

LDC (Proposed) Report		Application number	2024/4318/P
Officer Henry Yeung		Expiry date 02/12/2024	
Application Address St Giles College London Central 154 Southampton Row London Camden WC1B 5JX		Authorised Officer Signature Grant Certificate of Lawfulness	
Conservation Area Bloomsbury Conservation Area		Article 4	
Proposal Conversion from 9 x teaching classrooms to 6 x student bedroom and 1 x kitchen on the 4th floor, ancillary to the use of the main building.			
Recommendation:	Grant Lawful Development Certificate		

## Assessment

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The application site, St Giles College London Central, is a part six-part seven storey property located on the east side of Southampton Row close to the junction with Russell Square. The property is in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is not listed.

1.2 The application seeks confirmation that the conversion of the 4th floor as student accommodation instead of teaching classroom does not constitute development and is lawful such that planning permission would not be required.

### 2.0 Applicants Evidence

2.1 The applicant provided the following documents/drawings in support of the proposal:

Drawing No's: SI 318/ 50 (Location Plan); SI 318/ 106 (Existing Plans); EGA004 (Proposed Plans);  
Lawful Use Application Statement;  
Planning Statement from Apcar Smith Planning

### 3.0 Background information

3.1 At the time that the building gained planning permission in 1997 for the current use there were 48 student bedspaces accommodated in a range of single and twin rooms at 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th floors totalling 1283sqm, with 1996sqm of teaching

accommodation, ancillary offices and ancillary facilities such as the canteen at basement, ground, 1st and 2nd floors.

3.2 In 2011 (2011/4095/P), planning permission was granted for the retention of alterations to the rear elevation in association with the conversion of student bedrooms to classrooms at 3rd, part 4th and 5th floor levels to existing education use. In the officer report, it was stated that 'Given the size of the property and the number of students that can be accommodated in the teaching rooms (approximately 550 people) it is considered that the student bedspaces have always been ancillary to the main use of the property as an education establishment.' In 2022 (reference 2022/2388/P), a Certificate of Lawfulness was granted for the use of the third floor as student accommodation ancillary to the main building's use.

## **4.0 Assessment**

4.1 Development is defined by Section 55 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as 'the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations, in, on, or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land'.

4.2 It is firstly noted that the planning history at the application site does not include any conditions restricting the use of the premises. The applicant wishes to convert part of the fourth floor as student accommodation from teaching classrooms which would be ancillary to the use of the wider building as an educational institution. As has always been the case, the accommodation would only be available to students of St Giles College. Previous planning history has recognised that student bedspaces have always been ancillary to the main use of the building as a teaching facility. It would appear that over the course of time there have been fluctuations to the parts of the building used as classrooms and student accommodation, but the primary use has always been as an educational facility. The applicant has stated that in floorspace terms, the student accommodation would comprise 29.8% and the teaching facility would comprise 70.2% therefore the education premises would still operate largely as a teaching facility.

4.2 As such, the proposed activity is not considered to amount to a separate use, either physically or functionally, nor would it result in any significant change in the character or use of any part of the 'buildings or other land' within the application site, but rather, would wholly operate incidentally to the existing and lawful primary use of the application site as an educational facility. Furthermore, the scale of the conversion is minor when considered in the context of the main college use. It is noted that the application form states the proposal as a change of use from F1 (Learning and Non-Residential Institution) and C2 (Residential Institution). However, as the conversion is intended solely for students attending St Giles College London and is ancillary to the school, it should be considered a conversion within the same class rather than a change of use under this type of application.

4.3 The proposal would therefore not result in a material change of use, nor fall within the 'meaning of development' which would require planning permission, as defined by Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

4.5 The proposal is therefore lawful and it is recommended that a certificate of lawfulness be granted.

**5.0 RECOMMENDATION:** Grant Certificate of Lawfulness