



**BW/**Architecture

# **Design and Access Statement incorporating a Heritage Statement**

**15-17 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HY**

In support of a Planning Application ;

**Alteration to roof to form a flat roof section  
with external condensers.**

November 2022

**15-17 Leeke Street, WC1X 9HY**

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## **1 Introduction**

This document is in support of an application for planning permission to alter an existing contemporary patent glazed roof by introducing a lowered flat deck area to support and conceal external air conditioning condensers.

The site is in the Kings Cross Conservation Area but is not listed.

## **2 The property and Context**

The property is a ground floor office unit within a converted Victorian “shed” building that was originally built for The London General Omnibus Company as a depot for their vehicles and housing for the horses that pulled them.

The building fronts Britannia Street, Wicklow Street and Leeke Street within a small quiet local backwater of parallel streets with predominantly commercial offices and workshops and educational tenancies. The London Underground’s Metropolitan, Circle and Elizabeth lines run along the building’s eastern boundary in an open cutting and the nearest residential flats lie to the other side of the noisy railway lines, approx. 50m to the east.

The building has been variously altered and renovated over a long period with new roofs and windows, updated services to modern office standards and many internal alterations.

It is now subdivided into several different commercial units for let.

The subject application unit is at ground level fronting Leeke Street and was converted in 2016 from restaurant to office use including the introduction of a new entrance screen. The Leeke Street frontage is a single storey structure stepping down from a 2-3 storey central block and has a roof of continuous patent glazing and the interior can become very hot from solar gains in summer months.

The majority of the commercial units are already served by modern comfort cooling systems with external condenser units, but this unit, having been more recently converted from restaurant use, is not.

There are several examples of external plant in the immediate area that are visible from first floor windows and in one or two cases also at street level. ( building

opposite for example ) and to the current proposal building where ducts rise above the parapet.

### **3 Proposal and Design**

The proposal is to ;

- remove exiting ductwork rising very visibly above and just behind the parapet to the front of the area to be altered.
- Remove a section of pitched patent glazed roof (approx. 2.2m along the elevation x 2.8m depth between parapet and rear wall rising behind) This section sits between existing original roof trusses and is situated above a plant room at GFL, next to the entrance.
- Install a single ply membrane flat roof set low to drain into the existing gutter behind the existing parapet.
- Place compact condenser units onto the roof to serve internal cooling units within the office to overcome summertime overheating from solar gains.

It should be noted that the proposed condenser units will be almost completely concealed from view in the street, due to being on a low deck below and behind the existing parapet and will provide a substantial visual improvement over the existing situation with large duct vents rising above the parapet.

### **4 Access**

Access requirements are set out in Part M of Building Regulations, “Access to and use of Buildings”.

Currently there isn't any a level threshold access into the unit and no simple or economic method to provide access for wheelchair users.

The proposals are for minor alterations only and do not warrant proposals to alter the existing access circumstances.

The applicability of Part M is limited as there is no intended change of use and the general principle is therefore that nothing should be made worse.

## **5 Conclusion**

It is considered that the provision of cooling is of important and beneficial value to the employees who work in the proposal unit since it suffers from “greenhouse” solar heat gains caused by a large element of patent roof glazing.

It is considered that the location, compactness and sunken nature of the proposed replacement roof allows a discrete placement of necessary external plant providing a minimum impact on the building and on the Conservation Area.

It is considered that whilst the new plant could be viewed from upper windows of the property to the opposite side of Leeke Street, there are no nearby residential windows to cause significant residential outlook concerns.

It is considered that the proposals are a significant improvement over the existing and less discreet bulky venting ducts in this location that the new plant replaces.

Therefore, this proposed roof alteration and more discrete plant is an improvement over the current situation. It will enhance the character of the building and of the Conservation Area.