



**FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL  
PROPERTY CHAMBER  
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)**

**Case Reference** : **LON/00BK/LDC/2022/0094  
P: PAPERREMOTE**

**Property** : **Flats 1-5, 52-53 Dean Street London  
W1D 5BL**

**Applicant** : **GM Investment Trustees Limited  
GM(UK) Pension Trustees Limited**

**Representative** : **Charles Russell Speechlys LLP**

**Respondents** : **The leaseholders listed in the  
schedule to the application**

**Representative** : **Unrepresented**

**Type of Application** : **Section 20ZA Landlord and Tenant  
Act 1985  
Dispensation with consultation  
requirements**

**Tribunal member(s)** : **Mr M Taylor MRICS (Valuer Chair)**

**Date of Paper  
Determination** : **11<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

**Date of Decision** : **11<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

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**DECISION**

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**This has been a remote hearing on the papers which has not been objected to by the parties. The form of remote hearing was P: PAPERREMOTE. A face-to-face hearing was not held because it was not practicable nor was a hearing requested and all issues could be determined on paper. The documents that I was referred to are in a bundle of 92 pages and additional survey of 3 pages, the contents of which I have noted.**

## **Decision of the Tribunal**

- (a) **The Tribunal grants dispensation under section 20ZA of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 ('the 1985 Act') for works to be undertaken to replace non-compliant Fire Doors to service cupboards at the residential common parts of Flats 1-5, 52-53 Dean Street London W1D 5BL ('the Property').**
- (b) **There are no terms imposed on the grant of dispensation.**

## **The application**

1. The applicant seeks dispensation from the consultation requirements imposed by section 20 of the 1985 Act.
2. The application was submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and directions were issued on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022. These provided that the case be allocated to the paper track, to be determined upon the basis of written representations. None of the parties has objected to this allocation or requested an oral hearing. The paper determination took place on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022.
3. The relevant legal provisions are set out in the appendix to this decision.

## **The background**

4. The Property is located in Dean Street and comprises residential flats on the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> floors and commercial on Ground and Basement. An inspection was not undertaken due to Covid-19 but also that it was not considered necessary or proportionate to the current application. The tribunal had the benefit Google Street View.
5. The applicant seeks dispensation from the statutory consultation requirements for committed works to replace defective fire doors to two service cupboards in the common parts. It was suspected that Asbestos containing material may have been present. However, a subsequent survey confirmed this was not the case.
6. The applicant did engage in consultation and evidences some communication with the tenants on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and a Notice of Intention dated 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022. On the same date a letter was sent to all respondents, enclosing the application made and confirming that three quotes had been obtained for the works and that Cousins, as the lowest, at ££5198.74 exclusive of VAT was to be appointed. No comments or objections from the respondents have been received.

7. The only issue for the Tribunal is whether it is reasonable to dispense with the statutory consultation requirements. **This application does not concern the issue of whether any service charge costs will be reasonable or payable.**

### **The grounds of the application**

8. The grounds are set out in the application dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and can be summarised as follows:
  - (a) The Works are urgent and necessary due to a number of fire doors in the residential common parts being non-compliant with Fire Safety Legislation.
9. Paragraph 2 of the directions gave the respondents an opportunity to object to the dispensation application by completing and returning reply forms and serving statements, setting out their grounds of opposition. No forms were returned.

### **The Tribunal's decision**

10. The Tribunal grants dispensation for the Works. There are no terms imposed on the grant of dispensation.

### **Reasons for the tribunal's decision**

11. The Tribunal accepts that the Works are necessary and urgent, given the potential adverse impact if a fire was to occur.
12. Whilst limited consultation was undertaken there were efforts made to keep tenants informed, it is not clear that any tenants would have been prejudiced by the lack of formal consultation and no objections have been made to the dispensation application.
13. Having regard to the particular facts of this case and the guidance in *Daejan Investments Limited v Benson [2013] UKSC 14*, it is reasonable to dispense with the strict consultation requirements.
14. This decision does not address the cost of the Works, or whether the respondents are liable to contribute to the cost via their service charges. Nothing in this decision prevents the respondents from seeking a determination of 'payability', pursuant to section 27A of the 1985 Act.

