



Progress[™]
Planning

Planning, Design & Access Statement

The Atrium, 1 Harefield Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1EX

Prepared by Progress Planning on behalf of:

Atrium Academy of Fashion and Jewellery

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Executive Summary

This report has been submitted in support of a change of use planning application for the change of use of the ground floor at The Atrium, 1 Harefield Rd, Uxbridge, UB8 1EX from Class E(g,i), office to Class F1(a), an educational facility. Please note only the ground floor is proposed to change use. The remaining site will remain as use Class E.

The site falls under one local designation which is the 'Town Centre' as imposed by the local plan.

The application is being submitted on behalf of the Atrium Academy of Fashion and Jewellery, the proposal seeks to cater to the growing demand for private education across the country. The centre would incorporate no greater than 40 students with a total of 5 staff members a day. Given part of the property is currently vacant, it is considered the increase in employment activity on the site would accord with the objective of SP3 and DMCI 1A. The proposal supports active travel through the inclusion of 26 long stay cycle spaces and a further 8 short stay cycle spaces. Cycle spaces are Sheffield cycle stands and adequate distances are maintained between spaces.

The proposal would cater to a number of various educational needs but would seek to specialise in Fashion and Jewellery. The proposal would not seek to make any external changes and instead consists of a change of use from Class E to Class F1. The application proposes internal changes consistent with the needs to run the facility day by day as such lecture halls, classrooms, breakout spaces and study rooms are provided. An assessment and evidence of the sites current and proposed use is stated below. This evidence sets out the proposed use, the proposed number of staff, the average number of students expected and the time of day the education centre would operate at.

No changes are sought to the public highway and a site plan confirming such accompanies the submission. The proposed use would operate and be serviced in a very similar fashion to the consented office use. Given the sites location and current use the proposal would not raise concerns with regards to transport. The centre would promote students to take public transport and support active travel.

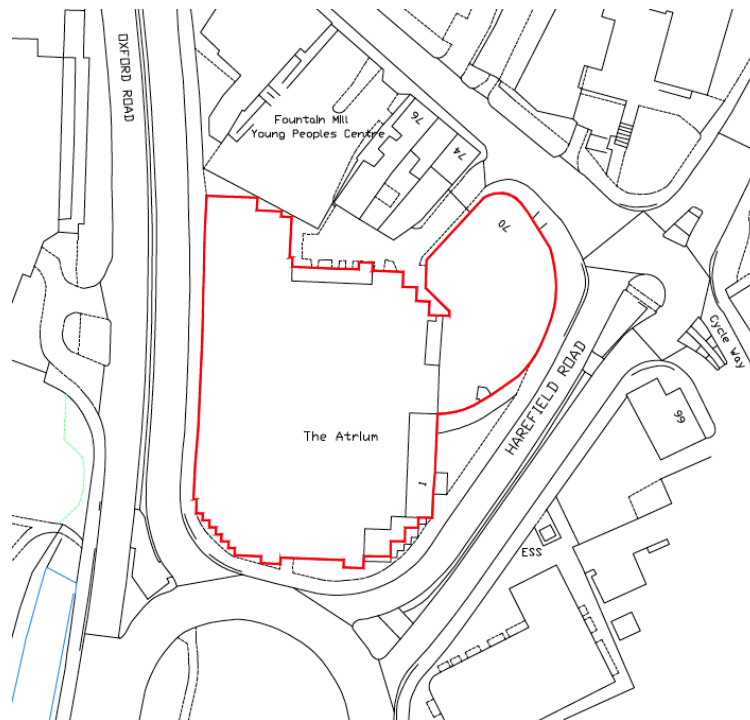
Therefore overall, it is considered that this proposal should be welcomed for providing an education use within an existing employment area.

Introduction

This application is for the change of use of the ground floor from office (Class E(g)) to an education centre for Fashion and Jewellery (Class F1(a)). The local planning authority (LPA) in which this application is made to is the London Borough of Hillingdon. This submission is made on behalf of the applicant, Atrium Academy of Fashion and Jewellery.

The Site

The site is situated within the London Borough of Hillingdon and is located on the edge of the roundabout adjoining Oxford Road and Harefield Road with the site being situated in a very sustainable location especially when considering the wider context of the borough, the PTAL rating is 5 (with 6b being the best and 0 being the worse). The site is accessible from Uxbridge Tube Station and a number of public bus services.



Location Plan

The site consists of a ground to fifth floor building with basement/lower ground floor for car-parking, the majority of the floors being open plan. The proposal would use the already partially subdivided ground floor to provide appropriate student learning facilities and ancillary spaces such as a staff room and admin areas. The remaining floors of the site will stay as office use. The atrium itself highlighted as a breakout area and café on the plan is a shared space for all uses of the site, this is the current set up of the facility.

Planning History

In terms of relevant planning history there are no relevant planning applications on the site to note. The only planning submissions relate to minor changes to the commercial use to incorporate internal changes and elevations and accommodate two generators.

Proposed development

The proposal seeks the change of use of the ground floor of The Atrium from office (Class E(g)) to an education centre for the Atrium Academy of Fashion and Jewellery (Class F1(a)).

The proposal makes no change to the external appearance of the building aside from the inclusion of Sheffield bike stands.

Planning Policy

The proposed development has been assessed against the London Plan 2021 and Local Plan Policies contained within the Hillingdon Local Plan (2012 and 2020).

