
From: Jonathan.Bore@rbkc.gov.uk
Sent: 08 September 2014 15:25
To: [REDACTED]; Cllr.Blakeman@rbkc.gov.uk
Cc: Cllr.Lasharie@rbkc.gov.uk; CllrR.Atkinson@rbkc.gov.uk; [REDACTED]
Claire.Shearing@rbkc.gov.uk; Roger.Keane@rbkc.gov.uk;
Alison.Flight@rbkc.gov.uk; Laura.Johnson@rbkc.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Applications Nos. PP/12/04097 and PP/14/03655: Grenfell Tower Refurbishment

Dear Cllr Blakeman

The approved new bridge from the walkway to Grenfell Tower would provide a pedestrian link from the walkway level to the ground via a new staircase and lift within the Tower. However, the planning documents do not give any suggestion that other local residents outside Grenfell Tower would benefit from the use of this access. As the access is integral to Grenfell Tower, matters relating to its access could be reasonably secured as part of the planning permission. I can therefore only suggest pursuing these matters with the TMO to see if a satisfactory solution can be reached.

The rationale for the removal of the previous external staircase is discussed within paragraph 4.13 of the Committee Report accompanying the permission for refurbishment of Grenfell Tower (available [here](#)).

Regards

Jonathan Bore | Executive Director | Planning and Borough Development

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Kensington Town Hall, London W8 7NX | [REDACTED]

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From: Fido [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: 01 September 2014 14:30
To: Bore, Jonathan: PC-Plan; Cllr, Blakeman, Judith
Cc: Cllr, Lasharie, Beini; Cllr, Atkinson, Robert; Cllr Dent-Coad [REDACTED]; Shearing, Claire: PC-Plan; Keane, Roger: HS-Housing; Flight, Alison: PC-Plan; Johnson, Laura: HS-Housing
Subject: RE: Applications Nos. PP/12/04097 and PP/14/03655: Grenfell Tower Refurbishment

Dear Mr. Bore

I am interested in the following:

"The Design and Access Statement makes the following comments.

The key changes proposed to the internal organization of the tower are:

- *Removal of the external concrete stair on the south east corner to make way for new floor space at ground, mezzanine, walkway and walkway+1.*
- *Creation of a new stair and lift on the south west corner of the tower, connecting the lower three levels.*

- *Infill of voids and extension to the mezzanine floor slab to create extra space to become residential properties.*
- *A remodelled reception to be larger, more welcoming and provide surveillance to the doors, new lift and stairs.*

*The proposal is that the new stair would be generally accessible to residents, therefore replacing the external stepped ramp as a means of getting between ground and walkway level. **A new bridge connection on the walkway is created to achieve this.** The proposed stair also provides the last two flights of stairs down to ground for residents in the floors above. The original fire escape strategy involves leaving the building at Walkway level and escaping via the bridge or one of the two existing external stairs to be removed as part of the works"*

My reading of this is that it relates only to access to residents of Grenfell Tower and not to the residents of the northern ends of the three finger blocks or Grenfell Walk - apart from the sentence I have highlighted in bold.

I would be grateful if you can clarify whether this sentence means that the new bridge connection will provide access from Grenfell Walk to Grenfell Tower, which will mean that, at long last, those residents currently disadvantaged by the removal of the ramp will have lift access to the ground floor?

If it does not mean this, then the residents to whom I refer will have lost their disability access. It is correct that it is possible to walk all the way round to Bramley Road beside Latimer Road underground station, but this will not work for people with impaired mobility, since it adds almost half a mile to some journeys and at least one quarter of a mile for every journey.

I note that the TMO acknowledge only one complaint. We did receive a delegation of residents at one of our councillors' surgeries just after the ramp was demolished and we were also contacted by the Residents' Association on behalf of a number of other residents. The one case mentioned by the TMO has been resolved satisfactorily. Cllr. Lasharie, one resident and I did walk around the site with TMO officers following these complaints.

Most residents would be content if they can be re-assured that their disability access will be restored via a new bridge connecting Grenfell Walk to Grenfell Tower, but will not be content if my reading of the Design and Access Statement is not correct.

Kind regards.

Cllr. Judith Blakeman

From: Jonathan.Bore@rbkc.gov.uk [mailto:Jonathan.Bore@rbkc.gov.uk]
Sent: 01 September 2014 11:49
Subject: RE: Applications Nos. PP/12/04097 and PP/14/03655: Grenfell Tower Refurbishment

Dear Cllr Blakeman

The removal of this ramp is approved. It appears within the approved drawings for the KALC scheme approved in September 2012 (our reference PP/12/01833) and for the works to Grenfell Tower (our reference PP/12/04097). There is therefore no breach of planning control. The rationale for the removal of the ramp is set out within the Design and Access Statement.

The Design and Access Statement makes the following comments.

