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London Borough of Camden  
Planning Services  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
NC1 4AG

20<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**Our ref:** LEOL/SNE/HSC/U0020227

**Your ref:** PP-11438910

Dear Sir / Madam

**Room 23, South Wing, London, Gower Street, WC1E 6BT  
Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990  
Application for Listed Building Consent**

We write on behalf of our client, University College London ('the Applicant'), to submit an application for listed building consent for internal alterations to Room 23, South Wing, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT ('The Site').

Listed Building Consent is sought for the following:

**“Proposed internal works to Room 23 of South Wing, relating to the removal of redundant servicing and the installation of an interactive screen, projectors, speakers, cameras and microphones, and associated servicing works.”**

**Site and Surroundings**

The South Wing forms part of the main UCL Bloomsbury campus and adjoins the Chadwick Building to the west and the Wilkins Building to east. The property is listed as a single entry 'University College (University of London) and attached railings to north and south wing' and is Grade I Listed.

The Site is also located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The proposed works only relate to Room 23 which is located centrally on the second floor of the South Wing.

**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'. These are set out below:

On 8 September 2022, a Listed Building Consent application (ref. 2022/2420/L) was granted for "Installation of eight Wi-Fi access points at ground, first and second floor and removal of redundant fixtures and fittings at first floor".

On 11 April 2019, Listed Building Consent (ref. 2019/0271/L) was granted for “Refurbishment of rooms on Level 2 of South Wing and the refurbishment of an office and adjacent store on Level 1. Work includes alteration to an internal wall, and the removal of 2 no. 20th century suspended ceilings to reveal high level windows. New A/C to the teaching laboratories and mezzanine offices. External addition of a condenser unit, with existing plant to the south-west rear corner of the building, and associated services.”

Other permissions on the Site which have been identified on the Council's online planning register either relate to external works, or refurbishment works on other floors.

### **Background and Proposals**

The aim of the proposals is to create a more contemporary workspace for those utilising Room 23 of the South Wing building. This is proposed by improving the practicality of the room through the installation of modern technological and educational appliances. The removal of redundant services will also improve the efficiency of Room 23 by making space for more relevant teaching equipment whilst also providing improvements to the functionality and appearance of the listed building internally. No external works are proposed as part of this application.

A summary of the proposed works is set out below:

1. Strip out works of all existing furniture including cupboards, floor coverings, and old wall fixings (including pin boards, coat hooks, dado trunking, and associated cabling);
2. Repair of all walls and floors and associated redecoration;
3. Installation of new carpet;
4. Installation of data infrastructure, including:
  - Additional access hatches to the plasterboard suspended ceiling;
  - Installation of projector bracket and projector to the back of the room on existing partition wall;
  - Installation of pattresses to the rear partition wall;
  - Installation of cable containment within existing ceiling void;
  - Formation of 100mm diameter hole through existing corridor wall to allow for new data cables to run into Room 23;
5. Strip out of existing light fittings, small redundant power and associated cabling and projector from Room 23;
6. Supply and install new ceiling mounted LED lighting; and
7. Supply and install new AV items to Room 23 including projector, speaker, cameras and microphones and associated cabling and trunking.

The physical works proposed are outlined in further detail within the supporting drawings and Scope of Works Document.

### **Local Development Framework**

The London Borough of Camden's Local Development Framework comprises of the following planning policy documents: The London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan (2017).

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is a material consideration.

Camden also has several adopted Planning Guidance documents which are also a material consideration.

### **Statutory Legislation**

Statute regarding the heritage environment is relevant to this application. Both the site's historic fabric and the surrounding environment have been carefully considered in the development of the proposals having regard for the statutory legislation set out below.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that local planning authorities should pay special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of historic or architectural interest which it possesses when considering applications.

Section 72 of the same Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Under paragraph 194 of the NPPF, in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 197 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Where a development proposal will lead to a less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 202).

### **Planning Assessment**

#### Heritage and Design

Camden Local Plan Policy D1 sets out that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development and requires that development respects local context and character.

Camden Local Plan Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, especially the conservation areas and listed buildings. To maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area. The Council will also resist development that would cause harm to the significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting or would cause harm to its special architectural and historical interest.

