

Suite 320/323
Baltic Chambers
50 Wellington Street
Glasgow
G2 6HJ
0141 348 7700
office@maithdesign.com
www.maithdesign.com

DESIGN STATEMENT

Project No:	0100	Date:	03.07.2023
Project Name:	County Hotel Euston	Revision:	F
Client:	Splendid Hospitality Group	Status:	Planning



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Summary

This Design Statement has been prepared by Maith Design, on behalf of Splendid Hospitality Group, to accompany the planning application for the comprehensive refurbishment of County Hotel, Upper Woburn Place, London.

1.2 Scope of Application

This document sets out the principles of the extensive upgrade to the external building envelope, including full window replacement, external wall repairs and roof upgrade works.

The hotel has not had a comprehensive refurbishment or repair works carried out for several decades and is in a general state of disrepair. The proposed external works are therefore intended to bring the hotel up to a modern standard and offer high quality hotel accommodation along with the extensive internal refurbishment works that do not fall within the scope of this planning application.

1.3 Supporting Information

This Design Statement is supplemented by two key documents:

- Planning Statement prepared by Centro Planning Consultancy
- Heritage Statement prepared by JB Heritage

1.4 Project Team

The Project Team includes:

- Client: Splendid Hospitality Group
- Development Manager: Dean Street Developments
- Planning Consultant: Centro Planning Consultancy
- Heritage Consultant: JB Heritage
- Architect: Maith Design
- Services Engineer: Elkoms Consulting
- Acoustic Consultant: ACL
- Structural Engineer: Shear Design

2.0 Site

2.1 Location and Context

The County Hotel sits within the West End district of Bloomsbury, London and is centrally located in relation to the key transport hubs of Euston Station, King's Cross Station and St Pancras Station.

The building has operated as a hotel since opening in 1940 and the current proposals are intended to secure the hotel's future as a vibrant and sustainable destination for a variety of guests, including both business users and tourists.

2.2 Existing Building

The County Hotel is located on Upper Woburn Place with a secondary elevation fronting onto Woburn Walk. The main façade on Upper Woburn Place is predominantly red brick with additional details in banded stonework while the rear facades are somewhat less detailed.

The current accommodation includes 175 guestrooms, none of which are en-suite (typical floors contain 26 rooms sharing only 6 WCs and 6 bathrooms between them). The ground floor includes reception and the adjoining Resting Hare pub, together with ancillary guest accommodation. The basement floor includes miscellaneous back of house facilities, guest toilets and further ancillary guest accommodation.

The accommodation is in a poor state of repair and additional works, out with the scope of this planning application, include fully refurbishing the accommodation to provide contemporary en-suite guestrooms together with enhanced guest facilities.

2.3 Bloomsbury Conservation Area

Please refer to the Heritage Statement prepared by JG Heritage for relevant details of the building's location and identity within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

3.0 Design Approach

3.1 Architectural Building Envelope Strategy

Commensurate with the significant investment in the building, the developer wishes to significantly reduce its carbon footprint through a range of retro-fitted measures. Hence the proposals include comprehensive building envelope upgrade works to windows, external walls and roofs. While the scope of external wall and roof works may not necessarily require planning permission, they are discussed herewith to demonstrate the commitment to the overall building improvement strategy.

3.2 Windows and Guestroom Ventilation

3.2.1 Existing Windows

The current windows have not been maintained and are in a serious state of disrepair with smashed single glazing, rotting frames and general broken ironmongery.

The single glazed windows do not provide an acceptable level of acoustic or thermal performance required for either guest experience or compliance with Building Control.

Regarding Health and Safety, several of the existing windows incorporate glazing at levels lower than that acceptable for Building Control in terms of hazards from falling and this required to be addressed within the window strategy.

