

Our Ref: 16218/TW/ta
Your Ref: PP-05610863
Email: twilliams@firstplan.co.uk
Date: 10 November 2016

Laura Hazelton
Planning Department
London Borough of Camden 2nd Floor
5 Pancras Square
Town Hall
Judd Street London
WC1H 9JE

Dear Ms Hazelton,

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF EXTERNAL PLANT AT REAR BASEMENT LEVEL AT NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE, 303-306 HIGH HOLBORN, WC1V 7JZ

We are instructed by our client, Barts Charity, to submit an application (via Planning Portal ref: PP-05610863) for the installation of an external air conditioning unit at basement level within the existing courtyard to the rear of the above office building. The purpose of which is to serve the refurbished basement level Class B1 (Office) accommodation.

This application has been the subject of pre-application discussions with Ms Laura Hazelton (Planning Officer – LB Camden) and should be considered concurrently with a proposal for alterations to the rear basement elevation and courtyard submitted via Planning Portal (ref: PP-05610933:).

In support of the application and in accordance with national and local validation requirements the following documents are attached:

- Completed Application Forms;
- Completed CIL Form;
- Site Location Plan (drawing no. PL.001);
- Block Plan (drawing no. PL.002);
- Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. PL.005);
- Existing Rear Elevation (drawing no. PL007);
- Existing Courtyard Elevation (drawing no. PL008);
- Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. PL015A);
- Proposed Courtyard Elevation (drawing no. PL018);
- Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement and Heritage Impact Statement included within this letter;
- Environmental Noise Survey Report – Prepared by Sandy Brown Associates; and
- Manufacturers Equipment Specification Details.

The Council's requisite planning fee of £385 has been paid online.

Site and Surrounding Area

The application site comprises an eight storey building fronting onto High Holborn, situated close to the junction with Chancery Lane, and within a commercial area characterised by office and retail uses. A bank and electronic retail shop is situated at ground floor with office accommodation set out over the upper floors and at basement level.

The application proposals relate to the basement level, which benefits from B1 use but is currently used as ancillary storage space for the occupied offices on the upper floors. The rear elevation faces onto an enclosed court yard, which accommodates plant. The elevation features an access door and louvre - the former roller shutters have previously been infilled pursuant to the consents outlined below. A mix of commercial and residential uses are situated to the south of the site at 1-4 Stone Buildings.

Relevant Planning History

The current office building was constructed pursuant to permission references TP9043/18830 and TP9043/18406 in the late 1950's. In the intervening years, a significant number of applications have been approved but the most recent and relevant to this application are as follows:

- **2015/1954/P** – Installation of 8 x air conditioning units to replace 14 units at top floor level.
- **2015/2458/P** – Replacement of 6 x air conditioning at rear first floor levels and infilling of opening at basement level.

Application Proposal

The application proposal comprises the installation of 1no. condenser unit within the basement courtyard. The new unit will provide a modern air conditioning solution, which will ensure that the temperature and environment within the refurbished basement level office space can be controlled in a manner conducive to the continued use of the premises as offices. The new unit will be situated within the rear courtyard adjacent to existing plant. Specifically, the proposal comprises:

- 1 no. Mitsubishi PURY-P250YLM-A1(-BS) VRF condensing unit.

Full details of the proposed plant are set out within the enclosed equipment specification details and drawings.

The application also includes the erection of a 1.9m cedar timber fence and gate. The enclosure will surround and screen the existing and proposed plant.

Relevant Planning Policy

The statutory development plan for the site comprises the London Plan (2015), Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 (2010) and the Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (2010).

The Proposals Map shows that the site is situated within the defined Central London Frontage within the Central London Area and Holborn Growth Area. The site also falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and an Archaeological Priority Area.

Camden Core Strategy

Policies CS1 and CS2 seeks to focus growth in the most suitable locations and maximise the efficient use of land and buildings.

Policy CS14 requires that development proposals preserve the character and appearance of heritage assets, including conservation areas and important views.

Development Management Policies

Policy DP25 requires development within conservation areas to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Policy DP26 sets out that development should not harm amenity in respect to noise, vibration levels, odour and fumes. The need for appropriate attenuation measures will be considered where necessary.

Policy DP28 seeks to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed. Plant should be designed to be operated without causing harm to amenity or exceeding Camden's noise and vibration thresholds. Supporting paragraph 28.3 states that an acoustic report will be required in support of noise generating development.