**Name:** Mark Taylor MRICS  
Valuer Chair

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## **Rights of appeal**

1. By rule 36(2) of the Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Property Chamber) Rules 2013, the Tribunal is required to notify the parties about any right of appeal they may have.
2. If a party wishes to appeal this decision to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), then a written application for permission must be made to the First-tier Tribunal at the regional office which has been dealing with the case.
3. The application for permission to appeal must arrive at the regional office within 28 days after the Tribunal sends written reasons for the decision to the person making the application.
4. If the application is not made within the 28-day time limit, such application must include a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28-day time limit; the Tribunal will then look at such reason(s) and decide whether to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed, despite not being within the time limit.
5. The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the Tribunal to which it relates (i.e. give the date, the property and the case number), state the grounds of appeal and state the result the party making the application is seeking.
6. If the Tribunal refuses to grant permission to appeal, a further application for permission may be made to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

## **Appendix of relevant legislation**

### **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (as amended)**

#### **Section 20**

- (1) Where this section applies to any qualifying works or qualifying long term agreement, the relevant contributions of tenants are limited in accordance with subsection (6) or (7) (or both) unless the consultation requirements have been either—
  - (a) complied with in relation to the works or agreement, or
  - (b) dispensed with in relation to the works or agreement by (or on appeal from) the appropriate tribunal .
- (2) In this section “relevant contribution”, in relation to a tenant and any works or agreement, is the amount which he may be required under the terms of his lease to contribute (by the payment of service charges) to relevant costs incurred on carrying out the works or under the agreement.
- (3) This section applies to qualifying works if relevant costs incurred on carrying out the works exceed an appropriate amount.

- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that this section applies to a qualifying long term agreement—
  - (a) if relevant costs incurred under the agreement exceed an appropriate amount, or
  - (b) if relevant costs incurred under the agreement during a period prescribed by the regulations exceed an appropriate amount.
- (5) An appropriate amount is an amount set by regulations made by the Secretary of State; and the regulations may make provision for either or both of the following to be an appropriate amount—
  - (a) an amount prescribed by, or determined in accordance with, the regulations, and
  - (b) an amount which results in the relevant contribution of any one or more tenants being an amount prescribed by, or determined in accordance with, the regulations.
- (6) Where an appropriate amount is set by virtue of paragraph (a) of subsection (5), the amount of the relevant costs incurred on carrying out the works or under the agreement which may be taken into account in determining the relevant contributions of tenants is limited to the appropriate amount.
- (7) Where an appropriate amount is set by virtue of paragraph (b) of that subsection, the amount of the relevant contribution of the tenant, or each of the tenants, whose relevant contribution would otherwise exceed the amount prescribed by, or determined in accordance with, the regulations is limited to the amount so prescribed or determined.]

### **Section 20ZA**

- (1) Where an application is made to the appropriate tribunal for a determination to dispense with all of any of the consultation requirements in relation to any qualifying works or qualifying long term agreement, the tribunal may make the determination if satisfied that it is reasonable to dispense with the requirements.
- (2) In section 20 and this section –  
“qualifying works” means works on a building or any other premises, and  
“qualifying long term agreement” means (subject to subsection (3)) an agreement entered into, by or on behalf of the landlord or a superior landlord, for a term of more than twelve months.

### **Section 27A**

- (1) An application may be made to the appropriate tribunal for a determination whether a service charge is payable and, if it is, as to

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- (a) the person by whom it is payable,
  - (b) the person to whom it is payable,
  - (c) the amount which is payable,
  - (d) the date at or by which it is payable, and
  - (e) the manner in which it is payable.
- (2) Subsection (1) applies whether or not any payment has been made.
- (3) An application may also be made to the appropriate tribunal for a determination whether, if costs were incurred for services, repairs, maintenance, improvements, insurance or management of any specified description, a service charge would be payable for the costs and, if it would, as to -
- (a) the person by whom it would be payable,
  - (b) the person to whom it would be payable,
  - (c) the amount which would be payable,
  - (d) the date at or by which it would be payable, and
  - (e) the manner in which it would be payable.
- (4) No application under subsection (1) or (3) may be made in respect of a matter which -
- (a) has been agreed or admitted by the tenant,
  - (b) has been, or is to be, referred to arbitration pursuant to a post-dispute arbitration agreement to which the tenant is a party,
  - (c) has been the subject of determination by a court, or
  - (d) has been the subject of determination by an arbitral tribunal pursuant to a post-dispute arbitration agreement.
- (5) But the tenant is not to be taken to have agreed or admitted any matter by reason only of having made any payment.