Examples of the current condition of windows are shown below:

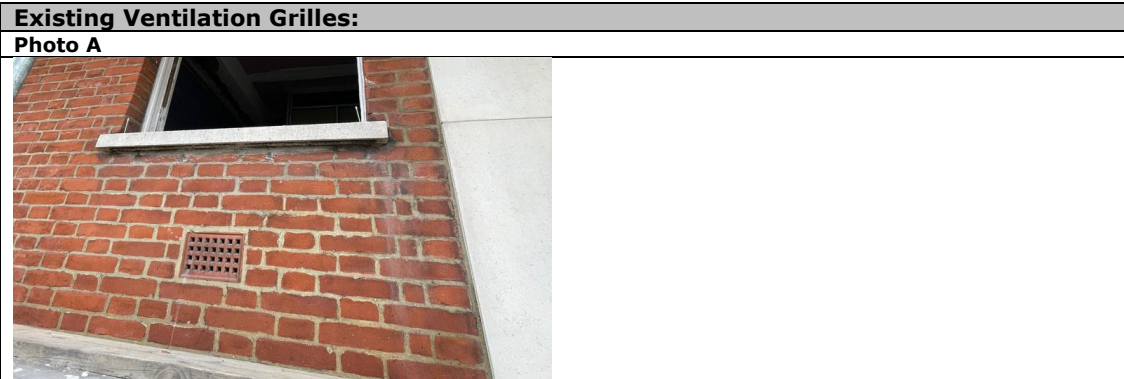


3.2.2 Existing Ventilation

Ventilation to the bedrooms is currently via brick vents within the façade. This provides a sub-standard level of accommodation for the following reasons:

- The rooms are noisy due to the open grilles not being controllable.
- The rooms are difficult to control from a thermally due to the open grilles not being controllable.

Examples of the current ventilation grilles are shown below:



3.2.3 Acoustic and Energy Appraisal

To inform the window strategy appraisal, the Acoustic and Services consultants assessed the options for enhancement and compliance from their respective perspectives. Their reviews focused on two key performance criteria:

- Optimised energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Optimised acoustic performance for the internal noise climate.

With reference to energy performance, Elkoms Consulting Ltd reviewed in detail the three options available:

- Window retention and refurbishment.
- Window replacement and retention of natural ventilation.
- Window replacement and introduction of mechanical ventilation.

Their findings are set out in the Elkoms report "2306 County Hotel Energy Strategy 01".

Following Elkoms recommendation, and with reference to acoustic performance, ACL Ltd reviewed the proposal for attenuated trickle vents for the development.

Their findings are set out in the ACL technical Note "9874 – County Hotel – Energy Strategy-P01".

As can be seen from both the Elkoms report and the ACL Technical Note, their combined recommendation is that the proposal for replacement windows with natural ventilation via trickle vents, produces the greatest energy savings benefit, whilst ensuring an appropriate internal noise climate for modern hotel standards.

3.2.4 Proposed Window Upgrade Strategy

A window upgrade options appraisal was undertaken by the Design Team to find the most appropriate solution for the hotel.

The options available were identified as:

- Repair existing windows and install secondary glazing.
- Replacement windows.

The option to undertake a programme of repairs together with secondary glazing was investigated.

Following a detailed review of the existing windows condition (as summarised in Section 3.2.1), this option was discounted for the following reasoning:

- The state of disrepair rendered repairs technically and economically unviable. Lack of maintenance has resulted in deteriorated frames, cills and glazing beads which makes repair not viable due to the extensive patch-replacement.
- Acoustic upgrade of the glazing would not be viable due to the existing frame profiles, requiring secondary glazing.
- Thermal upgrade of the glazing would not be viable due to the existing frame profiles, requiring secondary glazing.

Regarding secondary glazing, this option was discounted for the following reasoning:

- Visual impact – both internally and externally, secondary glazing was seen to be a low-quality solution.
- Internally, secondary glazing is visually unappealing.
- Externally, even when carefully co-ordinated, secondary glazing will always be visually apparent through the façade due to it being viewed obliquely.
- Secondary glazing is not compatible with a naturally ventilated solution, and this is expanded upon in Section 3.2.4.
- Secondary glazing installations retains a risk of condensation between the two windows over time due to operational usage and combination of internal and external thermal environments.

Additionally, window repairs would not have the longevity in comparison to replacement, requiring ongoing repairs and eventual replacements. This is undesirable from sustainable and operational perspectives.

The option to install replacement windows was investigated.

Following detailed review of the existing windows as noted previously, the strategy proposed is to undertake an extensive programme of replacement on a visually like-for-like basis for the following key reasons:

- Lack of maintenance has resulted in deteriorated frames, cills and glazing beads which makes repair not viable due to the extensive patch-replacement.
- Full replacement with new windows will result in a sustainable approach, providing enhanced acoustic and thermal performance with new windows that will be maintenance free for several years.

