

<b>Address:</b>	<b>Bidborough House 38-50 Bidborough Street London WC1H 9BT</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Application Numbers:</b>	2020/5133/P	<b>Officer: Laura Hazelton</b>	
<b>Ward:</b>	Kings Cross		
<b>Date Received:</b>	04/01/2021		
<b>Proposal: Temporary change of use of the Ground to Fourth Floor of Bidborough House from Offices (Class E) to Education (Class F1) comprising of student study space and associated works for a period of two years until 30th June 2022 (academic years 2020/2021 and 2021/2022) (Retrospective).</b>			
<b>Background Papers, Supporting Documents and Drawing Numbers:</b>  400-SLP, 400-E-G, 400-E-01, 400-E-02, 400-E-03, 400-E-04, 400-P-G, 400-P-01, 400-P-02, 400-P-03, 400-P-04, letter dated 6 November 2020 and Design and Access Statement dated 6 November 2020.			
<b>Recommendation Summary: Grant conditional planning permission</b>			
<b>Applicant:</b>		<b>Agent:</b>	
University College London (UCL)		Mr Sam Neal Gerald Eve 72 Welbeck Street London W1G 0AY	

## Analysis Information

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace (Gross Internal Area, GIA sqm)
Existing	Offices (Class E Commercial, business and service)		3830.7
Proposed	Education (Class F1)		3830.7

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	0	0
Proposed	0	0

## **Officers' Report**

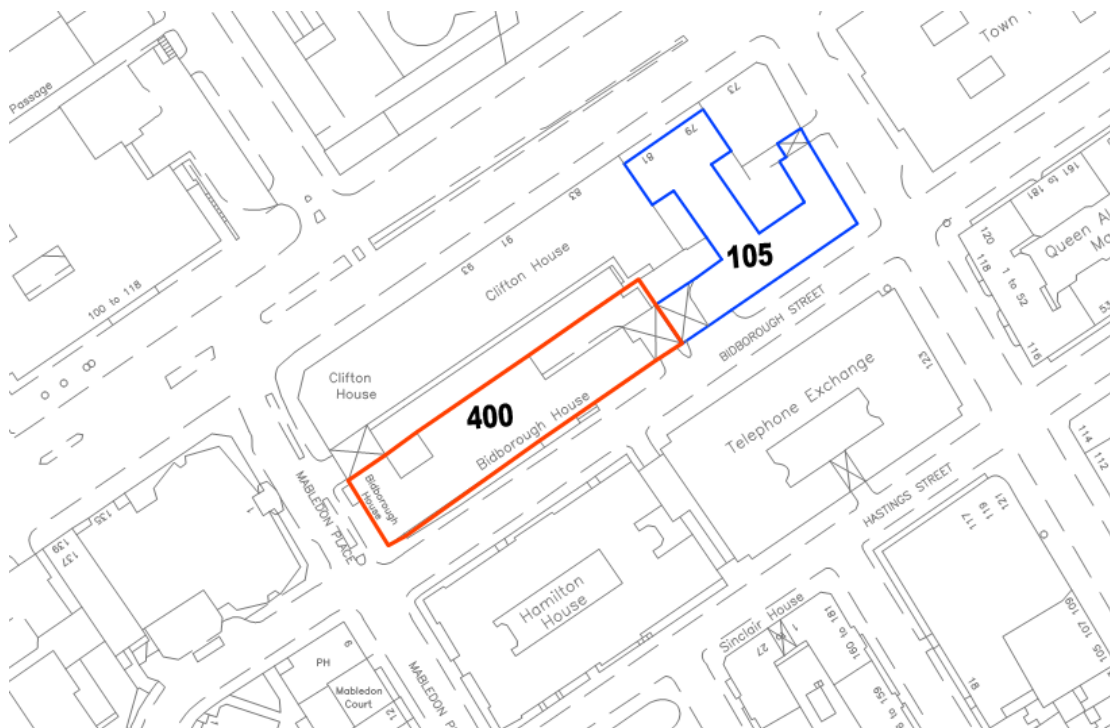
**Reason for Referral to Committee: Major development where this involves the construction, extension or conversion of floorspace for 10 or more new dwellings or more than 1000 sq. mtrs of non-residential floorspace; [clause 3(i)].**

