Design and Access Statement

Site: 1 – 19 Torrington Place
London, WC1E 7HB

Planning Portal Reference: PP09085029v1VZU

Date: 25 February 2021

Design and Context

The alterations are based on providing a more secure entrance via the east end of 1-19 Torrington Place, where the site service road access leads to rear of the building/service yard. The service road serving the site consists of a pedestrian walkway and adjoining vehicle access route. The existing horizontal folding metal galvanised shutters to the front elevation prevent out of hours access to this east access service road; left open during the day and then closed after hours. At present there is an onsite security guard patrolling the area, who is stationed in a small room near the main service road site entrance. For vehicle access to the site service road, there is an existing security drop down barrier for vehicles entering into the enclosed/sheltered area, (a vehicle holding area). However, the drop down barrier is not operational and the horizontal metal folding shutter is kept partially closed to prevent unauthorised access onto the site; the security guard manually operates the shutters to allow vehicles to enter/leave the site, likewise for pedestrians. Note, that the pedestrian walkway route also provides access to the bicycle rack area at the rear of the site, as well as access to/from the rear of the building at basement level.

There is a wheelchair accessible car parking bay which requires safe access at the rear, (located adjacent to rear building access).

The design proposal is to remove the drop down vehicle barrier and install an automated drop down roller speed curtain (operation similar as a roller shutter). The speed curtain will operate smoothly with far less noise than a typical metal roller shutter; it will be affixed to the underside of the building beam and supported on independent self-supporting stanchions. The inner vehicle holding area will be of a suitable size for a dustbin lorry which will need to access the site. Note, consultation has already taken place with the waste company to ensure the proposal would meet the required standards.

To assist and improve building user access to the rear of the building/site, a secure gate opening is being formed; consultation has taken place with fire safety officers who insisted the proposed gate will need to open outwards to assist emergency means of escape, hence the gate opening recess being formed.

As part of the design, the existing horizontal shutters have been repositioned so that the new gate opening area is formed. The existing key clamp railings segregating the service road walkway from the vehicle access route will be replaced with a tall partition screen (running along from the proposed front gate along to the column of the speed curtain shutter opening). This will then

securely segregate the pedestrian walkway from the vehicles entering the site and therefore improve site security/safety.

The roller speed curtains will be linked via a security swipe card/intercom facility.

As part of the planning application and consultation process UCL welcomes the Metropolitan Police's comments and will happily engage to ensure site safety will not be compromised.

CCTV cameras will be repositioned to suit and artificial lighting along the enclosed walkway section shall be improved.

Please note, there is already a speed curtain shutter installed to the West vehicle entrance to the site which cannot be used as there is a limit on the loading capacity at the front ramp.

Amount

The existing site space is to remain similar as the existing; there will be no change in the floor space at road level.

Layout

The layout will be improved to the east end access service road where the proposal consists of installing a new gate opening to the side of the existing large horizontal folding shutter. A separately controlled secure pedestrian and bicycle access gate removes the requirement for a full-time guard and both vehicular and pedestrian routes are safely segregated. The new gate opening will be security controlled.

The main large existing horizontal metal folding shutters will only be in operation during the main operational times of the building; 7:00 – 17:30, thus vehicles will only enter/exit the site between such times.

Scale

The proposed new gate opening surround will be purpose built to fit within the existing building fabric opening (at East end Service Road access) measuring approx. 1400mm wide. At present, the large metal folding shutter would need to be fully retracted manually so that pedestrians can enter the service road leading to the rear.

Appearance

The front elevation gate opening framework, panels and gate will be metal with a matching black colour powder coated finish, blending in well with its surroundings. The partition screen to the rear of the gate (separating the walkway from vehicle access route) will consist of perforated panels in a galvanised/grey colour. The speed curtain shutter fabric colour is yet to be agreed, although the one installed at the West vehicle access approach is red in colour.

Access

Access to and from the building would be greatly improved for cyclist building users as well as users requiring access to the rear of the building in general. There is a dedicated car parking bay at the rear of the building for a wheelchair user; access via an automated speed curtain shutter would benefit such building users.

As per the existing building, there are very good public transport links with local underground train stations, bus routes and dedicated bicycle lanes within walking distance.