Street (or Chenies Street Chambers) is located immediately adjacent to Fitzroy House and is a red brick apartment block that forms

the south west corner of Huntley Street. The thirty-six apartments within the building are laid out over lower ground, upper ground and four upper floors. The front (i.e. Chenies Street and Huntley Street) elevations of the building are characterised by projecting bays, Portland stone features and white-painted timber sash windows. The rear elevations of the building, that overlook the communal garden area, are generally constructed in London stock brick, with red brick projecting bays and a variety of white-painted window types.

The Eisenhower Centre is a painted concrete single-storey bunker, located at the centre of the crescent that is characterised by an asymmetrical footprint

of octagonal and round buildings linked by a narrow corridor structure. The building was constructed between 1941 and 1942, and was originally a WW2

air raid shelter for high-level army personnel, including General Eisenhower,

with connections via deep level tunnels to nearby Goodge Street Station. Reportedly, most of the D-Day Invasion was planned within the basement of the building. The building is currently used by TFL for storage and is known locally as “The Bunker”.

Immediately in front of the Eisenhower Centre sits a Grade II listed War Memorial dating from 1923. It is a low stone obelisk commemorating the 12th County of London Regiment (“the Rangers”).

The Mature tree on the corner of North Crescent and Chenies Street, directly in front of Fitzroy House, is identified as a ‘feature of streetscape interest’ within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2008.

View from Albert Place towards North Crescent and South Crescent is identified as a ‘local view’ of importance within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2008.

**Past Planning History:**

Minerva House was previously refurbished in 1998

The following are the three fairly recent applications relating to the property:

**Application with reference:** PS9804007R2

**Decision:** Grant Full Planning Permission with Conditions 23.07.1998.

**Description:** Alterations to the front elevation at ground and basement levels, including the formation of a basement area with steps up and a metal railing adjacent to the pavement; alterations to some of the windows on the rear and side elevations and the installation of plant on the rear of the roof.

**Application with reference:** PS9704463

**Decision:** Grant Full Planning Permission 01.08.1997.

**Description:** Change of use of the whole building from Class D1 (health authority/educational use) to use for office purposes (Class B1).

**Application with reference:** 2010/4322/P

**Decision:** Grant Full Planning Permission 18.10.2010.

**Description:** Internal and external alterations to existing office building (Class B1) including installation of roof mounted solar panels; erection of eight condenser units within light well to south west elevation; repairs to chimney stack, roof, parapets, gutters, and facades; new level access at ground floor level; refurbishment of toilet areas; and replacement of lift.

**Application Proposals:**

Below is a breakdown of the internal works we are proposing at Minerva House. None of the works are structural or will change the fabric of the building. No original features will be removed.

All walls and bulkheads being removed are stud, and none load bearing. The reception and ground floor area will be taken back to a more open plan space like it was originally attended.

The main contractor has been appointed due to his 10 years experience of commercial fit-outs, and has had experience working similar listed buildings and Camden Council in the past.

M&E services currently in situ will be updated and will use existing waste and service routes to minamise further works, or obtaining further permissions from Landlords, Camden Council and any further third parties required.

Camden Council’s Building Control, prior to the build starting and after completion, will approve the work.