The key changes proposed to the internal organization of the tower are:

- *Removal of the external concrete stair on the south east corner to make way for new floor space at ground, mezzanine, walkway and walkway+1.*
- *Creation of a new stair and lift on the south west corner of the tower, connecting the lower three levels.*
- *Infill of voids and extension to the mezzanine floor slab to create extra space to become residential properties.*
- *A remodelled reception to be larger, more welcoming and provide surveillance to the doors, new lift and stairs.*

The proposal is that the new stair would be generally accessible to residents, therefore replacing the external stepped ramp as a means of getting between ground and walkway level. A new bridge connection on the walkway is created to achieve this. The proposed stair also provides the last two flights of stairs down to ground for residents in the floors above. The original fire escape strategy involves leaving the building at Walkway level and escaping via the bridge or one of the two existing external stairs to be removed as part of the works.

Apart from one request for fob access through Grenfell Tower to the first floor walkway, which I am told is being looked into, I understand that the TMO has not been contacted by residents of the finger blocks regarding problems with access to the first floor walkway. No residents of Lancaster West have told the TMO that they have been adversely affected by the closure of the ramp. The TMO does not believe that the closure adds a significant amount of time to residents' journeys, especially as the Grenfell entrance to the first floor has been repositioned, which means Grenfell residents come directly out onto the walkway which leads directly to St Ann's/Bramley Road. If you can provide the TMO with the contact details of the complainants, their concerns can be investigated.

The TMO is currently working on surveys to go to residents about their homes and the environment, as part of an asset management strategy to inform future work programmes. I am told that the survey for the finger blocks will include a question about the ramp.

I hope this helps.

Regards

Jonathan Bore | Executive Director | Planning and Borough Development

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From: Cllr, Blakeman, Judith
Sent: 27 August 2014 15:01
To: Bore, Jonathan: PC-Plan
Cc: Cllr, Lasharie, Beini; Cllr, Atkinson, Robert; Cllr Dent-Coad ([REDACTED])
Subject: Applications Nos. PP/12/04097 and PP/14/03655: Grenfell Tower Refurbishment
Importance: High

Dear Mr. Bore

I have received a number of complaints from residents of Lancaster West concerning the decision to remove and not restore the ramp from Grenfell Walk down to the ground that has emerged as a result of the Council/TMO's refurbishment works to Grenfell Tower.

Before these works commenced, Grenfell Tower was linked by a first floor walkway to a first floor walkway known as Grenfell Walk, which provides access to homes in Grenfell Walk itself and the three "finger blocks" of Barandon Walk, Testerton Walk and Hurstway Walk. Leading down to the ground floor from Grenfell Walk was a curved ramp. This ramp, although stepped, had very long, very shallow steps and consequently provided easy access for people with impaired mobility, pushchairs, some wheelchairs etc. However, this ramp has been demolished and we have now been told that there is no intention to replace it.

The unintended consequence of this has been to remove disability access from residents living in Grenfell Walk and the northern ends of Barandon Walk, Testerton Walk and Hurstway Walk. There is disability access to the southern ends of the three "finger blocks" but not to their northern ends.

There is ramped access at the far end of Grenfell Walk that takes residents a long way round to the ground at Station Walk. This route adds an extra quarter of a mile and can add between 5 and 15 minutes to a person's journey, depending on how mobile they are. The only other means of access to and from the "finger blocks" and Grenfell Walk are three very narrow staircases that wind round, are very dark and are difficult even for able-bodied people to use. They also pose a security hazard on occasion, especially during the dark winter months. In addition, they can be damp and the steps can become iced in very cold weather.

We have asked for the ramp to be restored at the end of the refurbishment, but have been told that it this will not happen because:

- a. The works are refurbishment, not a new development, and therefore do not need to be *Disability Discrimination Act* compliant; and
- b. The removal of the ramp was consulted on when the planning application was submitted.

While I accept under point (a) that this is a refurbishment, I am not clear that this means that a refurbishment can justify the *reduction* of existing disability access.

As far as point (b) is concerned, I have looked at these two applications and both applications state quite clearly under the heading *Pedestrian and Vehicle Access, Roads and Rights of Way* that no changes are proposed. In addition, the officers' report that went to the Planning Committee, while making it clear that the first floor walkway joining Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk was to be removed and not replaced, contains no reference to removing, either permanently or temporarily, the curved ramp from Grenfell Walk to ground level. Therefore, there was no public consultation on this matter.

Consequently, I am at a loss to understand how planning permission can have obtained to remove and not replace this ramp. If planning permission was not obtained, then why was the ramp removed?

I have taken advice from Planning Aid, London who tell me that this matter should have been the subject of public consultation. The TMO indeed claim that this issue was consulted on in their leaflets to residents of Grenfell Tower about the refurbishment programme. Again, however, I have studied these leaflets and there is no reference to the permanent removal of the ramp. In any case, those leaflets only went to Grenfell Tower and not to the addresses that have been affected by the ramp removal.

Can you please advise me how it has come about that this ramp has been removed and will not be replaced – apparently without planning permission? Or alternatively, point me to the grant of an application and the public consultation process that was followed.

Many thanks.

Cllr. Judith Blakeman

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