

Design and Access Statement
for
The alterations to the apartment scheme at Victoria Mill,
Miles Platting, Greater Manchester



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1.0 Introduction

This design and access statement is submitted in support of applications for key changes to the previously approved apartment scheme for Victoria Mill (application number 119321/JO/2018 submitted by Signature Victoria Mill part of Signature Living).

Since the scheme achieved planning approval Signature Victoria Mill commenced construction but ceased trading before the project was completed.

Medlock FRB have been appointed as the principal contractor on a design and build contract. Medlock FRB appointed Allison Pike as architects. Since taking on the project Medlock FRB have uncovered several building regulations issues with the scheme as partially built.

This document seeks to outline amendments to the original scheme and explain why they are required.

This document should be read in conjunction with the new architectural drawings submitted as part of this application.

2.0 Overview of the Original Scheme

This scheme is for the conversion into 85 apartments of office space on five upper floors of one half of Victoria Mill, which is a grade II* listed building in Miles Platting, Greater Manchester.

3.0 List of Key Changes

1. The cycle storage, originally to be located in the basement is now located in storerooms on upper floors.
2. Staircase A is now a maintenance stair only and a door will be added into the NHS corridor.
3. Staircase B requires a smoke vent to the top of the staircase
4. The ground floor lobby to staircase C will now be divided between the NHS use on the ground floor and the new apartments above.
5. One new firefighting lift is proposed instead of refurbishing the two existing lifts which will be removed.
6. Smoke vents are to be added to protect the route to staircase B & C.
7. The home working spaces are to be omitted.
8. The central refuse area in the basement is to be replaced with bin stores on each floor. These bin stores will also require ventilation.
9. Internal steps have been introduced due to existing floor level changes.
10. Existing cross corridor doors have been moved and additional ones proposed.
11. Addition of a door in the corridor to staircase B
12. Modern ceilings are proposed to some areas of the development
13. External works, repair works were proposed as part of the original planning application. This application seeks to update these drawings to reflect the current condition of the building. Upgrades to the elevations also include a new external door to the basement which is in poor condition and additional external lighting to meet Secure by Design standards

4.0 Key Change 1: Cycle Storage

The original scheme housed cycle storage in the existing basement. This was to be accessed by a long ramp and narrow internal corridor. This was viewed to not be very convenient for residents and therefore not be used.

Following discussions with our Secure by Design consultant it was agreed that the best solution to encourage cycle usage was the inclusion of cycle stores on each floor of the building in one of the existing storerooms.

This option has the following benefits:

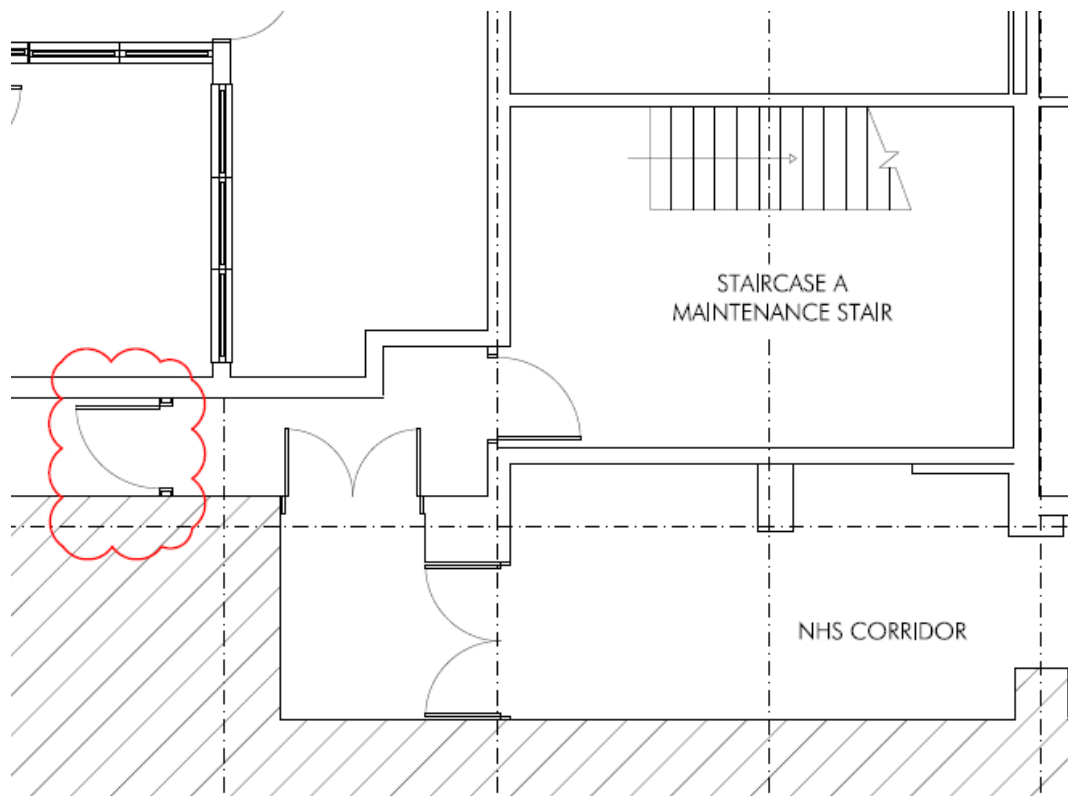
- Secure external cycle storage within the building behind several access-controlled doors
- Cycles can be stored close to residents accommodation

