



GERALDEVE

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FAO: Laura Hazleton

20 September 2021

Our ref: LOL/NFD/SNE/U0017403

Dear Sir/Madam

**1st and 2nd Floor, 97 Tottenham Court Road, London
Temporary Change of Use to Accommodate UCL Teaching Spaces
Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) 1990**

We write on behalf of our client, University College London ('UCL'), to submit a planning application for the temporary change of use of the first and second floors of 97 Tottenham Court Road from Offices (Class E) to Education (Class F1) up until 24 June 2022, to assist in providing appropriate teaching space for the Bartlett School based on the current temporary increase in student numbers.

Planning permission is sought for:

“Temporary change of use of the First and Second Floors of 97 Tottenham Court Road from Offices (Class E) to Education (Class F1) up until 24 June 2022.”

Application Documents

In addition to this letter, we submit the following information in support of this application:

- Completed application form;
- CIL Form;
- Site Location Plan, prepared by UCL;
- Existing and Proposed Plans, prepared by UCL; and
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Gerald Eve.

The payment of £462 for the application fee has been made via planning portal. This application has been submitted via Planning Portal Reference PP-10163137.

Site and Background

This application relates solely to the first and second floors of 97 Tottenham Court Road. This building is located on Tottenham Court Road, with Maple Street to the North, and Howland Street to the South. The building is not statutory listed or within a conservation area, although it is located adjacent to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant Planning History

From a review of the Council's online planning register, we have provided a summary of the relevant planning applications relating to the Site.

On 7 December 2020, an outline planning application (2020/5624/P) was submitted for the following proposal:

"Outline application for demolition of office building (95-100 TCR & 76-80 Whitfield St) and 7 flats (88 Whitfield Street) and construction of a new building to provide for a maximum of 17746 sqm (GIA) of 'commercial business and service' floorspace (use Class E) along with details of access, scale and landscaping and other works incidental to the application. Details of layout and appearance are reserved."

The application has been heard at Planning Committee and been given a resolution to grant, subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement. Currently, the application is still awaiting formal determination.

Reserved Matters applications (2020/5631/P and 2020/5638/P) were also submitted on the 7 December 2020 relating to the aforementioned outline planning application. These applications are still pending determination.

University College London

UCL was founded in 1826 in the heart of London. UCL is London's leading multidisciplinary university, with more than 13,000 staff and 42,000 students from 150 different countries.

UCL occupies a number of sites across London providing educational and administrative services, with its main campus situated in the heart of Bloomsbury.

Following the national revision of A-Level results in August 2020 and 2021, a number of universities have seen an unexpected increase in the number of students joining this year and in the previous academic year. UCL is one of the university's that has seen a notable increase in the number of students joining this academic year. This has created an additional pressure on UCL to accommodate students across the campus.

The UCL Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment is currently located at 22 Gordon Street. Due to the increase in student numbers, there is a requirement for the provision of temporary floorspace to accommodate teaching facilities for the additional students of the Bartlett School. UCL has undertaken a review of its existing portfolio to determine where it may be possible to accommodate the additional teaching space for a temporary period, however no appropriate spaces have been found. Therefore, 97 Tottenham Court Road has been identified as the most appropriate temporary solution in this instance.

The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the temporary change of use of first and second floors of 97 Tottenham Court Road from Use Class E (Offices) to Use Class F1 (Learning and Non-Residential Institutions) for a period up until 24 June 2022.

This will enable UCL to provide appropriate teaching facilities for the UCL Bartlett School to accommodate the temporary increase in student numbers following the national revision of A-level results in recent years.

There are no proposed changes to the methods of access. Existing access arrangements will be retained via the stairs of the main building entrance on Tottenham Court Road. Within the building there is stair and lift access to all floors from the Tottenham Court Road entrance.

The proposal only relates to the change of use of the internal floor area. No external works are proposed as part of the application.

UCL would operate the teaching spaces under the following operating hours:

- Monday – Friday: 08:00 – 22:00
- Weekends: Closed
- Holidays Periods: Closed

The Development Plan

The statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 comprises:

- a) The London Plan (2021); and
- b) Camden's Local Plan (2017)

In terms of planning policy designations, the Site falls within the following designations:

- Site Allocations Proposal Site (Ref F13)
- Viewing Corridor;
- Central London Frontage;
- Protected Frontage (Primary); and
- Transport Safeguarding Area

The NPPF (2021) is also a material consideration.

