

KS/FC/P23-1764

20 December 2023

Development Management
London Borough of Camden
Camden Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London
WC1H 8EQ

Dear Sir/Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)
Planning Application for Canopy and Advertisement Consent Application
Ragged School, 18 Vine Hill, London, EC1R 5DZ
Planning Portal Ref: PP-12364398

Lotus Technology Innovative Limited ('the Applicant') seek to submit a full planning application and advertisement consent application for the following development at Ragged School, 18 Vine Hill, London, EC1R 5DZ ('the site'):

"Installation of a canopy above existing entrance door and installation and display of 1no. illuminated sign set within canopy."

Accordingly, the following documentation has been submitted via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-12364398):

1. Application Form;
2. CIL Form;
3. Architectural drawings, prepared by Modus Workspace Ltd:
 - a. Site Location Plan (ref. I- PL- 080- 01 Rev A);
 - b. Site Plan (ref. I- PL- 081- 01 Rev A);
 - c. Existing Entrance Plans and Elevations (ref. I- PL- 082- 01 Rev A)
 - d. Proposed Entrance Plans and Elevations (ref. I- PL- 083- 01 Rev A)
 - e. Proposed Canopy Detail (ref. I- PL- 084- 01 Rev A)
4. Planning Assessment (included within this letter); and
5. Heritage Assessment (included within this letter).

Payment of the requisite planning application fee of £293 and advertisement consent application fee of £165 will be made to the Council under separate cover.

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Site Description

The application site comprises the Ragged School building at 18 Vine Hill. The building itself extends to part three / part four storeys plus lower ground, and has recently been refurbished and extended as part of a wider redevelopment including erection of an 8 storey mixed-use hotel building to the east fronting Eyre Street Hill.

The application site comprises Class E office use. The building has recently been extended and reconfigured internally as part of the wider approved works, and a new entrance has been installed fronting Vine Hill, as shown in the image below.



Figure 1 – CGI of Application Site fronting Vine Hill

The site is located at the far northern end of Vine Hill, a street which is accessed via Clerkenwell Road. A small footpath links the end of the street to Rosebery Avenue. The surrounding area comprises a variety of commercial (mainly office) and residential uses, with the new hotel immediately to the east of the site. Clerkenwell Road features a number of food and drink uses at this part, with a restaurant and pub adjoining the entrance to Vine Hill.

The site is located within Hatton Garden Conservation Area. The building is not statutory listed or locally listed.



According to the Environment Agency's Flood Map, the site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1 which indicates a 'low' probability of flooding.

Planning History

A search of the Council's online planning records has revealed numerous applications on the site relating to the refurbishment and extension of the office accommodation at the application site at 18 Vine Hill and associated mixed use redevelopment of the adjoining site at 15-29 Eyre Street Hill. The following applications are of relevance to the proposal:

2018/6016/P – *Erection of an 8 storey building comprising a 153 bed hotel (Class C1) with ancillary ground floor restaurant/cafe facilities (Class A3) and 9 flats (5 x 1 bed and 4 x 3 bed) (Class C3), excavation works to enlarge the lower ground floor level and create a lift pith, following demolition of the existing rear annex and garages at 18 Vine Hill, together with refurbishment of 18 Vine Hill and the erection of a 3 storey extension to provide additional office accommodation (Class B1(a)), hard and soft landscaping and other associated works. Granted 2 January 2020*

2020/0985/P – *Alteration to ramps and stairs in office entrance, WC facilities to upper floor, alteration to lower ground change facilities of office, installation of mezzanine level in office at fifth floor, reconfiguration of hotel rooms to provide an additional 7 rooms to be 153, ground floor reconfiguration of front of house and back of house facilities in hotel and introduction of partition wall to 3 bed units to separate living and kitchen/dining areas of planning permission 2018/6016/P dated 02/01/2020. Granted 4 June 2020*

