



BIDWELLS

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement accompanies an application for Full Planning Permission relating to proposed development at the roof of Imperial Buildings, 48-58 Kingsway. The description of the development reads as follows:

Replacement of two large chillers at roof level with twelve smaller air conditioning units.

- 1.2 The application is also supported by a Heritage Statement which explains the significance of the host building as well as surrounding heritage assets, and the impact of the proposed alterations on that significance. This report also provides further information on the context and constraints of the site, assessing the existing condition of the site as well as providing a relevant planning history and supporting photographs.

2.0 Context and Design Rationale

- 2.1 The location of the proposals is a small area of rooftop to Imperial Buildings, an early twentieth century office block, located at 48-58 Kingsway. 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields (Powis House) is a Grade II* listed building, adjoining Imperial Buildings to the rear. Powis House dates to the seventeenth century and was first listed in October 1951. Works in the 1980s saw a break in the rear party wall of Imperial Buildings, creating an opening between the two buildings. However the building is not considered to fall within the listing of Powis House, as clarified within the Kingsway Conservation Area Statement, where the building is identified as a positive contributor rather than a designated heritage asset. This has been consistently upheld in the planning history of the site, with planning permission given without Listed Building Consent for a number of alterations to Imperial Buildings, including to the roof.
- 2.2 The works to the roof have included the addition of an acoustic screen, installed in the 1980s. This screen presently shields the existing two chiller units from short, medium and long views. The location of the proposals is therefore sheltered from glimpses from and to the surroundings. Notwithstanding this, the surrounding roofscape along Kingsway includes many examples of plant work additions and the present condition of the site is consistent with this wider character.
- 2.3 As such it is noted that the works are found to be located within the setting of a listed building as well as the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which encompasses the townscape to the east of the site. The proposals themselves fall within the Kingsway Conservation Area, adjoining the Bloomsbury Conservation Area on its western boundary. As such it is important to demonstrate that the proposals will be undertaken in accordance with sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This assessment has been undertaken within the accompanying heritage statement, which has concluded no harm to any of the heritage assets identified.
- 2.4 The existing chillers are no longer fit for purpose and do not adequately control the environmental needs of the building. The design principles for the proposals are to provide modern state of the art units which are more modest in scale in respect of the conservation area and will fulfil the needs of the building and its planned refurbishment. Care has been taken to preserve existing views, so that the installation of twelve new air conditioning units, will have no impact on how Imperial Buildings is currently appreciated within the surrounding townscape, as well as the site's current contribution to the surrounding heritage assets.

3.0 Site Photographs



Figure 1. Location of the existing units, to be replaced, looking north.



Figure 2. Existing units to be replaced, looking south east.

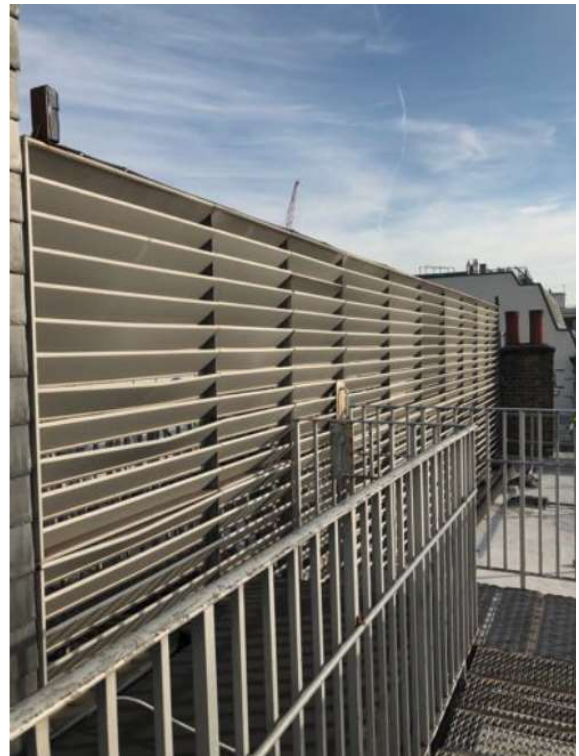


Figure 3. View of the existing chiller units location, from outside the enclosure created by the acoustic screen. Note the units are entirely screened by the existing enclosure.



Figure 4. Imperial Buildings, seen from street level. Left: Corner elevation to the junction with Remnant Street, Middle: Western elevation to Kingsway. Right: View of return elevation to Remnant Street, with the side elevation of Powis House visible to the left of the image.