Planning Considerations

Temporary Loss of Office Use

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 for an alternative type of business use has been fully explored.

The application is for a temporary change of use of from Offices (Class E) to an educational use (Class F1) until 24 June 2022 to assist with providing suitable teaching facilities for the students of the Bartlett School to accommodate the temporary increase in student numbers following the national revision of A-level results in recent years.

Although the application will lead to a loss of office floorspace, this will only be for a temporary period, and it will then revert back to an office use. We would be happy for a reversionary condition

to be included in a decision notice to cover this requirement to revert back to an office use upon the cessation of the planning permission.

Consideration has also been given to the redevelopment proposals for the Site that are outlined in the aforementioned planning application which is awaiting determination. Discussions have been held between the landowner and UCL, and the relevant commercial clauses have been considered so this application would not impact on the wider redevelopment of the Site should it come forward in the future.

On the basis that the office use will be re-instated following the temporary change of use to an educational use, it is considered that the proposal retains the office use for the long term and therefore does not conflict with Policy E2.

Community Use

The proposed use is for educational purposes and is therefore defined as a community use in the Local Plan. Policy C2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will seek to ensure community facilities and services are developed to meet the changing needs of the community and reflect new approaches to the delivery of services.

Policy S3 of the London Plan sets out that proposals should ensure there is a sufficient supply of good quality education facilities to meet demand and offer educational choice.

Consideration should also be given to Paragraph 96 of the NPPF which sets out that to ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

Due to the increase in student numbers, there is a requirement for a provision of temporary floorspace to accommodate the teaching facilities for the students of the Bartlett School. This temporary change of use will assist in providing appropriate teaching facilities for the Bartlett School and therefore aid the university in meeting the needs of its students during this temporary period.

As such, the proposal complies with the requirements of Local Plan Policy C2 and London Plan Policy S3.

Design

The proposal is for the temporary change of use to an existing building and does not involve any external alterations which would affect the design or appearance of the building.

Transport and Servicing

Policy T1 of the Local Plan states that the Council will promote sustainable transport by prioritising walking, cycling and public transport.

Policy T4 of the London Plan sets out that developments should not increase road danger and be assessed to determine if schemes would have an adverse impact on transport systems.

Policy CC5 of the Local Plan sets out that the Council will aim to make sure that developments include facilities for the storage and collection of waste and recycling.

The existing use of the first and second floors is for office purposes. It is understood that the floors currently accommodate approximately 100 staff. The proposal seeks a temporary change of use to provide teaching facilities which involve both desk-based and workshop-type activities accommodating approximately 110 students and staff from the Bartlett School. Therefore, the proposed use will lead to a similar number of persons using the space, meaning there will be a negligible change in overall footfall and occupancy levels within the building. Therefore, the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the transport network.

In terms of modes of transport, the existing building does not include any car parking spaces, therefore all prospective occupiers of the building would need to travel to the Site via a sustainable mode of transport. In addition, UCL promotes students and staff using sustainable modes of transport when travelling to and from university and will continue to encourage students and staff to use the existing cycle parking spaces available across the UCL campus, including Torrington Place and 90 Tottenham Court Road.

In terms of servicing and waste storage, this will remain as existing.

Therefore, the proposal complies with Policy T1 and CC5 of the Local Plan, and Policy T4 of the London Plan.

Summary

The scheme is being brought forward to assist UCL in providing appropriate teaching facilities for the Bartlett School due to the increase in student numbers following the national revision of A-level results over recent years.

The proposal is for a temporary period and will allow the conversion of the floor area back to an office use upon the cessation of the agreed time period. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with the development plan.

We trust that you have all the necessary information to validate this application and we look forward to confirmation of this shortly. If you have any queries, please contact Sam Neal (sneal@geraldeve.com / 0203 486 3312) or Natalie Davies (ndavies@geraldeve.com / 0207 333 6371) of this office.

Yours faithfully



Gerald Eve LLP