2020/0984/P – *Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) of planning permission 2018/6016/P dated 02/01/2020, namely alterations to the hotel to reduce height of building by 900mm, amend pre-cast concrete panels to glass reinforced concrete panels, reconfigure PV panels on roof, and revise ventilation strategy for hotel rooms on Eyre Street Hill; alterations to the office building to relocate plant to 2nd floor external terrace with installation of associated plant enclosure, alter back of house layout, increase number of WCs and form new fire escape from stair core. Granted 5 March 2021.*

2022/5115/P – *Amendments (changes to door and window details) planning permission 2020/0984/P dated 12/01/2021 which itself varied 2018/6016/P dated 02/01/2020. Granted 17 July 2023.*

2023/1446/A – *Display of 2 x internally illuminated fascia signs, 2 x externally illuminated fascia signs, 1 x internally illuminated projecting sign all at ground floor level and 1 x internally illuminated projecting sign at 3rd floor level. Granted 24 July 2023.*



Proposed Development

This application seeks planning permission and advertisement consent in order to facilitate occupation of the newly refurbished site at 18 Vine Hill by the intended Class E office operator. Specifically, the application seeks planning permission for:

- Installation of a small canopy above the newly installed entrance doors.

The application also seeks advertisement consent for the installation and display of the following advertisement:

- 1no. internally illuminated sign to the canopy, to be set within the canopy with the lettering flush to the canopy fascia.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden Council comprises the Local Plan (2017) and the London Plan (2021).

Other material considerations that are relevant to the application proposals include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023), and relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

The key policies relevant to this application are outlined below.

Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy D1 'Design' states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development respects local context and character, comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character, integrates well with the surrounding streets and contributes positively to the street frontage, and carefully integrates building service equipment. The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Policy A1 'Managing the Impact of Development' outlines that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours and will grant permission for development unless this causes unacceptable harm to amenity.

Policy D4 'Advertisements' states that the Council will require advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. Advertisements must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design,



material and detail. The Council will support advertisements that preserve the character and amenity of the area; and preserve or enhance heritage assets and conservation areas.

The Council will resist advertisements that contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area; contribute to street clutter in the public realm; cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or wildlife habitats; have flashing illuminated elements; or impact upon public safety. The Council will also resist advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, except in exceptional circumstances.

Policy D2 'Heritage' states that the Council will require development within a Conservation Area to preserve or, where possible, enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Supplementary Documents: Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)

CPG 'Advertisements' (March 2018) states that advertisements and signs should respect the form, fabric, design and scale of the host building and setting. With regards to illumination, the guidance states that the level of illumination should consider the intensity, the surface area to be illuminated, and the positioning and colours. Illuminated signs should not be flashing or intermittent. The internal illumination of individual letters is generally considered appropriate.

CPG1 'Design' (January 2021) states at Section 6 that canopies are likely to be acceptable where they are a blind box integrated with the overall design and of an appropriate width. Chapter 3 considers heritage and states that development within conservation areas will only be permitted that preserves and where possible enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Planning Assessment

This application seeks planning permission for the installation of a canopy to the newly completed entrance to the refurbished office premises at 18 Vine Hill, together with advertisement consent for 1no. internally illuminated sign set within the canopy. The proposals are relatively minor in nature and scale, and will facilitate occupation of the newly refurbished offices.

Careful consideration has been given to the scale, siting, and detailed design of the proposed development to ensure that the proposal will respect the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

Canopy

The proposed canopy will be a very modest addition which will remain clearly subservient to the host building, which extends to four storeys in scale. The scale and siting of the canopy will respect the architectural form and proportions of the host building, extending the width of the newly completed entrance above which it will be sited, and projecting beyond the face of the existing entrance by only a very modest 0.17m. There will be no architectural features of merit obscured as a result of the proposal.



The canopy will incorporate high quality material which will respect and complement the materiality of the newly completed modern entrance doors to which it will be affixed, which will ensure the alterations integrate sensitively with the appearance of the host building. The dark muted finish will ensure it appears appropriate within the conservation area and preserves its character.

In terms of amenity, the canopy will provide a sufficient clearance from ground level of 2.98m which will ensure no adverse impact on public safety. It should be noted that the canopy will project over privately owned land outside the main entrance, however, it will not project over the public highway.

