DESIGN ASSOCIATES
Architects & Designers

Design Access Statement
61 Neal St

Nov 2016

Existing

The property is a four storey building + a small basement. The 3rd floor is built within the attic space with a dormer window (at the front) and gabled roof line (at the rear).
There is a retail unit on the ground floor with stairs down to the basement, which affords further retail and storage space.
There is also a Ground floor front entrance, corridor and stairs up to the residential unit over the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors. The domestic residential unit has two bedrooms, lounge, kitchen and bathroom, with a staircase between each floor.
The front façade is stucco rendered with concealed parapet and slate roof with dormer.
There is a small rear yard bounded by yard walls on 3 sides and the rear elevation forming the fourth side. There is a single storey rear extension forming the flank wall of 63 Neal St.
There is a two-storey extension (grd flr & basement) forming the flank wall to 59 Neal St (see photographs and sectional elevations).
The rear of the yard is formed with the multi storey rear elevation of 13 Neal's Yard and a rear boundary wall of 9 Monmouth St.
The property forms part of the terrace, which is Neal Street, approximately 18 century with a later timber shop-front added during the 20th Century.
The property is a Grade 2 Listed Building, which falls within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation area. Listing Nº 1322099.

Proposals

Running concurrently with these proposed decoration/refurbishment works would be the construction of a rear ground floor infill construction. Planning consent for the rear extension Listed Building and Planning Consent Ref 2015/0060/L and 2014/7775/P, 27 May 2016.

<u>The Intended Works</u>

Generally the works proposed <u>within this</u> application are the redecoration and refurbishment works, to the residential areas of the building with the exception of the complete replacement of the existing staircase from ground to third floors with a matching 'handed' staircase of the same proportion and material to the original Georgian style staircase.

Staircase
We have provided a structural conditional survey confirming that the existing staircase is not fit for purpose as it was severely damaged during the fire in the 1960's. It has been over clad with hard board and the treads have also bee re-supported and over clad. The treads and risers are uneven and tilting throughout the building.

It is the intension to replace the existing closed string timber staircase of simple Georgian town house style with a new staircase matching the existing design and proportion of the original. We will copy as many of the timber sections as possible and will maintain the same winders, treads and nosings as the original staircase. The handrail will be of the same section and set at the same height as the original staircase (below present day standards). The Balusters will also be of the same section and spacing (again set greater than the Part K of Building regulation 100mm centre to centre).

Cont'd over

15 Swains Close. Tadley. Hampshire Rg26 4Nf
Tel/Fax Nº:- 0118 9819631
Email:- martin@mdda.co.uk

The main design change is that we are proposing to hand the staircase.

At present it winds anti-clockwise up the building, which originally allowed for a rear door access to the back yard beneath grd to 1st floor staircase. This is no longer required and we are proposing to reverse the staircase to a clockwise direction, occupying the same space as the original staircase.

On completion the treads and handrails would be finished with stain and polish and the balusters would be painted.

Front elevation boxed sash windows.

We also propose to replace the eight vertically sliding sashes (four windows, front 1st & 2nd flr) with six over six panes sashes, vertically sliding (see drwg). The existing frames will remain in position with the sashes being remade. We will be upgrading the glass, but the sashes limit the use of double-glazing.

We will also be replacing the three main rear windows with modern versions of six over six pane sliding sash, painted timber windows.

The original casement windows running up the rear of the building adjacent to the staircase will remain and be redecorated only.

Principle Rooms on the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Flrs,

In the two principle rooms on the first and second floors we intend to repair and sensitively redecorate the existing walls, floors and ceiling. It is proposed to reinstate the missing Georgian cornice on the first floor and add a reduced sized Georgian cornice on the second floor (similar design as 1st flr but reduced in height and depth) (see drwg 20014/201295/22).

