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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT 28 November 2011

81 DALE STREET MANCHESTER

PROPOSAL FOR BALCONY AND RELOCATION OF EXTERNAL STAIRCASE

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Dale Apartments LLP to accompany a planning application for permission to relocate an external staircase.

1.02 The document should be read in conjunction with drawing nos. 2261-02-40A and 41A attaching to the planning application.

2.00 CONTEXT OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDS

2.01 81 Dale Street contains 85 apartments and is located on the corner of Dale Street and Ducie Street, in the Piccadilly area of Manchester. In addition there are two retail units at ground floor level.

2.02 The south-east elevation faces onto Ducie Street and the south-west elevation faces onto Dale Street. The north-west elevation of the building faces to the Rochdale Canal, with the canal towpath running beside the building. An office building abuts the north-east elevation.

2.03 The land surrounding the application site contains a mixture of residences, offices, shops and public car parking areas, reflecting its inner city location. The car parking areas also serve the nearby Piccadilly train station.

2.04 Site Planning History

2.05 The original planning approval for the building was granted as an Outline Permission in year 2002 under reference 065974/ OO/CITY3/ 02. The drawings indicate an external terrace on the North-west elevation, facing to the canal. A part of the terrace is shown as a "raised external deck" one metre higher than the terrace, with a connecting staircase. The deck continues indoors to form an upper floor level inside the retail unit.

2.05 Approval of reserved matters and discharge of Planning Conditions has been pursued subsequent to the Permission, with the building now completed and in use.

2.06 Physical Context

2.07 The two street frontages allow access directly from the street into the building, and the main entrance to the apartments is on Dale Street, with entry into a reception area. There are two shop units facing onto Ducie Street with, in addition, the vehicular entrance to the basement car park.

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2.09 The site is not within a flood risk area according to the Environment Agency Flood Map, given its canalside location.

2.12 Site Topography

2.13 The ground floor shop units allow for level pedestrian access from Ducie Street.

3.01 The shop units have a rear terrace, effectively the roof of the basement car park which sits outside the envelope of the building proper.

2.11 The Rochdale Canal towpath runs by the side of the external terrace and is 1.5 metres below the floor level of the terrace and the shops. Add the one metre change of level between the terrace and the raised external deck, and it can be seen that the change of level from the raised area of external deck to the towpath is approximately 2.5 metres.

3.02 The original design intent is unclear regarding the formation of any pedestrian link between the rear terrace and the towpath. If a link is to be formed, the only point at which a level connection can be made is on the landing partway down the existing external ramp which leads from Dale Street onto the towpath. The landing is in line with back of pavement on Dale Street.

3.00 THE PROPOSAL

3.04 Design concept

3.01 If the shop units are to be occupied by a food and drink operator it is likely that the terrace will become an attractive feature, allowing alfresco dining during the warmer months. We consider it will be feasible to make a connection from the Dale Street ramp onto the terrace which will allow for general access and more particularly will also serve as a fire exit.

3.02 However, the upper level deck can only be accessed by crossing the main terrace, which is not ideal if there are to be two separate lettings to the ground floor shop units. The upper level deck clearly belongs to Unit 2, and we wish to provide separate access to the deck and thus eliminate the need to cross the area of the terrace belonging to Unit 1.

4.00 SUMMARY

4.01 In summary therefore, our proposal is to relocate the original staircase. Instead of it connecting terrace to terrace the staircase will now connect the upper level deck directly to the towpath.

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Photograph showing original staircase connecting the two terrace levels with a temporary stair providing access from the terrace to the towpath. Photographed prior to recent construction works. The stair to the towpath no longer exists.