ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed New Shop Front at
151-153 Curtain Road

December 2005

For:
HBC Investments (23 Charlotte Road) Ltd.
87-89 Upper Lisburn Road
Finaghy
Belfast
BT10 0GT
151-153 Curtain Road Access Statement

1. Introduction
2. Accessibility Issues
3. Accessibility Provisions
4. Summary

Introduction

1.1 This Access Statement is submitted in support of the Planning Application by McGregor Associates, for a New Shop Front at 151-153 Curtain Road, London, EC1. It sets out the accessibility issues behind the submitted design proposal, putting them into the context of the design proposal, and how the various criteria are attempted to be met by the design.

1.2 The policies of all local authorities are undergoing change at this time and therefore whenever possible this document sets out which policy is relevant to particular issue under consideration, or which policy is satisfied by a particular provision within the design proposal.

1.3 The design proposal is for a new shop front to an existing building currently being used as offices and small lecture rooms. Our intention is to convert the ground floor to retail, as have most of the other buildings along Curtain Road, with a new entrance and to reposition the existing entrance.

Accessibility Issues

2.1 The existing entrance to 151-153 Curtain Road currently has 2 steps of 150mm each, as can be seen from the photograph on drawing 2002/25/02.

2.2 Our proposal is to convert the ground floor into retail with a new shop front and entrance and to reposition the existing entrance.

2.3 The approved Document. Part M2, regarding 'Access to Extensions to Buildings other than Dwellings', states that suitable independent access shall be provided to the extension where 'reasonably practicable'.

2.4 We have investigated various options to make full provision for access for people with any form of disability.

2.5 Providing a ramp is not practical. In compliance with part M, item 1.26 of the Building Regulations, the ramp must have a clear width of 1.5m and the maximum going for a flight of 1:12 gradient is 2m. There are 2 steps of 150mm which means the ramp would be 3.7m long requiring a half landing of 1.5m. We are unable to incorporate this into the width and design of the shop front, refer to the attached sketch 01.
2.6 We have contacted a number of manufactures of wheelchair platform stair lifts and have not been able to find any suitable products. Initially we investigated a vertical platform lift designed by DDA-VPL-Spacesaver, which appeared suitable, except for the fact that the company has recently stopped the manufacturing this product, as it is no longer in compliance with DDA. The problem with the wheelchair platform lift’s available is that they require angled rails, which would project into the pavement by about 1.6m. This would be considered hazardous please refer to attached sketch 02. Furthermore the operation of a wheelchair platform stair lift would restrict the safe use of the stairs by other people.

Accessibility Provisions

3.1 The design proposal is to provide two entrances with stairs designed in compliance with part M item 1.33 of the Building Regulations to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people.

3.2 We have recessed the new entrance door to the shop and the repositioned entrance door to provide a 1.2m unobstructed length of landing.

3.3 Handrails will be provided in compliance with Part M, items1.34 -1.37 of the Building Regulations, based on the design criteria that they can easily be gripped, spaced away from the wall and provide good forearm support.

Summary

4.1 Due to the fact that we are proposing a new shop front for an existing building, with existing structure in the plane of the front façade, it is not practical to step the shop front back to accommodate a ramp for the new shop entrance. The installation of a wheelchair platform stair lift would project into the pavement and be hazardous to the general public.

4.2 The design proposal is therefore to provide 2 steps designed to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people and people with impaired sight.