On the basis of the above, by reason of its careful and considered design, the proposed development will accord with Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) and Chapter 3 of Camden Planning Guidance 'Design'.

Advertisement

The proposed sign will be located within the new canopy above the main entrance. The sign will be sited to the right hand side of the canopy, above the sliding door of the main entrance, enhancing legibility of the entranceway for visitors.

The scale of the proposed sign is considered appropriate when viewed in context of the scale of the host building, which extends to four storeys in height. The sign will be very modest when viewed in this context, being neatly contained within the confines of the fascia of the new canopy with the height of the lettering only extending to 155mm. The width of the sign is also very modest, extending to only 760mm; only a quarter of the width of the canopy.

The sign will incorporate individual lettering, which will be set back within the canopy itself, with the lettering flush to the canopy fascia, ensuring it integrates seamlessly.

With regard to method of illumination, the proposed sign will comprise internally illuminated individual letters. It should be noted that the entrance is modern, having been recently completed following approval of the wider redevelopment refurbishment and works as outlined in the Planning History section above. This given, an internally illuminated sign is considered appropriate in this context to this new modern entrance, particularly given the very modest scale of the sign.

The principle of internally illuminated signage is established and has been accepted within the wider surrounding conservation area. Indeed, internally illuminated signage has been supported by the Council at the adjacent hotel site at 15-29 Eyre Street Hill, for which advertisement consent was granted in July 2023 for 2no. internally illuminated fascia signs and 1no. internally illuminated projecting sign at ground floor level and 1no. internally illuminated projecting sign at 3rd floor level (ref. 2023/1446/A). Notwithstanding this, the level of illumination to the proposed sign will remain discreet and careful consideration has been given to ensure that the illumination will be limited to the lettering only, which is of a very small size, and setback within the canopy, in order to minimise the visual impact and ensure that there will be no adverse impact on highways or pedestrian safety.



In summary, the proposed advertisement has been carefully designed in order to ensure that there will be no adverse impact on visual amenity or public safety, whilst also respecting the character and appearance of both the host building and the wider surrounding area. The proposed advertisements therefore will accord with Policies D1, D4 and A1 of the Local Plan and CPG 'Advertisements'.

Heritage Assessment

As the site falls within the boundaries of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, the proposals have the potential to impact its character and appearance. This section will assess the significance of the Conservation Area, including any contribution the site makes to that significance, as well as the impact of the proposals on that significance.

The Hatton Garden Conservation Area was first designated in 1999. A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted on 12th September 2017. The Appraisal summarises the character as follows:

"The character of the Area is varied, with no single period, style or use predominating. Yet, there is a conspicuously high proportion of Victorian former warehouses and twentieth-century commercial buildings, and a smattering of Georgian houses, all of which are the direct result of the history of the Area. Today there are a mix of uses, especially commercial and residential."

The Appraisal goes on to describe the activities within the Conservation Area, both historically and currently, and how they contribute to its character and appearance.

The significance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area is principally derived from those elements of its intrinsic character and appearance detailed in the Appraisal. These comprise aspects of its historic layout and street patterns, historic built form and limited green spaces, all of which contribute to the combined historic, architectural, artistic, and archaeological interest of the designation area. Most of these interests can be better appreciated as part of key views within and towards the designation area.

Given the variety of characteristics, the Appraisal subdivides the Conservation Area into various character areas. Sub-area 1: Rosebery Avenue includes the application site and is described as follows:

"Spatial character

5.3 Sub-area 1, in the northern part of the Area, forms a dense pattern of short, narrow, hilly streets, contained within a framework of three major thoroughfares: Gray's Inn Road, Rosebery Avenue and Clerkenwell Road. The complex medieval street plan, cut through by these three nineteenth-century roads, creates surprising vistas and transitions in the townscape that are integral to the character. There are many curving or angular plot boundaries and there are also interesting



changes in level. For example, it is possible to turn off the broad, tree-lined Rosebery Avenue, descend steep steps and find yourself in Vine Hill, a narrow lane with a strong sense of enclosure.