Figure 5. View of plant work within the surrounding roofscape.



Figure 6. View from street level, looking towards the proposals. Please note the location of the proposals are screened from view by the oblique angle and existing hoarding.

4.0 Proposals

PURY-P450YNW-A

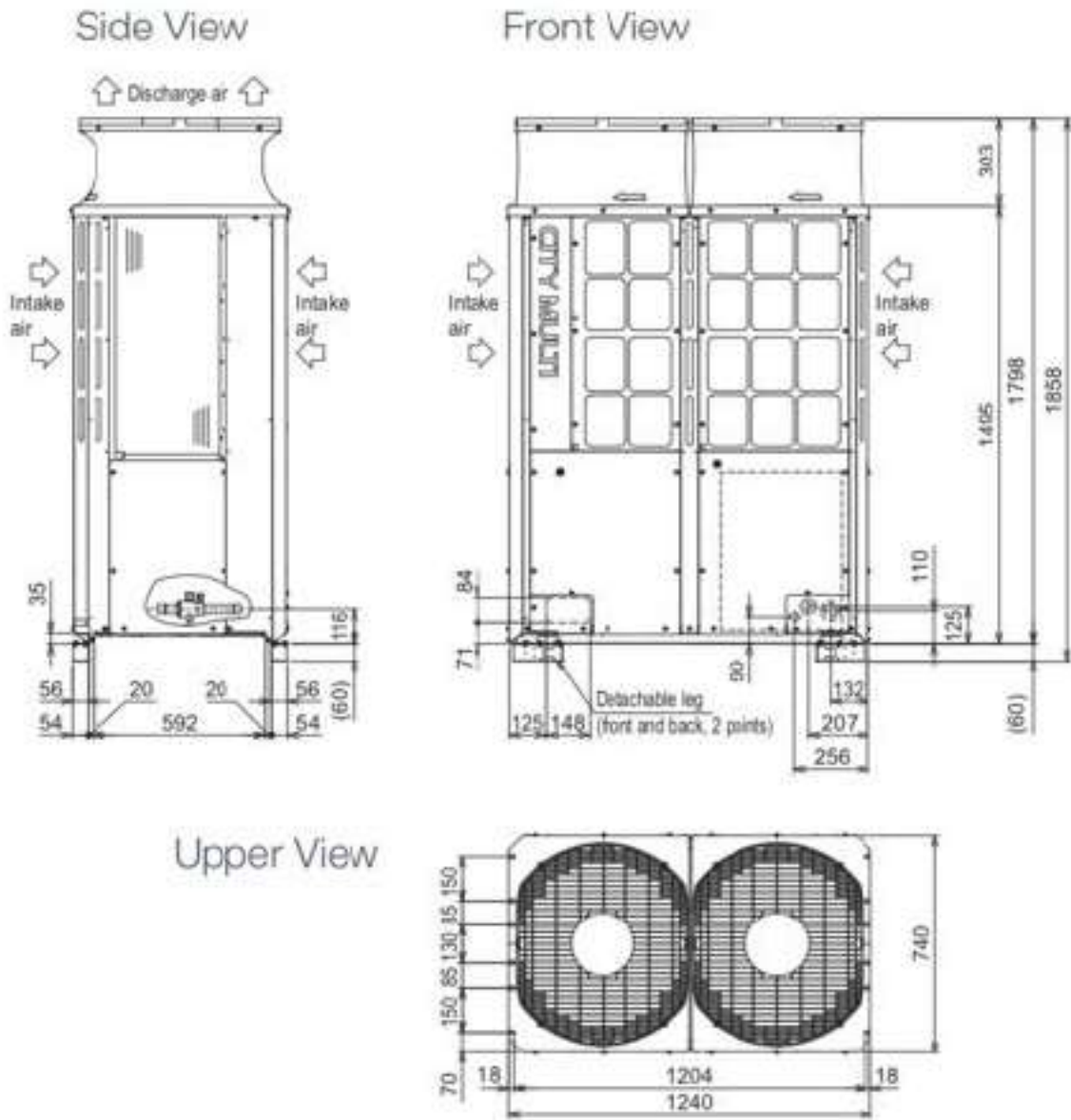


Figure 7. Proposed air-conditioning unit specification.



Figure 8. Appearance of unit, PURY-P450YNW-A.

