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30 April 2020

Laura Hazleton
Planning Department
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
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London
WC1H 9JE

Dear Laura,

University College London – Engineering Front Building, Malet Place, WC1E 7JE

Full Planning Application for Amendments to the Main Entrance Doors of the Engineering Front Building

On behalf of our Client, University College London ('UCL') ('the applicant'), we hereby submit to the London Borough of Camden ('LB Camden') a full planning application for amendments to the main entrance doors of the Engineering Front Building ('EFB') on Malet Place ('the site') to improve pedestrian flow and door control arrangements, especially at peak hours. The description of development is:

"Amendments to the main entrance doors of the Engineering Front Building on Malet Place to improve pedestrian flow and door control arrangements."

Site Location and Description

The site forms part of the UCL Bloomsbury Campus in LB Camden The site is located to the south of the UCL Main Quad and Wilkins Building. It is bounded by Gower Street to the west and Torrington Place to the south, Malet Place to the east and a service road to the north. The nearest stations are Euston Square (7 minute walk), Russell Square (9 minute walk) and Euston (10 minute walk).

Planning permission for the site was granted in 2002 and construction was completed in 2008. The site was designed to provide a public street frontage for the Department for Engineering creating a public presence for UCL. The building comprises of five stories. The entrance of the site faces Malet Place and comprises of two sets of doors with two door leafs each.

The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (within sub area 3 'London University / British Museum' and on the edge of sub areas 2 'Gordon Square / Woburn Square / Byng Place' and 5 'Bedford Square / Gower Street'). The building is not listed.

This application relates to the main external entrance doors of the EFB only.

Context to the Application

The site accommodates the UCL Faculty of Engineering within its upper floors and offers a café, exhibition space and large lecture theatre for the wider student community within its ground floor. Therefore the building is extensively used by both the Faculty of Engineering and wider UCL community. UCL's Faculty of Engineering has experienced a spike in the total number of students, staff and researchers over the past few years, with a total of over 3,500 users. Throughout this period of growth, there have been some operational constraints

which limit students and staff experiences' when navigating and waiting for their taught lectures within the EFB.

Therefore, it is proposed to modify the existing main entrance of the EFB to accommodate the increase in staff and students' numbers, especially at peak hours.

Relevant Planning History

The table below sets out the relevant planning history of the site. The site was granted planning permission in 2002 and finished construction in 2008.

Application Reference	Description	Decision
2012/2338/P	Reconfiguration and refurbishment of the Malet Place Engineering Building servicing bay to provide new workshop space for UCL students with associated changes to the elevations.	Granted 19/06/2012
PS9904439	The erection of a five storey building to the front of the existing New Engineering Building and a part nine, part ten storey building to the rear, for university research purposes (use Class D1).	Granted 16/07/2002

Figure 1: Planning History

The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for amendments to the main entrance doors of the EFB. The description of development is as follows:

"Amendments to the main entrance doors of the Engineering Front Building on Malet Place to improve pedestrian flow and door control arrangements."

The existing entrance doors comprise of a pair of automatic sliding doors with an adjacent set of double doors for disabled access. However, the existing door widths are insufficient for high levels of circulation and the sliding door sensors are triggered by pedestrian traffic walking along Malet Place, leading to heat loss and discomfort internally. Therefore, the proposals aim to improve pedestrian flow to accommodate the increase in student numbers and improve the door control arrangements to prevent heat and energy losses. Ultimately, improvements in pedestrian flow will result in an enhanced student experience. The proposed widths of the entrance doors is 775mm per door leaf.

The new entrance proposals are for three glazed stainless steel framed or powder coated framed double doors, with the new doors and frames replicating the existing materials, i.e. stainless steel doors with anti-finger trap hinges, with dark grey door and glazing framing, and infill paving of external flooring to match existing. The finish of the doors would be to match the existing and adjacent Malet Place Engineering Building entrance finish. In addition, the new doors will be set back within the door plan to avoid the sensor being triggered by adjacent pedestrian traffic in and out of Malet Place.

Above the doors will be obscure glazing in a dark grey frame system to match the existing appearance, with mullions repositioned to align with the new door location. The existing canopy above the entrance is to remain, and the hanging signage will be re-hung to align with the new vertical frame of the doors.

One doorset will be automated via an internal and external push pad for DDA users of the building. Overall, the proposals meet both general accessibility and DDA requirements.

