**38, GLOUCESTER CRESCENT, LONDON NW1 7DL**

**APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR REPAIR WORKS TO THE SECOND FLOOR STRUCTURE.**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

During recent works to refit the bathroom, the true condition of timber joists and of timbers within the rear wall became apparent; repair works are required to stabilise the floor and wall and these works will require removal of some plasterwork in order to enable the works to be undertaken.

**Repair works**

It is envisaged that the final scope of repair will only be established during the works but, based on inspection of the fabric that is currently visible, the proposed scope of the structural repair works is shown on the structural engineer’s drawing 26761 SK01. They may be summarised as

• Wall plates

Removal of the defective wall plate built into the brickwork and to which the joists are fixed. This plate continues to form the lintel above the first floor window below and it will be necessary to replace the damaged lintel. It is proposed that the horizontal void created by removal of the defective plate should be replaced in brickwork and that the section which forms the lintel over the window below should be replaced using an oak lintel. These areas are shown as b and c on the engineers drawing.

The extent of work will be limited to the replacement of timbers which are found to be defective and will not be increased to remove timbers which are currently sound but which might become defective in time (indicated as a on the engineers drawing).

Having lost the original timbers, the use of brick infills is preferred to the use of new timber plates because of the difficulty of sourcing sufficiently durable timber and the vulnerability of built in timbers in solid walls to future damage. In addition the piecemeal way in which bricks can be inserted into the recesses, working on a small section at a time, makes it easier to avoid too much disturbance to the brickwork between the joist ends, which are usually fairly loose and prone to fall out.

• Replacement of decayed joist ends

This will be undertaken by cutting back the defective timber and butt jointing the new timber end to end using metal splice plates (Option 2 on the engineers drawing). Replacement will be in treated softwood built into the existing recesses in the brickwork, wrapped in damp proof sheeting to separate timber from direct contact with brickwork. Metal straps will be fixed to joists and built into the brickwork to reinstate horizontal tying effect of the floor.

• Minor repairs

Other joists appear to be in fair condition. The opportunity will be taken to re-secure any loose herringbone strutting and to infill any unused service notches with glued folding wedges.

**Secondary works**

It will be necessary to remove sections of the first floor ceiling below in order to allow these works to take place. This ceiling is of lath and plaster, largely original but with some areas of past repair in plasterboard and is surrounded by a plaster cornice which appears to be of the original pattern. The cornice has many cracks running through it, and part of it has fallen. Overall, it is hard to judge its quality as it has been overpainted for many years. In many areas, the nibs which form the key for the lath and plaster have been lost and there are many cracks running through the ceiling, particularly in the south west corner of the room, diagonally opposite to the main area of structural repair.

Where joist ends, wall plates and lintels are to be replaced the cornice and ceiling will have to be removed to provide access to those areas. This work will be undertaken carefully and in stages to minimise the extent of work. The extent of removal will be limited to those areas required for access for the repair works and those areas where the existing plaster ceiling plaster and cornice are unsound, cutting back to a firm edge for reinstatement with new lath and plaster.

Reinstatement of flat plaster will be in riven oak lath and hair reinforced lime plaster. Existing laths will be removed. Those sections of cornice that have to be removed will be replaced with new plaster cornice modelled on the existing.

Jon Bolter

REES BOLTER ARCHITECTS

12 April 2016