


Printed on: 07/07/2020 09:10:12

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2020/0363/L		25/06/2020 15:07:07	COMMENT	<p>I object to the air condensing units at roof level (or at any other level) on the grounds that this would interfere with residential amenity because of the noise they produce. My family occupy the house immediately next door and our top floor has two double bedrooms in it. The noise of the units would interfere with sleep. These air condensing units are often very noisy and even if they start off quiet, they tend to get noisy over the years. I have long lived in central London and had serious problems with such units in my previous home so I am well aware of what a huge problem they can become. I do not consider them in keeping with a listed building.</p> <p>I have no objection to the rest of the proposed works</p>

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2020-0363-L	[REDACTED]	30/06/2020 08:56:13	OBJ	<p>I am objecting to the installation of the two air condensing units that are proposed to be installed on the roof of the property in question. The reasons for my objection are as follows:</p> <p>Residential amenity I am the immediate neighbour to the south of the property, and my bedroom is on the top floor. From examining plans from a previous application (2019/6233/P, [1]) which I believe to still be current, the proposed location of the units is approximately 8 metres from my bedroom window which I like to keep open. I am concerned about a constant whirring or buzz from the units which may run 24/7. I also noticed that I can see the proposed location of the units from my bathroom, and depending on how high they would be, from my outdoor seating area. The placement of such units would be a blemish on an otherwise very pretty example of a early-18th century building.</p> <p>Noise pollution The rear of all property on the west side of Great James Street is bordered on one side by the houses, and on the other by a long tiled wall (between Great James Street and Emerald Street). This corridor has significant echo, and is mostly shielded from the street. It is not unusual to overhear conversations happening 4 or more houses away. The noise assessment previously conducted [2] states that the background noise ranges from 49 to 46dB from day to night. This test was undertaken on a Monday, so does not take into account the much quieter environment of the weekend. As the properties bordering the application property are largely residential, and given the previously noted echo, it seems that any additional industrial noise would significantly disturb all parties on west side of the street.</p> <p>Risk of air conditioning to a listed building. The property and the neighbouring properties, (including my own) is Grade II* listed and within the Bloomsbury conservation area. I have read section 5.10 of the Planning and Heritage statement conducted in December 2019 [3], but I am still concerned on the effects of routing air conditioning below the panelling in the walls. It is my understanding the wood is particularly sensitive to changes in humidity and temperature, and I am worried about not only the result to the panels inside the application property, but also to the panels in my own property, to the south. It seems to me that the wooden panels will not only be subject to significant change from within the walls, but also to a long term drying effect due to the use of air conditioning in the house.</p> <p>Environmental impact. Section 6.99 of the Camden council Local Plan [4] states that 'Air conditioning will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there is a clear need for it after other measures have been considered', and section 8.39 states 'The Council will discourage the use of air conditioning'. The Council should follow through with its own guidance and not permit an air conditioning unit to be added. As none of the other residential properties have air conditioning or are considering adding it, I'm not sure how it can be considered a 'clear need'. It is unfortunate that we live in a world where the environment comes second to personal convenience. In 2018, air conditioning accounted for one fifth of the electricity used in buildings [5], and that number is likely higher now. Not only is air conditioning a big electricity consumer but obviously if it's pumping cold air into a house, it is also pumping hot air out of the house. As a community we should be trying to reduce global warming, and the council should be leading the way. Fortunately these old houses all have shutters in the windows which can be closed, and the windows can be opened in order to prevent the house getting too warm. Outside these measures I feel the lack of availability of air conditioning, is something that should be accepted with the acquisition of an old building.</p> <p>Precedent. As far as I am aware, no other property on Great James Street has air condensing units. I feel by allowing, one property to have such a device, the council is setting a dangerous precedent for other</p>

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properties. It would certainly create a noticeable increase in noise and likely an environmental impact if every house had an air conditioning unit. Not to mention that it would not be in fitting with the early 18th century surroundings.

Operating hours. I cannot find a stated proposal of when the air conditioning units would be active. Certainly running the units 24/7 would be unfair to the neighbouring residents particularly in summer evenings and at weekends when there is very little noise from the street.

