

HERITAGE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Project:	Creation of open chiller plantroom within 11&12 South Square roof void	Ref/File No: HK 2273/3.1
Applicant:	The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn	
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Date:	9th December 2024	

INTRODUCTION

This application is for Planning Consent for the installation of condenser units and associated alterations to the roof to create an open lightwell (Rooftop plantroom 3) within the existing 11&12 South Square Roof void.

The proposals are identical to planning consent 2021/0214/P which expired 23 November 2024. That application was not implemented at the time due to the Covid pandemic.

This plantroom is the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle which will allow removal of the 1950's energy inefficient gas fired district heating system that currently serves the whole of South Square.

BACKGROUND

The proposed plantroom is to serve the west side of South Square (10A, 11 & 12 South Square). These buildings are currently heated by means of radiators served from the district heating system.

Additionally, ground floor reception, waiting and conference spaces, are served by packaged comfort cooling units with freestanding condensers in the rear lightwell area.

The driver for the new plantroom is the requirement to move away from fossil fuels for heating and to install a more energy efficient combined heating/cooling system. A combined system has the additional benefit of allowing surplus heat from areas which require cooling to be transferred to those areas requiring heating (e.g. from a densely populated function room to rooms more sparsely populated) thus further reducing energy usage.

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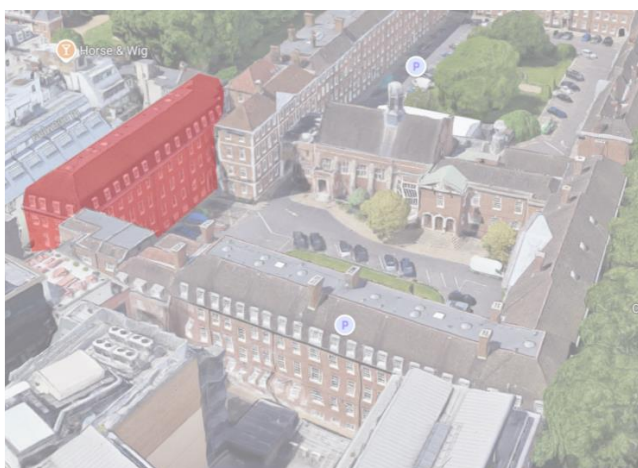
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PROPOSALS

It is proposed to create a new plantroom within the existing roofspace above 11&12 South Square.

Although the existing roof presents as a traditional clay tiled mansard structure, it is in fact a concrete shell with a central flat roofed section (See Photo). The new plantroom will be formed by removing a section of the flat roof between the two outer roof slopes to form an open topped, waterproof 'box' set down below the ridgeline of the perimeter sloping roofs. This will conceal the condenser units from view.

The building design, construction and plantroom proposals are similar to those for Nos 3&4 South Square where consent was granted for rooftop plantrooms under Refs: 2023/4842/P dated 16 May 2024 (Rooftop plantroom 1) and 024/3272/P dated 01 October 2024 (Rooftop plantroom 2).



11&12 and 10A (Left to Right) South Square



11&12 Roof Void Proposed Plantroom location



Aerial View showing location of proposed plantroom (orange) and adjacent chiller locations (yellow & pink)

IMPACT

There will be no change to the appearance of the roof from ground level or other buildings in South Square. As such the character and appearance of the conservation area will be maintained. The proposals will have no effect on the setting of any listed building.

It is not considered that the new opening in the roof (shaded orange on the photo above) will be visible from the top floor of buildings lying to the immediate west and south of the site as they are of similar height to the ridge line of Nos 11&12. The well may be glimpsed from taller buildings further afield but the visual impact will be minimal and less prominent than similar plant provision on other buildings in the vicinity (shaded yellow and pink on the photo above).

ACOUSTIC ASSESSMENT

See Hann Tucker 'Environmental Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment Report'
Reference 28324/PNA1 dated 5 November 2020 which finds:

The assessment indicates that the proposed plant, in conjunction with the proposed mitigation, should be capable of achieving the proposed plant noise criteria at the nearest noise sensitive window and therefore achieves the requirements of the Local Authority.

THERMAL COMFORT / COOLING HIERARCHY ASSESSMENT

See Oscar MEP 'Thermal Comfort Assessment' Project ref: 24030 Revision P1 dated 28/11/2024 which finds:

The overheating assessment has determined that passive measures alone (following the cooling hierarchy) are not sufficient to ensure compliance with TM52 for overheating. This is largely due to the existing building constraints providing limited scope for passive measures, such as lack of cross flow ventilation due to building orientation and layout.

ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposals have no DDA Access implications.

Prepared by Richard Young Architect RIBA