

### Design and Access (including Planning) Statement

Daniel Watney has been instructed by Tanfield Chambers Services to submit an application for full planning permission pursuant to the reprovion of plant equipment to the rear first floor roof area of Tanfield Chambers, located at nos. 2-5 Warwick Court, WC1R 5DJ.

The existing plant equipment is being removed and replaced by new air conditioning equipment. Sufficient noise attenuation measures are proposed to ensure that noise and vibration generated by the equipment is minimised in line with adopted policy. The replacement plant equipment is required as part of a comprehensive renewal of the building's mechanical and engineering systems; at present the existing plant is poor quality and inefficient resulting in an uncomfortable office environment. This planning application is supported by existing and proposed scaled drawings and a noise assessment, including recommended equipment and mitigation measures, undertaken by Emtec Products Ltd.

### Site Description

Tanfield Chambers, located at nos. 2-5 Warwick Court, currently comprises office accommodation arranged over five floors plus a basement level. Floors four and five are provided within a mansard level. The building is in single occupation by the Chambers. The building, whilst being an attractive addition to the street scene, is not subject to a statutory listing however falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The site location is reproduced in Figure 1 below, however a full red line site plan is submitted as part of this planning application. Photograph 1 below refers to the front elevation of the property.

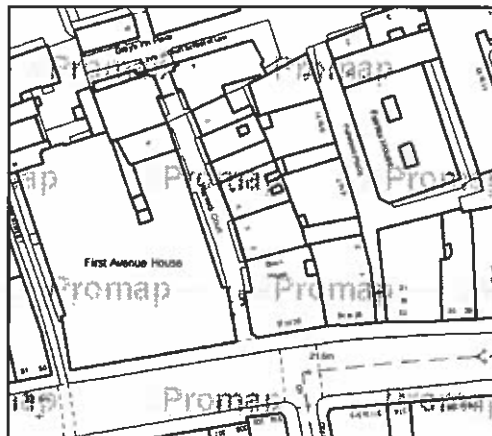


Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Photograph 1: Front Elevation Nos. 2-5

This planning application relates specifically to the first floor roof located to the rear of the property. As referenced by photographs 2 and 3 overleaf, at present this roof contains fifteen pieces of plant equipment, alongside associated ducting, ventilation and roof lights providing daylight to the lower floors. The plant is arranged in an ad hoc manner, indicating the piecemeal approach to the building's M&E which this planning application seeks to improve.

Located directly opposite the existing and proposed location of plant equipment is the rear of office accommodation on Fulwood Place. The proximity of these buildings reflects the dense urban arrangement of these streets. As can be seen in photographs 4, 5, 6 and 7 overleaf, the opposite buildings are of a varying scale, height and age and are presently served by a variety of different ventilation measures, including plant equipment, ducting and flues. These are also referenced within the noise assessment submitted in support of this planning application. We have reviewed planning history records for these properties and established that they are

occupied on a commercial office basis; therefore we have confirmed that no residential accommodation faces onto the existing and proposed plant location.

Surrounding uses comprise principally office accommodation and ground floor drinking establishments. Located to the north of Warwick Court is the City Law School, which faces on to Gray's Inn Garden. The area is predominantly commercial in character with a very dense urban arrangement.



**Photograph 1: Existing Plant to Rear**



**Photograph 2: First Floor Roof Existing**



**Photograph 3: Buildings Facing Opposite**



**Photograph 4: Opposite Plant Equipment**



Photograph 5: Adjacent Plant Equipment



Photograph 6: Adjacent Plant Equipment

### Planning History

Daniel Watney LLP has reviewed the statutory planning history as held online by the London Borough of Camden. Please note that it is the responsibility of London Borough of Camden as Local Planning Authority (LPA) to maintain these files and Daniel Watney LLP is not liable for the accuracy of the information available therein.

The available planning history is reproduced in the table below. Please note that the planning history is arranged in date ascending order.

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
32353	Re-erection of the third floors and the erection of a mansard extension for office use.	Granted	17/07/1981
9201118	The installation of 8 condensing units on the rear elevation.	Granted	10/12/1992
9301118	Installation of two additional air cooled condensers on the first floor flat roof at rear.	Granted	12/11/1993
9301322	The retention of 8 condensing units on the rear elevation.	Granted	21/11/1993
9400128	Installation of 2 air cooled condensers on the rear wall in between ground and basement floor levels.	Granted	02/06/1994
9502070	Formation of new window opening to the third floor rear elevation.	Granted	09/02/1996
PSX0104605	Erection of additional link bridge at ground, first, second and third floor levels to provide access to existing fire escape stair at rear of the building and associated	Granted	21/08/2001

	external alterations.		
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Table 1: Planning History

It can be seen from the available planning history records that there have been four successful planning applications relating to the erection or retention of plant equipment to the building.

### Proposed Use

The engineering infrastructure at Tanfield Chambers is that of a heated building to which cooling has been progressively added over time. Heating is by radiators and a mix of concealed and surface pipework. The heating infrastructure whilst visually in good condition is over 25 years old.

Ventilation to the building is currently enabled by opening windows with some mechanical ventilation added when cooling was introduced. However approximately 70% of the current air-conditioning equipment is estimated to be over 14 years old, resulting in unreliability and an uncomfortable working environment. Furthermore, the refrigerant product currently used (R22) in 80% of the current equipment will not be available post-2015. It is therefore essential to replace the outdated air conditioning equipment to ensure the long term, sustainable operation of the building.

