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Planning Department
Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP

Matt Richards
E: matt.rihcards@savills.com
DL: +44 (0) 2033208266

33 Margaret Street
London W1G 0JD
T: + 44 (0) 20 7499 8644
F: + 44 (0) 20 7495 3773
savills.com

Planning Portal Ref: PP-10387353

Dear Sir/Madam

26 Lower Belgrave Street London SW1W 0LN
Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for air conditioning unit and acoustic enclosure at the rear third floor level terrace and associated internal alterations

On behalf of our client, Alexander Rayden, we are instructed to submit an application for the installation of a new air conditioning system within an acoustic enclosure, which will be situated at the third floor level rear terrace at 26 Lower Belgrave Street London SW1W 0LN.

The planning application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP-10387353) and comprises the following documents:

- This letter (which sets out the site background and planning considerations);
- Application Form;
- CIL Form;
- Suite of existing and proposed drawings, prepared by Rainsford Ltd;
- Heritage Statement prepared by Bidwells; and
- Noise Impact Assessment prepared by KP Acoustics Ltd

Site and Surrounding Area

No. 26 Lower Belgrave Street is a Grade II Listed building (List UID: 1274657), designated in December 1987. The residential property is a Regency styled townhouse, likely constructed at some point between 1827 and 1850. The house has been extended to the rear (assumed in 1988 – planning ref - 88/02061/LBC) and adapted at various points in the 20th C. The site previously had external a/c units at the third floor terrace, which have recently been removed as part of refurbishment works.

Externally to the front, the house retains its original general appearance and has not been significantly altered or extended in form. The front elevation retains historic stucco, ironwork and the front door casing. Internally, the house has lost the vast majority of its historic interior (including windows and doors) with the majority of the fit out of the building being 20th C and of no significance or historical value.

The house sits within a terrace that contains rear closet wing projections above which are various structures including a/c units.





No. 26 Lower Belgrave Street – Application site

Figure 1: Rear terrace with Application Site identified.

The site is bounded by Lower Belgrave Street and Chester Square to the Southwest, residential properties to the Northwest and Southeast, and residential gardens to the Northeast.

Planning History

There are a number of applications for internal and external alterations to the building including the following:

- **App Ref: 87/06395/FULL**

Full planning permission for 'Alterations including construction of infill conservatory at rear basement level, rebuilding of first floor rear extension and erection of second floor extension on top with roof terrace above for continued use as a single family dwelling.' was granted on 29th December 1987.

- **App Ref: 88/02061/LBC**

Listed Building Consent for the "Alterations including construction of infill conservatory at rear basement level, rebuilding of first floor rear extension and erection of second floor extension on top with roof terrace above for continued use as a single family dwelling." was granted on 14th March 1989.

▪ **App Ref: 96/00069/LBC**

Listed Building Consent was granted on 24th April 1996 for the “Internal and external alterations and repairs including the removal of load bearing partition at ground floor level and installation of air-conditioning units and flue at rear 3rd floor roof terrace”

▪ **App Refs: 96/00349/FULL**

Full planning permission was granted on 24th April 1996 for the “Internal and external alterations and repairs including the removal of load bearing partition at ground floor level and installation of air-conditioning units and flue at rear 3rd floor roof terrace”

▪ **App Refs: 20/07054/FULL and 20/07/055/LBC**

Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was refused on 7th January 2021 for ‘Erection of a new portico to the façade’

▪ **App Refs: 21/00399/FULL**

Full Planning Permission was granted on 10th June 2021 for the ‘Part and full replacement of doors and windows, replacement roof coverings, including access hatch, replacement of the aerial and installation of a satellite dish at roof level, installation of chimney pots / caps, replacement railings to rear terrace, installation of exterior lighting, installation of a planter box and works to the front balcony and overcladding of stone steps to entrance (linked to 21/00400/LBC)’.

▪ **App Refs: 21/00400/LBC**

Listed Building Consent was granted on 10th June 2021 for the ‘Part and full replacement of doors and windows, replacement roof coverings, including access hatch, replacement of the aerial and installation of a satellite dish at roof level, installation of chimney pots / caps, replacement railings to rear terrace, installation of exterior lighting, installation of a planter box and works to the front balcony and overcladding of stone steps to entrance. Internal alterations, including relocation of kitchen to ground floor, alterations at all levels, replacement and new services, installation of lighting, replacement of internal doors, decorative finishes, fixtures and fittings and retrospective consent for opening up works.’

▪ **App Refs: 21/00400/LBC**

A Listed Building Consent was validated 24th February 2021 and is currently under consideration by Westminster Council for a ‘New cavity drainage waterproofing to utility room, removal and replacement of external render at basement level and new/repair tanking slurry to vault’.

▪ **App Refs: 21/05375/FULL and 21/05376/LBC**

Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was granted on the 30th September 2021 for the ‘Widening of the rear ground floor door.’

Planning Policy Framework

The Development Plan covering the site currently comprises the following documents:

- London Plan (March, 2021),
- Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 (April, 2021)

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised 2021), National Planning Practice Guidance (2014, as amended) and emerging and adopted supplementary planning guidance notes (SPGs) and supplementary planning documents (SPDs), are relevant material considerations.