An external cycle store was also considered however this would result in the loss of existing car parking spaces and would impact the setting of the listed building.

As a result of this change, no works are now proposed to the basement area of the building.

5.0 Key Change 2: Staircase A

The existing building has three staircases. One of the alterations to the scheme is to change staircase A from an accommodation stair into a maintenance stair. The reason for omitting this staircase as an escape route for the residents is that at ground floor the escape route from the staircase would merge with the escape route from the ground floor offices which is in contravention of building regulations part B. An additional door has also been added in the NHS corridor to comply with building regulations, see the following drawing extract, this is to provide a two separate escape routes for maintenance staff from stair A.



Extract of the ground floor plan showing the addition of a door (highlighted in red revision cloud)

6.0 Key change 3: Staircase B

As part of the fire strategy that has been prepared for this building staircase B is required to have an automatic opening smoke vent through the roof. This opening will have minimal impact on the listed building externally as it is in the centre of the plan which has 1400mm approx. high parapet walls to the perimeter, see the roof plan submitted as part of this application.

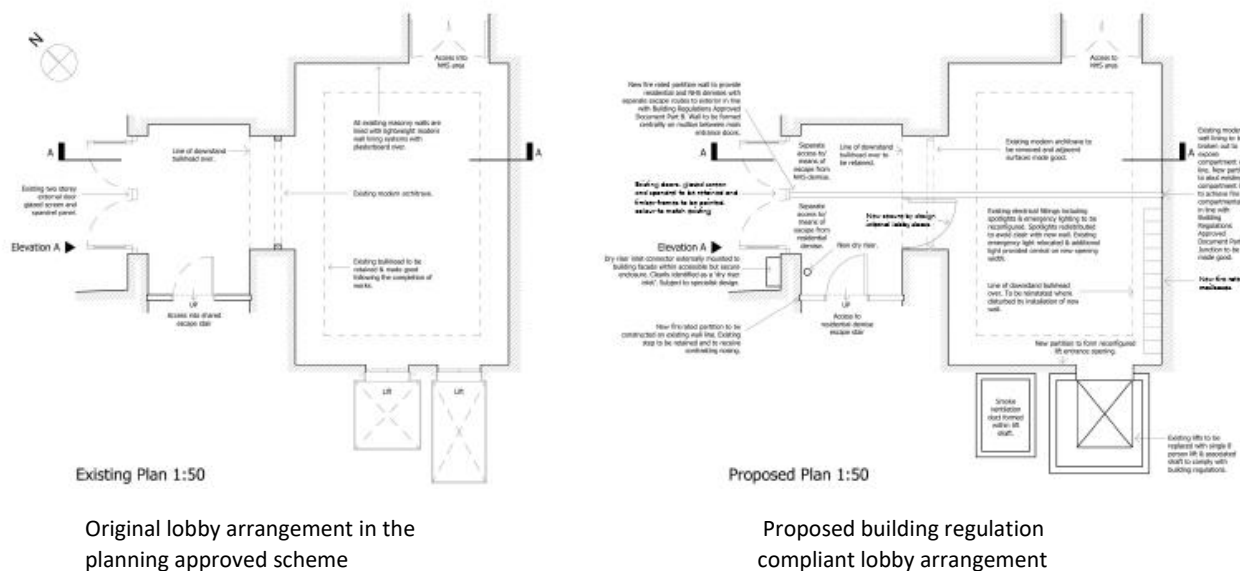
7.0 Key Change 4: Staircase C

In the original scheme the escape route from the apartments merged with the escape route from the offices in the ground floor lobby of staircase C. In order to comply with the requirements of Part B of the Approved Building Regulations (Fire Safety) each use needs to have a separate escape route.