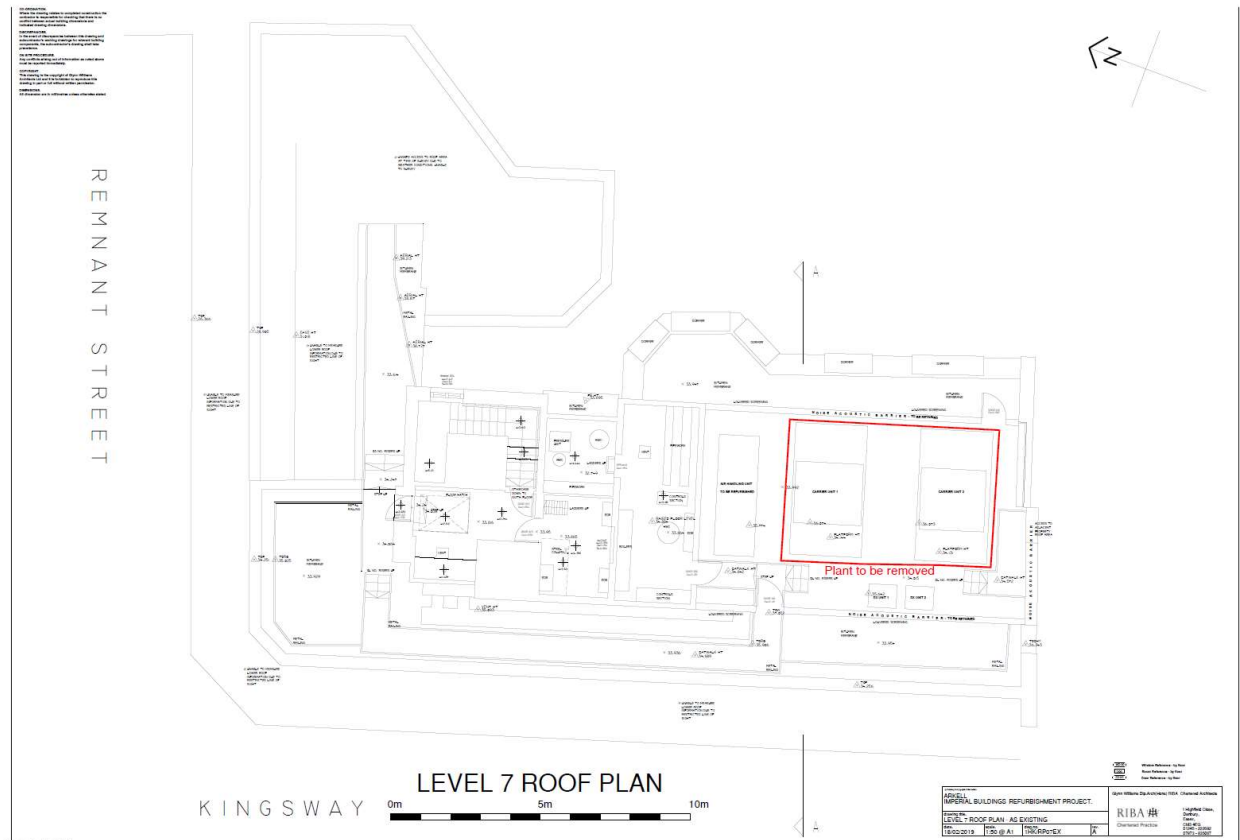


Figure 9. Roof plan as existing.