Architectural character

5.4 Much of Sub-area 1 has a strongly defined architectural character derived from its large and impressive late nineteenth-century housing blocks. These include austere 'model dwellings' in London stock brick (e.g. Cavendish Mansions, Clerkenwell Road; Positive) and more decorative mansion blocks in red brick with stucco ornaments (e.g. Churston, Dawlish, Dulverton and Tiverton Mansions on Gray's Inn Road; Positive). There are also several large industrial buildings of similar or later date, including Panther House, grouped around a secluded courtyard off Mount Pleasant (Positive), and Herbal House (Positive), a monumentally treated former print works on Herbal Hill and Back Hill. As a result the overall architectural character is robust and strongly articulated though not highly decorative. The irregular street pattern has created many wedge-shaped sites that some of the best buildings turn to advantage, e.g. 144 Clerkenwell Road (Positive), which sweeps round dramatically into Back Hill. Red brick and London stock brick are the predominant materials."

The application site is at the northern end of Vine Hill and terminates the view down Vine Hill from Clerkenwell Road. This area mainly comprises the larger former warehouses, schools or mansion blocks from the Victorian/Edwardian area and has a secondary appearance by virtue of the restrained architectural detailing and secondary thoroughfare. The application site is a former school, having been constructed in 1878/9 as the "Ragged School" for homeless people, and has an overtly Victorian appearance with the historic entrance on the eastern side of Vine Hill. Given the retention of this detailing and the legibility of its former use as a school, the building is considered a positive contributor to the wider Conservation Area. This is confirmed in the Appraisal.

Impact Assessment

The proposals include the installation of a canopy with associated signage above a previously approved new entrance to the building (2018/6016/P). With respect to the new entrance, the Committee Report stated the following:

"12.28 The office entrance will be relocated from the entry portico of the tower to the south façade of the Ragged School building at the bottom of Vine Hill. This façade terminates the 'locally significant view' along Vine Hill. The entrance would create a more inviting, grand and accessible entrance to the office whilst reactivating this currently blank façade. The entrance would match the age and style of the building façade terminating the 'locally significant view' along Vine Hill."

The proposed canopy has been positioned in the location of the existing transom above the entrance. This will allow for continued appreciation of the new entrance as approved. It will only extend out by 500mm to accommodate advertisements and illumination rather than any



additional prominence in the streetscene. This will ensure that the historic entrance to the Ragged School remains prominent whilst the new entrance has more legibility. The canopy will only be the width of the new opening, thus not affecting any historic fabric. Given the shallow depth and modest size of the canopy, it will not obscure or affect any views of the constrained detailing of the wider building, nor will it alter any local views down Vine Hill from Clerkenwell Road.

The proposed lettering is also modest and right-justified on the canopy in contrast with the existing 'The Ragged School' lettering above. This creates some balance on the entrance, which will still be read as a sensitively-designed addition to the positively contributing building. Lastly, the canopy will provide illumination below, which will add to the officer's previous comments of the entrance being more *"inviting, grand and accessible"*. Overall, the proposals will not change the way the site and wider Ragged School contribute to the streetscene and surrounding Conservation Area.

With reference to the levels of harm in the NPPF, the proposals will result in 'no harm' to the significance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. Thus, the proposals will fulfil the statutory requirement set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and relevant local policies.

Conclusion

The proposed development will facilitate occupation of the newly refurbished office premises and will wholly comply with local and national policy.

The proposed development will be minor in nature and scale. Notwithstanding this, it has been carefully designed to be of a high-quality appearance which will respect the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, taking into consideration the significance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. The proposals have been demonstrated to result in 'no harm' to the significance of the conservation area. There will be no adverse impact on visual amenity or public safety by reason of the careful scale, siting, and detailed design of the proposed canopy and sign.

The proposal will therefore accord with Policies D1, D4 and A1 of the Camden Local Plan, as well as Supplementary Guidance, and the NPPF.

I trust the above and enclosed is sufficient for the registration of this application. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Kate Simpson (Kate.Simpson@pegasusgroup.co.uk).

Yours faithfully,



Fiona Campbell
Planner

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