'In mixed use buildings, separate means of escape should be provided from any storeys or parts of storeys used for the 'residential' purpose groups.'

Extract from Part B Volume 2 of the Approved Building Regulations

In order to provide this a dividing wall is required in the ground floor lobby of staircase C, as shown in the following drawings:



This is a necessary change to comply with building regulations Part B.

In the newly created residential entrance lobby fire rated mailboxes will be installed which also comply with Secured by Design criteria this includes the creation of an internal secure lobby with secure by design certified doors. The addition of the doors means that the existing listed external main entrance doors will be retained, and the timber frames will be refurbished.

To the top of staircase C to enable this existing stair to be used as a fire fighting stair a smoke vent needs to be installed that connects directly to fresh air. This is located on the flat roof behind the chimney. There are very limited places that this vent can be located due to the position of the historic chimney above the stair and the existing lift motor room located on the flat roof. The location chosen will have minimal impact on the listed building and will not be seen from the ground due to the position of the historic chimney.

8.0 Key Change 5: Firefighting Lift

In the original scheme the existing lifts were to be refurbished, however the existing lifts are 30 years old and are in need of replacement. It is proposed that the existing lifts will be removed and replaced with a single 8 person lift. This new lift will be a firefighting lift which is a building control requirement. Currently there are no firefighting lifts on either side of this building and as this is a building over 18 metres high this provision greatly improves the fire brigades' access to all the upper floors of this building in a fire situation.

9.0 Key Change 6: Smoke Vents

In accordance with BS9991 and building regulations Approved Documents Part B the common escape routes between the apartments and protected staircases should be provided with smoke ventilation (only the section of corridor directly outside the staircases needs to be ventilated). This was not considered in the approved scheme.

Below is an extract from the building regulations highlighting the requirements of a smoke vent for a corridor to a staircase without an external wall:

There should therefore be some means of ventilating the common corridors/lobbies to control smoke and so protect the common stairs. This means of ventilation offers additional protection to that provided by the fire doors to the stair, as well as some protection to the corridors/lobbies. Ventilation can be natural or mechanical.

They should discharge into a vertical smoke shaft, closed at the base, that meets all of the following criteria.

i. The shaft should conform to the following conditions.

- *Have a minimum cross-sectional area of 1.5m² (minimum dimension 0.85m in any direction).*
- *Open at roof level, minimum 0.5m above any surrounding structures within 2m of it horizontally.*
- *Extend a minimum of 2.5m above the ceiling of the highest storey served by the shaft.*

ii. The free area of all the following vents should be a minimum of 1m² in the following places.

