

Flat 5, 10 St Georges Terrace, London NW1: Heritage, planning and context of proposals to introduce a free standing air conditioning unit on the top terrace

Introduction And Location

Flat 5, 10 St Georges Terrace, is part of a converted house in a Grade II listed terrace situated in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The terrace consists of 11 buildings originally built as town houses in the mid 1850s. The terrace climbs on the lower slope of Primrose Hill set back behind a gated garden running between St Georges Terrace and Primrose Hill Road. It looks out over the park and is a prominent structure that is an important element of the street scape of the conservation area. Flat 5 is located on the third and fourth floors of the building pictured here. This report accompanies an application for listed building consent and planning permission for an air conditioning unit on the fourth floor terrace.



The Historic Development of the Site and Building Description

In 1827, Eton College sought to develop their property holding, obtaining an Act of Parliament enabling them to grant leases of land in the parishes of Hampstead and Marylebone. After the accession of Queen Victoria, Primrose Hill was obtained by the Crown, and a public act was passed, effecting an exchange between Her Majesty and the Provost and college of Eton. The Terrace was designed in a classical palazzo style. The overall form follows classical proportions but has both Doric and Corinthian elements. It is almost a symmetrical composition as designed but the last house on the western end has an extra minor bay, where the surplus triangle of land has been used. Numbers 9 and 3 in the terrace are set back and lower in height. The setting has changed little since the terrace was built, the only changes being to the west where a block of flats and an estate of town houses have been built in the 1970s. The site is located in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area facing the hill and is a prominent feature in the townscape.

The Proposal

This is to place a freestanding external air conditioning unit on the fourth floor terrace, behind the parapet wall, placed on anti-vibration feet. This is part of the installation of the MSZ-EF Zen Inverter Heat Pump into the top bedroom. This will involve drilling a 60mm hole in one roof tile at floor level and running a small pipe containing the electric cable and air outlet, neatly tucked underneath the dormer window.

It will not change the character of the building in any way, and nothing will be visible from the public realm, because the 55 cm high unit will sit behind the 1.35m parapet wall at the front of the building (see the photo here – the red arrow shows where the unit will sit).



The only actual alteration to the building is drilling through one tile, something reversible at any stage. Furthermore, it will make the flat significantly more energy efficient and also addresses the fact that the top of the house is unbearably hot in these ever warmer summers. Given the above, it is our view that the proposed change is entirely in keeping with the building and its place as part of the local conservation area.