## **Executive Summary**

- i. The application is made retrospectively for a change of use of the ground to fourth floor of Bidborough House from offices (Class E) to a temporary use as study spaces for students at UCL (Class F1). The existing lawful use of the site is as offices and was last in occupation as such by the UCL Estates Team. The proposed temporary change of use is required to assist UCL in providing additional study spaces for students near to the main Bloomsbury campus during the current COVID pandemic and would be for a temporary period of two years. The proposal would help to ensure that they are able to provide the necessary social distancing measures to protect the health and wellbeing of staff and students.
- ii. The existing office function would not be impacted as the UCL estates team who currently occupy the building would continue working from home. The proposed site location within the Knowledge Quarter is considered a suitable location for the temporary educational use. As such, the temporary loss of the office use is considered acceptable subject to the condition that the site reverts back to its lawful use as offices at the end of the 2021/2022 academic year.
- iii. There are no external alterations proposed, and as such, the proposals would not impact the appearance of the building, nor the setting of the nearby Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- iv. Given the reduced capacity of the building, there would be no harm to the amenity of nearby neighbouring residents.
- v. As such, it is recommended that temporary conditional planning permission is granted.

## 1 Site

- 1.1 The application site comprises the ground to fourth floors of Bidborough House. The building is located on Bidborough Street, with Mabledon Place to the west, Judd Street to the east and Euston Road to the north and covers an area of approximately 0.14 hectares (1352sqm). The site is not statutory listed, nor is it located in a conservation area, although it is located adjacent to and within the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The ground to fourth floor levels of Bidborough House which are the subject of this application are occupied by the University College London (UCL) Estates Team and are used for office-related purposes linked to the university (Class E). Bidborough House was formerly owned and occupied by Camden Council as offices but was sold to UCL in 2014, who have since used the building as offices.
- 1.3 The site is located in a predominantly commercial area, surrounded by education and office uses, and is located within the Local Plan area defined as the Knowledge Quarter.



*Figure 1 – Site location outlined in red. UCL-owned land shown in blue*

- 1.4 The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b (the best). The nearest London Underground Stations are Euston, Kings Cross St Pancras and Russell Square which are all a short walk away. There are also numerous bus services from Euston Road.

## 2 The Proposal

- 2.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the vast majority of UCL estates staff are working from home. The pandemic has also led to many students working from home

although this is not possible for all students and so there remains a high demand for study space on campus. Due to the requirements for social distancing, this has meant that larger areas of floor space are required to provide study space which in turn has led to a requirement for the use of additional buildings to facilitate this. The proposals were implemented on site in September 2020 in time for the start of the 2020/2021 academic year and therefore permission is being sought retrospectively.

- 2.2 It is proposed that the current education use of Bidborough House be retained for a temporary period of 2 academic years until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for use as a study centre for UCL students and staff. The proposals are for 240 workstations to be provided (down from the current level of 660 desks due to social distancing).

### **3 Relevant history**

- 3.1 **2015/0933/P** – Replacement of existing doors to main and secondary entrances with powder coated aluminium/stainless steel framed and glazed entrance doors to main entrance and new revolving/air-lock door with adjacent fire exit/pass door to secondary entrance. Granted 10/04/2015.
- 3.2 **2007/4769/P** - Alterations to existing Mabledon Place and Bidborough Street entrances including the creation of a new public entrance on Bidborough Street, new railings, replacement of all windows and roof coverings, re-cladding of existing concrete panels, new external service risers to the rear elevation and new roof plant and acoustic enclosures at fifth floor and roof level, and solar panels at seventh floor level all to existing office building (Class B1). Granted 27/11/2007.

### **4 Consultation Summary**

#### **Adjoining Occupiers**

- 4.1 Site notices were displayed on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 on Bidborough Street and Mabledon Place
- 4.2 No responses were received.

### **5 Policies & Guidance**

- 5.1 **National Planning Policy Framework 2019**
- 5.2 **NPPG**
- 5.3 **London Plan 2021**
- 5.4 **Mayor's Supplementary Planning Guidance**
- 5.5 **Camden Local Plan (2017)**

- G1 Delivery and location of growth
- C2 Community facilities
- C5 Safety and security
- C6 Access for all
- A1 Managing the impact of development
- D1 Design
- E1 Economic development
- E2 Employment premises and sites
- T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and car-free development
- T2 Parking and car-free development
- DM1 Delivery and monitoring

## **5.6 Supplementary Planning Guidance**

- Access for All CPG 2019
- Amenity CPG 2021
- Design CPG 2021
- Transport CPG 2021

## 6 Assessment

The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are considered in the following sections of this report:

7	<b>Land use principles</b>
8	<b>Design</b>
9	<b>Impact on neighbouring amenity</b>
10	<b>Transport</b>
11	<b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</b>
12	<b>Conclusion</b>
13	<b>Recommendations</b>
14	<b>Legal comments</b>
15	<b>Conditions</b>
16	<b>Informatives</b>