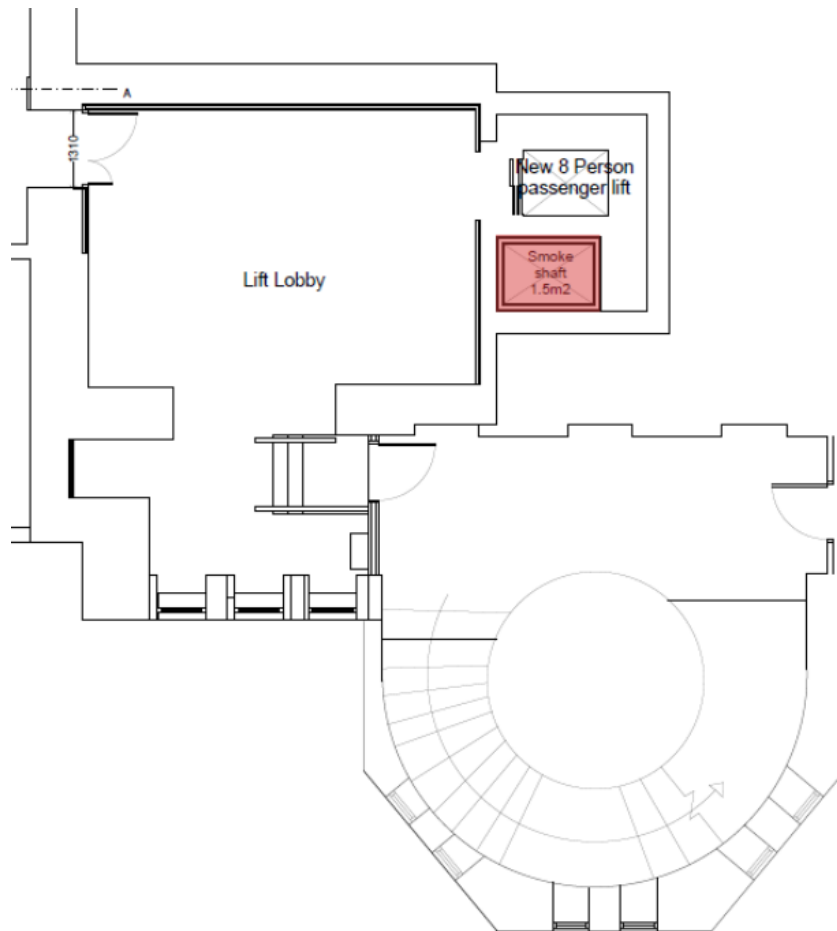
- *From the corridor or lobby into the shaft.*
- *At the opening at the head of the shaft.*
- *At all internal locations within the shaft (e.g. safety grilles).*

iii. The smoke shaft should be constructed from a class A1 material. All vents should either be a fire doorset or fitted with a smoke control damper achieving the same period of fire resistance and designed to operate as described below. The shaft should be vertical from base to head, with a maximum of 4m at a maximum inclined angle of 30 degrees.

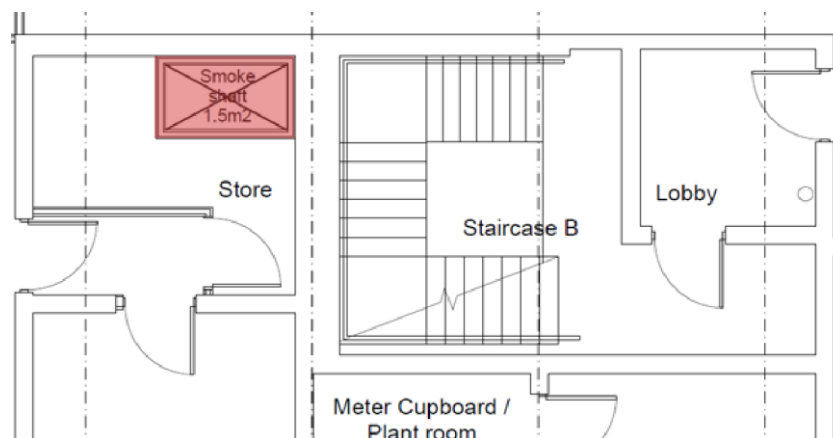
- Approved Document Volume 1 Part B

To comply with this building regulation requirement two smoke vents need to be incorporated into the scheme, one to protect each stair. The project's fire strategy document provided by BB7 outlines the ideal location of the smoke shafts as follows; '*the smoke shaft should be located at the remote end of the corridor away from the staircase*'. When considering the location of the shafts the impact on the fabric of the listed building was carefully considered. For the vent to staircase B locating the vent in the redundant staircase A was considered first however, this location proved to be

unworkable because the shaft cannot have any bends in it and due to the location of staircase A in relation to staircase B this fundamental criteria for the shaft would not be met. The remaining area of the core of the building has brick jack arch ceilings and therefore wherever in the core it was to be located an opening in the brickwork would be required. So we have located the shaft in the store room adjacent to the protected corridor to staircase B which complies with the requirements of the British standard. The shaft for staircase C is located one in the disused lift shafts next to the new firefighting lift. This is an existing shaft and does not require any new openings through the floor, only one opening at roof level. The following drawings show the location of the shafts:



Location of smoke vent for staircase C



Locating the smoke vent for staircase C in the disused lift shaft will have minimal impact on the fabric of the listed building. To create the opening for the smoke vent for staircase B openings will need to be formed in the jack arch brick floor construction at each level. This smoke vent is required in order to make the building safe for a residential use. So whilst installing this shaft will result in some harm to the listed fabric the building as a whole will be protected and maintained long term by full time occupation.

