

## **DESIGN STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 8 SMARTS PLACE LONDON WC2 B 5LW**

8 Smarts Place is in the Conservation Area of Seven Dials, on the edge of the theatre district of Covent Garden. This application follows on from a consent given in 2004 number 2004/1853, which established the broad principles of massing and design of apartments on the roof of the existing building. The present application focuses on the critical daylight angles that determine the massing of the proposed apartment. The client proposes to construct a three storey apartment built over an existing four storey office building. The proposed dwelling faces southeast and looks over an interesting and complex roofscape, including theatres and other urban architectures. The stepped form of the apartment follows the angled limits of the day-lighting strategy needed to safeguard adjacent buildings.

As a massing diagram, it offers a transition between the lower buildings of adjacent almshouses, the Georgian /Victorian fabric of theatreland, and the modern office buildings along High Holborn.

The relationship between daylight angles and floor area dictates the use of each floor. The principal reception spaces are located on the lowest floor of the apartment, in order to achieve the largest volumes for the living room, dining room and kitchen. The floor above, with its narrower floor plan, accommodates bedrooms and study bedroom. These spaces are linked directly to a "widow's walk" that connects all the bedrooms to a fitness room or conservatory on the top floor. This gives direct access to an outside plunge pool. It is anticipated that this floor could also be used for growing tender vegetables and fruit throughout the year. The 'widow's walk' is constructed from a patent glazing system that forms the enclosure. On its lean-to roof, a surface of photovoltaic cells will be fixed as an energy supplement for heating the plunge pool etc. On each level of the apartment, there will be a roof garden, layering the views from the apartment to cityscapes beyond. Because of the stunning SE views, the apartment plan offers a layering of elements and components that make up the architecture of the space. This architecture screens, obscures and anticipates a pre-ambulation around objects, an enfilade with the views beyond. The southeast elevation is constructed as a series of screens made from steel, timber and glass that borrows from the aesthetic of a traditional Japanese house with its deep plan section and domestic scale. It aims to break up the corporate façade treatment of nearby offices, and offers small scale elements in keeping with the complex theatreland roofscapes and the small urban grain of an earlier London.

At the level of the stepped apartment on the southwest facing elevation onto Smarts Place, the flank wall is pushed out to accommodate a 'centering' of the apartment space behind. This blind panel is constructed of faceted Portland stone, which picks up south sunshine and lightens the cul-de-sac, with its streetscape of London stock brick that forms the façade of 8 Smarts Place.