

## The provision of Universal Access to No.11 Denmark Street

The introduction of an opening/doorway between No.10 and No.11 Denmark Street, will without doubt, improve the access between the buildings in the following ways:

- Wheelchair access is very difficult - if not almost impossible - into No.11 from the street, as the steps up from the pavement are particularly steep and wouldn't easily allow for a ramp to be used. Once you're on the other side of the door, there are then steps straight back down to the shop floor level, to add to the challenge (see picture below)



- Access between no.10 and no.11 would remove this as an issue, because there is no step into No.10, nor any steps once you're inside, and the rear of the stores are level, thus enabling easy access to both stores, even for those in a wheelchair.
- By the same token, it would be hard to imagine that we could employ anyone who either needed a wheelchair, or was limited in terms of their mobility, without this additional access at the rear of the store.

## Other benefits from a staffing and customer experience point of view

- As part of a customer conversation or demonstration, it's important to be able to *seamlessly* take customers from one product to another, and sometimes these won't be in the same building. Neither building is large enough on its own, to accommodate everything we want to be able to show to customers – particularly when it comes to our larger products such as keyboards, digital pianos, grand pianos and drum kits. Frequently, people will want to try one product against another, so they'll need to be able to easily move between No.10 and No.11 to

make instant comparisons. Without the doorway between the two stores, this would not be possible, and having to go from one shop to another is not at all ideal in terms of the customer experience.

- Sometimes we need to physically move the products between the stores for events or promotions. This has already been a significant challenge, particularly with larger products (such as the “furniture” type pianos) and has meant that we’ve had to bring in specialist carriers (at significant cost) rather than risk our own staff carrying heavy instruments between the stores and up and down the steps into No.11. A doorway (wider than a regular single door) within the store at the rear will mean we can much more easily achieve these everyday tasks ourselves, and also save money, time and inconvenience.
- If our store team want to “grab a product” to show to a customer as part of a demonstration/discussion, they need to be able to do this quickly, easily and spontaneously. Some products are also larger, and it’s important *not* to make these everyday aspects of the job something which becomes a hurdle to overcome and potentially disrupts conversations, ultimately preventing a sale from taking place.
- We have storage in the basement of both stores. If we want to collect products for a customer or a courier, we need to be able to do this quickly and easily and across both stores. The boxes can also be quite large, so getting from A to B without having to pass lots of customers in the store, and minimising the obstacles is important. Again, double doors (albeit smaller than full width double doors), will make this task much easier and more practical.
- The safety of the public is also compromised if we’re moving large products throughout both of the stores, rather than across the back via the shortest route possible.
- We operate video calls with customers, and this will require us to move from product to product whilst “live” on a call with a customer. Aside of the challenge of maintaining a continuous wi-fi connections between the two stores, it doesn’t look great to a customer, if we have to leave one building and go into another as part of a call – potentially having to pass people on the pavement and entrance into the other store.
- It goes without saying that all the above points become even more of an issue, if the weather is not good!
- In an *ideal* world we’d want customers to be able to see between the two stores from inside, so that they can appreciate the entire “flagship” store and what is available for them to try across our entire product range, improving their retail experience within the store. If the idea of *glazed* doors is not an option (which we appreciate might be the case), then allowing us to install two narrower “blank” and more discreet double doors as per the enclosed plans, would still be a

significant benefit for the store (for all the reasons above) – particularly when it comes to carrying large products between the two stores.

### **From a commercial perspective**

- Without the link between the two stores, we will almost certainly need to employ more people (1-2 more in the short term) as it we won't be able to deploy individuals into other parts of the store so quickly and at short notice.
- With the doors in place, individuals will be easily able to proactively "check in" on the other store to make sure no help is required. And similarly, if help is required, someone can easily put their head around the door and ask for help (almost whilst maintaining a conversation with a customer).
- It's amazing how small things (conscious or subconscious) can make the difference between someone deciding to make a purchase or not. Many of the points made above about the practical reasons for needing access between the two stores, genuinely could make the difference between us making sales or not and therefore affect our overall turnover in the store.

### **On Going Music Industry use of the site**

- The music industry is a relatively niche market, when it comes to musical instrument/product sales. And in this day and age, it's all too easy for customers to purchase on-line and go nowhere near a music shop or in this case, Denmark Street.
- The reason we opened our store in No.10 Denmark Street in July 2022, and then subsequently expanded into No.11 this year, was because we want to offer the best possible experience we could, to customers "face to face" in an amazing store environment, with our fantastic team of Product Specialists. The history of Denmark Street and the development of the area in the last decade really did make the difference for us locating there rather than in other potentially much more practical locations (more open plan, better access for deliveries, storage etc).
- However, we really do need to make this work for us from a commercial point of view to ensure our longevity in the location. Whilst we really do appreciate the importance of the historic buildings (after all, that's why we're on Denmark Street), there is a point where direct/indirect costs, or sales not being achieved or the environment just not quite working for us, would ultimately mean we'd end up looking for alternative locations. And we most certainly know that Roland (being a worldwide and highly recognised brand within the Music Industry) is a real draw to Denmark Street for many customers. My belief is that if we were not on that site, it would be hard to fill the units with other music related brands, and suddenly the offering on the street and the musical heritage would be diluted.

**Other Heritage benefits or improvements**

- We will submit an application regarding the signage on No.10 to ensure that we are compliant with all requirements there.
- In terms of any other suggestions, you think we could incorporate, we'd certainly be open to ideas.