

Address:	Unit 6A 6-17 Tottenham Court Road London W1T 1BG		5				
Application Number(s):	2025/4131/P	Officer: Gary Wong					
Ward:	Bloomsbury						
Date Received:	18/09/2025						
Proposal: Change of use from a Bank (Class E) to dual use as an Interactive Museum (Sui Generis) or flexible Class E use.							
Background Papers, Supporting Documents and Drawing Numbers: <p>Existing:</p> <p><i>A010; A011; A012; 002-MOI TOTTENHAM COURT RD - P001 Rev. B.</i></p> <p>Proposed:</p> <p><i>A090 Rev.1; A091 Rev.1; A092 Rev.1; A200 Rev.1; A201 Rev.1; A202 Rev.1; 002-MOI TOTTENHAM COURT RD - P002 Rev. B.</i></p> <p>Documents:</p> <p><i>Cover letter dated 04 September 2025 prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning; Design and Access Statement Rev.1 dated 26/08/2025 prepared by rpa: group; Operational Management Plan v.1.1 dated 21/11/2025 prepared by Museum of Illusions.</i></p>							
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: <p>Grant conditional planning permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement</p>							
Applicant:	Agent:						
c/o - Agent	Rolfe Judd Planning Old Church Court Claylands Road Oval London SW8 1NZ						

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:		
	Use Class / Description	Floorspace (GIA sqm)
Existing	Class E (last use was Barclays Bank)	1,105 sqm
	TOTAL	1,105 sqm
Proposed	Sui Generis (Interactive museum with associated facilities including retail and office space) or Class E	1,105 sqm
	TOTAL	1,105 sqm

Parking Details				
Type	Existing spaces	Proposed long stay	Proposed short stay	Difference
Car parking	0	0	0	0
Cycle parking (non-residential)	0	0	0	0

Executive Summary:

- i) The application site relates to the ground, first and second floor of Unit 6A, 6-17 Tottenham Court Road. The unit was last used as a Barclays Bank (Class E use) and it has been vacant since February 2025. Planning permission is sought for change of use of the unit from Class E to dual or flexible use as Sui Generis or Class E. The proposed Sui Generis use specified under this application is for an interactive museum, The Museum of Illusion. The proposed use will also include ancillary facilities for retail and office space within the unit. This use is considered 'Sui Generis' falling outside of any one of the defined use class categories.
- ii) Permission is needed for this change of use as, although similar in nature to the lawful existing Class E use in many aspects, the proposed use is considered materially different in planning terms.
- iii) The proposed ground floor will include a reception and a gift shop for the Museum of Illusions along with a storage area and associated access (lift and escalator). The proposed first floor will include a range of interactive experiences along with a staff room and customer lavatories. The proposed second floor will be restricted to staff access only and comprise ancillary office space and plant for the application unit. There will be no change in the total floor space which remains as 1,105 sqm.
- iv) Hours of operations including ancillary activities proposed will be from 08:00 – 23:00, Monday to Sunday.
- v) The proposed use as an interactive museum is considered acceptable given its town centre location. The museum will complement the mixed-use character of Tottenham Court Road and contribute to attracting visitors' footfall around the

area. The interactive museum providing an immersive experience will support employment and align with Camden's economic and cultural objectives. Whilst the adjacent units are predominantly in retail use, the proposed ground floor includes a gift shop which will be able to provide a highly similar character to the adjacent retail frontages. The former use of the unit as a Barclays Bank included retail banking services and ancillary office space on the upper floors. The proposed development will also include ancillary office space on the second floor level. Overall, the proposed dual or flexible use as Sui Generis or Class E would preserve the character of Tottenham Court Road and contribute to the variety, vibrancy and choice within the area for residents and visitors. The proposed use would not harm the character, function, vitality and viability of this central London location, and as such, is considered appropriate.

- vi) The development does not involve any external alterations or extensions. As such, it would not impact the character or appearance of the host building, the wider frontages, or this part of the Hanway Street Conservation Area.
- vii) Although the expected footfall from the proposed museum use will be increased compared to the former use as a retail bank branch, the proposed museum adopts a ticketed booking system with 20-minute entry time slots available via online platforms. Walk-ins are permitted but only depend on real-time visitor volumes and capacity. Queuing management practices will be in place to facilitate orderly visitor flow. An Operational Management Plan (OMP) has been provided and is considered satisfactory. The OMP would be secured via S106 legal agreement to help ensure the proposed use would be operated as intended and to mitigate any potential amenity issues that might come from a use attracting large numbers and their arrival/dispersal. As such it is not considered to alter the character of the area or unduly impact neighbouring amenity.
- viii) Subject to the suggested conditions and Operational Management Plan secured by S106 legal agreement, officers are satisfied the proposed development would be operated without resulting in harmful disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.
- ix) As such, the proposed development complies with the development plan as a whole and is recommended for approval.

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for referral to Committee: The proposed development is for a change of use resulting in the provision of more than 1,000 sqm of non-residential floorspace (Clause 3(ii)).