[1]: <http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/Record/8231530/file/document?inline>

[2]: <http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/Record/8007188/file/document?inline>

[3]: <http://camdocs.camden.gov.uk/HPRMWebDrawer/Record/8007185/file/document?inline>

[4]:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/3912524/Local+Plan+Low+Res.pdf/54bd0f8c-c737-b10d-b140-756e8bbeeae95>

[5]: <https://www.iea.org/reports/the-future-of-cooling>

Application No: 2020-0363-L
 Consultees Name: [REDACTED]
 Received: 30/06/2020 11:41:00
 Comment: OBJ

Response:
 I object to the air conditioning unit aspect of this application. Please note I placed an earlier comment as an interested party but I wish to cancel that and have it replaced by this objection.

Whilst I can see that the applicants have given the application a lot of careful thought and wish to incorporate the air conditioning as sympathetically as possible, I object to it. Fundamentally, you cannot put a square peg into a round hole. Air-conditioning is wholly inappropriate for these listed buildings in a conservation area. It will damage listed panelling, cause interference with residential amenity and set a dangerous precedent as well as being environmentally undesirable. Whilst the application is thorough, it does not give any heed to the specific context and environment of the property which will make air conditioning highly undesirable both for the listed property and its neighbours. I set out below in more detail grounds for objection.

Residential Amenity

The units will interfere with my residential amenity. Whilst I appreciate that a noise report has been done and consideration has been given to this it does not take account the specific circumstances and direct environment. I am in the neighbouring property and have two bedrooms on the top floor, one on the second and one on the first floor. The backs of the properties on that side of the street back on to a high wall. Sound bounces around the corridor considerably such that conversations two or three properties away can be heard with clarity. If there is an air conditioning unit on the roof the noise from it will echo down the street. I previously lived in a similar street in Soho and we had enormous problems with ACUs at the back of us, so I am well aware of the noise problems they can cause. If permission were granted for the air conditioning units, it would likely be running most vigorously on hot days, the very days when I would want all my windows open to allow a good though draught, especially on the upper floors at night. Thus they would cause maximum interference with residential amenity at a time of most need for peace.

Damage to a listed building

Whilst I can see that thought has been given to minimising impact of ducting on panelling there appears to be no understanding or reference anywhere in the heritage statement of the affect of temperature change on wood. I have lived in listed buildings built in 1720s in London since 1996, previously in Meard Street and now in Great James Street. I am well acquainted with how the panels adapt, swelling and shrinking over the year depending in temperature. Air conditioning will clearly result in bigger temperature variations and risk damaging the panelling drying out the wood considerably. The applicants may not be aware, but part of their hallway is very close to ours with no wall between, just panelling back to back, so their temperature changes will affect our panelling on that wall too. As decision makers, you must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Allowing air conditioning will not be having this regard, either for the building in question or for its immediate neighbours which are also listed.

As stated in the applicants heritage statement there is a 'strong presumption' against granting planning permission for development which would cause harm to heritage assets. The panelling is specifically noted in the listing. Granting permission for the air conditioning will be risking damage to heritage assets.

In breach of Camden Design Policy and the National Planning Policy Framework Camden Policy D1 demands that design: a. respects local context and character, b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets, c. Is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best

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practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation; and that planners j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building. The National Policy Framework requires great weight should be given to the assets conservation irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.} And that change }should require clear and convincing justification. I find it very hard to find a clear justification for the damage air conditioning would cause to the panelling when

No other residential properties in the street have it
The property has shutters and windows that open providing adequate shade and ventilation

In Breach of Camden Local Plan

Section 6.99 of the Camden council Local Plan [4] states that 'Air conditioning will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there is a clear need for it after other measures have been considered', and section 8.39 states 'The Council will discourage the use of air conditioning). As no other residential property in the street has air conditioning and the property has shutters and opening windows providing shade and ventilation there cannot be said to be a clear need). I live in an almost identical property and have never felt the need for air conditioning. The street is quiet and has little traffic so it is no problem opening up windows in front and back to allow a decent through draught and on the occasional very hot day, I keep the shutters closed, windows open.

Environmental Impact

Air conditioning uses unnecessary electricity and pumps hot air into the street. If every house in the street had it the street would be hotter. If you allow one listed building to have it, there is no reason why all the rest would not eventually follow suit damaging the panelling all down the street and increasing Camdens carbon footprint at a time when global warming is the biggest threat to the world.

I urge you to deny the air conditioning element of this application and suggest alternative measures such as use of shutters and opening windows.
