DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF STEEL FOLDING ENTRANCE DOORS TO "BETTER SOUND LTD" PREMISES AT 31 CATHCART STREET, KENTISH TOWN, LONDON NW5 3BJ.

LOCATION AND CONTEXT.

31 Cathcart Street is located just inside the northern boundary of the Inkerman Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. A number of streets in the immediate area are named to commemorate battles and persons from the Crimean War of 1853 to 1856. Cathcart Street is named after Sir George Cathcart who was killed in the Battle of Inkerman in 1854. The architecture of the terraced houses on the south west side of Cathcart Street, opposite the application site reflects this mid 19C period as shown on the photo insert. To South East the houses adjoining the site (Nos. 32-35) are a later Victorian design, built between 1875-1894. To North West the adjoining houses are a modern terraced housing development just outside the conservation area boundary. The late 20C design of these is loosely connected to the Victorian design.

THE EXISTING BUILDING.

No 31 is a mid 20C building formed with the same London Stock facing brick walls as the older adjoining houses. It was constructed as the entrance to a former Post Office vehicle depot which replaced a number of war damaged late Victorian terraced houses. It is not a Listed Building and is presently the premises of Better Sound Ltd. The dominant feature of the front elevation is a very large rectangular carriageway opening giving vehicle access into the yard beyond. The opening has a white painted stucco surround with mouldings. The surround fascia is stepped to accommodate the original premises name which no longer exists. The Stucco surround was obviously influenced by the stucco features to the adjacent Victorian houses. To left of the opening there is a single doorway leading to the dwelling unit above. Above the door is a staircase window. In the wall above the large carriageway opening there are domestic type windows in an asymmetrical arrangement. This pattern is repeated in the dormer windows to a somewhat unusual slated gambrel roof. The roof is flanked with brick parapet party walls,

with chimneys, finished with a brick on edge capping. The carriageway opening has a pair of large steel sliding folding security doors. These are a manually operated concertina type which have been in place for many years. The doors now need to be replaced because of vehicle damage and worn mechanism. Due to this, and also the sheer weight, it is very difficult to open and close the doors which has to happen daily. It has been established that the existing doors cannot be motorised/electrified.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL AND DESIGN.

The proposal is to replace the existing steel concertina door with an electrically operated steel roller shutter incorporating a side pass door. Drawing number 209/02 shows the existing and proposed arrangements. The shutter curtain will consist of 76mm wide single skinned curved and interlocking galvanised steel slats. A degree of through vision will be provided with 150mm x 45mm apertures in the slats with 50mm between the apertures. An open grille type shutter is not possible for structural reasons due to the large size of the opening. However, there is nothing much of visual interest to be seen behind the shutter unlike a shop front situation. The amount of visibility provided by the apertures will improve casual observation and therefore security over the existing doors which have no vision openings. The colour of the new shutter will be RAL 5010 which is a very similar blue colour to that on the existing steel door. The pass door and the roller shutter box fascia will be in the same colour.

The proposed change will not have any major impact on the street scene as both the existing doors and the new shutter are set to the rear of the opening. The change from the existing heavy industrial folding doors to the proposed steel shutter with apertures will improve the overall appearance.

ACCESS.

There will be no major change to the access arrangements as the carriageway opening doors are open during working hours. There is level access at present which will be retained. Access in the broader sense will be improved in that the electrically operated shutter could easily be operated by a person with a physical impairment unlike the existing doors.

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