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| 1 | **STRIP OUT BUILDING WORKS (See plans)** |
|  |  |
| 1.1 | Removal of kitchen units reception |
| 1.2 | Removal of kitchen units rear of office |
| 1.3 | Removal of dividing walls between office and reception |
| 1.4 | Removal of partition walls at rear of office (see plans) |
| 1.5 | Removal of internal partitions in meeting rooms |
| 1.6 | Removal of bulkhead (in meeting room) |
| 1.7 | Removal of double doors (corridor) |
| 1.8 | Removal of signal door x 2 (meeting room) |
| 1.10 | Removal of 6 meters of glazed panels |
| 1.11 | Removal of raised sub floor (WCs) |
| 1.12 | Removal of floor ramp (WCs) |
| 1.13 | Removal of lino flooring in reception |
| 1.14 | Removal of carpet and rear of building |
| 1.15 | Removal of any existing furniture such as the reception |
| 1.16 | Removal of glass shelves |
| 1.17 | Removal of balustrades |
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| **2** | **SUSPENDED CEILINGS / MF CEILING (See plans)** |
|  |  |
| 2 | MF ceiling installed and dry lined in reception |
| 2.1 | MF ceiling installed and dry lined outside the WCs |
| 2.2 | Reconfiguration of Sally's office/meeting room |
| 2.3 | Reconfiguration of server room |
| 2.4 | Reconfiguration of rear kitchen |
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| **3** | **RAISED ACCESS FLOORING (See plans)** |
|  |  |
| 3 | 33 square meter of raised access flooring (reception) or similar |
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| **4** | **PARTITIONING (See plans)** |
|  |  |
|  | *Plasterboard Stud* |
|  |  |
| 4 | Display wall reception |
| 4.1 | Stud TV wall | slimbricks finish (TV sizes to be confirmed) |
| 4.2 | Sally's Office/Meeting Room |
| 4.3 | Rear Kitchen |
| 4.5 | Rear Server Room |
| 4.6 | Bulkhead | Boxed in above post room door |
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|  | *Glass Partitioning* |
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| 5 | Sally's Office/Meeting |
| 5.1 | Rear Kitchen |
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| **6** | **FLOORING (See plans)** |
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| 6 | Removal of existing flooring reception (lino) |
| 6.1 | Removal of existing rear of the office (carpet tiles) |
| 6.2 | Removal of corridor existing flooring (carpet tiles) |
| 6.3 | Removal of ramped area |
| 6.4 | Removal of existing kitchen floor |
| 6.5 | Removal of sub floor outside disable WC |
| 6.6 | New door matt reception |
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| **7** | **DECORATION** |
|  |  |
| 7.1 | Decorate existing and new MF ceiling |
| 7.2 | Paint existing door frames and doors |
| 7.3 | Full decoration to reception walls |
| 7.4 | Full decoration to rear of the office walls |
| 7.5 | Full decoration of corridor |
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| **8** | **JOINERY / CARPENTRY (See plans)** |
|  |  |
| 8.1 | New door frame and FD30 fire door - Access to rear of office (toilets) |
| 8.2 | New door frame and FD30 fire door - Post Room |
| 8.3 | Construct large raised stage reception (see plan) |
| 8.4 | Folding/pocket door sever room FD30 door |
| 8.5 | Double pocket door sally office/meeting room FD30 doors |
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| **9** | **KITCHEN (See plans)** |
|  |  |
|  | *Reception Kitchen* |
|  |  |
| 9 | Units |
| 9.1 | Dishwasher |
| 9.2 | Sink |
| 9.3 | Taps |
| 9.3 | Fridge |
| 9.4 | Water Filter |
| 9.5 | Fitting of the above |
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|  |  |
|  | \* use existing waste and supply (purely re-fit) |
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|  | *Rear Kitchen* |
|  |  |
| 9.6 | Units |
| 9.7 | Dishwasher |
| 9.8 | Sink |
| 9.9 | Taps |
| 9.10 | Fridge |
| 9.11 | Water Filter |
| 9.12 | Fitting of the above |
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|  | \* Use existing waste and supply (purely re-fit) |
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| **10** | **AIR CONDITIONING** (Client's Contractor: AMBER) |
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| 10.1 | Removal of three ceiling/wall mounted units in reception |
| 10.2 | Install three recessed ceiling units. |
| 10.3 | Remove one small wall mounted AC unit in ground floor meeting room |
| 10.4 | Install the above wall mounted AC unit in server room. |
| 10.5 | Remove one small wall mounted AC unit in Brand Science Directors office at rear of the ground floor |
| 10.6 | Install the above wall mounted AC unit in new position. |
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| **11** | **ELECTRICAL** (Client's Contractor: TECC) |
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| 11.1 | Isolation works. |
| 11.2 | Relocate 18 existing floor boxes with sockets. Supply 14 new boxes. 13 additional double gang sockets for kitchen/stage table/café tables/platform and AV. |
| 11.3 | Relocate 69 existing CAT runs and 7 new runs. |
| 11.4 | Relocation smoke detectors and provided new ones to plans. |
| 11.5 | Install and reposition new reception lighting fittings. |
| 11.6 | Install and reposition new ground floor back office lighting fittings. |
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| **12** | **HEATING** (Client's Contractor: TECC) |
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| 12.1 | Removal of two radiators on the ground floor / stored on site. |
| 12.2 | Removal of under counter boiler in existing kitchen. |
| 12.3 | Install the above boiler in new position. |
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| **13** | **DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM + CCTV** (Client's Contractor: Trigion) |
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| 13.1 | Isolation works of current door entry systems and CCTV |
| 13.2 | Install 2 x door entry systems (1 x existing kit) to proposed plans. |
| 13.3 | Install CCTV to proposed plans |
| 13.4 | Install new software for above services. |
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| **14** | **GROUND FLOOR TOILETS** (Not being undertaken by Trifle Creative) |
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| 14.1 | Dividing the existing Men's WC into two separate cubicles |
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|  | \* All works have been priced by Amber for the Client directly |
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**Conclusion:**

Trifle Creative believes that the proposed internal works at Minerva House will not affect or dilute Bloomsbury Conservation Area, or the appearance of the façade, or any other part of Minerva House or any other building locally.

We believe the proposed works are sympathetic to the original listed building, which retains small amounts of original features internally on the ground floor; the works are like for like, and purely to update a dated reception and ground floor area.

We have had a site visit from Camden Council’s, Hannah Walker, who is happy with the proposed work. Hannah would like us to gain Listed Building Consent so there are records of these minor internal changes for future records or planning applications.

We hope that Camden will support this proposal, if you require any further information, please don’t hesitate to make contact.

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