The Proposals

The proposals comprise the installation of an external air conditioning unit at the third floor rear terrace. As noted above, this terrace previously had external a/c unit, which has recently been removed as part of refurbishment works. Air conditioning will be supplied to the ground floor dining room, 1st floor living room and third floor bedroom. The external unit comprises a Dakin Mini VRV air conditioning system within an acoustic enclosure, capable of providing Cooling or Heating (but not at the same time) to each room. The system would be served by a RXYSCQ5TV1 Low Height Compact Condensing unit on located on the existing 3rd floor rear terrace, which is situated on the rear closet wing.

Internally the works comprise the installation of a purpose made cabinet located within the ground floor dining room and an adapted existing radiator cabinet to the first floor living room. An existing riser is used to connect these units to the third floor.

At third floor the fan unit would be housed within the ceiling void above the lobby, connected to a linear grille discretely located at high level between built in wardrobes. The cabinets will be designed to be appropriately detailed and no more intrusive than standard interior fittings such as radiators.

Planning Considerations

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Noise

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (amongst others) preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, water or noise pollution or land stability.

At the regional level, London Plan 2021 Policy D14 states that in order to reduce, manage and mitigate noise to improve health and quality of life, development proposals should manage noise and avoiding significant adverse noise impacts.

At the local level, Policy 33 of the Westminster City Plan states that the council will make sure that quality of life and health and wellbeing of existing and future occupiers, and the natural environment are not adversely affected by harmful pollutants and other negative impacts on the local environment.

Specifically, Policy 33 Part C states that development should prevent adverse effects of noise and vibration and improve the noise environment in compliance with the council's Noise Thresholds, with particular attention to

- Minimising noise impacts and preventing noise intrusion to residential developments and sensitive uses;
- Minimising noise from plant machinery and internal activities;
- Minimising noise from servicing and deliveries; and
- Protecting the relative tranquillity in and around open spaces.

An environmental noise survey has been undertaken by KP Acoustics and is submitted in support of the application. An assessment has been carried out to determine the plant noise emissions at the nearest noise sensitive receivers. The assessment undertaken concludes that with the proposed acoustic enclosure and anti-vibration mounts installed to ensure that vibrations do not give rise to structure-borne noise, that the plant would achieve the noise requirements of the Local Authority of 30dB(A) at the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

As such the proposed plant equipment is considered to accord with both the London Plan and Local Plan in terms of managing noise and will avoid significant adverse noise impacts.

Visual and Heritage Impact

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that high quality buildings and places are fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 specifies that development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings.

At the local level, Policy 38 of the City Plan stipulates that new development will incorporate exemplary standards of high quality, sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture befitting Westminster's world-class status, environment and heritage and its diverse range of locally distinctive neighbourhoods.

Policy 39 (B) of the City Plan states that development must optimise the positive role of the historic environment in Westminster's townscape, economy and sustainability, and will:

1. Ensure heritage assets and their settings are conserved and enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance;
2. Secure the conservation and continued beneficial use of heritage assets through their retention and sensitive adaptation which will avoid harm to their significance, while allowing them to meet changing needs and mitigate and adapt to climate change;
3. Place heritage at the heart of place making and good growth, maintaining the unique character of our heritage assets and delivering high quality new buildings and spaces which enhance their settings

The plant and its enclosure are discretely sited in the corner of the terrace closest to the property. As noted above, the terrace previously comprised external a/c plant. This part of the terrace contains a number of external a/c units, and so the inclusion of a discretely sited one at on the terrace is not considered to have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, which will be preserved.

Internally an existing riser will be utilised for the system's primary distribution to the rooms set out above. Within these rooms the air will be projected via discrete and appropriately designed joinery that will preserve the heritage significance. The supporting Heritage Statement prepared by Bidwells accompanies this application. The Statement has assessed the proposed works and considers the impact of the proposals on the significance of the heritage assets identified, including the contribution made by their settings.

As a result of our assessments on Site, it is considered that the emerging proposals would result in neutral impact to the listed building. The proposals have been shown to have regard to the existing character of the surroundings and heritage assets, in compliance with Policy 38. The proposals encompass the sensitive adaptation of the listed building, preserving decorative detail of interest and conserving the significance and setting of the heritage assets identified in compliance with Policy 39.

Considering the aforementioned, the proposals are considered to comply with NPPF and local planning policies.

Summary

It is considered that the installation of an air conditioning condenser unit within an acoustic enclosure would not result in any harm to residential amenity via noise transfer, and would preserve the character and appearance

of the Listed Building and Conservation Area. Overall the proposals are considered acceptable and in accordance with policy requirements.

I trust that the enclosed is in order and I look forward to receiving prompt confirmation that the application has been validated. Please feel free to contact myself or my colleague Michael O'Driscoll (Michael.O'Driscoll@savills.com) of these offices in the first instance if you have any queries or would like to discuss.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "MR", written in a cursive style.

Matt Richards
Director

enc. As above