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PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE EXTERNAL STAIRS AND LIFT AT APOLLO STUDIOS, CHARLTON KING'S ROAD, LONDON NW5 2SB.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1. Introduction

This design and access statement is submitted in support of the proposal for the demolition of the existing external stairs and lift and replacement with new stairs and lift with different design, shape and materials in the courtyard of Apollo Studios, Charlton King's Road, London NW5 2SB. The proposal involves also the relocation of the entrance door of Unit 7 on the ground floor to allow the new position of the lift shaft.

2. Site and Surrounding Area

Apollo Studios is a 4/5 storey building accessed via a narrow private drive of Charlton King's Road in Kentish Town. The site is located to the rear of properties fronting onto Torriano Avenue, Charlton King's Road and Leighton Road. Apollo Studios was originally a factory building but is now used for a mix of uses, predominantly residential and B1 office uses. The site is not in a Conservation Area. The surrounding area is also predominantly residential with some B1 office uses, pubs and other local services on Brecknock Road. Kentish Town Road is the nearest public transport, shopping and service centre and is located approximately 700m from Apollo Studios.

3. Proposed Development: Design

The existing external stairs and lift lie in the south-west corner of the courtyard of Apollo Studios. The stairs go up around the lift shaft and give access to units 8 to 10 on the first floor, 11 to 13 on the second floor, 14 to 16 on the third floor and 17 on the fourth floor. The lift doesn't reach the fourth floor. Due to the fact that the stairs are rusting and the lift needs a new motor and a new car, the Apollo Studios Resident Association (ASRA) has decided to replace both the stairs and the lift rather than repairing them. This has led to the decision to change the design and the

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shape of the stairs in order to make them more compact and less hulking in the courtyard. At the moment the block of the stairs and the lift is very bulky and tall. It covers almost completely the windows on the left side of the east facade and the lift shaft rises almost at the same height of the penthouse roof even if the car doesn't reach the top floor.

In the design proposal the new lift shaft will be located against the wall of the east facade, between the entrance door and the first window of each unit on the first, second and third floors. On the ground floor the openings are not aligned with the ones of the upper floors, therefore it will be necessary to move to the left the door of Unit 7 and infill part of the opening. The limited loss of light coming from the two glazed panels at both sides of the door will be fully compensated by the gain of light coming from the central window that is now partly blocked by the existing stairs and lift. The shaft will be shorter due to a more compact lift machinery and more discreet because partly hidden by the structure of the stairs. It will be clad with powder coated galvanized steel panels in a green-grey colour (RAL 7009) more subdued than the blue of the existing shaft. The same green-grey colour is already used for the signs in the courtyard and for the main gate. The existing lift pit will be mass filled and a new pit will be excavated. A site investigation has been already conducted and the report is among the planning application supporting documents. The area around the new pit will be paved with bricks matching the ones in the rest of the courtyard.

The stairs will have two parallel straight flights between each floor joined by a cantilevered landing halfway and will be aligned with the lift shaft. The uncoated galvanized steel structure will be supported by 3 columns and will be anchored to the buildings in the same points as the existing stairs. The idea behind the design of the stairs is to make them visually as light as possible. This is why for the balustrade it has been chosen an expanded galvanized metal mesh and for the treads and the landings an uncoated perforated galvanized steel plank, which will also prevent the rainwater from stagnating. The simple design of the structure and the choice of galvanized steel throughout aim to a hard-wearing and low-maintenance durability with an industrial feel matching the historical heritage of the building as a former factory.

Besides being more compact and visually lighter, the position of the new stairs and lift will unblock completely all the windows on the left side of the east facade and will not obstruct the view of any other window except for part of those in the communal corridors giving access to the units 8, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 15.

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4. Proposed Development: Access

The new stairs and lift will provide access to the same units and will be accessible from the courtyard just like the existing ones. The number of the parking spaces in the courtyard will remain the same. The access to Apollo Studios from Charlton King's Road will not be affected by the proposed development. A bicycle rack under the second flight of stairs will provide a better parking facility for the bicycles that are currently left randomly under the existing stairs. During the entire duration of the works a scaffolding with a temporary staircase will grant full access to all the units.

6. Summary

The design of the new stairs and lift, more compact and linear, will improve considerably the appearance of the building and the quality of the courtyard space.

The east facade will be more visible and the units on that side will benefit from more light coming in through the unblocked windows.

More durable materials and a more modern lift will lower the maintenance costs.

7. Drawings and documents attached

- AS-ST site location plan
- AS-ST block plan
- AS-ST existing plans
- AS-ST existing elevations
- AS-ST photos
- AS-ST proposed plans
- AS-ST proposed elevations
- AS-ST proposed materials
- AS-ST door unit 7
- AS-ST lift technical
- AS-ST site inspection report

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