Please see the submitted architectural drawings and Design and Access Statement prepared by Penoyre Prasad, for a full description of the works.

Pre-Application Discussions

Pre-application discussions took place with LB Camden Conservation and Planning Officers. The principle of development and need for the proposed works were discussed and agreed. The Officers requested for confirmation within the application documents that the proposed works meet accessibility requirements. This has been addressed within the supporting Design and Access Statement.

Planning Policy Considerations

This section of the letter sets out the key planning considerations in relation to design and access and assesses the proposals against relevant planning policies.

Design

The Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy D2 'Heritage' seeks to preserve, where appropriate, and enhance Camden's heritage assets and their settings.

Camden Local Plan (2016) Policy D1 'Design' seeks to secure high quality design in development. This includes development that carefully integrates building services equipment and respects the surrounding local context and character.

The Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Design (2018) sets out that development will only be permitted where it preserves and enhances the character and appearance of a Conservation Area and listed buildings. Paragraph 3.21 of the CPG states that 'like for like' repairs and maintenance do not require listed building consent. However, where they involve the removal of historic materials, architectural features or would have an impact on the historic interest of the building, consent will be required.

The Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Design (2018), paragraph 2.12 sets out that materials used should relate to the character and appearance of the area, particularly in conservation areas or within the setting of listed buildings.

Applicant Response

The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area but is not listed. The proposals are limited in their scope and relate to the main entrance doors of the EFB only.

The width of the entrance doors will be increased to 775mm per door leaf to improve pedestrian circulation in and out of the building. The modified entrance doors will match the existing in terms of design, being of the same style and profile to match existing finishes. Therefore, there will be no impact to the views or setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The proposals are sympathetic and carefully designed to ensure minimal impact to the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposals will also provide considerable public benefit through the provision of improved access for all. This is explained in further detail below.

Access

Policy 7.2 'An Inclusive Environment' of the adopted London Plan (2016) requires all development to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design to ensure that developments can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all regardless of disability, age, gender, ethnicity and economic circumstances.

Camden Local Plan Policy C6 'Access for All' seeks to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent everyone from accessing facilities and opportunities. Policy C6 expects routes and facilities between buildings to be designed to be fully accessible and expects all buildings and places to meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely and easily by all.

The Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Design (2018), paragraph 3.27 promotes inclusive access through ensuring that all historic and listed buildings are of sensitive design and are easily accessible for all levels of mobility.

Applicant Response

The existing doors cause operational issues due to their limited widths and are unable to efficiently accommodate the increased demand of UCL's Engineering Faculty. Therefore, they hinder the flow of pedestrian traffic in and out of the building. In addition, the sensors of the sliding automatic doors are triggered by pedestrian traffic adjacent to the building, and consequently, results in heat and energy losses. This will be resolved by setting the doors back within the floorplan.

Overall, the proposals are considered to significantly improve access and circulation through the building for all students, academics and visitors including wheelchair users and those with impaired mobility. The proposals will incorporate internal and external push pads to meet DDA requirements. The proposals will not have a harmful impact on the setting of the Conservation Area or views from nearby heritage assets.

Overall, the proposed works are considered to comply with the policies outlined above.

Application Submission

In addition to this covering letter and planning policy appraisal, this planning application comprises and is supported by the following documents:

- Application Forms prepared by Deloitte LLP;
- Location Plan prepared by Penoyre Prasad;
    - 735-PPA-XX-XX-DR-A-2100;
- Site Plan prepared by Penoyre Prasad;
    - 735-PPA-XX-XX-DR-A-2015
- Design and Access Statement prepared by Penoyre Prasad;
- Existing and proposed floor plans prepared by Penoyre Prasad; and
    - 735-PPA-XX-00-DR-A-2250
    - 735-PPA-XX-00-DR-A-2200
- Existing and proposed elevations prepared by Penoyre Prasad.
    - 735-PPA-XX-00-DR-A-2400
    - 735-PPA-XX-00-DR-A-2450

The planning application fee of £234.00 has been paid online via Planning Portal at the time of the submission.

We trust that you have all the information you need to validate the application. Should you have any queries with the application, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Dena Dabbas (ddabbas@deloitte.co.uk/+44 20 7007 2134).

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Yours sincerely

Mark Underwood
Deloitte LLP

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