The Design Team sourced a traditional timber window manufacturer to provide appropriately detailed replacement window on a like-for-like basis.

The proposed windows are operational Heritage Slim Sash and Heritage Slim Casement systems that replicate the existing window types, complete with brass ironmongery.

They incorporate restrictors to reduce openings to less than 100mm, enhancing guest experience for optional additional background ventilation. It also eliminates the requirement for unsightly secondary glazing or safety bars, both of which would have a negative visual impact on the building.

The windows are to be painted internally and externally with Farrow & Ball "All White", complete with product and warranty for a robust installation that will last for several years without further maintenance.

The only windows not to be replaced are the two windows to reception incorporating intricate metalwork and are to be repaired and refurbished as required.

3.2.4 Proposed Ventilation Strategy

A guestroom ventilation options appraisal was undertaken by the Design Team to find the most appropriate solution for the hotel.

The options available were identified as:

- Mechanical ventilation.
- Natural ventilation.

The Design Team reviewed mechanical and deemed it to be undesirable for the following reasoning:

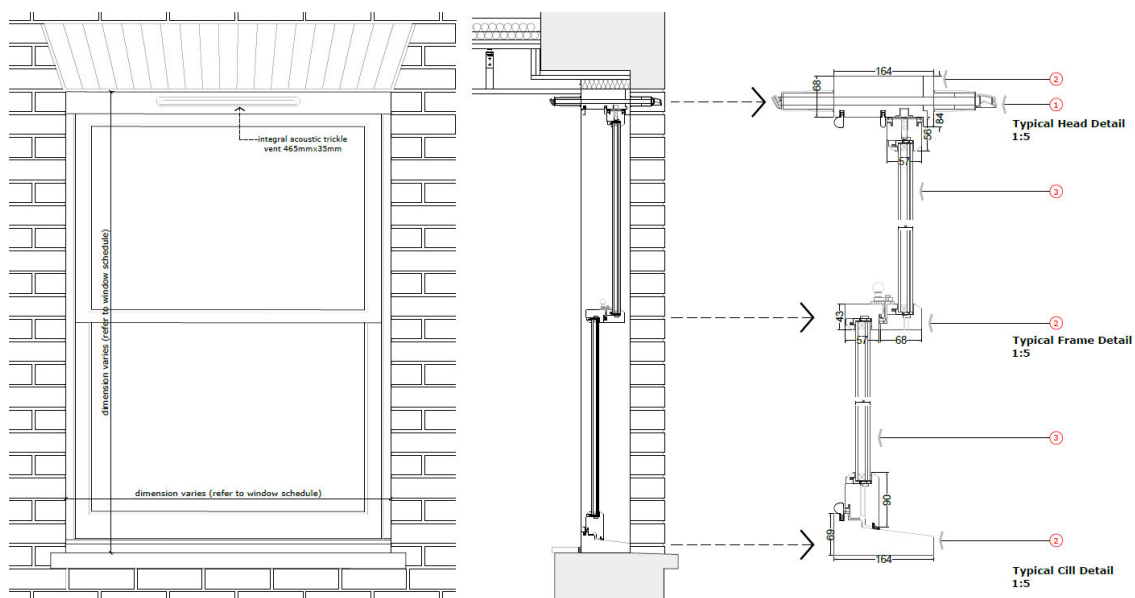
- Environmental sustainability – if we could deliver appropriate ventilation within the guestrooms and avoid permanently operational mechanical ventilation, this would be the preferred option.
- Guest experience – the client’s preference was to provide guests with the option to have opening windows to supplement the background ventilation. Mechanical ventilation works best when installed within a sealed building, therefore this contradicts the option to have opening windows.

This led the Design Team toward a naturally ventilated guestroom design.

