PLANNING AND HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Listed Building Consent for replacement floors.

June 2015
INTRODUCTION

1. This statement is submitted in support of an application for Listed Building Consent in relation to the replacement of existing floors of 21 Drayton Gardens. This statement will assess the works in the context of the local and national planning policy and their heritage impact. It should be read in conjunction with the other supporting documents.

SITE CONTEXT

2. The site comprises a rectangular area of 288sqm. The site comprises a four-storey terrace town house and gardens, located at the northern end of Drayton Gardens. The site has both a large front garden (through which the site is accessed) and rear garden and is backed at the rear boundary by houses situated on Eagle Place.

3. Drayton Gardens is characterised by relatively large terraced houses of ‘character’ from the mid-19th Century with generous gardens. Many, if not most of these houses have been redeveloped in recent years to incorporate rear extensions and internal alterations. The site itself has previously undergone some loss of original fabric with the installation of modern fittings throughout largely undertaken during a major refurbishment in the 1990’s.

4. The boundaries of the gardens are marked by Old Brompton Road to the north, Thistle Grove and Eagle Place to the east, Fulham Road to the south and Cresswell Place to the west.

5. The site is Grade II listed and lies within The Boltons Conservation Area.
BACKGROUND

6. The site was recently the subject of two householder and listed building applications submitted consecutively. The Council refused the first of the applications in October 2014 (ref PP/14/06371); however, the second application was approved in December 2014 (ref: PP/14/07389).

7. Upon commencement of the 'soft strip' and the removal of the carpets in early March 2015, it was apparent that almost all of the original flooring had been removed as part of previous works to the building (presumably when the building was refurbished in the 1990s) and replaced with plywood. In the few parts of the building where floorboards existed, these were largely not original fabric and in poor condition. The application is supported by a set of drawings showing the ground to third floors, which identifies the existing and proposed floor finishes.

8. On the basis that all of the floors in the house are to receive new floor finishes it was decided to replace both the existing plywood flooring and the existing boards. It is acknowledged that listed building consent should have been sought prior to this work being undertaken and this retrospective application is submitted in order to formally regularise the situation.

THE BOLTONS CONSERVATION AREA

9. The townscape analysis undertaken in The Boltons Conservation Area Statement describes Drayton Gardens as ‘long terraces that are elegantly proportioned with Roman doric porticoes’. Other characteristics of the terrace are ‘rounded pediments above first-floor windows, and a characteristic parapet, pierced in a guilloche pattern that was originally repeated in the front garden balustrades. The other sections have stucco on the whole elevation, rather than on just window surrounds’. The area was developed by the Gunter family between 1845 and 1870.
10. The conservation area as a whole runs from Collingham Gardens in the north, Fulham Road in the south, Redcliffe Square in the west and Drayton Gardens in the east.

**LISTED BUILDING**

11. Nos. 1-39 (Odd) Drayton Gardens were Grade II listed in 1969 and the listing description for these properties describes them thus:

“Mid C19 by T Blore. One of 2 facing terraces of yellow brick stucco houses. Roman Doric attic and continuous cast iron balcony balustrades at first-floor level, and following a line of the porticoes. Central 12 bays (15-25) are higher, with attic storey crowned by an open parapet; pilasters through upper floors.”

12. The property and the terrace are designed in a classical idiom, typical of the late Regency and early Victorian period (c. 1830-50). The style of the whole terrace of 1-39 (odd) comprises buff brickwork with rendered quoins, heavy dentil moulding along the eaves, guilloche-style moulding of the parapets of the central blocks (carried forward in some front garden balustrades), giant order pilasters to the central blocks, simple hood mouldings around the windows and their diminishing size on each floor and the stuccoed ground floors with incised rustication.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

13. In this section, the significance of the application site will be examined in context. It should be noted that the statutory designations set out above confer a recognised level of national significance.

14. Locally, the building forms an important element in the streetscape, integral to the homogeneity of the terrace which itself is part of the intended architectural
composition of the development as a whole. The terrace itself forms part of a fairly typical architectural style in the immediate vicinity, particularly in roads off the southern side of Old Brompton Road, such as Cranley Gardens and Onslow Gardens. We would, therefore, consider the building to be of moderate local significance.

15. Regionally, the building represents a building (and terrace) type especially common in the Greater London area for the period of its construction. The style is not specific to the region and so we would consider it to be of low regional significance.

16. Nationally, based on the information we have been able to access and notwithstanding its listed status, we would consider the building to have low national significance.

17. The building forms part of the Day Estate which has been a landholder in the Kensington area for three centuries and has a place alongside the other family developments that facilitated and encouraged the expansion of London and, as a result, played a part in the proliferation of the Georgian terrace across the capital. The continuing ownership of the Estate by the Day family continues this tradition intact from the 18th century.

18. The development is also associated with the local architect, John Blore (1812-82), whose connection with Kensington extended back to his father’s building trade. Blore made his own contribution to the current architectural language of this part of Kensington with his designs for the Day Estate, Alexander Estate and, in Chelsea, the Colville Estate. In this area, therefore, is the majority of the corpus of Blore’s work in London.

19. For the reason of these connections, we would consider the building to have a high level of associative significance.
20. Architecturally, the building does not have exceptional features of design or construction that stand apart from other examples outside of the local context. However, the building does represent a very late example of a style of building which had been prevalent for well over a century. In addition, the architecture of this terrace forms a distinctive group with Drayton Terrace on Old Brompton Road and the west side of Drayton Gardens. Therefore, we would consider the building to have low to moderate architectural significance.