The proposed use coincides with the strategic aims of the London Plan 2021, specifically Chapter 5 social infrastructure. The overarching aim is to provide 'access to high quality education and training has a profound effect on people's life chances and is one of the most powerful ways to break down inequalities and improve social mobility. Every child, young person and adult should be given the best possible chance for success and be equipped to make the most of the economic opportunities the capital has to offer. High quality education and training provision, including the allocation of sufficient sites and the development of childcare facilities, schools, colleges and universities in appropriate places, will not only help to provide greater educational choice but will also improve skills, which is critical in tackling disadvantage. Good quality education and training are vital for supporting people into sustainable employment, which is also essential to London's continued economic success'.

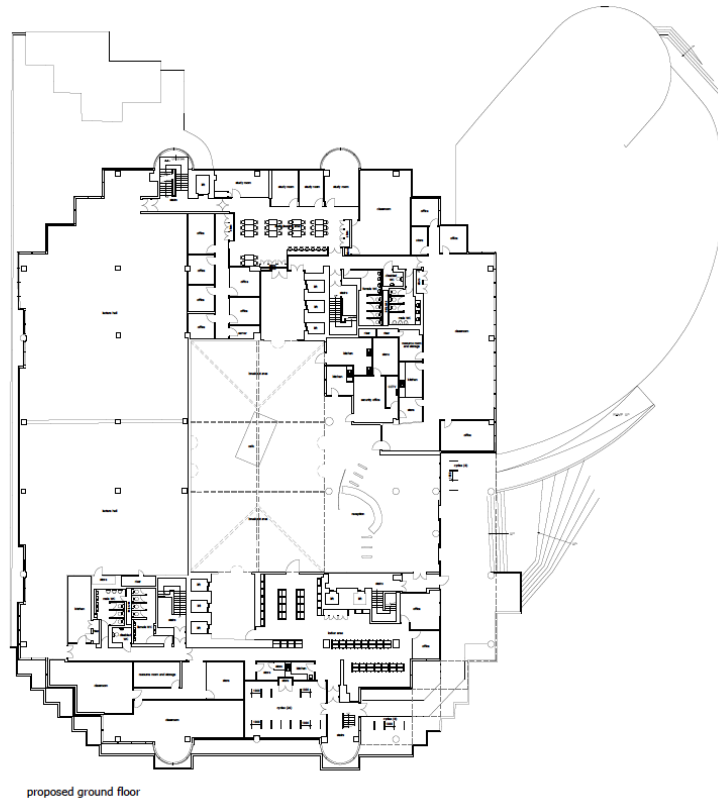
Planning Policy S3 relates to education and childcare facilities and notes development proposals for such should:

- 1) locate facilities in areas of identified need
- 2) locate facilities in accessible locations, with good public transport accessibility and access by walking and cycling
- 3) locate entrances and playgrounds away from busy roads, with traffic calming at entrances
- 4) link to existing footpath and cycle networks to create healthy routes to schools, and other education and childcare facilities, to enable all children to travel actively to school (walk, cycle or travel by public transport)
- 5) maximise the extended or multiple use of educational facilities for community or recreational use, through appropriate design measures
- 6) encourage the shared use of services between schools, colleges, universities, sports providers, and community facilities, and between early years and health and social care providers
- 7) ensure that new developments are accessible and inclusive for a range of users, including disabled people, by adopting an inclusive design approach
- 8) ensure that facilities incorporate suitable, accessible outdoor space
- 9) locate facilities next to parks or green spaces, where possible

The following Hillingdon Local Plan part 2 (2020) policies have also been considered including the overarching aim of Hillingdon's local plan to provide and promote a strong, well connected local economy with good potential for further growth.

Principle of Development

In terms of the principle of development and as touched upon earlier in this report, the current use of the premises is an office use. However, there is clearly an oversupply of office lettings in the area. The ground floor of the site is currently empty and not in use, however the applicant wishes to make use of the ground floor as a F1 use, this should be welcomed as a use for the site.



Proposed ground floor

Fundamentally, the estimated maximum occupancy level of the proposed use would be 55 staff and student members per day, with approximately 15 permanent staff and a total of 150 students. Given that the property is vacant with no current or future prospect of being used as an office space, it is considered the increase in employment activity on the site would accord with the objective of Policy SP3 and DMCI 1A.

Impact on neighbours

The proposed use would be unlikely to cause any noise, privacy or visual impacts to neighbours. The nature of the use is considered to have a no greater intensity than that of the existing use and would therefore be little to no external impact on neighbours. Given the opening hours that is proposed and the sites' location, the impact of the proposal on neighbours would be minimal.

Impact on character and appearance of the area

No external changes are sought and as such the proposal will not affect the appearance of the building or character of the area.

Impact on transport

The applicant has considered the existing transport network as adequate to facilitate the change of use. No change is proposed to the overall car parking numbers, but the proposal supports active travel through the inclusion of 26 long stay cycle spaces and a further 8 short stay cycle spaces. The cycle spaces are Sheffield cycle stands and adequately distanced from each other. This has been incorporated exceeding the requirements set out in the London Plan. Given the current use of the site and the nature of the proposed use it is considered the site will be serviced in much the same way.

In addition, the car ownership levels within London generally and specifically amongst students will therefore result in limited impact on the transport network with trips to

and from the site being unlikely to change significantly as it is expected that most staff and students will either use public transport or cycle to the site.

Overall, the scheme should be considered acceptable from a transport perspective.

Conclusion

In terms of the principle of development, the sites current use is an office use however the proposal is for the Class F1(a), an educational centre at the ground floor with the remaining site being Class E, office. No changes are sought to the public highway and the centre would be serviced and operate in a very similar fashion to the existing use found on site. The proposal would not raise concerns with regards to transport. In addition, given the nature of this change, the proposal is extremely unlikely to raise any concerns with regards to impact on neighbouring residential properties.

It is considered that this proposal should be welcomed for providing additional facilities and realising a renewed use for an underused office space. As such this application should be approved.