

Rooftop Plant Design Statement

11 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3HU

Prepared for: Convene / ETC Venues

Prepared by: David Briggs on behalf of Synergy Architects Ltd

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Status: PLANNING APPLICATION

synergy architects

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

This design statement has been prepared by Synergy Architects in support of the planning application pertaining to the proposed installation of two no. external air conditioning condenser units to the existing roof top plant area (ninth storey) at 11 Portland Street, Manchester.

The application is made on behalf of Convene / ETC Venues to overcome an additional cooling requirement within their eighth floor demise in both their kitchen and associated pantry area, which serve to support the main training, conference and function provision on this floor. These rooms often suffer from overheating and the new units will help to provide a more comfortable working environment.

The new internal AC units will need to be served by external condenser units, for which this application is made. This statement should be read alongside all accompanying submitted drawings and documents to provide a full overview of the proposals.

2.0 SITE INFORMATION

2.1 Location

11 Portland Street, formerly known as Westminster House, is a 1970's office building situated in a prominent location in Manchester's city centre, bounded by Minshull Street to the south-west, Portland Street to the north-west, and Aytoun Street to the north-east. It is a nine-storey multi-tenant office building, providing approximately 15,100 square metres of lettable space. Convene / ETC Venues occupy the eighth floor only.

The building is well located for public transport. Piccadilly and Oxford Road stations are both within easy walking distance and several bus and tram routes run through the adjacent Piccadilly Gardens.

Access to the building is via a main entrance on the corner of Portland Street and Aytoun street, with a secondary access off Minshull Street.

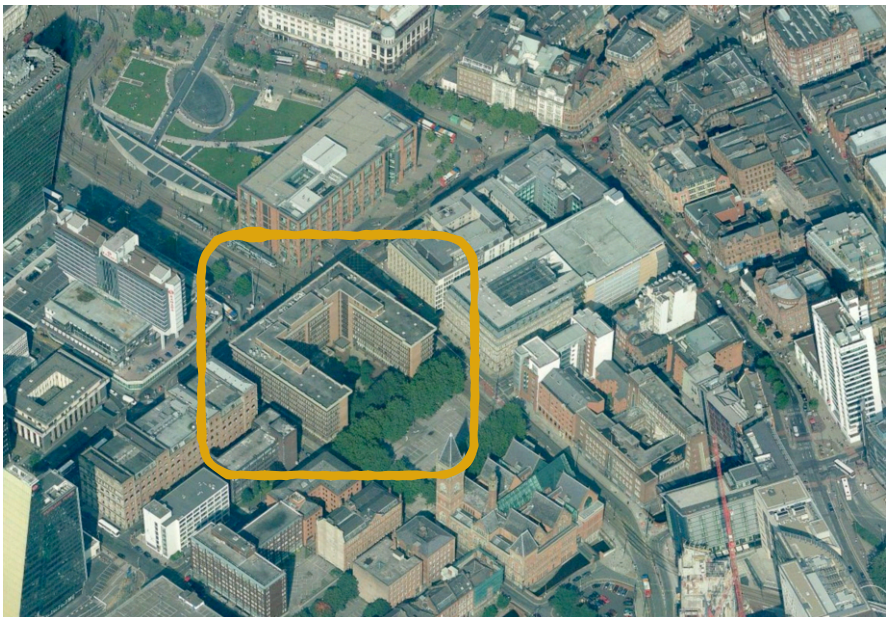


Figure 1 Aerial view of site

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 Proposed Works

The scope of this application relates to the installation of two no. small wall-mounted external condenser units at roof level, one no. to replace an existing under-performing unit serving the small pantry plus one no. additional unit to supplement the existing kitchen cooling/ventilation.

The proposed condensers will be mounted on the external face of an existing rooftop plant room wall, in the location of the existing unit to be replaced. The condensers will be mostly hidden behind existing large deck-mounted units which sit in front of them, which in turn are screened by the existing roof edge parapet from the surrounding street level. Refer to the project drawings for further information.

The proposed condensers will be no larger or higher than many of the existing condensers and other rooftop plant surrounding them which have previously been granted planning consent in recent years.

They will be wall-mounted on a proprietary cantilevered Unistrut-type support system, in the same way as the many other units already present here, sized to suit the weight of the units and provide the necessary clearances to all sides.

Any associated new or replacement refrigeration pipework will follow the same route through the plant rooms as the existing to reach the internal units on the eighth floor.

The installation will meet the local authority guidelines on noise emission from roof plant and noise attenuation measures.

The plant is proposed to operate between 06.30 and 18.30 with occasional operation until 21.00.

