

Dear Carlos Martin

Proposed Alterations to 23 Tamar House, 12 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RD

It has been difficult to access the exact plans on the Camden website. It appears the application is twofold (1) to update the interior of the flat altering layout and heating systems and (2) to add an additional storey/rear extension

Re (1) updating the interior

The leases for all flats in the block state:

5.6 Not to make any alterations in or additions to or cut maim alter or injure any of the walls or timbers or plumbing or alter the internal arrangement of the Demised Premises or any part thereof without the previous consent in writing of the Lessors...

and

First Schedule No. 12 The Lessee will cover and keep covered the floors of the Demised Premises with carpet and an underlay other than the floors of the kitchen and bathroom which shall be properly and suitably covered (timer battens to be glued to the floors not nailed.)

Assuming freeholder consent I see no problem with the proposed interior alterations to update the flat: at least one other flat at the top level has altered the windows on the front elevation and changed to wooden floors. However, some years ago, when I made a preliminary enquiry about opening up the layout of a flat a Tamar House flat, Camden Buildings officer said there were potential fire risk problems in removing internal walls and doors (all fire doors.) Has there been a change of policy?

There will be difficulties getting materials in and out of the building – see below – but this is acceptable for internal refurbishment.

The proposal to add a storey is problematic.

(1) Top floor flat lessees do not own the roof above their property, or presumably the space above it.

The lease states:

12.1 That every wall separating the Demised Premises from any other part of the Building shall be a party wall severed medially and shall be included in the Demised Premises as far only as the medial plane thereof.

(2) Adding a storey and/or rear extension is a major building project.

The website refers to previous planning permission being given to rear extensions to Nos 2 and 4 Tavistock Place. As far as I can recall this work was done when those properties, formerly offices, were totally empty and being restructured and refurbished throughout. Tamar House is a residential

block of some 30 furnished and inhabited flats. The only access is from the shared main front entrance at 12 Tavistock Place. There are double yellow lines in Tavistock Place which makes loading/unloading difficult. There is only a small passenger lift, so transporting large quantities of building materials and machinery to the top floor will be a problem. Residents will be subjected to constant noise and dust. No.23 is already one of the largest flats in the block so there is no need to extend it further.

Yours faithfully