



DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION WITH CONSERVATION AREA CONSENT FOR:

**The removal of the rear fire escape stair and access
doors, installation of new windows and Automatic
opening smoke vent system**

AT:

**Bray House
4-5 Duke of York Street
London
SW1Y 6JX**

April 2021

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the planning application for the removal of the existing fire escape stairs and associated access doors and replacement with new windows and automatic opening smoke vents at Bray House, 4-5 Duke of York Street, London, SW1Y 6JX.
- 1.2 The proposals which form the basis of this application for Planning approval are:
- The removal of an existing steel emergency exit staircase at the rear of the property together with the access doors to the 1st – 5th floors.
 - Door openings are to receive new windows to match the style of the existing and a new automatic opening smoke vent system is to be installed.
 - Installation of a new Automatic Opening Vent (AOV) system to facilitate the discharge of smoke and enable safe evacuation of the property in the event of a fire incident.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The property lies to the north-western side of St. James's Square on an established site. The property itself occupies a corner plot between Duke of York Street and Ormond Yard.
- 2.2 Bray House is a 7-storey multi occupancy residential property with a restaurant on the ground floor and a bar and lounge at basement level. The property faces Duke of York Street and sides Ormond Yard where a rear access gate is located. The principal pedestrian accesses are from Duke of York Street.
- 2.3 The property features an aged steel fire escape stair to the rear of the property with accesses from the 1st to 5th floors. The exit route ultimately discharges to Ormond Yard.
- 2.4 Bray House does not benefit from any parking provision.

- 2.5 The property is designed and constructed as a block of apartments arranged over the five upper floors. Floors 4 and 5 are a later addition to the original building's construction.
- 2.6 The property is bounded by other existing, established residential and office blocks of varying ages and styles of construction.
- 2.7 The proposals primarily affect the rear of the existing property and the area in question is largely obscured from view from street level. The area is not visible from Duke of York Street and only partially visible from Ormond Yard when viewed alongside the rear access gate position. From adjacent buildings the affected area is partially visible from some properties to the north of Ormond Yard but the lower levels are obscured from all angles due to the proximity of adjacent buildings.

Listed Buildings, Conservation and Heritage

- 2.8 The existing property is not listed although is located within the Westminster City Council 'St. James' Conservation Area.
- 2.9 Bray House was part of Chandos House Site redevelopment in 1933-34. The property is constructed largely with red and buff brickwork facings and stucco detailing to the ground floor. Windows are timber framed, vertical sliding sash examples. The main entrance to the property features a timber raised and fielded door, accessed by 3 stone steps.
- 2.10 The existing fire escape stair is constructed in black painted steelwork with matching treads and handrails. Access doors to the escape stair are timber with glazed panels and fanlights.
- 2.11 The property has been extended vertically by 2 floors in a matching style since its original construction
- 2.12 The proposals are to remove the metal escape stair and the timber access doors. Door openings will be infilled with brickwork and aluminium framed windows to match the proportion and style of the existing. Automatic opening smoke vents (AOV's) are to be installed to improve fire safety to the building. These AOV's will not be visible from the street and are to be located through the existing lift motor room and water tank room areas upon the existing roof level and fitted to the new windows to facilitate discharging of smoke in the event of an emergency.