21. The building is illustrative of both the wider and the most specific context in which it was built and used. The terrace, and the development of the Day Estate as a whole, provides a continuing illustration of the westward expansion and development and of suburban London, which saw individual villages in agricultural settings such as Kensington, Chelsea, Earl's Court and Marylebone become part of what could by this time be called Greater London. Associated with this, the workings of the Day Estate and the other family estates of the area, for example the Alexander Estate, Edwardes Estate and Colville Estate, illustrate the practice by which land was developed and buildings built and is fundamental to our understanding of the evolution of Kensington and Chelsea as a borough.

22. In a narrower context, despite the internal alterations the building remains a legible example of an early Victorian townhouse, with internal hierarchy and room use understandable. The building represents the Georgian and Regency traditions at the very end of its hegemony in London's architectural scene and is, therefore, a valuable example of the stylistic changes evident at that time. For the above reasons, we would consider the building to be of high contextual significance.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

23. **TP/85/0566** Conditional Permission (11/07/1985) Erection of a rear extension at 2nd floor level, with a terrace above, balcony at rear ground floor level and a 600mm high trellis on the boundary fence between 23 & 21 Drayton Gardens.
24. **TP/85/0567** Conditional Permission LBC (11/07/1985) Erection of a 2nd floor rear extension with terrace above, a balcony at rear ground floor level and a 600mm high trellis on the boundary fence between 23 & 21 Drayton Gardens.

25. **TP/92/1445** Unconditional Permission LBC (06/11/1992) Retention of replacement staircase to garden providing access from ground floor to rear garden.


27. **PP/14/06371** Householder and Listed Building Consent refused (LB/14/06372) - Infill conservatory extension at the lower ground floor level, removal of steps to rear garden, windows and doors to rear elevation and internal alterations. The Council’s decision to refuse the application was appealed and subsequently dismissed by the Planning Inspector on 3rd June 2015 (APP/K5600/W/15/3002786).

28. **PP/14/07389** Conditional Permission LBC (LB/14/07390) - Lower ground floor rear extension; new window above the replacement door in the ground floor of the main rear wall and re-positioning of the existing rear window to the family bathroom in the closet wing; external alterations to rear elevation and internal alterations.

**PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

29. The statutory plan for the site comprises the London Plan 2011; the adopted RBKC Core Strategy 2010; and the saved policies of the RBKC Unitary Development Plan 2002.
30. The Council recently undertook a partial review of the Core Strategy and adopted various amendments, relating to basements, housing, conservation and design, and other miscellaneous matters in December 2014 and January 2015.

31. The Boltons Conservation Area Proposals Statement, published in 1980, is also relevant to the assessment of this application.

32. The NPPF defines listed buildings and conservation areas as ‘designated heritage assets’. Paragraph 132 states that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation and that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

SCHEDULE OF WORKS

33. The application drawings submitted in support of this listed building consent application detail the changes proposed.

34. Where the existing plywood has been removed it is proposed to replace it with new plywood, ready for floor finishes (areas marked blue on the submitted drawings). Where floorboards have been removed it is proposed to replace them with new 98 x 19mm square edged softwood floorboards, ready for floor finishes (areas marked red on the submitted drawings).

KEY PLANNING MATTERS

35. The key planning matters are considered to be:

- Impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building;
DESIGN AND HERITAGE IMPACT

36. Moving down from the upper floors of the building: on the third floor, the existing plywood flooring in bedrooms 5 & 6 and the shower room has been completely removed, to be replaced with new plywood flooring. None of this plywood flooring was considered to be original. The original floorboards are likely to have been removed during refurbishment work undertaken in the 1990s, or earlier.

37. The stairs between the second and third floors appear to be original and have been retained. The upper landing was finished in plywood and is to be replaced with the same, while the half-landing was covered in poor-quality non-original floorboards, which are to be replaced with plywood flooring.

38. On the second floor, all plywood flooring in bedrooms 3 & 4 and on the landing have been removed, to be replaced with new plywood flooring. None of the plywood flooring was considered to be original. The stairs between the first and second floors appear to be original and have been retained.

39. The family bathroom lies within a closet wing extension, which was not part of the original house. The floorboards in this room were not original and were generally of poor quality. It is proposed to lay a new plywood floor, ready for the bathroom floor finish.

40. On the first floor, each room has had the existing plywood flooring removed to be replaced with new plywood flooring. Small sections of original floorboards, located adjacent to windows and the fireplace in the master bedroom are retained. The stairs between the ground and first floors appear to be original and have been retained.

41. At ground floor level, the rear two rooms had been stripped back to their original structure during earlier refurbishments. The existing plywood flooring has been
removed, to be replaced with new plywood flooring. The hall, and front room had floorboards of indeterminate age, which were in poor condition and have now been removed, to be replaced with new 98 x 19mm square edged softwood floorboards.

42. No works to floors have been undertaken at lower ground floor level, as all floors are laid to concrete.

43. Once works are complete, new floor finishes will be applied, to replace the fitted carpets that previously extended throughout the house. This is with the exception of the stairs, which will be cleaned, stained and fitted with ‘stair-runner’ carpets.

44. It is considered that the removal of existing plywood flooring and poor quality floorboards and their replacement on a like-for-like basis is considered to be acceptable in terms of their impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. All existing floors in the house were covered with either fitted carpets or laminate flooring and new floor finishes will be applied throughout the building upon the completion of structural works. This is with the exception of the stairs, which are an original feature and will be retained.

45. The replacement of the existing floors will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building as the works will be undetectable once the floor finishes have been laid, and the proposals are therefore in accordance with policy CL 4 of the adopted Core Strategy; the policies of the London Plan and the NPPF.

CONCLUSIONS

46. It is considered that application proposals pass the tests set out in Section 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and that listed building consent should be granted accordingly.