

CUBE PLANNING

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Roof-Mounted Air Conditioning Unit

Flat 7, 22 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX
Crouch End Conservation Area

Site	Flat 7, 22 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX
Proposal	Installation of a single external air-conditioning condenser unit at roof level
Drawing	Drawing No. 1A - Existing / Proposed Front / Rear / Side Elevations
Heritage designation	Crouch End Conservation Area
Purpose	Planning and heritage assessment in support of the proposed installation

1. Introduction

This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the installation of one external air-conditioning condenser unit serving Flat 7 at 22 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX. The property lies within the Crouch End Conservation Area. The statement considers the visual, heritage and residential amenity implications of the proposal, with particular regard to the submitted elevation drawing and to the approach taken by the London Borough of Haringey in the supplied officer report for a comparable residential air-conditioning proposal within another conservation area.

2. Site and Heritage Context

22 Crescent Road is a substantial traditional residential building whose principal elevation contributes to the established architectural character of Crescent Road and the wider Crouch End Conservation Area. The significance relevant to this proposal is principally derived from the building's external architectural composition, roof form and its contribution to the surrounding historic streetscape.

The submitted Drawing No. 1A illustrates the existing and proposed front, rear and side elevations. It expressly records that the proposed air-conditioning unit is not visible from the streetscene and that there is no visible change to the proposed front elevation. The drawing also indicates a compact unit at roof level, approximately 0.27 m high with plan dimensions shown as approximately 0.47 m by 0.77 m.

3. The Proposal

The proposal is for a single, compact external condenser unit positioned at roof level to serve Flat 7. No alteration is proposed to the principal front elevation and the installation does not involve an extension, dormer, change to the principal roof profile, or removal of identified architectural features. The unit is deliberately located so that it is visually recessive and screened by the existing roof form when viewed from the public realm.

4. Planning Policy Context

The relevant development-plan considerations are design quality, conservation of heritage significance and protection of neighbouring amenity. Haringey Development Management DPD Policy DM9 requires proposals affecting heritage assets to be assessed against their significance and requires alterations in conservation areas to be sensitive to the architectural style, scale, proportions, materials and details of the host building. Policies DM1 and DM12 address high-quality, context-sensitive design, while Local Plan Policies SP11 and SP12 address design and the historic environment. London Plan Policy HC1 requires development affecting heritage assets and their settings to conserve their significance. London Plan Policy D14 and Haringey Policy DM23 are relevant to noise from mechanical plant.

The Crouch End Conservation Area Character Appraisal is also a material heritage consideration. Its purpose is to identify the special architectural and historic interest of the area so that change can be managed in a manner that preserves or enhances that character.

5. Heritage Significance and Impact

5.1 Significance

For the purposes of this modest proposal, the heritage significance of the conservation area is experienced through the coherent historic townscape, the architectural quality of individual buildings, established roof forms, and the contribution that principal elevations make to public views. The host building's front elevation and roof silhouette therefore warrant particular sensitivity.

5.2 Visual impact of the proposed unit

The proposal has been designed to avoid material interference with those elements of significance. Drawing No. 1A demonstrates no visible change to the front elevation and identifies the condenser as not visible from the streetscene. Its low height and compact dimensions mean that it would remain a subordinate item of plant rather than a new architectural feature. It would not compete with the building's principal elevation, alter the apparent massing of the property, or interrupt the principal roof form in public views.

Accordingly, the installation would preserve the character and appearance of the host building and the Crouch End Conservation Area. Any heritage effect would be negligible and neutral. No harmful change to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area has been identified.

6. Relevant Haringey Officer Report

The supplied Haringey officer report for application HGY/2025/3410 at 24 Lansdowne Road is not a precedent for this site and concerns a different conservation area and building. It is nevertheless a useful indication of the Council's assessment of small-scale residential air-conditioning equipment. In that case, Haringey's Heritage Officer considered the wider proposal to have a neutral impact on the conservation area, while the planning officer concluded that an air-conditioning unit in a visually discreet location would not materially harm the host building. The officer report ultimately found that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the host building and conservation area.

The present proposal follows the same core design principle - visual discretion - and is stronger in one important respect: the submitted elevations expressly demonstrate that the unit would not be visible from the streetscene and that the front elevation would remain visually unchanged.

7. Residential Amenity and Noise

A roof-mounted condenser has the potential to generate operational noise and vibration, and these matters should be controlled so that neighbouring occupiers are not materially affected. The supplied Haringey officer report treated noise as capable of being satisfactorily controlled by condition and imposed a plant-noise criterion measured at the nearest residential premises.

It is therefore appropriate for the proposed unit to be installed on suitable anti-vibration mounts and operated and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements. The applicant would accept a proportionate planning condition requiring plant noise to comply with the Council's applicable noise standard at the nearest noise-sensitive residential receptor. If requested by the Local Planning Authority, technical acoustic data or a competent-person assessment can be provided to demonstrate compliance.

8. Cooling and Sustainability

The submitted comparator officer report records Haringey's cooling-hierarchy policy but concluded that applying the full hierarchy would be overly onerous for a householder proposal involving only one air-conditioning unit. The current proposal is similarly limited to a single domestic condenser. The installation is therefore modest in scale and should be considered proportionately, alongside reasonable measures to reduce overheating and unnecessary energy use within the flat.

9. Planning Balance

The proposed development is a minor item of domestic plant with a deliberately discreet siting. The key heritage test is whether it would preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area. The submitted drawing demonstrates that it would not be visible from the streetscene and would produce no visible alteration to the principal front elevation. Its small scale ensures that it remains subordinate to the host building.

Subject to appropriate installation and noise control, there is no identified material harm to neighbouring amenity. The proposal therefore accords in principle with the design, heritage and environmental protection objectives identified above.

10. Conclusion

The proposed single roof-mounted air-conditioning unit at Flat 7, 22 Crescent Road has been sensitively located to minimise its visual effect. It would be concealed from the streetscene, would leave the principal elevation visually unchanged, and would not materially alter the building's roof form or architectural composition. The character and appearance of the Crouch End Conservation Area would therefore be preserved.

With suitable controls over noise and vibration, the installation would also safeguard neighbouring residential amenity. The proposal is consequently considered acceptable in planning and heritage terms, and planning permission is respectfully sought.

Appendix A - Documents Reviewed

Drawing No. 1A: Flat 7, 22 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX - Proposed A/C - Existing / Proposed Front / Rear / Side Elevations.

London Borough of Haringey Officer Report, application HGY/2025/3410, 24 Lansdowne Road, London N10 2AX.

Haringey Development Management DPD, including Policies DM1, DM9, DM12 and DM23.

Haringey Local Plan, including Policies SP11 and SP12.

London Plan (2021), including Policies HC1, D6 and D14.

Crouch End Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

Appendix B - Suggested Supporting Information

For submission, the application should also include the manufacturer's technical specification for the proposed condenser (dimensions, sound power/sound pressure data and operating modes), confirmation of anti-vibration mounting, and - if requested by the Council - an acoustic assessment addressing the nearest noise-sensitive receptor. These technical particulars were not contained in the materials supplied for preparation of this statement.