3.0 Design and Access Considerations

Layout and Design

- 3.1 The proposal have been designed in conjunction with a fire safety specialist to provide a safer, compliant and managed strategy in the event of a fire within the property. The proposed measures will serve to aid in discharging smoke from the building effectively. This will provide a safer and more accessible stair shaft to enable safer egress from the building and safer fire fighter attendance. The existing aged external emergency escape stair will then become obsolete.
- 3.2 Future access to the roof level will be via a safer, internal access point leading in to the existing tank room via an existing access hatch in the floor / ceiling of the top floor.
- 3.3 The existing fire escape stair is accessed by a single door at each level to the rear of the property. His stair then requires users to descend to basement level and then ascend back up to ground level via what is a fairly dark route which would pose health and safety risks in the event of an emergency.
- 3.4 The proposed removal of the door and replacement with windows has been designed to match the aesthetic of the existing building and adjacent windows generally. Windows are proposed in aluminium to ensure minimum maintenance and also to ensure future operation of the AOV system.
- 3.5 The layout of the property will remain unchanged as a result of the proposal although additional internal fire doors are also proposed as a means of affording improved fire safety to the building and its occupants.
- 3.6 Site access and parking arrangements will remain unchanged as a result of the proposal.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 This is a planning application with conservation area consent application for fire safety improvements to an existing established multi-occupancy property. Visually the alterations will be fairly minor and in keeping with the existing building detailing and should offer limited visual impact on the surrounding area due to their position and orientation.
- 4.2 The proposals will have a positive impact on the property and its occupants and will serve to improve fire safety and ensure compliance with current fire safety legislation relating to blocks of flats and to the Building Regulations.
- 4.3 It is, therefore, requested that Westminster City Council support the proposal and grant consent for the proposals.

5.0 Appendix A - Photographs



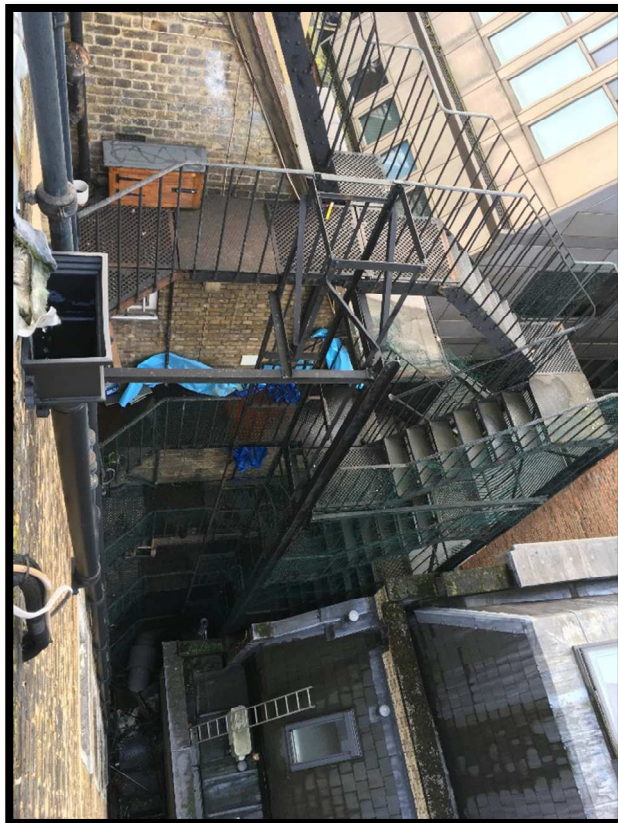
Bray House viewed from the corner of Duke of York Street and Ormond Yard



Rear side corner as viewed from Ormond Yard



View from the roof – Fire escape stair at top, Ormond Yard at bottom



View toward the fire escape stair from the roof



Roof level plant room – location of new AOV



An alternate roof view



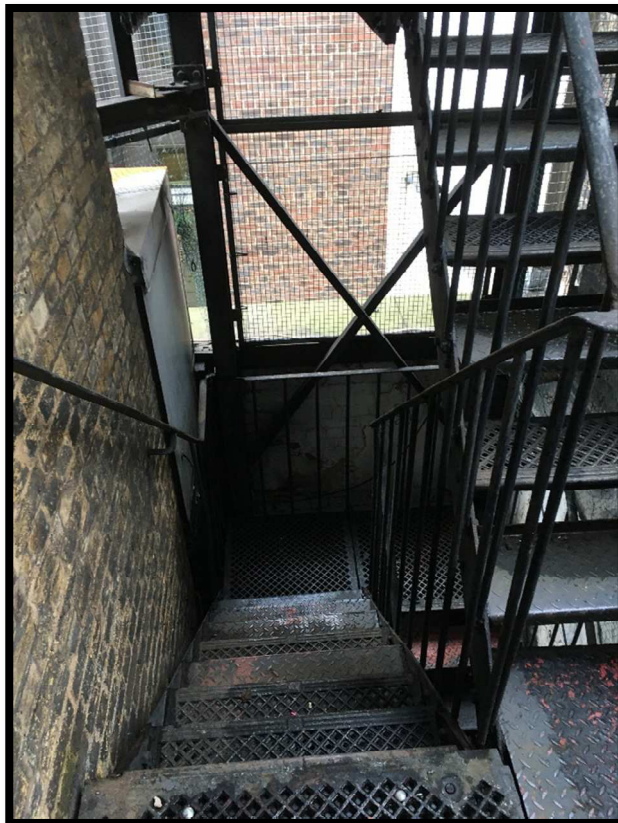
Disused top floor egress door to be replaced



