

10 John Street
London
WC1N 2EB

Installation of A/C condensers

Design and Access Statement

October 2017

Revision A – This document is a lightly revised version of the Design & Access statement that was submitted with our original Planning Application in August 2017. Any text that has been amended or added is shown here in red for clarity.


DANKS BADNELL

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 Danks Badnell Architects Ltd. has prepared this statement in support of a Planning Application for the installation of external air conditioning condensers at 10 John Street.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- 2.01 **The Brief.** The property was originally designed and built as a private residence between 1799 and 1813. The building was later converted to office use and has been used as such for many years.

The building becomes unbearably hot during the summer and this has now become completely unmanageable. It is extremely important that air conditioning be installed as soon as possible or there is a very real risk that the site will no longer be considered a viable proposition in today's competitive commercial letting market. This is likely to lead to the loss of the site as a valuable employment generator for the local area.

- 2.02 **Drawings and Supporting Information.** This statement makes reference to the following application drawings:

1. 14/37/01 Site Location Plan
2. 14/37/05 Existing Building
3. 14/37/40 Proposed Scheme

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.01 **Location.** The site is 10 John Street, London, WC1N 2EB. This is on the junction of John Street and Northington Street.

- 3.02 **Site Extents.** Site location plan ref: 14/37/01 highlights the extent of the site in red.

- 3.03 **Existing Building.** The existing building has a formal four storey frontage to John Street but the height reduces to just two storeys to the rear of the site. There is also a basement below ground level.

- 3.04 **Setting.** The setting of the site is completely urban.

- 3.05 **Use of Site.** The entire site is in private commercial use by a firm of Solicitors.

- 3.06 **Surrounding Properties.** The application site forms the southern end of a long terrace heading north along John Street. The whole terrace is uniform in terms of appearance and massing. Similar terraces run north and south along both sides of John Street. The most unique building is The Lady Ottoline public house which stands directly opposite the application site on the far side of Northington Street. This has a curved façade and decorative brickwork in contrast with the more Conservative terraces all around.

- 3.07 **Views into the Site.** 10 John Street is clearly visible from John Street and Northington Street.

4.0 TOWN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.01 Heritage. The site forms part of a Grade II Listed terrace (ref: 1379156) and also falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. A detailed analysis of the site history is provided in the heritage statement submitted with this application.

4.02 Planning History. The Local Authority's online Planning records show only two applications in recent years. These are:

- | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | 2007/2926/P | Planning | Change of Use to C3 | GRANTED (S106) |
| 2. | 2009/1235/L | Listed Building | Repairs and redecoration | GRANTED |
| 3. | 2015/2037/P | Planning | Change of Use to C3 | GRANTED (S106) |

4.03 Previous Pre-Application Advice. Pre-application advice has not been sought for this exact scheme, however, advice has been sought of some previous alternatives.

In 2014 advice was sought for a scheme involving 2no. relatively large condensers positioned on the flat roof over the rear block of the building (ref: 2014/6997/PRE). The scheme included a louvred enclosure to screen any views of the units, however, the Local Authority deemed the proposal to be too visible.

In 2015 advice was sought for a scheme involving 5no. smaller condensers positioned on the same roof to the rear (ref: 2015/3946/PRE). These low-level units were all hidden inside neat acoustic casings, however, the Local Authority still deemed the proposal to be visually harmful.

A third solution was also prepared involving 5no. small units all hidden within the building's lightwells to ensure that they were never visible to the public. Unfortunately it was not possible to get this option to meet the noise limitations set by the Local Authority and so pre-application advice was not sought.

5.0 CONTEXT

5.01 Physical Context. The site is in an urban area. The surroundings are relatively flat although the ground levels do fall away slightly along Northington Street.

5.02 Social Context. The neighbouring property at 11 John Street is a private residence although the majority of other properties along the terrace are in commercial use. We are very keen to ensure that neighbours are not disturbed by the proposed condenser units and so rigorous acoustic tests have been undertaken as discussed further later.

6.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

6.01 Proposals. The application seeks consent for the installation of 3no. air conditioning condensers. Firstly, an opening will be formed in the existing flat roof and then the modern timber structure below will be adapted to allow a well to be formed down into the existing attic space. The air conditioning units would be installed within the newly formed well. The proposals are clearly illustrated on application drawing 14/37/40A.

6.02 Use. The site will remain entirely in Class B1 use.

6.03 Scale and Visibility. The proposed condensers are relatively modest in size and have been grouped as compactly as we can manage without harming their performance.

All 3no. units will be installed in a newly formed well within the existing roof space as described in 6.01 above. The well will be deep enough to completely submerge the units below the level of the existing flat roof. This will ensure that there is no possibility whatsoever of the units being visible to passers-by.

6.04 Area. The proposal will have no impact upon the floor area of the building.

6.05 Landscaping. The proposal will have no impact upon landscaping.

6.06 Appearance. The proposal will have no impact upon the appearance of the building.

6.07 Access. The proposals will not have any impact upon the access arrangements for the building. The existing roof hatch will be lost during formation of the roof well and so a simple replacement hatch will be provided within the well itself.

6.08 Heritage. The proposal will not require the demolition or significant alteration of any historically important part of the Listed Building. The key alteration is the formation of the sunken well in the roof. Whilst large portions of the building date back more than 200 years, this roof is of much more recent construction. Photographs clearly showing the modern roof softwood structure are provided below. If absolutely necessary it could be arranged for the Conservation Officer to inspect these timbers for him/herself.

A more detailed analysis is provided in the heritage statement submitted with this application.



Photograph 1 – Modern softwood roof structure.



Photograph 2 – Modern softwood roof structure and plastic sheeting.

- 6.09 Acoustics.** Noise levels are a key concern for any proposal like this. Our acousticians Hann Tucker Associates have undertaken noise surveys and have calculated the potential impact of the proposed condensers using the manufacturer's official noise data. Their detailed acoustic report [ref: 24502/PNA1 Rev 3](#) confirms that the proposed units meet the Local Authority's [recently updated](#) noise criteria and would be deemed acceptable. A copy of the report is submitted with this application.
- 6.10 Condensers.** The proposed scheme involves the installation of 3no. Daikin RXYSCQ5TV1 condenser units. Technical details for the condensers are provided as an appendix to this document. [Two particular precautions have been taken to ensure that noise emissions are kept to an acceptable level. Firstly, the units will be mounted at low level within a roof well to eliminate any possible line of sight to receptor windows, and secondly a night set-back card will be installed to reduce emissions at source.](#)

7.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed installation of air conditioning condensers is long overdue as it is considered critical to the ongoing viability of the site as an employment generator for the local area.

This is a sensitive site, however, an appropriate design solution has been developed in order to ensure that the proposals do not have a harmful impact upon the heritage value of the building or the existing amenity of the neighbours and the wider public. The air conditioning units themselves will be completely hidden from view and acoustic precautions have also been taken to keep noise levels within acceptable limits.

The key issues of heritage value and noise control have both been carefully considered by respected experts and their reports submitted with this application show that the scheme is considered acceptable.

8.0 APPENDIX

Technical specifications for Daikin RXYSCQ5TV1 external condenser units.