10.0 Key Change 7: Home Working Spaces

The original scheme included four home working spaces per floor. The Manchester City Council appointed building control inspector has confirmed that the home working spaces do not fit into the live/work unit Part B category, and therefore these need to be removed in order to comply with Part B of the Approved Building Regulations. In the updated scheme these spaces have become store rooms.

11.0 Key Change 8: Refuse Areas

The first approved scheme had bin stores located near to the lift lobby on each floor. This principal is in contravention of the building regulations Part H (Drainage and Waste Disposal) which stipulates the following:

'Storage areas for waste containers and chutes should be sited so that the distance householders are required to carry refuse does not usually exceed 30m (excluding any vertical distance).'

This was updated to provide a single refuse chute in staircase A in the current approved scheme however, this principal is also in contravention of the building regulations Part H which additionally stipulates the following:

'Dwellings above the 4th storey may share a single waste container for non-recyclable waste fed by chute, with separate storage for any waste which can be recycled. Alternatively, storage compounds or rooms should be provided'

The refuse strategy in the approved scheme is also in contravention of Building Regulations Part B Volume 1: Dwellings which states the following requirements:

'Refuse chutes and rooms for storing refuse should meet both of the following conditions.

- a. Be separated from other parts of the building by fire resisting construction (minimum REI*
- b. 30 in buildings with a top storey up to 5m above ground level; otherwise REI 60).*
- c. Not be situated within a protected stairway or protected lobby.*

The approach to rooms containing refuse chutes or for storing refuse should comply with one of the following conditions.

- a. Be directly from the open air.*
- b. Be through a protected lobby with a minimum of 0.2m² of permanent ventilation.*

Access openings to refuse storage chambers should not be sited in the following areas.

- a. Next to escape routes or final exits.*

b. Near the windows of flats.'

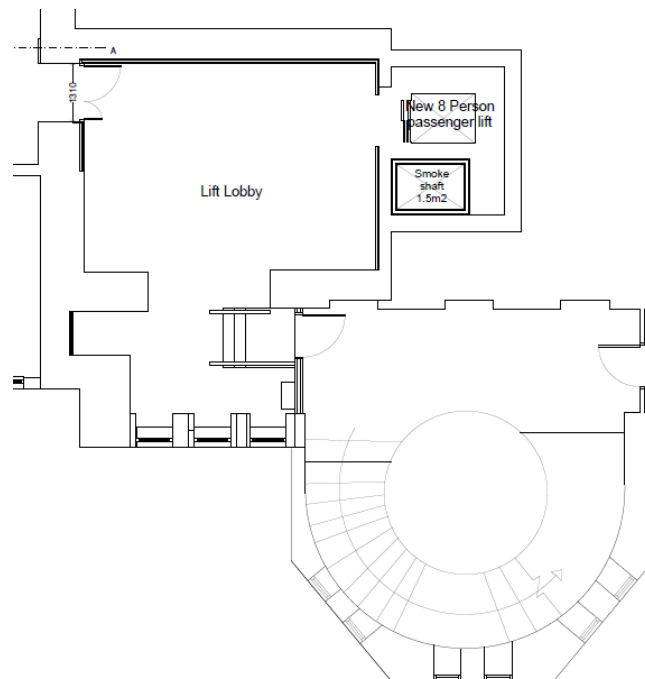
This clearly states that it is not acceptable to have a refuse chute in a staircase (even though staircase A is now a maintenance stair) which links to an escape route on the ground floor.

To comply with building regulations the solution is to locate a bin store on each floor within the central core; this has now been included in the design, see the refuse drawing that accompanies this application. Another building regulation requirement for the bin stores (as listed in the above extract) is that they are accessed through a protected lobby which has permanent ventilation. This will be provided a ductwork shaft located in staircase A (which adjoins the bin store) with wall mounted vents connected to each bin store lobby. Locating the ductwork in the staircase removes the requirement for creating openings within the brick arched floors although there will need to be an opening through the roof. Space will be created for the duct by taking out a section of the staircase half landing on each level. This is possible because this staircase is only going to be used for maintenance so a deduction in the size of this landing is not a fire escape issue. It is also a metal staircase (which is not original) which can be adapted to accommodate the openings for the ductwork. The penetrations required to install the horizontal connections from the vertical shaft to into the bin store lobbies are through a modern wall, so no historic fabric is lost here.