An example of the 1st – 4th floor doors to be replaced with new windows



View of the rear elevation from the fire escape showing windows to be matched



A view to the lower levels of the fire escape stair

6.0 Appendix B – Strategic Smoke Control Spec.



Report Bray House

5/10/20

Reference BH/09/20

Further to our site visit and inspection with regards to delivery of a strategic smoke control system to allow the egress from the building and or stay put policy.

Description

5 Storey above retail plus Rooftop Plant room.

Floors 1-4 Main staircase with access to secondary means of escape

Floor 5 Isolated from MOE

Objective

To clear building of smoke from all lobbies and staircase by means of AOVS.

To allow occupants to remain within the protection of the lobby Fire Door sets (By others) or Turn and make a clam escape Via the protected and ventilated staircase (lift being grounded) to a place of safety.

Works Compliance notes

ADB (2019)

MHCLG Fire safety in Purpose built blocks of flats Revised 2020

SCA Guidelines

WWW.Ashfire.co.uk

Registered Office 32 Clarence Street Southend SS1 1DB Reg UK 7371884

BH/9/20

The Works

To make available all necessary plant and materials for the safe execution of the works.

Note

Unless further instructed all building works by others.

Areas (Staircase)

As discussed on site.

Item 1/ All service shaft covers to be removed and replaced with decorative vented louvres this will provide positive pressure to the stairwell together with two motorised vents to the main lobby area.

Item 2/ At head of Stairs (fig 2) an A1 Fire Rated Grille and damper to be fitted to a plenum unit leading to fire rated ducting to vent Via the Lift Motor room avoiding access issues to electrical switch gear. The ducting to terminate at the AOV on Flat roof level.

NOTE LEVEL 5 (fig 3)

This is an isolated area with no current means of egress via the external staircase. (HIGH RISK). Identical works will be carried out to this lobby as discussed retaining the Roof Access. Secondary measures to be installed from the lobby via the Tank room to the terminating at upper roof level. Provisions to roof access points (Ashfire to Advise)

Levels 1-4

Item 3/ (fig 4) On completion of building works (By Others) A1 Fire Rated and secure AOVs to be fitted to the openings these will be fitted with deflectors to divert smoke and heat away from the façade of the building. As Requested decorative lead features to be incorporated in the glazed design.

BH/09/20

Wiring

Item 4/ 1 no 10 Zone control panel

7 no Individual Zonal control panels

12 No Smoke Alarms with relays and interfaces

FM 200 Gold 4 & Earth 1.5mm Cable

1 no Fire man override switch

Mechanicals

All fire Rated Lightweight Steel composition.

10m of Ducting

2no Birds Beaks

6no couplings

6no elbows

2no plenums

2no grilles

2no dampers

2no external grilles/vents

Fixings Included

Note

Allowance has been made for 2no in shaft fans to assist in the assured measured response and performance these are stock items if they are not Required they will not utilised and charged.

Building manager to oversee all works.

A Site Diary will be in operation throughout.

Lead In time TBA (Ashfire)

Costs TBA (Ashfire)

Building Works TBA (Ashfire) Door Sets (Ashfire)

Strategy B/H/09

On completion of all works Notices to be posted in all common parts and apartments with an action plan in case of Fire.

I would be prudent to install a photo luminescent guidance system and emergency lighting.

Compliant Smoke extract would lead to Safe and calm evacuation of the premises in a Fire incident in any single or multiple location.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Paul Evans', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Evans

IFE IFSM FSEC

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