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London Borough of Camden
Planning and Borough Development
5 Pancras Square
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Our ref: LEO/LHA/BGI/U0024229
Your Ref: PP-12622290

09 August 2024

**UCL, Torrington Place (Malet Place Entrance), London, WC1E 7JE
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Application for Advertisement Consent**

We write on behalf of our client, University College London ('UCL') (the 'Applicant') to submit an application for Advertisement Consent for the display of two non-illuminated signs on the Malet Place entrance gates fronting Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7JE (the 'Site').

Advertisement consent is sought for the following:

"Installation of 2 x non-illuminated signs on the Malet Place entrance gate fronting Torrington Place."

Site

The Site is located within the UCL campus and is situated at the entrance of Malet Place with Torrington Place to the south. The Site is adjacent to the Engineering Front Building to the west and the Grade II listed 33 and 35 Torrington Place to the east. It is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Although the Site itself is not listed, nearby are the Grade II listed 33 and 35 Torrington Place to the east and the Grade II listed former Dillon's Bookshop on the opposite side of Torrington Place to the south.

Planning History

A planning history search has been undertaken using Camden Council's online planning register. The search identifies that the Site has a limited planning history.

Planning permission (ref. 2009/1061/P) was granted on 19 May 2009 for the:

“Relocation of the existing vehicular and pedestrian gates to the entrance of Malet Place and installation of two bollards.”

Since the relocation of the entrance gates in 2009, there is not any planning history of advertisement consent applications for the installation of signs on the gates.

Background

UCL’s Bloomsbury campus main entry points at Gower Street and Malet Place have for a long time lacked signage to let students, the public and visitors know they are arriving at UCL. The branding across Bloomsbury has been reviewed with the purpose to create a welcoming experience for staff, students and visitors

UCL’s Branding Team focused on creating appropriate signage for the main entrance areas to link different parts of the university. A key factor was to ensure the brand experience is consistent across all locations, with the designs prepared for UCL East reflected in those at UCL Bloomsbury and other locations. With important events coming up, including the bicentennial in 2026, some solutions were identified in the short-term that could be refreshed with similar, appropriate signage.

One of the main considerations in each case was to respect and work with the architectural style of the buildings and to create a solution that is prominent enough, but in-keeping with the surroundings. Signage designs are expected to follow a similar format in regards to fonts, text, dimensions when refreshed and updated in future.

Proposals

The proposals relate to two signs which have been installed on each side of the Malet Place entrance gates facing onto Torrington Place. The signs measure 500 x 1,800mm and are made of rigid dibond. They are fixed to the gates by a clamping fixing solution.

The signs contain the UCL logo as well as some short text stating ‘Welcome to the University of the Year 2024’. It is expected that the text on the signs will change at the end of 2024 and similar, discreet text relating to the university will be displayed. The size, material, location and fixing of the signs will remain in line with the submitted proposals.

The proposed signage is shown on the submitted drawings, prepared by UCL.

Planning Policy Considerations

Regulation 3 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires that local planning authorities control the display of advertisements only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the Development Plan, in so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the Local Planning Authority when considering proposals for development within Conservation Areas to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.



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Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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The Statutory Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan (2017).

The following planning policy documents are also material considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)
- Camden Planning Guidance: Advertisements (2018)

The Government has recently published consultation on an updated draft of the NPPF, which is open for consultation until 24 September 2024. No changes are proposed to the text of Chapter 16, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Camden is in the process of preparing a new local plan which aims to set out the Council's vision for future development in Camden for the next 15 years. The draft local plan was subject to a Regulation 18 consultation in early 2024, with target adoption due in Summer 2026. Due to the progress of the draft local plan, at this stage limited weight is given to the draft policies when assessing the proposals.

As the proposals affect a building within a Conservation Area, consideration has been given to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Planning Policy Assessment

Policy HC1 of the London Plan and Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan seek to conserve the significance of heritage assets and their surroundings.

Policy D1 of Camden's Local Plan sets out that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development and requires that development respects local context and character.

Policy D4 of the Camden Local Plan requires advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building by respecting the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail.

Policy D4 also sets out that states that advertisements should not 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 application relates to two signs at the entrance of Malet Place. The proposals have been sensitively designed in terms of their size and location. Consideration has also been given to their impact on the host building on which they are displayed, local context, street-scene and wider townscape. The design and colouring of the lettering is minimal and is in keeping with UCL branding across the Campus. The signage is not considered to obscure or hinder the ready interpretation of any traffic, or the safety of persons using any highways.

The advertisements are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and will allow the UCL to successfully advertise the building and their university in a sensitive manner with no impact on public safety

or neighbouring amenity. As a result, the proposals are in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Furthermore, the signage discreet and sensitive, and would reflect the context of the entrance and the wider area. The proposals are therefore considered to have a neutral impact on the wider conservation area.

On the basis of the above, the proposed signage complies with Policies D1, D2 and D4 of the Local Plan, Camden Planning Guidance: Advertisements, London Plan 2021 and the NPPF 2023, and as such, express consent for the display of an advertisement should be granted accordingly.

Application Documentation

In accordance with the London Borough of Camden's validation requirements, the following documents have been submitted via the Planning Portal, alongside this cover letter:

- Application form;
- Site Location Plan; and
- Drawings/Pack, prepared by UCL.

The requisite application fee of £165 (Plus a Planning Portal admin fee of £70) has been paid online via the Planning Portal at the time of submission.

Please do not hesitate to contact Lucy Hale (+44 747 166 4280) or Ben Gibbs (+44 742 547 7724), of this office should you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to receiving notice of your receipt and validation.

Yours faithfully,



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