Other Relevant Guidance

Camden Planning Guidance: Amenity (2011)

The guidance states that the Council's preference for controlling noise begins with attempting to reduce noise at its source and that this is best achieved in respect to plant by using "quiet machines" and by specifying an acceptable noise limit. The guidance requires that applications for plant are supported by a noise assessment and manufacturers specification details. The proposed plant is of an efficient and quiet design. The noise assessment predicts that the noise levels shall be within the local authority requirements.

Camden Planning Guidance: Design (2014)

The guidance sets out that wherever possible new plant within Conservation Areas should be kept to a minimum and screened to minimise impact and avoid visual blight. External plant should be designed to avoid harmful reduction in daylight and sunlight or cause nuisance to occupiers. Machinery must be installed and maintained to ensure that impacts are properly mitigated and the situation does not deteriorate overtime with continued operation.

The application proposals have been carefully designed to accord with the design principles set out within this document. The new unit will be situated in an enclosed area that accommodates existing plant. It will not result in any loss of daylight/sunlight or undue impact on amenity.

Planning Assessment

Principle of the Development

The application site is an existing and long established office building situated fronting onto High Holborn. The building lies within a Central London Frontage, the Central London Area and Holborn Growth Area, where office development is considered an appropriate use.

The application simply seeks to introduce a new air conditioning unit to serve the refurbished basement level Class B1 (Office) accommodation to ensure that Northumberland House can make a full contribution to the Borough's stock of employment premises in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS2.

Noise and Amenity

A full environmental noise survey has been prepared by Sandy Brown Associates in support of the application. The report was carried out to determine the existing background sound levels in the vicinity of nearby noise

sensitive premises and set appropriate limits for noise egress from building services plant within the requirements of Camden Council.

The nearest noise sensitive premises to the site are shown in Figure 1. Lincoln House to the west and 2-4 Stone Buildings to the south are commercial buildings and have been highlighted in blue. The top floor of 76 Chancery Lane and Flat 1 of 1 Stone Buildings are residential accommodation and are highlighted in green.

The assessment of the proposed unit indicates a level at the worst affected window of the nearest noise sensitive premises at Stone Buildings of LAeq 38 dB. This complies with the minimum night-time noise level of LAeq, 8hr 39 dB set by Camden Council. As such, no further noise mitigation measures are required and the proposal is in compliance with the advice contained within Camden Planning Guidance: Amenity (2011) and Policies DP26 and DP28.

Design and Heritage Statement

The application building is not statutorily listed but is situated within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area – which forms the heritage asset. The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011) outlines the special interest of the Conservation Area. With regard to Northumberland House, it states that it was designed and constructed by Clyde Young and Bernard Engle between 1957-59. However, it is not identified as being of any particular historic interest, or to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed plant will be screened from views from outside of the site by the existing courtyard wall and the proposed timber screening. Moreover, the basement court yard is situated to the rear of the property with an existing plant zone. As such, the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation in accordance with Policies CS14 and DP25.

Design and Access Statement

Use

The application seeks permission for the installation of an air conditioning unit within the yard of an existing office building which already accommodates similar mechanical services.

Amount and Scale

The proposal comprises 1 no. air conditioning unit. The unit will be capable of managing the temperature of the basement level office space. The scale and amount are appropriate and typical for an office.

Layout and Appearance

The proposed plant will be located adjacent to existing plant within an enclosed courtyard. The plant will not be visible from outside the site. The proposal includes a timber screen around the existing and proposed plant. The screen will obscure the plant from view of the office.

Landscaping

There are no proposed changes to the landscaping as part of this application.

Access

There are no proposed changes to the access as part of this application. The plant will be accessed by a gate on the proposed plant screening, this area will be accessible for servicing only.

Conclusions

The application proposes the installation of 1 no. new air conditioning unit to serve the basement level office accommodation at Northumberland House, 303-306 High Holborn.

The noise survey report submitted in support of the application demonstrates that noise levels from the plant at the nearest noise sensitive premises are within the Council's required limits and will not cause material harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers. As such, no additional noise mitigation is required.

The proposals will be screened by a timber screen and will not be visible from outside of the site. The character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area will therefore be preserved. Accordingly, the proposal is in accordance with the policies and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the Camden Core Strategy (2010) and Camden Development Policies (2010).

We trust that the enclosed information is sufficient to enable a favourable determination of this application. In the meantime, we look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been registered.

Yours sincerely,



TIM WILLIAMS
Director

Enc.