## **7 Land use principles**

- 7.1 UCL currently provides student study spaces in a variety of locations across Bloomsbury, including within the Student Centre at 27-28 Gordon Square. These spaces provide students with the flexibility of undertaking their independent studying on, or near to, the UCL campus. Due to the requirement of imposing social distancing measures across campus, buildings such as the Student Centre must be occupied at much reduced levels. This has led to the requirement for an increase in floorspace to accommodate study spaces for the students. UCL has undertaken a review of its existing portfolio to determine where it may be possible to accommodate the study spaces for a temporary period and Bidborough House has been identified as a suitable location.
- 7.2 Temporary permission is sought for the change of use of the ground to fourth floors of Bidborough House from Use Class E (Offices) to use class F1 (Learning and Non-Residential Institutions) for a period of two academic years, until 30th June 2022. This is to enable UCL to provide student study spaces through the installation of socially distanced study desks in areas which are currently fitted out as offices. The UCL Estates Team who normally work from Bidborough House will be working from home during this period. Retrospective consent is sought as the proposals were implemented on site in September 2020 in time for the start of the 2020/2021 academic year.
- 7.3 Policy E2 of the Local Plan sets out that the Council will seek to resist the development of business premises for non-business uses unless the building is no longer suitable for the existing business use, and the possibility of retaining the site for an alternative type of business use has been fully explored.
- 7.4 In this instance, the application is for a temporary change of use of from offices to an educational use over two academic years to assist with providing suitable socially distanced study spaces for the students during the current COVID pandemic. Although the application will lead to a loss of office floorspace, this will only be for a temporary period to assist with implementing COVID procedures and it will then revert back to an office use. The existing office function would also continue as the UCL Estates Team will continue to work from home. Subject to a condition requiring the site to revert back to the lawful office use on or before 30th June 2022, the temporary loss of office use is considered acceptable.
- 7.5 The proposed temporary use is for educational purposes. Policy C2 sets out how the Council will ensure that there is provision of community facilities to meet the needs of a growing population. 'Community facilities' includes childcare, education, adult learning and training, healthcare, police stations, libraries, public houses, etc., which form a vital part of local neighbourhoods.
- 7.6 Due to the current COVID pandemic, there is a requirement for social distancing measures to be imposed to maintain the health and wellbeing of staff and students at the university. As such, there is a requirement for student study spaces to be suitably distanced which requires an increase in floor area to accommodate the study spaces. The site is located in the Knowledge Quarter and the proposals would assist the university in meeting the needs of its students

during the pandemic. As such, the proposed site is considered a suitable location for the proposed temporary educational use.

## **8 Design**

- 8.1 Policy D1 seeks to secure high quality design in all development by requiring development to respond to local character and context, be highly sustainable in design and construction, integrate well to the surrounding streets and townscape, comprise high quality architecture, and be accessible for all. Camden's Local Plan is supported by CPG (Design).
- 8.2 The proposal is for the temporary change of use to an existing building and does not involve any external alterations which would affect the appearance of the building or the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

## **9 Impact on neighbouring amenity**

- 9.1 Camden Local Plan policy A1 and the Amenity CPG are relevant with regards to the impact on the amenity of residential properties in the area.
- 9.2 The nearest residential dwellings are located at 12 Mabledon Place to the south west of the site.
- 9.3 Although student uses can sometimes have the potential to raise amenity issues in residential areas if not managed appropriately, due to the requirement for social distancing, the occupancy of the building would be at a reduced capacity from 660 desk spaces associated with the previous office use down to 240 for the student use. As such, there would likely be reduced comings and goings, mitigating any impact to the area. In order to ensure that this situation does not change before the end of the temporary period and with the lifting of restrictions, a condition is recommended limiting the occupancy of the building to not greater than the current number of desk spaces (240). Opening hours would be Monday to Friday only, from 09:00 to 21:00, which would be secured by condition. As such, it is not considered that there would be any harm to neighbouring amenity by way of loss of privacy or disturbance.

## **10 Transport**

### Car Parking

- 10.1 Policy T2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will limit the availability of parking and require all new developments in the borough to be car-free. The existing building does not include any car parking spaces, and none are proposed. All visitors to the building would need to travel to the site via sustainable modes of transport.

### Cycle Parking

- 10.1 Policy T1 of the Local Plan states that cycle parking at developments should be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the London Plan.



