

1 September 2014

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 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.

Most residents would be content if they are re-assured that their disability access will be restored via a walkway from 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