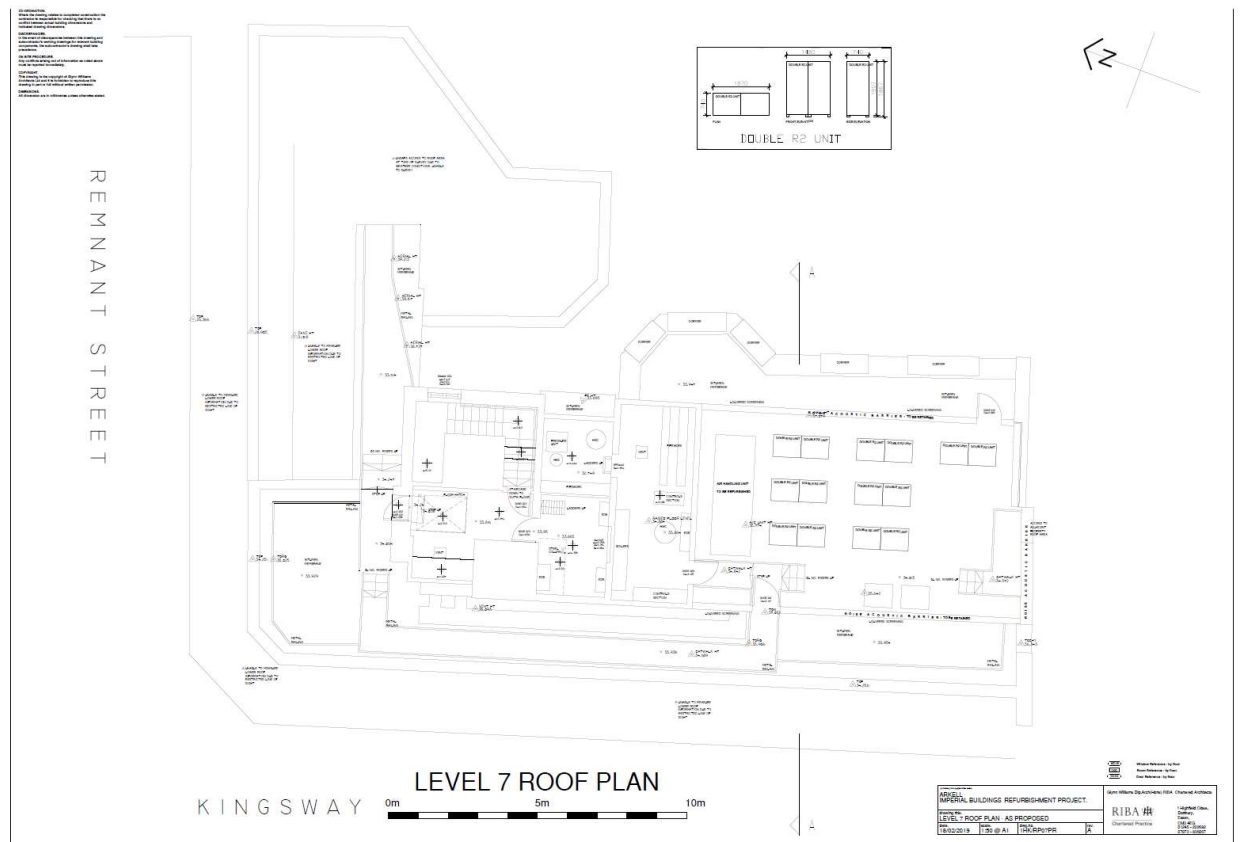


Figure 10. Roof plan as proposed.

5.0 Design and Access Considerations

Use

- 5.1 The property will remain in use as commercial offices. The proposals are minor in nature, affecting only a small amount of plant work to the roof. The day to day use of the building will be entirely unaffected. The use of the proposals relates to the provision of modern state of the art units that will ensure the continued commercial office use of the building.

Layout

- 5.2 The proposal will not alter the existing interior layout of the building, requiring the removal of existing two chiller units at roof level only, and replacement with twelve smaller air conditioning units. The proposals are considered to reduce the bulk of the existing units and as with the existing appearance of the roof, will remained entirely screened from view by existing acoustic hoarding. As shown on the accompanying drawings and within the Heritage Statement, the proposals will not be visible from the surroundings.

Appearance

- 5.3 The proposed works will not alter the existing utilitarian character of the roofscape which has undergone successive waves of plant work and screening installation. The location of the proposals as existing presently do not positively contribute to the appearance of the building as a whole and the removal of the existing units will not affect the appearance of the decorative main, side and return elevations. The replacement units have been designed to remain similarly unobtrusive, situated behind existing screening. The appearance of each proposed unit is shown in Figures 7 and 8. The drawing shows the unit to be 1,858 mm high, 1,240mm long with a width of 740mm. The units will be freestanding, located on the existing platform.

Access

- 5.4 The access into the property and to the roof will remain as existing, as shown on the accompanying plans. The location of the proposals is presently not accessible to the public, and the proposals do not include any changes that will affect this.

Landscaping

- 5.5 The works will not have any impacts to existing landscaping.

Residential Amenity

- 5.6 The works will not have any adverse impacts on the amenity of the adjacent neighbouring properties. Please see accompanying acoustics report for details submitted as part of this application.

Consultations

- 5.7 There have been no consultations undertaken.