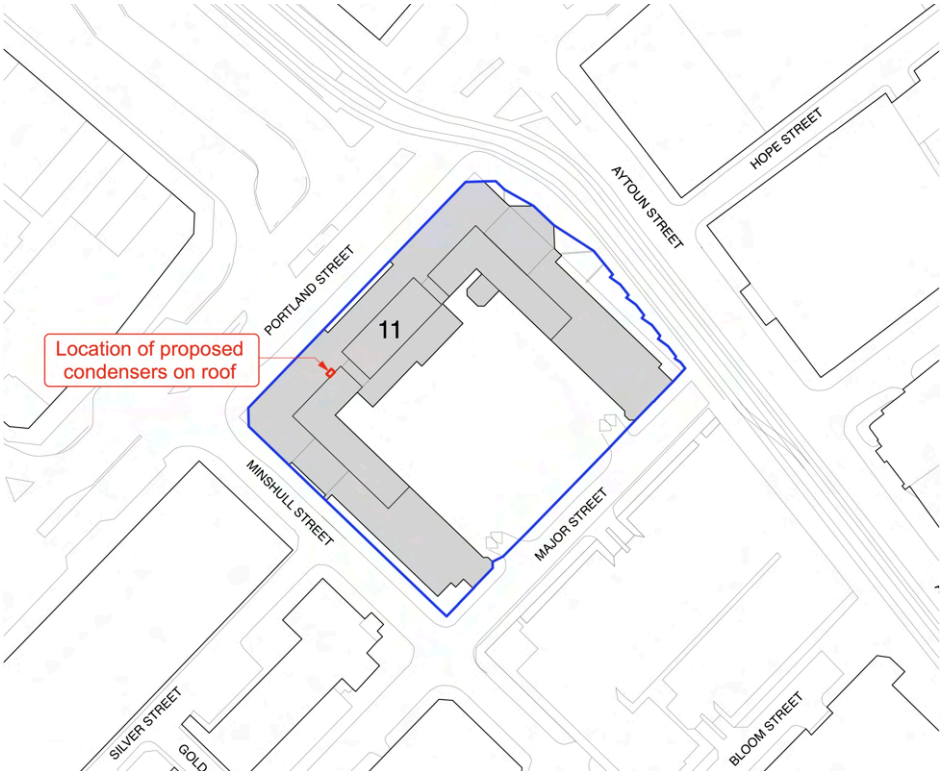


Figure 2 Site plan illustrating location of proposed units

3.2 Equipment Specification

The following modern, energy-efficient, external units have been sized and selected by Campbell & Law to ensure that the required level of cooling is provided:

- New Unit: 1 x Midea CB1-24HFNX-O condenser, size W890mm x D342mm x H673mm.
- Replacement Unit: 1 x Midea MOX23OU-12HFN8-Q(GA) condenser, size W765mm x D303mm x H555mm.

Technical data sheets for both units are included in the submission documentation, which include information on the broadband sound pressure levels used in the sound impact assessment.

4.0 VISUAL IMPACT

4.1 Location

As previously stated, it is intended that the two units will be wall-mounted one above the other on the outside of the ninth floor roof plant room wall facing towards Portland Street, in the location of an existing underperforming single unit which is to be replaced.

The proposed units are surrounded on all sides by existing plant installations.

Refer to the project drawings for full information on the proposed location of the units.

4.2 Visibility

The proposed condensers will be installed on the outside of the existing plant room wall, located over 8m back from the inside face of the roof parapet, and will be substantially hidden behind existing larger deck-mounted units which are to be retained - see Figure 3 below.

The new units will not be visible from the surrounding street level and may only be marginally seen above the existing units if viewed from the same platform level of an adjacent facing building.