The existing fifteen units arranged to the first floor roof area would be removed and replaced by thirteen Mitsubishi PUMY condenser units, alongside rearranged ductwork including the reprovision on a like for like basis of the fresh air ventilation system. Eleven of these units will be floor mounted on steel supports and two units will be wall mounted. The installation will be screened by a 1500mm high acoustic screen.

### Amount

It is proposed to reprovide thirteen air conditioning units to the first floor roof. Eleven of these will be floor mounted with two wall mounted. The installation will be surrounded by an acoustic screen, with the exception of a one metre gap from the rear of the building to enable access for servicing. The reprovided fresh air ventilation system and attenuator will be located adjacent to this in their existing location. It is proposed to reprovide this equipment on a like for like basis as it will need to be removed temporarily in order to erect the new plant equipment and acoustic screen. It is therefore sensible to replace this equipment at the same time. As shown on the proposed layout plan and indicative visualisations, the proposed quantum of plant equipment can be comfortably accommodated to the roof level.

### Layout and Scale

As can be seen on the proposed mechanical services layout plan submitted in conjunction with this planning application, the siting of the air conditioning units and the acoustic screen ensures access for servicing. Access to the roof level will remain as existing. The proposed arrangement is an improvement on the existing, by rationalising the existing equipment and positioning it to a single part of the roof. The scale of the screen, extending to 1500mm above the flat roof, is considered appropriate to the scale of the main building and surrounding area.

### Design

Nos. 2-5 Warwick Court is not a statutory listed building but the site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The Bloomsbury Conservation Area audit advises that development proposals must enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area. Adopted Policy DP24 requires all development to be of the highest

standards of design and advises (part e) that building services equipment is located in a visually inconspicuous position.

The planning application site, i.e. the first floor rear roof, is not visible from the street and is only visible from the rear of those properties falling adjacent or opposite on Fulwood Place. It is not considered that the proposed equipment would therefore have any impact upon the street scene or the character and appearance of the wider conservation area. Rationalising the plant equipment and providing an acoustic screen will arguably improve the quality of the immediate built environment. This would present a significant improvement compared to the arrangements of plant equipment, ducting and ventilation on those buildings falling closest to the site which is sporadic and of a varying quality.

The plant equipment proposed is industrial by nature and the acoustic screen will be coated in polyester powder in a non-metallic colour. The rear of Tanfield Chambers has an established 'back of house' character and it is considered an appropriate location, which has been established as acceptable in principle by previous planning permissions, for the reprovided plant equipment as it is not visible from the public realm.

### **Amenity**

We have sought to establish that the use of those buildings which have a direct aspect onto the first floor roof level, i.e. the rear of properties along Fulwood Place, solely comprise commercial, as opposed to residential, accommodation.

We have reviewed those available planning history records for adjacent properties and those on Fulwood Place and can find no evidence of existing residential occupation. We would therefore contend that there would be no impact upon residential amenity. As discussed below, the noise and vibration generated will be policy compliant ensuring that the environment and amenity for commercial occupiers will be acceptable.

For the occupants of Tanfield Chambers there will be an improved working environment through the provision of an updated air conditioning system and installation of silencers to the plant equipment.

### **Noise**

Camden advises that development should not affect the amenity of nearby properties. Adopted policy DP26 focuses on the impact of any development on neighbouring buildings noting the importance of considering the following factors when applying for planning permission:

- Visual privacy and overlooking;
- Overshadowing;
- Sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;
- Noise and vibration levels;
- Appropriate attenuation measures.

Adopted policy DP28 and Camden Planning Guidance 6: Amenity seek to ensure that noise and vibration levels are controlled. It is advised that planning permission will only be granted for plant or machinery if it can be operated without causing harm to amenity and does not exceed the noise thresholds.

The noise report submitted by Emtec Products Ltd assessed the noise and vibration levels of the immediate environment. The follow up correspondence, also submitted, confirms that the proposed plant equipment when combined with the acoustic screen and silencers will ensure a policy compliant noise environment is achieved. The erection of the proposed acoustic screen

is considered acceptable as the supporting text to policy DP28 advises that it expects proposals to include appropriate attenuation to mitigate the impact of noise and vibrations to an acceptable level.

### **Sustainability**

Core Strategy policy CS13 advises that Camden will require all development to take measures to minimise the effects of, and adapt to, climate change and encourage all development to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation. This can be done in a number of ways, including by minimising carbon emissions from the development, construction and occupation of buildings. Policy DP22 similarly promotes sustainable design and construction.

At present the air conditioning system is out dated and inefficient, resulting in a compromised internal working environment and poor energy efficiency. The proposed upgrade to the plant equipment will ensure the efficient operation of the building for the foreseeable future.

### **Conclusion**

It is therefore considered that the proposed removal of the existing air conditioning units and re-provision of thirteen units with an acoustic screen to be acceptable when assessed against adopted planning policy.

The supporting drawings and noise assessments submitted as part of this planning application demonstrate that the proposed units and acoustic screen will ensure a policy compliant noise environment is maintained whilst securing the long term occupation of Tanfield Chambers and enhancing the environmental performance of the building.

As we have demonstrated within this statement, the rear first floor roof is considered an acceptable location for the re-provided plant equipment, by virtue of the precedent of plant equipment to the roof being established by the existing and the significant amount of plant visible on the rear of those properties in the immediate area.