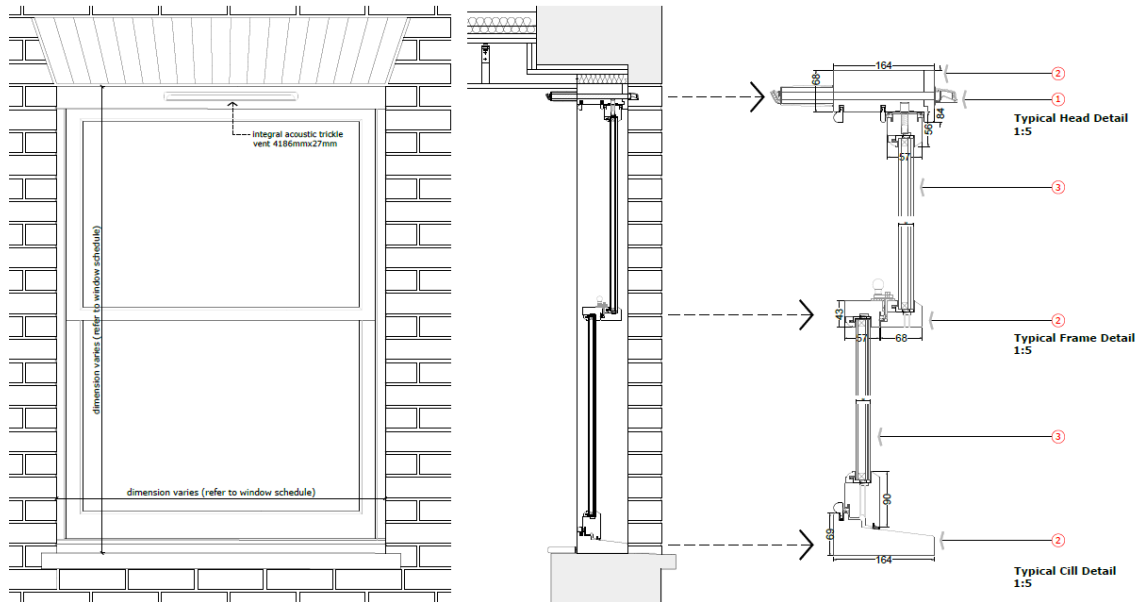
The ventilation strategy is proposed to be via acoustic trickle vents, factory fitted within the frames of the new replacement windows and colour matched to the window frames. The Design Team reviewed the acoustic trickle against the following key criteria:

- Acoustic performance.
- Visual appearance.

The acoustic performance criteria was reviewed by the Acoustician and set at 43dB, following which a suitable vent was sourced. This is an extremely high performing vent resulting in the external ventilator canopy being large, with a protrusion of 104mm from the face of the window frame. An extract of the initial co-ordinated design review illustrates this arrangement:



Further research was undertaken to determine if a more appropriate solution could be found. Following extensive dialogue with the Acoustician, window manufacturer and vent suppliers, an alternative product with a greatly reduced canopy was sourced. This alternative vent is only 27mm deep, performing at 40dB and, as advised by the Acoustician, provides as acceptable acoustic performance, delivering a balance of both visual and acoustic requirements. An extract of the initial co-ordinated design review illustrates this arrangement, and is contained within drawing AA(31)002:



This approach has been taken in order to reduce the environmental impact of the development in terms of ongoing energy usage.

This responsibly sustainable approach reflects the client's overarching approach to sustainability within their developments.

Details of the proposed new windows are contained within Section 5.6.

3.3 External Walls

As noted within Section 3.1, the scope of external wall works may not necessarily require planning permission however they are included to demonstrate the team's holistic approach to the building envelope refurbishment works and the commitment to protecting the building for future use.

In addition to the extensive window replacement works, the façades will benefit from:

- Rainwater goods repair and replacement works as required, on a like-for-like basis, including cleaning out of all gutters and downpipes.
- General repair and cleaning of masonry as required, including removal of plant growths.
- Removal of redundant ductwork and flues as required, together with repairs to walls where fixings have been removed.
- Removal of broken windows and doors to the Plant Room enclosure, together with repairs and re-rendering.

Details of the proposed building envelope works are contained within Appendices 4.2 and 4.3.

3.4 Roofs

As noted within Section 3.1, the scope of roof works may not necessarily require planning permission however they are included to demonstrate the team's holistic approach to the building envelope refurbishment works and the commitment to protecting the building for future use.

