HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Installation of Additional Roof Top AC

Condenser Units

Windmill Green, 15–24 Mount Street, Manchester, M2

Prepared by The TSK

Group for Neko Health

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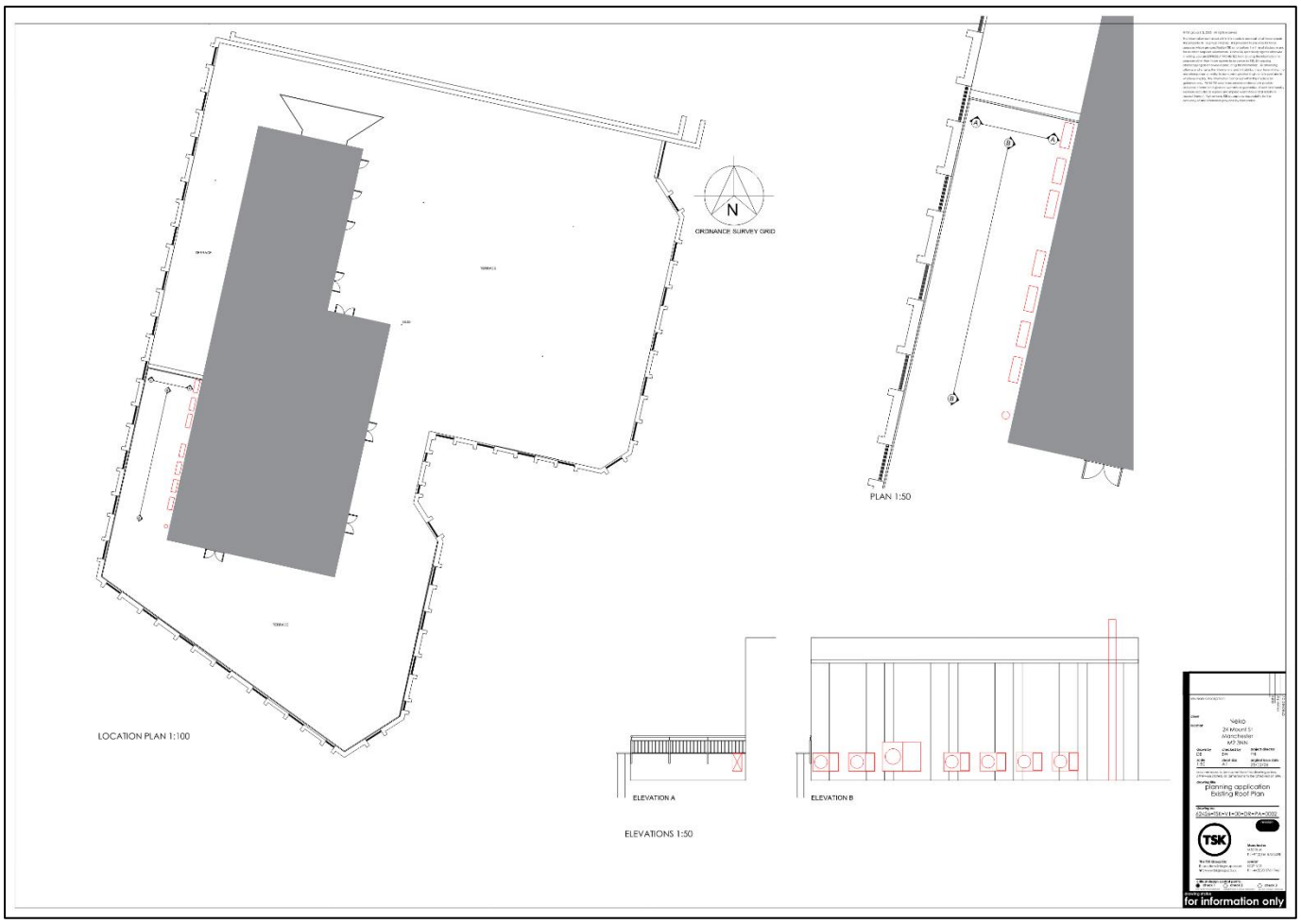
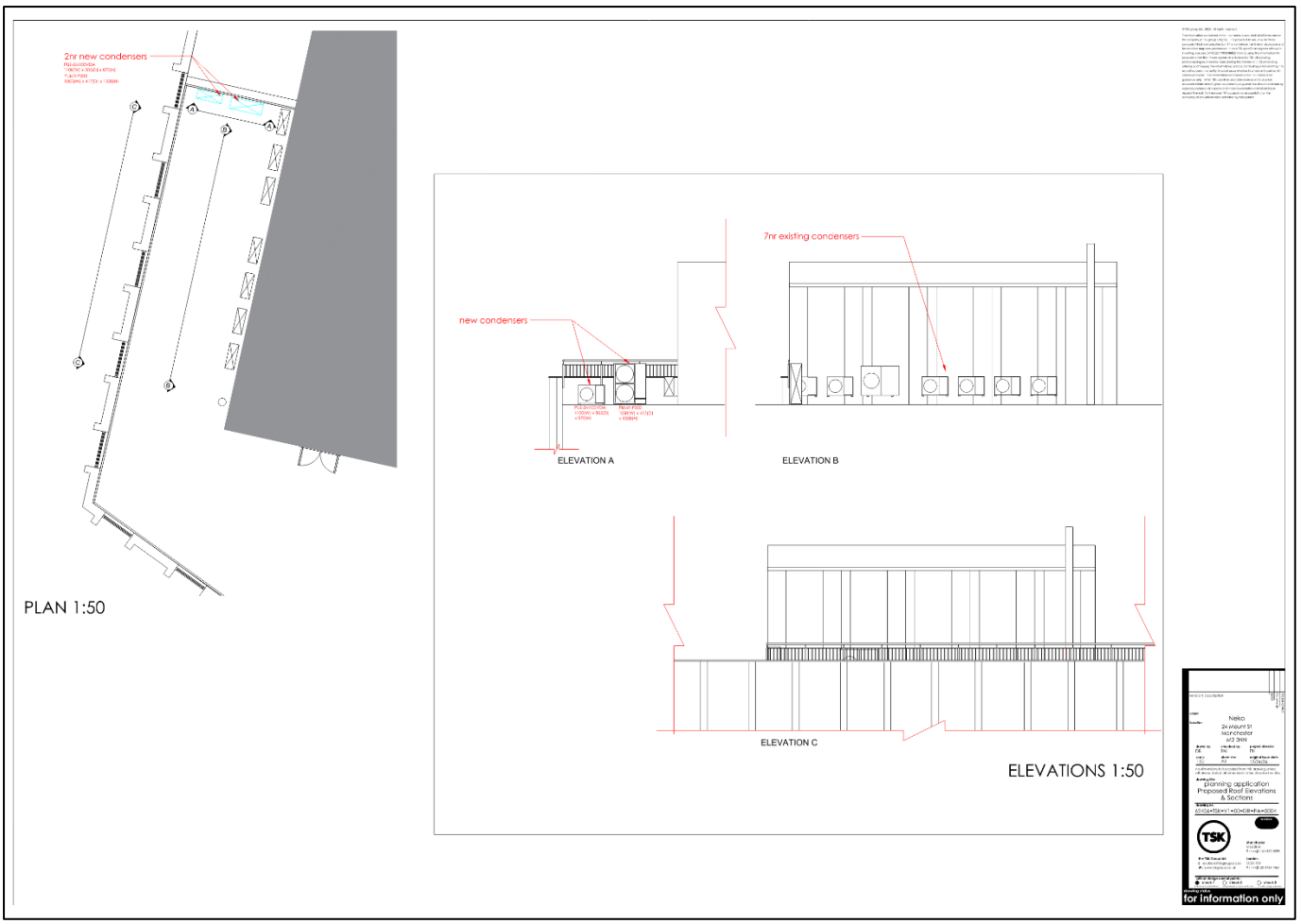
EXISTING ROOF PLAN