- 10.2 The standard for university uses is 1 space per 4 staff plus 1 space per 20 students for long stay use plus 1 space per 7 students for short stay use. This would suggest a requirement for 26 long stay spaces and 24 short stay spaces (50 in total), depending on the actual number of students and staff.
- 10.3 However, given the nature of the educational use as study space rather than teaching space it may be more appropriate to use the office standard, which is 1 space per 75 sqm for long stay plus 1 space per 500 sqm for short stay. On the basis of this there would be a requirement for 51 long stay spaces plus 8 short stay spaces (59 in total).
- 10.4 The applicant has confirmed that there are 100 existing cycle parking spaces located within the site which would be more than adequate.

#### Access

- 10.5 There are no proposed changes to the methods of access. Existing access arrangements would be retained via the DDA compliant ramp and stairs to the main building entrance on Bidborough Street. A second access to Bidborough House is located on Mabledon Place which has level access from the street and a lift in the foyer to provide DDA compliant access to a raised ground floor. Within the building there is stair and lift access to all floors from the Mabledon Place entrance, and access to the ground to fourth floor via the two lifts and stairs via the Bidborough Street entrance.

#### Refuse and recycling

- 10.6 Servicing and waste storage will remain the same as existing. Given the capacity of the building will be reduced, this is considered acceptable.

### **11 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 11.1 The proposal would not be liable for the Mayor of London's CIL2 (MCIL2) or Camden's CIL as there is no uplift in floorspace.

### **12 Conclusion**

- 12.1 The proposed temporary change of use is required to assist UCL in providing appropriate study spaces for students near to the main Bloomsbury campus during the current COVID pandemic. The proposal would help to provide the necessary social distancing measures to protect the health and wellbeing of staff and students.
- 12.2 The existing office function would continue as the UCL estates team who currently occupy the building would continue working from home. The proposed site location within the Knowledge Quarter is considered a suitable location for the temporary education use.

- 12.3 There are no external alterations proposed, and as such, the proposals would not impact the appearance of the building, nor the setting of the nearby Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 12.4 Given the reduced capacity of the building, there would be no harm to the amenity of nearby neighbouring residents.
- 12.5 As such, the proposed development is considered acceptable subject to the recommended conditions, including the condition requiring the site to revert back to its lawful office use on or before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and would be in accordance with the Camden Local Plan 2017 and London Plan 2021.

### **13 Recommendation**

- 13.1 Planning Permission is recommended subject to conditions.

