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DESIGN AND ACCESS / PLANNING / HERITAGE / STATEMENT

Install external and roof-top plant and equipment and all associated works.

Property Address: 147-149 Wardour Street, W1F 8WD.

October 2023

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access / Planning / Heritage Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant in respect of a planning application to install external and roof-top plant and equipment together with all associated works. This Statement should be read in conjunction with other drawings and documents accompanying the planning application.

1.2 This Statement comprises:

- A description of the application properties and surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed development;
- A summary of relevant planning history; and,
- An assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy.

2.0 APPLICATION PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The application relates to ground floor of No. 147-149 Wardour Street which sits within an overall multi-storey building. The overall property is in mixed use. The premises has been vacant for some time with the existing 'shopfront' boarded up and detracting significantly from the streetscene. The previous shopfront that existed here (as evident on old Street view Imagery) was of no architectural or visual merit.

2.2 The site is located within a wider mixed use area. There is wide variety in overall building scale and form in the area.

2.3 The property is not listed, nor are neighbouring properties. The site is located within the Soho Conservation Area.

2.4 As would be expected, and as is the case on neighbouring buildings, there is already a significant amount of plant / machinery to the rear elevation area and at roof-top level.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 It is proposed to install the following plant / equipment:

- Two new fans and filters for supply air at the rear.
- Three new condensing units for a chilled room in the kitchen at the rear.
- Two new outdoor units for A/C at roof top (incl. installation of cable tray and connection of pipe to outdoor units).

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Planning consent was previously granted in 2020 under application Ref. No. 19/10106/FULL for the installation of a new shopfront. The premises was in commercial use for some time prior to its recent period of vacancy.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) seeks to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation (para. 86 refers).

The proposed development is not considered contrary to NPPF policy. The overall area within which the premises sits is a mixed use vibrant area with significant variety in commercial premises and associated works. The proposed plant / equipment is essential for the commercial use to take place within.

London Plan (2021)

5.2 Policy SD6 of the new London Plan (2021) recognises the importance of mixed use town centres and supporting continued growth of commercial activity.

The proposed development is considered wholly in compliance with London Plan policy. Plant / equipment of the nature proposed is ubiquitous to the area.

Westminster City Plan 2019-2040

5.3 As per the Westminster Proposals Map, the site is within the Soho Conservation Area, Soho Special Policy Area, and West End Retail and Leisure Special Policy Area.

5.4 Policy 14 (Town centres, high streets, and the CAZ) is of relevance to the proposal. It states:

“A. The intensification of town centres, high streets and the CAZ to provide additional floorspace for main town centre uses is supported in principle, subject to impact on townscape and heritage. Proposals in existing town centres and high streets will enhance and diversify their offer as places to shop, work and spend leisure time.

B. Uses that provide active frontages and serve visiting members of the public will be required at the ground floor throughout the town centre hierarchy. Uses serving visiting members of the public will also be supported at first floor level within centres characterised by large format, multi-level stores. The use of upper floors for residential use is supported in principle across all parts of the town centre hierarchy except the International Centres.

C. All development within the town centre hierarchy will be of a scale, type and format that reflects and enhances the role and function of the centre within which it is proposed.

...”

The proposed development would not in any way be contrary to this policy.

5.5 Policies 39 (Heritage) and 40 (Townscape and Architecture) of the City Plan are of relevance. They state:

39. *“...Works to listed buildings will preserve their special interest, relating sensitively to the period and architectural detail of the building and protecting or, where appropriate, restoring original or significant detail and historic fabric...”*

...Development will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Westminster’s conservation areas. Features that contribute positively to the significance of conservation areas and their settings will be conserved and opportunities taken to enhance conservation areas and their settings, wherever possible...”

40. *“...Spaces and features that form an important element in Westminster’s local townscapes or contribute to the significance of a heritage asset will be conserved, enhanced and sensitively integrated within new development, including important architectural details, boundary walls and railings, historic roof forms or structures, open lightwells, historic or characteristic shopfronts and street furniture, as well as squares, parks and gardens. Where possible, lost or damaged features will be reinstated or restored...”*

The proposal is not considered contrary to these policies for the reasons set out in this Statement (refer to para. 5.7 below).

5.6 There would be no adverse impacts to neighbouring residential amenity. ***There are no residential windows within close proximity to the proposed plant / equipment. As noted above, the proposed plant / equipment would be sited next to many other plant equipment serving this and neighbour buildings - accordingly there would be negligible change in noise levels.***

Soho Conservation Area

5.7 According to the Soho & Chinatown Conservation Area Audit, the special interest of the conservation area is multi-faceted and includes its vibrancy, narrow streets, growing residential population, townscape, and diversity. No. 147 is not an unlisted building of merit. With regards the conservation area special features, it is not considered that the proposed works would in any way adversely affect the character. There would no adverse impact to the public realm whatsoever.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposed development is considered to be in compliance with NPPF policies.

6.2 The proposal is also considered in compliance with the Westminster City Plan.