The bin store plans submitted with this application show a typical layout of a bin store with the sizes of the bins indicated. The capacity of the bins has been calculated using Manchester City Council's *Waste Storage and Collection Guidance for New Developments* document. The sizes of bins chosen has been determined by the physical internal dimensions of the new lift.

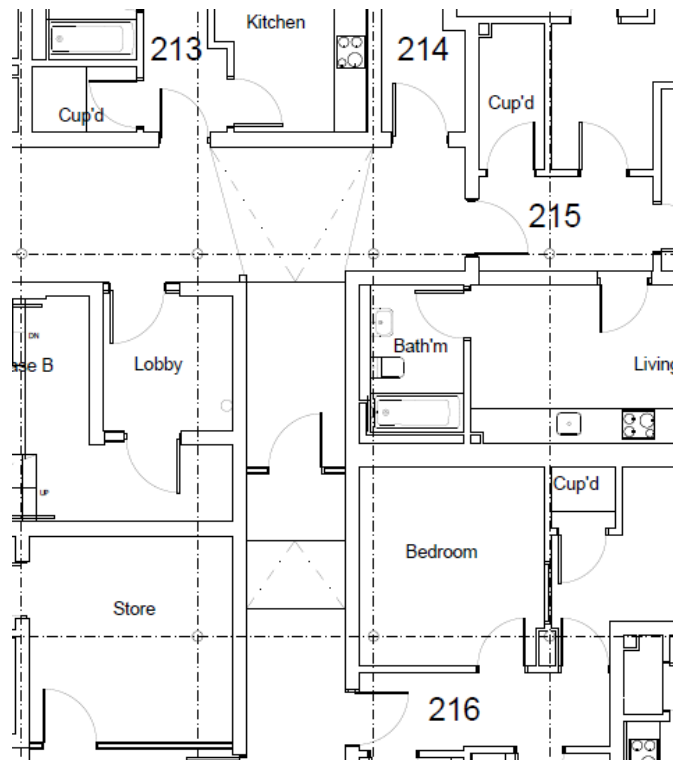
12.0 Key Change 9: Internal Steps

Since starting the construction work it has become necessary to include some additional steps and a ramp to overcome differences in floor levels. At second and third floor a small flight of steps is required between staircase C and the lift lobby, as the following drawing shows:



Extract from the third floor GA plan showing the small flight of steps required to link the lift lobby and staircase C