The proposed works seek to enhance UCL's facilities by updating the means of teaching within Room 23 of South Wing. The internal changes will not affect views of the site from the Conservation Area and will therefore maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposed refurbishment works are seeking to install AV Works including interactive screens, cameras and projectors and their associated fixtures and fittings. The proposed works have focussed being installed predominately on the suspended ceiling and modern partition walls. There is an exception to this where a small hole in the historic fabric is required for cabling to reach Room 23. In addition, whilst there will be additional trunking, the intention is to remove any redundant equipment, servicing and trunking which is a benefit in improving the visual appearance and as a means of decluttering the space affected by the works.

The proposed internal works seek to minimise the impact on historical fabric and as the works are minor in nature and the majority of fixings would be reversible, the proposals are not considered to cause harm to the special architectural or historical interest of the buildings. Should the Council consider the proposed works to lead to a less than substantial harm, we would consider that the notable benefits to education through the installation of the proposals would outweigh the harm caused in this instance.

Furthermore, as no changes are proposed to the exterior of the building, the external character and appearance of the listed building and the Conservation Area will be preserved and remain the same.

The proposals are therefore considered to comply with relevant national and local planning policy and meet the statutory tests of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Local Plan Policy D2.

#### Enhancing Community Facilities

Local Plan Policy C2 states that Camden will support the investment plans of educational, health, scientific and research bodies to expand and enhance their operations, taking into account the social and economic benefits they generate for Camden, London and the UK.

The proposed works are part of wider investment plan by UCL to improve IT facilities across the university campus. The installation of the proposed equipment will assist in providing modern, fit-for-purpose teaching spaces which meet the current requirements of students and staff of the university. In turn, this will assist in enhancing the teaching facilities and level of education provided to students.

Therefore, based on the enhancements the proposed works will provide to the existing educational use, the proposal complies with Local Plan Policy C2.

## Summary

The proposal is to create more contemporary workspaces for those utilising Room 23 of the South Wing. The proposal has carefully considered the sensitivity of the listed building and are therefore considered non-intrusive. There are no external works thus the proposal will not affect the nearby conservation area in any way. All elements are assessed against policy and are all deemed compliant. It is considered that there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to determine that the application is determined other than in accordance with the Development Plan. On this basis, listed building consent should be granted for the application accordingly.

## Application Documents

Please find enclosed, the following documents in support of this application:

- Cover Letter (this document), prepared by Gerald Eve;
- Application Form, prepared by Gerald Eve;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Gerald Eve;
- Site Location Plan (ref. E(X)001), prepared by twelve architects & masterplanners;
- Existing Second Floor Plan Room 23 (ref. (EX)102) prepared by twelve architects & masterplanners;
- Proposed Second Floor Plan Room 23 (ref. (PL)102) prepared by twelve architects & masterplanners;
- Room 23 – Proposed lighting installation and strip out (ref. 40-E0250-DR-04 Rev D) prepared by Ark MEP PLC;
- Room 23 - Proposed power/ data + AV installation (ref. 40-E0250-DR-05 Rev D) prepared by Ark MEP PLC;
- Room 23 - Proposed BWIC For new AV and Data Cables (ref. 40-E0250-DR-06 Rev D) prepared by Ark MEP PLC;
- Schedule of Works prepared by CPC;
- Photo 1 – Proposed penetration location through historic wall;
- Photo 2 – Proposed penetration location through historic wall;
- Data Quantities (ref 2022\_XXX\_ISD\_TDD\_AV\_00\_00\_Y\_DATA) prepared by UCL;
- AV Elevation with M&E (ref 2022\_PP210996\_ISD\_TDD\_AV\_00\_00\_Y\_AVEME\_A) prepared by UCL;
- AV Plan with M&E (ref. 2022\_XXX\_ISD\_TDD\_AV\_00\_00\_Y\_AVPME\_A) prepared by UCL;
- AV RCP with M&E (ref. 2022\_PP210996\_ISD\_TDD\_AV\_00\_00\_Y\_AVRCPME\_A) prepared by UCL.

As the application relates to Listed Building Consent, no fee is required.

We look forward to your confirmation of the validation of this application. In the meantime, please contact Lucy Hale ([lhale@geraldeve.com](mailto:lhale@geraldeve.com) / 07471664280) or Hannah Scott ([hscott@geraldeve.com](mailto:hscott@geraldeve.com) / 07553 745537) of this office should you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

*Gerald Eve LLP*

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