PROPOSED ROOF PLAN

PLANT SECTION / ELEVATION



HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Installation of Additional AC Condenser Units
Windmill Green, 15–24 Mount Street, Manchester, M2

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement supports a planning application for the installation of additional air-conditioning condenser units on the flat roof of Windmill Green. The site lies within a designated conservation area. The works are limited to roof-level plant adjacent to existing equipment and do not affect the external façades or historic fabric.

2. Site and Surroundings

Windmill Green is a refurbished multi-storey commercial office building on Mount Street within Manchester's Civic Quarter. Refer to Fig 1 location plan

The building was recently refurbished [2017] with subsequent external works granted planning permission in 2020. These works included extensive alterations including additional floors and external designated roof plant space to support the commercial viability as office accommodation. The surrounding townscape includes major civic and cultural buildings. The building is experienced primarily at street level, with roof areas visually screened.

Fig 1 – Site location plan

The building has its principal frontages and access along Windmill Street and Mount Street, albeit with secondary frontage along Museum Street. Immediately adjoining it to the north is the Grade II listed five-storey St. George's House, which is the former YMCA building now in use as offices with the ground floor retail unit being converted into a private Health clinic. St. Georges House fronts on to Peter Street to the north, which forms a main east-west route of the City linking the Manchester Corridor and St Peter's Square to Deansgate.

The 5 upper floors of Windmill Green comprise office floorspace with the ground floor retails units split between flex space and a retail unit

In addition to the Grade II listed St George's House to the immediate north, there are further listed buildings near the site. To the east, on the opposite side of Mount Street, is the Grade II* Listed Midland Hotel.

Opposite the site to the south is the Grade II* Listed former Central Station, now known as Manchester Central with a large area of public open space to its front which adjoins Windmill Road. Figure 2 below is extracted from the Historic England map search function with the blue triangles identifying the extent of listed buildings around the site, which is reflective of the historic character of Manchester City Centre.

The site is also within the St. Peter's Square Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1973 and contains a mixture of commercial, cultural and civic buildings of national importance.

3. Heritage Assets Affected

The heritage assets comprise the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed and historic buildings. Windmill Green itself is not listed. No direct physical alteration to designated heritage assets is proposed. Refer to Fig 2 – Listed building plan

Fig 2 – Listed building plan

4. Significance

The conservation area derives significance from its civic architecture, coherent townscape, and street-level architectural quality. Roofscapes are not key contributors to significance and commonly accommodate building equipment for later servicing.

5. Proposed Development

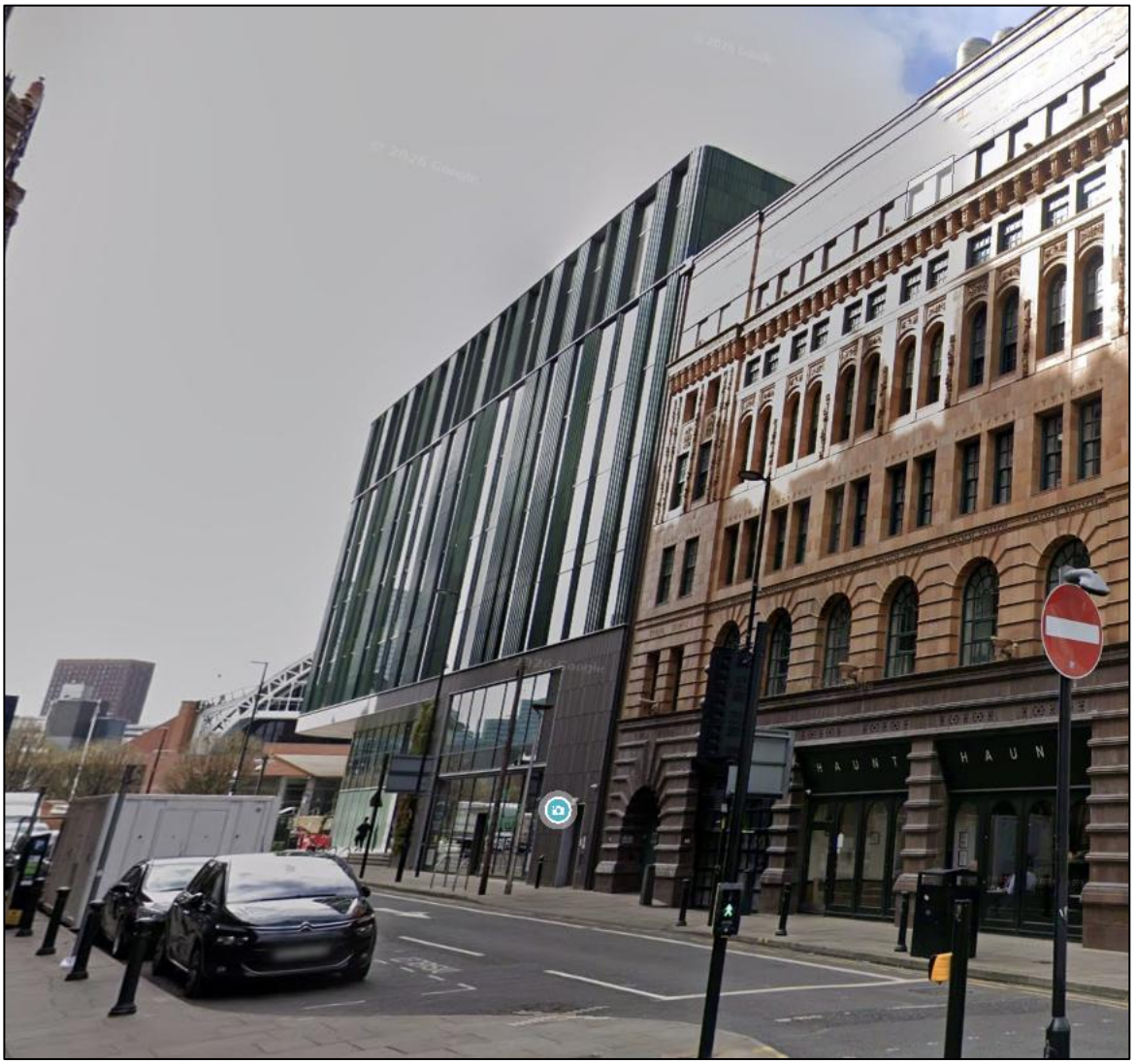
The planning application proposal includes minor works to the roof top plant area, adding 2no additional condenser units located on the existing flat roof, alongside current plant equipment. These new units are sized and located to minimize and public visual impact within the conservation space. The existing parapet line screens the proposed area from public view.