### **14 Legal Comments**

- 14.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

### **15 Planning Conditions**

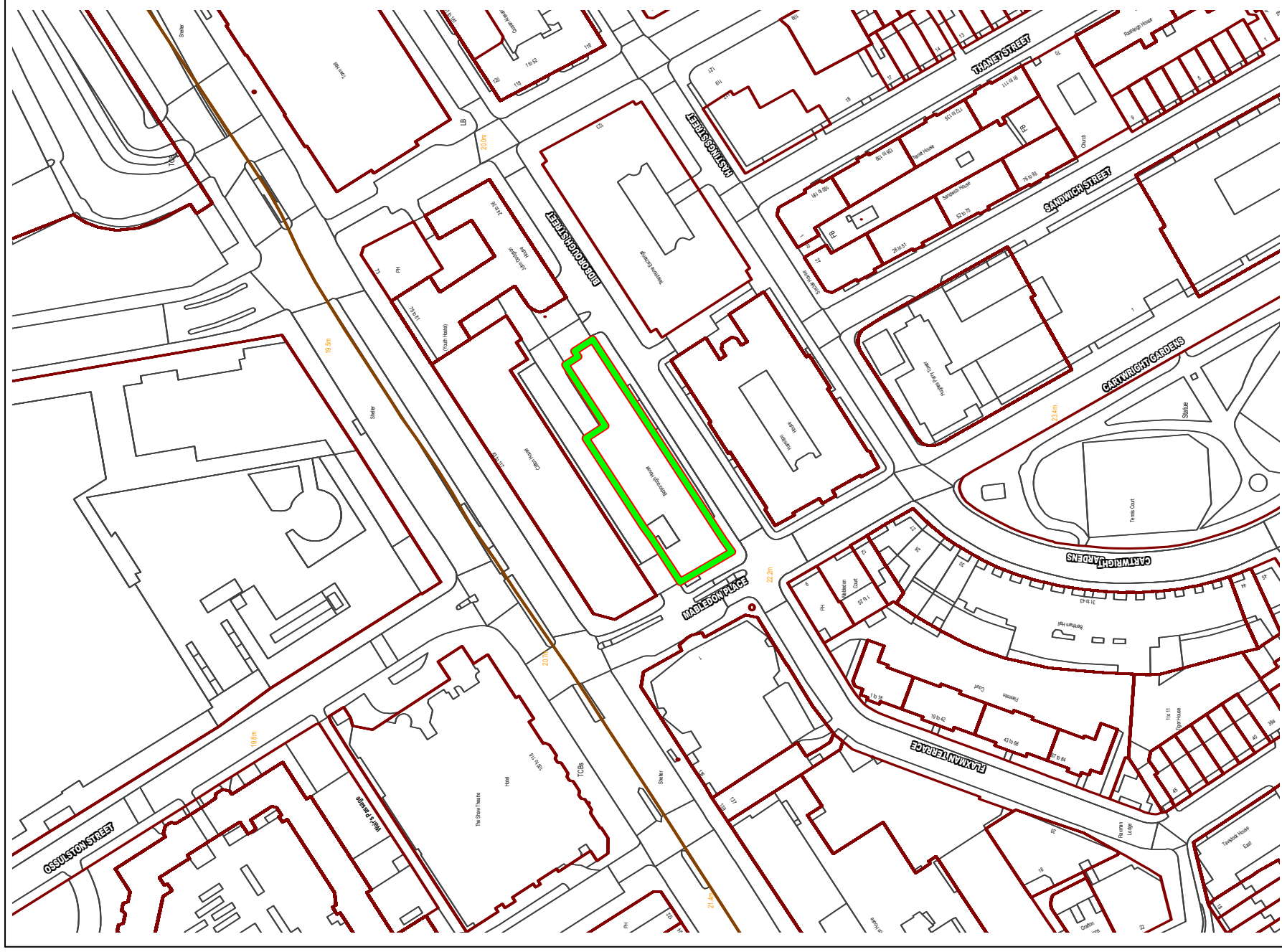
1	<p>Approved drawings</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 400-SLP, 400-E-G, 400-E-01, 400-E-02, 400-E-03, 400-E-04, 400-P-G, 400-P-01, 400-P-02, 400-P-03, 400-P-04, letter dated 6 November 2020 and Design and Access Statement dated 6 November 2020.</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.</p>
2	<p>Temporary consent</p> <p>The use hereby permitted is for a temporary period only and shall cease on or before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, at which time the premises shall revert to their former lawful use which is offices.</p> <p>Reason: In order to protect the existing business use and so that the long term use of the site may be properly considered in accordance with policies DM1 and E2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.</p>
3	<p>Restriction of the number of desk spaces</p> <p>Occupancy of the building for the use hereby approved shall not be greater than 240 desk spaces.</p>


	Reason: In order to prevent disturbance and protect the amenity of neighbouring residents in accordance with policy A1 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.
4	<p>Opening hours</p> <p>The temporary use hereby permitted shall not be carried out outside the following times: 09:00 to 21:00 Monday to Friday.</p> <p>Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally in accordance with the requirements of policies A1 and A4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.</p>

## 16 Planning Informatives

1	Your proposals may be subject to control under the Building Regulations and/or the London Buildings Acts that cover aspects including fire and emergency escape, access and facilities for people with disabilities and sound insulation between dwellings. You are advised to consult the Council's Building Control Service, Camden Town Hall, Judd St, Kings Cross, London NW1 2QS (tel: 020-7974 6941).
2	<p>All works should be conducted in accordance with the Camden Minimum Requirements - a copy is available on the Council's website at <a href="https://beta.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/1269042/Camden+Minimum+Requirements+%281%29.pdf/bb2cd0a2-88b1-aa6d-61f9-525ca0f71319">https://beta.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/1269042/Camden+Minimum+Requirements+%281%29.pdf/bb2cd0a2-88b1-aa6d-61f9-525ca0f71319</a> or contact the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444)</p> <p>Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. You must carry out any building works that can be heard at the boundary of the site only between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays. You must secure the approval of the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team prior to undertaking such activities outside these hours.</p>
3	This approval does not authorise the use of the public highway. Any requirement to use the public highway, such as for hoardings, temporary road closures and suspension of parking bays, will be subject to approval of relevant licence from the Council's Streetworks Authorisations & Compliance Team London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No 020 7974 4444) . Licences and authorisations need to be sought in advance of proposed works. Where development is subject to a Construction Management Plan (through a requirement in a S106 agreement), no licence or

	authorisation will be granted until the Construction Management Plan is approved by the Council.
--	--



<p><b>N</b> </p>	
<p><b>Scale:</b> 1:1527</p>	<p><b>Date:</b> 13-Apr-21</p>
<p><b>Application No: 2020/5133/P</b></p>	
<p><b>Bidborough House</b> <b>38-50 Bidborough Street</b> <b>London</b> <b>WC1H 9BT</b></p>	