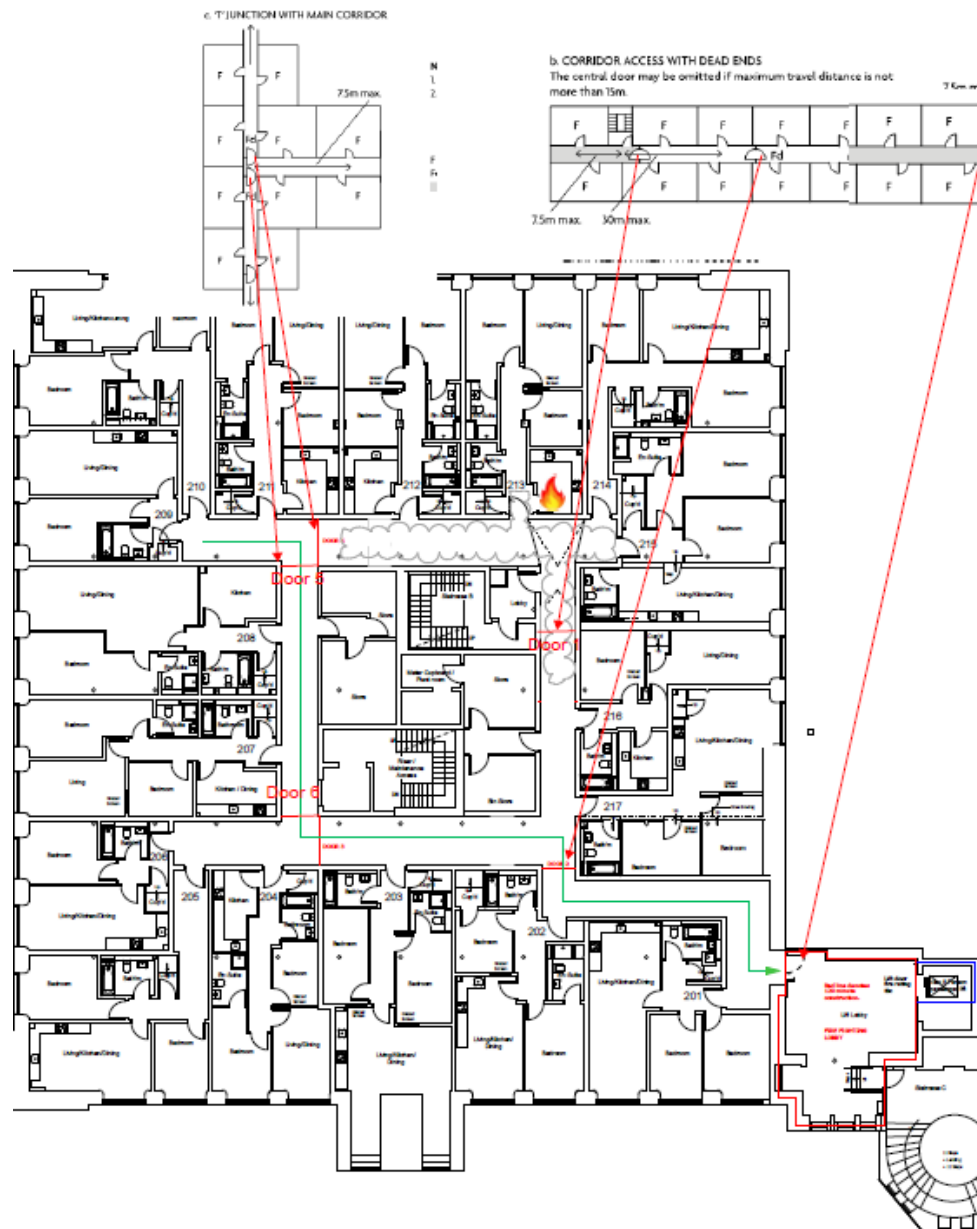
At second floor only, an internal ramp is required in the circulation corridor as there is an existing beam within the floor construction that is raised up from the floor level. The following drawing shows the location of this ramp:



Extract from the second floor GA plan showing the ramp required to overcome the raised beam within the floor

13.0 Key Change 10: Cross Corridor Doors

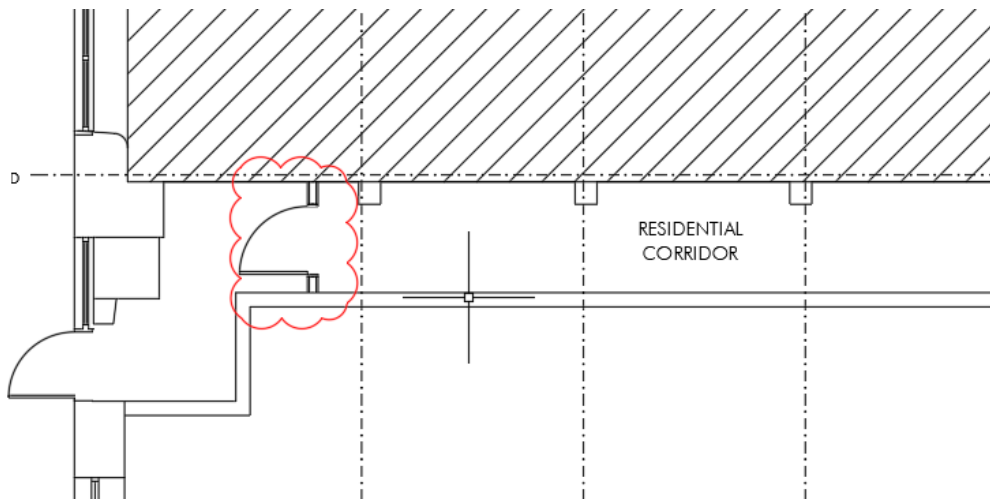
The approved scheme included for two cross corridor doors per floor. The position of these doors were not in accordance with the requirements of Building Regulations Part B Volume 1: Dwellings. There are two dead end corridors in the design and at the end of each one there is a requirement for an alternative protected means of escape. This is described and drawn in both building regulations Part B Volume 1 for Dwellings and the British Standard BS9991:2015. The figure below shows the diagrams from the building regulations referenced to the specific design of Victoria Mill as provided by the project appointed fire engineer BB7 Fire Limited. This is a necessary change in order to use this building for a residential purpose.



