

Design and Access Statement

Installation of Shopfront (new wider door on south east Elevation)

Proposed Minor Works– Unit 3, 10 BLOOMSBURY WAY LONDON, WC1A 2SL

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in relation to the application submitted for the 'Installation of Shopfront' minor works application of Unit 3, 10 Bloomsbury Way, WC1A 2SL by Tesco Express. This statement should be read in conjunction with submitted Cover Letter and drawings.

Proposed Use and Context

Tesco Express propose to occupy Unit 3, 10 Bloomsbury Way, WC1A 2SL. Unit 3 is located within a nine storey office building on a triangular site bounded by New Oxford Street, Bury Place and Bloomsbury Way. The application site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It is not a listed building, however it was highlighted as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area in the conservation area appraisal. The site is also within an archaeological priority area.

The building, where Unit 3 is located, has been recently refurbished, including the introduction of three flexible retail or restaurant units (Class A1/A3) and one retail unit (Class A1) at ground floor level. Planning permission was originally granted under 2012/1400/P on the 31st March 2013, and subsequently varied under 2014/2783/P on the 3rd December 2014. Tesco will occupy one of the flexible retail or restaurant units (Class A1/A3), which fronts Bury Place and New Oxford Street. To support the lawful use for retail purposes, the applicant is also seeking planning permission for minor works including: signage; shopfront; external louvres; and plant details. This application relates to the proposed setback of the current doorway to allow for a more suitable operation for Tesco's occupation.

Access

The main access to the store will be via the south east elevation on the corner of Bury Place and New Oxford Street.

- The current door, granted under LPA ref. 2014/2783/P on 3rd December 2014, does not meet the minimum requirements set out under Part M of The Building Regulations 2010 (updated 2015). However, previously submitted application 2017/6662/P to widen the doorway was refused to maintain the existing frame. The Council determined that the existing symmetry with the windows above needed to be retained for aesthetic purposes. Following the refusal it is considered the best way to improve the access in and out of the store would be to set the door back. This would allow the symmetry of the doorway to be maintained with windows on the upper floors. Given the new use of the building, it is considered necessary to meet requirements for accessible entrances.

- From Tesco's significant experience of running stores across the country, the current doorway is not suitable to enable parents with pushchairs and wheelchair access.
- The existing doorway is not suitable for proposed deliveries in line with the Delivery and Servicing Plan discharged on 4th January 2018. The Delivery and Servicing Plan outlines that all deliveries should be made via the store's main entrance on the south east elevation.

The set back is therefore vital to enable the effective functioning of the permitted A1/A3 use approved under LPA ref 2014/2783/P on 3rd December 2014. Any future A1/A3 use of the building will have high footfall levels, and an accessible doorway access is important to ensure that disabled users and parents with pushchairs can enter and exit the store more efficiently. Therefore, the door should be set back to ensure the unit provides sufficient access for all users in line with Camden's Policy D1 Design; principle G and Policy D3 Shopfronts; principle F. In addition, the set back will ensure that the store can be serviced more efficiently from the main entrance doorway on the south east elevation in line with the Delivery and Servicing Plan discharged on 4th January 2018.

It is also of note that the property underwent significant renovations under LPA ref. 2014/2783/P including change of use at the ground floor level from Use Class B1. Given the significant material changes to both the design and the use of the building, it is considered that the requirements for accessible entrances under Part M of The Building Regulations 2010 (updated 2015) for new buildings are applicable. This document outlines a minimum effective clear width of doors on new buildings of 1000mm. The existing doorway measurements is less than the minimum requirements at 850mm. The proposed doorway has therefore been appropriately widened to provide an accessible entrance for all users compliant with the regulations of Part M of The Building Regulations 2010 (updated 2015).

Appearance

The proposed set back of the doorway only represents a minor change from the existing plans of the doorway, approved 3rd December 2014 under planning permission LPA ref. 2014/2783/P. The doorway will be set back will be a negligible material change to the design of the building to achieve vital access to the building for all users.

Summary

Overall, the proposed development constitutes a negligible material change to the property, mindful of the building's historic character, to ensure it is more inclusive in its design and accessibility.