In addition to the extensive window replacement and external wall works, the roofs will benefit from:

- Removal of faulty roof coverings and replacement with a high-performance roof system.
- Removal of unsightly key-clamp edge protection railing and replacement with roof-mounted fall restraint system.
- Removal of all redundant plant and pipework.
- Removal of fragile rooflights.
- Removal of redundant access stairs and platforms.
- Rainwater goods repair and replacement works as required, on a like-for-like basis, including cleaning out of all gutters and downpipes.
- Installation of appropriately located condenser units to serve the hotel.

The removal of the unsightly roof edge protection shall reinstate the original roof line, example of the current provision is shown below:

Existing Perimeter Roof Guardings

Photo A (from Woburn Walk)

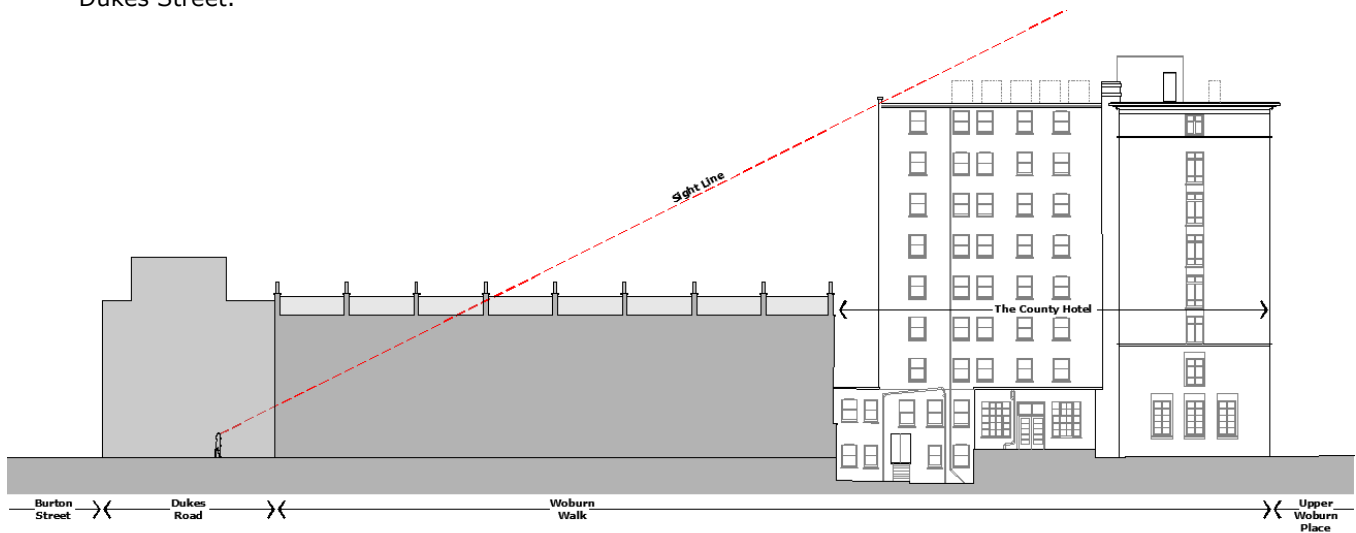


The new condenser units have been strategically located and set back sufficiently to screen views from both close and distant locations. Drawing series PL(00)300 within the application contains elevations which incorporate key sight lines around the immediate hotel vicinity.

They illustrate the natural screening from the existing roof edge, without the requirement for additional screening. An extract illustrating the sight line from Woburn Walk is included below:



In addition to the immediate vicinity, natural screening from the existing roof edge is achieved, with the diagram below illustrating appropriate screening from the end of Woburn Walk, at the junction of Dukes Street.



Full details of the proposed building envelope works are contained within Appendices 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9.

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www.maithdesign.com



4.0 Appendices

- 4.1** Existing Elevations – AL(00)000 Series
- 4.2** Downtakings Elevations – PL(10)000 Series
- 4.3** Window Elevation Strategy – PL(31)000 Series
- 4.4** Proposed Elevations – PL(00)300 Series
- 4.5** Existing Window Types – PL(31)000 Series
- 4.6** Proposed Window Types – PL(31)100 Series
- 4.7** Window Details – AA(31)002
- 4.8** Existing Roof Plan – AL(00)008
- 4.9** Downtakings Roof Plan – AL(10)008
- 4.10** Proposed Roof Plan – AL(00)108