Typical general arrangement plan with building regulations diagrams above and the required cross corridor door referenced from the building regulation guidance (shown in red),
Diagram provided by BB7 Fire Ltd

14.0 Key Change 11: Additional door to corridor to staircase

In order to comply with Secure by Design requirements the rear ground floor fire exit door needs to be made secure. The existing external door is listed therefore it was proposed that an additional internal Secure by Design door would be added to comply with this requirement, see the following drawing extract. This has been agreed with the Secure by Design consultant and is required to achieve accreditation.



Extract of the ground floor plan showing the corridor from staircase B with an additional door added (highlighted in the red revision cloud)

15.0 Key Change 12: Proposed Ceilings

The existing office scheme included a mixture of exposed brick arch, plasterboard or lay-in-grid ceilings. In this development it is proposed that as much of the brick arch structure will be exposed as possible.

The general principle for the ceilings in the apartments is to have plasterboard ceilings in the bathrooms, separate kitchens and corridors where mechanical extract is required. The bedrooms and open plan lounges and kitchens will all have exposed brick arch ceilings however there are two apartments on each floor which differ from this principle. This is because brick arch ceilings do not exist in some areas of these apartments, instead of brick arches there is modern, steel beams and concrete beam and block. It is thought that this area originally accommodated a loading bay, so no brick arches were ever built in this area, and the floor was infilled when the building was first converted. The beam and block construction does not provide the correct floor to floor fire protection, so plasterboard ceilings are therefore required to provide this and for aesthetic reasons. Where possible in these apartments brick arches have been left exposed. See the reflected ceiling plans for more details.

In the central core the original scheme from Signature Living included new plasterboard ceilings to all of these rooms. In the current scheme, following discussions with the conservation and planning officers on site, the decision has been taken to remove these plasterboard ceilings where the brick arches are in good condition. See the reflected ceiling plans for more details.

On the fifth floor brick arch ceilings do not exist so new ceilings are proposed to all of the public areas of the building.

16.0 Key Change 13: External Works

Works to building elevations

The original planning application included photographic record elevations showing the original condition of the building and areas which required repair. Since this application was approved a

significant amount of time has passed so the external elevations have been re-evaluated. New drawings have been repaired with new photographs added where necessary to illustrate new areas that require repair.

External lighting

Another part of achieving Secure by Design accreditation relates to the lighting in the car park and around the building. A survey of the existing lighting in the car park was completed which concluded that the existing car park was well lit however areas around the building needed more illumination. To meet the Secure by Design accreditation more light fittings around the building will be required so therefore an external lighting plan has been included in this application. The new light fittings have been placed near to the main entrance and rear fire escapes with the aim of providing well-lit entrance and emergency exit routes and eliminating the dark corner at the end of the car park on the northeast elevation. Most of the light fittings have been placed on the northeast elevation to illuminate the fire escape route with the number of light fittings on the main entrance elevation (northwest) limited to 2 near the main entrance only.

New replacement external door

The approved application highlighted on the northwest elevation that an existing external door was in poor condition and needed to be replaced. This door leads to the basement. No works are proposed in the basement, so as this will be a vacant space it is important that this door needs to be secure. The existing door has a large, glazed panel, it is proposed that the new door will be a solid timber door with timber mouldings. The design of the mouldings with reference the glazed panel and mouldings from the original door.

17.0 Access

The existing principles of level access have been retained. The provision of one new lift provides step free access to the entrance door of all the dwellings in the development. The original scheme provided two refurbished lifts, the provision of a new single lift in this revised scheme is considered to still comply with the building regulations Part M Volume 1: Dwellings which states:

- (1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to*
 - a. Gain access to; and*
 - b. Use the dwelling and its facilities*

There confirms that there is no building regulation requirement to provide more than one lift.

18.0 Conclusion

The alterations explained in this document are all necessary changes to comply with building regulations and achieve Secured by Design accreditation. The impact on the grade II* listed building has been considered and minimised wherever possible.