6. Visibility

Assessment of public sight lines confirms that the roof-level plant is not visible from Mount Street, Museum Street, or the surrounding public viewpoints due to parapet screening and urban enclosure. Refer to Street views below:-

Museum street sight line

Museum street view from Peter Street



Mount Street view from Peter Street

Winmill Street view from Central Plaza

7. Heritage Impact

Due to the location of the site within the St. Peter's Square Conservation Area and close to several listed buildings as identified earlier within this Statement, the NPPF requires that an assessment is made of the significance of these designated heritage assets and their settings affected by development, and of the impacts of that development upon them.

The St. Peter's Square Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and contains a mixture of commercial, cultural and civic buildings of national importance.

There are 11 listed buildings nearby the application site as set out in Section 2 of this Statement. Of these, only four have the potential to be affected by the development as they are adjacent to Windmill Green.

These include:

- St. George's House - Connects to Windmill Green to the north.
- Former Theatre Royal – To the west of the site on the opposite side of Museum Street.
- Midland Hotel – To the east of the site on the opposite side of Mount Street
- Manchester Central– To the south of the site on the opposite side of Windmill Street.

Policy EN3 of the Core Strategy encourages development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City

Centres. The policy requires new development to be designed to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.

There will be a negligible impact upon the Conservation Area because of these minor roof works. The proposed units will be situated adjacent to existing external equipment and effectively screen by the roof and building parapet.

Regarding the impact on nearby Listed Buildings, while these building are adjacent to Windmill Green, there will again be no impact upon their setting due to the scale of the proposed changes.

We conclude that the development works at the site will not lead to any harm to the significance of the heritage assets, and in accordance with the NPPF, the benefits of a proposal including the ongoing viable operation of the retail unit in the building, should be weighed in favour of approval of the change. The proposal preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area and complies with national and local heritage policy.

8. Design mitigation

The plant is the minimum size required to service the ground floor retail business to minimize visual impact. The units have been consolidated with existing roof equipment, set back from parapets, in the shadow of the roof enclosure.

9. Conclusion

The proposal will not alter historic fabric, roof profile, or public views. The impact on heritage significance is assessed as no harm.

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for the site currently comprises:
- Manchester Core Strategy, 2012;
- Extant Manchester Unitary Development Plan Policies (Saved July 2012)

Regard should also be given to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) in Manchester City Council.

Policy Allocations

Within the Manchester Core Strategy, the site is located with the Regional Centre of the North West and the City Centre boundary of Manchester.

As outlined earlier within this Statement, the site is also within the St. Peter's Square Conservation Area, and whilst Windmill Green is not a Listed Building, there are several nearby, including:

- Harvester House – Grade II
- Lancaster House – Grade II
- Free Trade Hall – Grade II
- Former Theatre Royal – Grade II
- St George's House (Former YMCA) – Grade II
- Midland Hotel – Grade II*
- G Mex (former Central Station) – Grade II*
- Central Library – Grade II*
- Town Hall Extension – Grade II*
- Town Hall – Grade I
- Albert Memorial – Grade I

The site is within the City Centre's Civic Quarter, which is bound by Deansgate to the west; Peter Street, Mount Street and Lower Mosley Street to the north; Portland Street, Oxford Street and Lower Mosley Street to the east; and Whitworth Street West to the south. The Civic Quarter is characterised by large freestanding buildings including the Midland Hotel, which is directly to the east of Windmill Green.

Appendix A – Key Planning Policy References

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Historic England: The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3)
- Manchester Local Plan – Conservation Policies