DOUBLE GLAZING TO 15 SWINTON STREET LONDON
WC1X 9NL FOR LORA AND GEORGE NIKOLOVA

HERITAGE STATEMENT

1. CHARACTER AND ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

The property is a Grade II listed Victorian four storied terraced house located on Swinton Street in the Kings Cross Conservation Area of Camden. It was built in the 1850's around the time when Kings Cross Station was constructed. It was recently renovated internally to a high standard by the previous owners. In addition to no: 15, there are 21 listed houses in Swinton Street, other listed houses in adjacent Acton and Frederick Streets and the surrounding area.

Kings Cross has experienced a colourful past. It is located at the meeting point of roads, waterways and rail lines and its history has created a rich urban fabric. The Regents Canal which was completed in 1820, linked the area to major cities in the north and stimulated both industrial activities and a demand for housing. In addition to workers' housing near the industries, elegant terraced properties were built largely to the south of Kings Cross Station including 15 Swinton Street.

The property which is a typical mid-Victorian terraced house, has an 11m high visible facade with a rendered coursed white painted ground floor and buff coloured London stock brick on the upper two floors. The facade is particularly distinguished by tall elegant white painted hardwood sash windows and narrow cast iron balconies on the first floor level, as well as a semi-circular ground floor sash window and front door fanlight. The basement level also has a rendered facade with triple sash windows, but is partly obscured from view by black painted cast iron railings and service stair. The pitched slate roof with a central valley gutter is not visible from the street as it is hidden behind a white painted horizontal parapet wall. The rear facade is in London stock bricks with sash windows, except for glazed double doors from the dining area and two small casement windows. The pitched roof form is visible from the rear. A two storied addition was constructed a number of years ago that modified the original flat rear facade.

(See photographs 1 to 6 from the planning and listed building application documents).

2. JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED DOUBLE GLAZING

As already described in the Design and Access Statement, the owners are very keen to improve the acoustic and thermal performance of of the building envelope. Swinton Street is part of a one-way gyratory road system that serves the busy Kings Cross Area that will continue to increase in traffic volume with the exciting and ambitious regeneration programme that is currently being implemented.

Having spent some time at the house, I can understand why the owners particularly wish to prevent the intrusion of traffic noise and exhaust pollution from Swinton Street. Even with every window and internal solid timber shutter on the front facade closed throughout the day, the noise is constant and unacceptably loud. In the rear garden, traffic noise is high which is why they also wish to install double glazing in the rear facade. The owners have their electric lighting on during daytime, because the shutters are always closed.

3. EXPECTED IMPACT OF PROPOSED DOUBLE GLAZING

There are twelve hardwood sash windows (W1 to W12) and one set of double doors (D1) in the two facades. Except for the double doors (D1) and sash window (D7), they are the original sash windows. All windows have single clear glazing generally 4mm thick, probably replaced and increased in thickness several times since the building was erected. All sliding sash frames are 48mm thick with traditional mouldings and painted white. Frame widths vary from 32mm to 48mm to 70mm depending on whether they are top, side or bottom rails. Glazing bars are 23mm thick with traditional mouldings to match the frames and painted white. All glass panes are sealed externally with white painted putty.

The proposal is to install 12mm thick double glazing to all sash windows and double doors (not the fixed door fanlights nor the semi-circular front door fanlight and two small rear casement windows). These double glazed sealed panes incorporate a 4mm thick clear glass outer sheet, a 4mm cavity filled with Krypton gas and a 4mm thick Low E inner glass sheet. They would be manufactured by the The Original Glass Company who are specialists in conservation glazing.

The visual impact of change from single to double glazing is only in the position of the glass in the sash frame. The existing depth of glass in the sash frames is 16mm externally and 28mm internally. With the introduction of double glazing, the new depth of glass panes will be 12mm externally and 24mm internally. This is a difference of 4mm on each side of the sash window frame. Traditional mouldings remain as existing, as the new glass panes are located in the centre of the original glass pane..

The thickness of glazing bars, which are the key elements in the sash windows remain the same at 23mm wide.

With all new sash window frames being factory manufactured, putty sealed and decorated, the profiles will be precise and sharp, unlike the existing frames which have been continuously re-decorated on site resulting in thickened and filled profiles.

(See drawings 1, 2 and 3 from the planning and listed building application documents)

4. EXPERTISE CONSULTED

I have consulted with the The Original Glass Company about the proposed installation and they have confirmed that this proposal is what they recommend and has been accepted by numerous local authorities.

Michael Lowe
Architect

20 January 2015