

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

in support of Planning and Listed Building Consent application for proposed alterations to:

**25B FITZROY SQUARE
LONDON
W1T 6ER**

25 DEC 2007
GROVE LTD
11 FAIRFIELD ROAD
LONDON SW11 5PZ

1. LOCATION

- 1.1 The site address is Flat B, 25 Fitzroy Square, London W1T 6ER.
- 1.2 No.25 is a five storey (including basement) terrace property on the west side of Fitzroy Square. Flat B occupies the entire ground floor, excepting a communal entrance hall and stairway.
- 1.3 The property lies within Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The property is Grade II* listed.
- 2.2 Prior to 1984 the whole building was unsympathetically split into flats. A rear extension has been added that extends to approximately 1/2 the width of the building at basement, ground and first floors. At basement and ground floor levels the rear extension forms part of the flat for that floor, at first floor level it forms a separate studio apartment.
- 2.3 The rear extension is of poor quality without any unity of fenestration design or opening sizes. It has a utilitarian façade with poor quality inserts randomly placed and punctuated by service duct outlets and pipe runs. The window types range from utility glass blocks to Crittal W20 sections. The windows face onto a blank party wall.
- 2.4 The conversion of the ground floor into a self contained apartment involved considerable internal alterations, including the following:
 - The removal of the original opening separating the front and rear rooms within the original building. The opening has been filled in and a new doorway formed (D.07 on dwg 9001) to allow for...
 - the insertion of a bathroom in the rear room of the main building.
 - The removal of the rear window to the back room in the original building and the construction of a new bay window (W.03 on dwg 9001).
 - The moving of the original doorway into the rear room of the original building and the creation of a new opening to cater for the new entrance door (D.02 on dwg 9001).
- 2.5 This is the first application submitted by the applicant, who presented the proposals as a pre-application submission to the Conservation and Urban Design Team for comment in September 2007. No specific adverse comments were received in the Council's response and the applicant was encouraged to submit the proposals as a formal application.

3. DESIGN STATEMENT

- 3.1 The proposed design does not seek to reinstate the original building to its former state as this is incompatible with the multiple occupation of the building.
- 3.2 The proposed design does, however, seek to reinvigorate the relationship between the two principle rooms in the original building, and to reorganise the rest of the flat to benefit from these spaces.
- 3.3 The bedroom and bathroom are relocated in the rear extension so that the two principle rooms can be opened up to each other and devoted to living.
- 3.4 It is our contention that the opening into the rear principle room from what would have been the corridor to the basement stair would originally have been located tight against the spine wall separating the front and rear principle rooms. This opening was filled in and repositioned

further towards the external back wall to accommodate the flat entrance door when the property was spilt into flats. The proposal removes the infill wall to widen the opening back to the spine wall. This allows the repositioning of the front door to the flat in order to provide a small inner hall, rather than the cramped existing arrangement.

- 3.5 The non-original rear bay window is to be removed and replaced with a cleaner design involving a fixed main window and an opening side light to either side. The head of the window is set higher than existing necessitating the removal of original external wall fabric between the window head and ceiling.
- 3.6 The repositioning of the bathroom from its current obtrusive position to the rear extension is facilitated by the conversion of the understair closet into a separate wc. This requires the low level core drilling of a 100mm diameter waste pipe through the original rear wall of the building (before it descends into the floor void of the rear extension and runs out between the joists to the existing SVP in the lightwell).
- 3.7 The window openings in the rear extension have been rearranged and enlarged. Clean-edged, flush set glazing units are proposed for the enlarged openings with the lower sections in obscure glass (as per dwg 9102) in order to promote privacy.
- 3.8 Whilst the new openings involve the loss of fabric in the external wall of the extension it is argued that this is not original fabric and the elevation will be improved by the high quality materials and detailing inherent in the proposal.

4. ACCESSABILITY

- 4.1 There is no proposed change to the access arrangement to the building itself.
- 4.2 The proposed front door to the flat will not be any narrower than existing and, notwithstanding the building main entrance limitations, the new flat entrance arrangement will facilitate both wheelchair and ambulant disabled access into the apartment.
- 4.3 There are no changes in floor level proposed within the flat and all facilities in the proposed layout remain as accessible as existing.