Flooring

We are to replace rotten or failing floorboards in the front room of the first floor with matching boards from either the top floor or second floors. The second floor, floor boards (front room) will also, where required, be replaced firstly with the third floorboards and the remaining with matching reclaimed floor boarding. The remaining boards in the front room on the third floor will be augmented with matching reclaimed boards. The boards will finally be sealed and polished.

We are proposing to refurbish the existing bathroom on the 3rd floor, reducing its size and forming a bank of cupboards accessed from the front 3rd floor bedroom.

This will require punching door openings through the separating wall between the front and rear rooms. The original structural beams in the ceiling will not be altered.

New proposed installations

We are proposing to install a full kitchen in the rear room of the 1st floor. This will be of simple design (shaker or similar) but with modern equipment. We will connect drainage to the existing soil vent pipes externally on the rear elevation.

We are proposing to form and install a ‘cloakroom’ toilet and sink within the rear room on the second floor.

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Electrical
It is intended to completely re-wire the whole property, to include new consumer units, metering for residential and retail along with new ring mains on each floor and lighting circuits. We will also be installing maintained smoke detection in each room/area.

Gas
There is an existing capped gas supply to the property entering into the building at first floor height from the front elevation into the niche cupboard to the right of the fireplace. It is proposed to reinstate the gas supply to enable a new gas fired boiler, hot water and heating system to be installed.

Works between ground and basement (repositioning of staircase) will be within floors that have previously been replaced either because of the fire or the original staircase.

Basement works
Apart from reinstating the stairaccess to the basement level we will also be refurbishing the existing toilet/ basin and kitchenette area. No other works are proposed in the basement.

Conclusion

The client's intension is to refurbish the property to allow the immediate and extended family to use the domestic accommodation on a regular basis. Creating an improved safe and warm environment, but maintaining (and adding to) the historical elements of the building especially the principle front rooms.

The proposed front windows will be in keeping with what we presume would have been originally installed. Examples of the proposed style of window can be seen on both the west and east sides of the road running behind to the west of Neal Street, Monmouth St. Some are constructed in timber others in PVCu. We are proposing using the original box framing and revising the vertically sliding sashes. Each window will be fully refurbished including balances, weights, cord, parting bead and draught measures. We are not proposing secondary glazing.

The existing staircase structural/conditional survey by Knapp Hicks and Partners confirms our believe that the existing structure is not viable, but the client is proposing to remake the original Georgian staircase using the existing as a template. We have agreement with Building Control to relax part K to allow the construction of the staircase in its original form.

We are proposing to add a kitchen and toilet to the 1st & second floors but in areas that have been previously ravaged by fire and reconstructed with modern building materials but the principle rooms we are leaving intact, trying to regain some of the building original Georgian style.

To be read in conjunction with the following plans and photographs and noted drawings along with the Heritage Statement.

Knapp Hicks and Partners structural report on the staircase	-	34012/L/001/SH/1w
Existing plans & elevations	-	20014/201295/01
Proposed plans & elevations	-	20014/201295/02c
Existing & Proposed 1st & 2nd flr principle windows	-	20014/201295/14
Existing Plans & Section of The main staircase	-	20014/201295/15
Proposed Plans & Section of The main staircase	-	20014/201295/16
Revised front elevation	-	20014/201295/17
Existing 1st flr wall elevations	-	20014/201295/20
Proposed 1st flr wall elevations	-	20014/201295/21
1st floor fibrous plaster cornice details	-	20014/201295/22
Site/location Plan	-	20014/201295/LP

15 Swains Close. Tadley. Hampshire Rg26 4Nf
Tel/Fax Nº:- 0118 9819631
Email:- martin@mddc.co.uk

KNAPP HICKS & PARTNERS LTD

CONSULTING STRUCTURAL, CIVIL & GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERS

ISO 9001 REGISTERED FIRM

Head Office:
Laval House
Great West Quarter
Great West Road
Brentford Middx TW8 0GL
Tel: (020) 8232 1888

Also at:

Prospect House
1 Highpoint Business Village
Henwood Ashford Kent
TN24 8DH
Tel: (01233) 502255
Fax: (01233) 643250