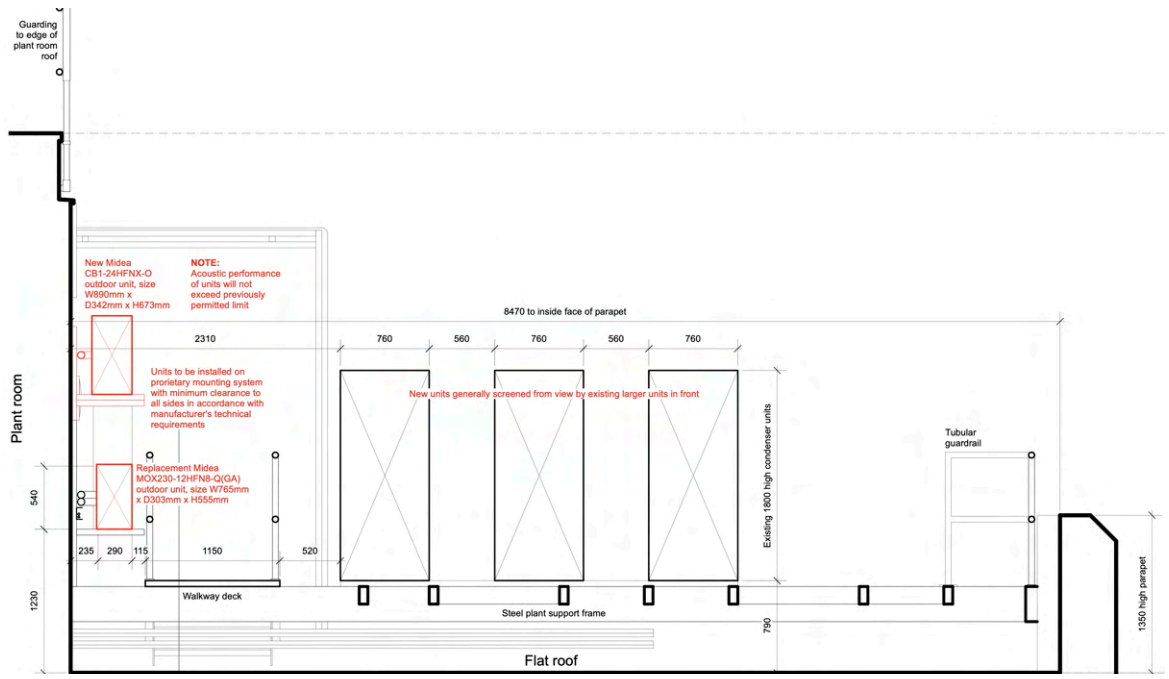


Figure 3 Roof section illustrating new units in red

4.3 Visual Impact Summary

Much larger plant equipment is already installed on the roof closer to the parapet edge and therefore the visual impact of the new units is considered insignificant and of having no detrimentally effect on the existing building or surrounding area.

5.0 ACOUSTIC IMPACT

5.1 Standard Guidance

BS 4142:2014:+A1:2019 *Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound* (BS 4142) provides a method for assessing noise from items such as building services plant against the existing background sound levels at nearby noise sensitive premises.

BS 4142 suggests that if the noise level is 10 dB or more higher than the existing background sound level, it is likely to be an indication of a significant adverse impact. If the level is 5 dB above the existing background sound level, it is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact. If the level does not exceed the background sound level, it is an indication of having a low impact.

If the noise contains 'attention catching features' such as tones, bangs etc, a penalty, based on the type and impact of those features, is applied.

5.2 Local Authority Criteria

Manchester City Council provides guidance in relation to plant noise emissions in their *Planning & Noise Technical Guidance* document dated May 2022, which states the following:

'The development should be designed so as to achieve a rating level of 5 dB (L_{Aeq}) below the typical background (L_{A90}) level at the nearest noise sensitive location.'

Corrections for tonal or attention catching characteristics need to be applied to the rating level in accordance with BS4142: 2014, as stated above.

5.3 Noise Survey

Sandy Brown Acoustics were commissioned to provide acoustic advice in relation to this application.

An environmental noise survey was carried out between 12:20 on 21 January 2026 and 13:35 on 26 January 2026 to determine the existing background sound levels in the area.

The representative background sound levels from this survey were $L_{A90,15min}$ 56 dB during the day, and $L_{A90,15min}$ 53 dB during the night.

The full Noise Impact Assessment report has been submitted as part of the application documents (Doc. Ref 026953-R01-A Acoustic Planning Report) and should be referred to for full details of test method and results.

5.4 Acoustic Impact Summary

Based on the requirements of the Manchester City Council and on the results of the noise survey, all plant must be designed such that the cumulative noise level at 1m from the worst affected windows of the nearby noise sensitive premises does not exceed L_{Aeq} 54 dB during the day and L_{Aeq} 51 dB at night.

These limits are cumulative, and apply with all plant operating under normal conditions. If plant items contain tonal or attention catching features, a penalty based on the type and impact of those features will be applied, and the limits will be more stringent than those set.

An initial assessment of the proposed plant items associated with the development has been carried out and the proposed plant items are expected to comply with the relevant noise limits - Refer to Doc. Ref 026953-R01-A Acoustic Planning Report for full assessment details.

The assessment results do not account for attention catching features, and it should be ensured that these are accounted for in the final design and commissioning of the plant items.

6.0 SUMMARY

6.1 Proposal Summary

The proposed units are to be discreetly located at roof level so they cannot be seen from the surrounding roads, and will not disturb other building tenants or those in adjacent properties.

In light of the negligible visual impact and compliant acoustic performance of the proposed units, and in the absence of any significant material considerations, it is considered that planning permission should be granted accordingly.