

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2009

Camden Council Culture and Environment Directorate  
Planning Division  
5th Floor, Camden Town Hall Extension  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8EQ

Dear Sirs,

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS ACT 1990  
8 ELY PLACE LONDON EC1N 6RY  
APPLICATION FOR INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND REPLACEMENT OF  
EXISTING EXTERNAL STAIRCASE/LADDER TO FRONT LIGHTWELL**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT:**

8 Ely Place is an office building, which is situated towards the southern end of the street, close to Charterhouse Street, forming the central building in a terrace of three five-storey Georgian Houses, which have long been converted to office use.

The applicant has been resident in the building since 2001 and owned the building since 2006.

The proposed alterations to the property are part of a refurbishment intended to increase adaptability, further safeguarding the future of the historic building.

Our design proposals for the alterations are summarized as follows:

- Replacement of unsafe, dilapidated, and unsightly steel stair/ladder accessing lightwell with a more usable staircase designed to a comfortable pitch.
- Re-rendering of areas of lightwell walls and soffit to improve appearance (currently dilapidated)
- Re-tanking and replacement of rotten coal-vaults doors, and securing the same for storage.
- Removal of stud wall within archway between front and rear ground floor reception rooms to improve flexibility of the office. Similar openings can be seen in the adjacent houses No 7 and No9 which are also now offices.

The proposed alterations are intended to improve the facilities and flexibility of the building, and should be considered in the light of a secure, long-term ownership. The proposals do not involve the loss of historic fabric or detailing.

The existing staircase consists of a cut-down and re-welded steel stair which has clearly been brought in and re-used. It is unsightly, and very steep (more of a ladder). The proposed new staircase giving access to the front lightwell is designed to current building regulations in terms of rise/going of treads, and will provide safer access and escape from the basement levels.

The proposed new staircase will be painted black to match the existing railings. There is a lamp holder integrated into the railings – this will not be affected by the proposed works.

The stair has been designed to be discreet and functional, without affecting the appearance of the listed building elevation.

The proposed works in the lightwell involve refurbishment of render to the walls of the lightwell, and application of waterproof render within the vaults to allow their use as storage. The proposed new doors will secure the vaults, one of which is currently open and derelict. The works are intended to help safeguard the future of the Listed building.

Internally, it is proposed to open the archway in the front reception room to improve use and communication between the front and rear reception rooms. Only the stud partition within the archway will be affected, the bookcase with the historic timber mouldings will remain untouched. The bureau/desk within the archway will be lifted out and re-used elsewhere in the property.

#### VAULT WATERPROOFING METHOD STATEMENT:

Although a manufacturer/installer has not yet been selected for the waterproofing, the proposed method of ensuring the vaults remain dry for storage is a cavity drain system. This does not involve render, or bonding of any render to the substrate, instead a proprietary dimpled membrane is fixed to the brickwork vault, providing a drainage and ventilation void. A mesh on top of the membrane allows a render to be applied internally, providing a clean, dry finish internally. The membrane is also used on the floor if necessary, and covered by a screed or floating floor.

Any water penetrating the vault brickwork is channelled by the membrane to basedrains at the base of the wall/floor junction. A sump and pump then removes any water to an appropriate drainage location, in this case a connection to the gulley in the lightwell.

The vaults are under a macadam road, so water ingress is not a serious problem. However for storage of papers in the vaults, a reliable impermeable waterproof solution is needed, which is not affected by possible vibration from the road above. We believe a BS.8102:1990 type 'C' drained solution provides this with minimal interference with the vault brickwork, unlike render type tanking systems. Full technical information can be provided when a subcontractor specialist is selected.

We hope that the information included will enable this application to be registered promptly, but should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely  
for DDWH Architects

WARREN HOWLING  
Director

Enc.  
cc

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