Prospect House
24 Prospect Road Ossett
West Yorkshire WF5 8AE
Tel: (01924) 269785

Suite 10 Swan Park Business Centre 1 Swan Park
Kettlebrooke Road Tamworth
Staffordshire B77 1AG
Tel: (01827) 307691

Web site:
www.knapphicks.co.uk

Directors:
Geoff Davies *(Managing)*
IEng, AMICE

Paul Nicholls
IEng, AMIStructE, AMICE

Pamela Armstrong *(Finance)*
ACMA, MAAT, MCMI

Business Development Director:
Patrick G. Hicks
MSE, PEng, FFB, MRSH

Principal Technical Directors:
Darren Cook
BEng (Hons), CEng, MIStructE
Steve Hazell
IEng, AMIStructE, AMICE
John Moss
IEng, AMIStructE

Technical Directors:
David Chrystal
BEng (Hons), MSc, CEng, MIStructE
Richard Moore
BSc, MSc, FGS, CGeol
Nick Sparrowhawk
BSc (Hons), CEng, MICE, ACILA

Technical Consultant:
David Cherrett
CEng, MIStructE

Associates:
Darryl Bedwell
ACIOB
Sean Fitzpatrick
BSc, CEng, MIStructE
Phillip Taylor-Wright
BSc (Hons) Surveying; Grad BEng; Dip CII; ICIOB

Knapp Hicks & Partners Ltd
Incorporated in England
No. 2886020

Registered office:
Laval House
Great West Quarter
Great West Road
Brentford Middx TW8 0GL

34012/L/001/SH/lw

7th May 2016

Mr Dale
MD Design Associates
15 Swains Close
Tadley
Hampshire
RG26 4NF

Dear Mr Dale

RE: STRUCTURAL INSPECTION OF TIMBER STAIRCASE AT 61 NEALE ST, LONDON, WC2H 9PJ

Thank you for your instruction to carry out a structural inspection of the existing internal staircase that serves the above property following fire damage that occurred in the past.

We confirm our Brief, Observations, Conclusions and Recommendations as follows:-

1.00 BRIEF

1.01 It is proposed to carry out a refurbishment of the upper floors of the above Grade 2 property to include repair or replacement of a staircase that has suffered fire damage during the 1960's. Our brief is to carry out a structural assessment of the staircase following the partial removal of the temporary coverings that has revealed the original condition of the staircase.

1.02 A visual only assessment was carried out on the available exposed areas and site notes and photographs taken to record our findings.

2.00 OBSERVATIONS

General

2.01 The staircase is located at the rear of the property adjacent to the southern party wall and serves the grd, 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors of the terraced property.

2.02 The staircase is made up of two straight flights of five to seven tread linked together with a 180 degree seven tread winder located against the rear wall. The stair width was approx. 830mm wide.

2.03 The staircase is a timber construction comprising 25mm x 235mm inner and outer stringers morticed into a continuous full height 88mm x 88mm newel post at the internal mid point of the winders with short height newel posts at each floor level.

2.04 Beneath the straight flights, two timber carriage beams were noted and measured as 60mm high x 95mm wide and spaced at 430mm ctrs apart. The timbers would appear to span from the floor landing trimmer to a support believed to be connect between the main newel post and outside trimmer. Additional timbers were seen connected to the side of these members to form the tread supports.

2.05 It is understood that the flats have not been occupied since the year 2000 and prior to that it was occupied by single elderly lady, therefore, the stairs usage has been limited since the fire occurred.

Defects Noted

2.05 The majority of the fire damage is concentrated between 1st floor and half way between the 2nd and 3rd floors and is recorded as follows:-

Grd to 1st Flr

The first flight has been temporary propped off the grd floor via 4" x 2" timbers as there must have been previous concern with the stair flights structural integrity.
Mild surface charring of internal stringers and newel posts.

1st to 2nd Flr

More extensive charring of the internal stringers and newel posts with a loss of section width on the stringer measured at 8 to 10mm and a loss of width of the newel post measured at 10 to 12mm on each side.
Loss of stair spindles where they have burnt any and a loss of cross section of the hand rail.

2nd to 3rd Flr

Charring of the internal stringers and newel posts with a loss of sectional area width on the stringer measured at 6 to 8mm and a loss of width and depth of the newel post measured at 6 to 8mm on each side on the first flight and reducing on the 2nd flights
Loss of stair spindles where they have burnt out and a loss of cross section of the hand rail.

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3.00 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

3.01 The fire is considered to have impacted upon the staircases structural integrity. The fire has caused a cross sectional area loss of up to approx. 20% of the newel post. This has not only reduced its structural capacity but has caused a reduction in the main support bearings of the existing mortice of the stringer into the newel post with charring of up to 12mm measured at this interface.

The extent of fire damage is considered to be beyond viable insitu repair and requires a number of stringers and the newel post to be replaced.

We therefore recommend that the staircase is rebuilt in new materials that could replicate the current structural form to be able to provide safe access for the proposed refurbished flat.

We trust the above addresses your instruction

Yours sincerely
For Knapp Hicks & Partners Limited

S HAZELL

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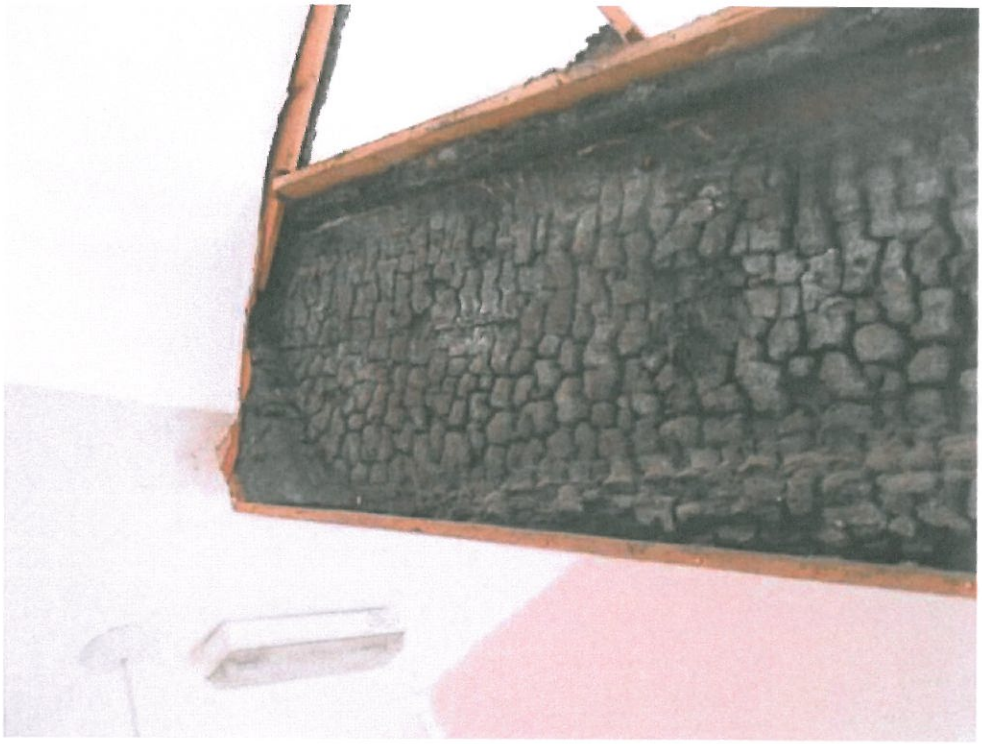
Charred Stringers and newel post

Upper stair flight showing burnt oak stair spindles and charred newel post and stringer



Extensive charring of internal stringer

Extensive charring at stringer to newell post junction

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Upper stringer and newell post with light surface charring