1 Site and background

Designations

1.1 The following are the most relevant designations or constraints:

Designation	Details
Central London Local Area	Fitzrovia
Fitzrovia Area Action Plan	Fitzrovia Area Action Plan
Contaminated site potential	1871-1877 Soap works, 1900-1939 unknown industrial
Central London Area	Central London Area (Clear Zone Region)
Conservation Area	Hanway Street
Archaeological Priority Area	Tier 2
PTAL (Public transport accessibility)	6b
Neighbourhood Area	Fitzrovia East
Business Improvement District	Fitzrovia
CMP Priority Area	South of Euston Road
Cross Rail Area	Cross Rail 2
TFL underground zone of interest	TFL underground zone of influence
Underground development constraints and considerations	Subterranean (groundwater flow) and Slope stability

Table 1 - Site designations and constraints

Description

1.2 The application site is located to the southwest of Tottenham Court Road and covers an area of approximately 1,105 sqm across three floor levels. The unit is part of a commercial frontages along 6-17 Tottenham Court Road which was re-developed for office and retail uses in 1990's. To the rear of the site are 5-6 Hanway Place and 10-22 Hanway Street which are in mixed use with shops, offices and upper floor residential accommodation. The site is within the Hanway Street Conservation Area and the application building is identified as a neutral contributor to the conservation area.

1.3 The building is three-storey in height and comprises a range of retail uses including Sainsbury's Local, Specsavers, Muji, Wasabi and Boots with glass frontages to Tottenham Court Road. The application unit, Unit 6A, was last used as a Barclays Bank and has remained vacant since February 2025. The application building is a modern redevelopment in the 1990's replacing a former block of terraces and warehouses in this part of Tottenham Court Road. The building is featured with extensively glazed frontages of which is proportionally

divided among each retail unit. The building's roof is a predominant plant area serving for the retail units and offices within the wider building.

- 1.4 To the rear of the site are Hanway Street and Hanway Place which survive as a backland enclave of varied small-scale buildings laid along narrow throughfares. Hanway Street links Oxford Street with Tottenham Court Road just to the northwest of the junction. Hanway Place forms a loop to the north which extends southwards at the east to meet Hanway Street. The area has a tight grain characterised by narrow lanes approx. 4m wide enclosed by three and four storey development of varied character, occupied by a mix of small scale warehouses, offices, retail and entertainment uses with residential accommodation on the upper floors. The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan 2014 and Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy regards the application site (6-17 Tottenham Court Road), 5,6 and 12 Hanway Place as being 'opportunity sites'. It is noted that the emerging draft Camden Local Plan 2025 would replace the policies and guidance relating to this identified opportunity site within the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan 2014. The emerging Camden Local Plan 2025 does not allocate 6-17 Tottenham Court Road as an opportunity site since the site has become unavailable and is not expected to come forward for development.
- 1.5 The application site is located in Central London Area and has an excellent Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b (Excellent). The nearest London Underground Stations are Tottenham Court Road which is located approximately 150 yards to the south, Goodge Street which is 0.3 miles to the north. Numerous bus routes serve Charing Cross and Victoria to the south, Hampstead, Archway and Stoke Newington to the north.

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the use of the application unit comprising ground, first and second floor to dual or flexible use as an interactive museum with ancillary facilities and offices (Sui Generis) or Class E. The unit would be operated by the Museum of Illusions and provide a range of interactive experiences for visitors.

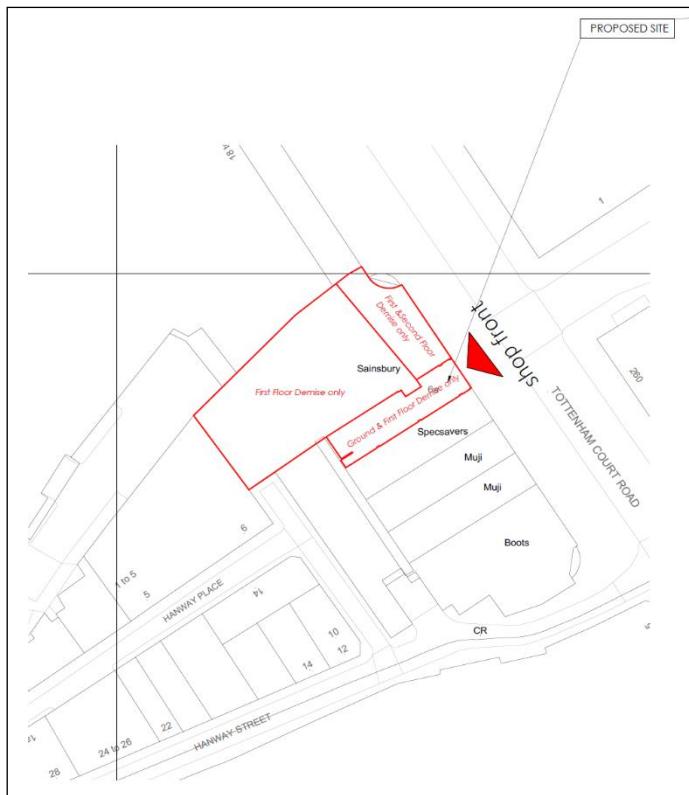


Figure 1 – The proposed site

2.2 The proposed ground floor would include the main public entrance, a gift shop supporting the experiential offer and forming part of the retail and visitor journey. There would be a vertical circulation zone with lift, escalator and stairs providing access to the upper floors. The proposed first floor would offer the main museum exhibits and experiential displays, customer and staff lavatories and lifts. The second floor would be restricted to staff use only and include stock and ancillary storage area, office space and plant area.

Floor	Proposed GIA (sqm)
Ground floor	163 (Entrance, reception area, gift shop)
First floor	751.1 (Interactive experience, lavatories)
Second floor	190.9 (Office space, storage area, plant area)
TOTAL	1,105

Table 2: Proposed floor areas

2.3 The museum will open from 09:00 – 22:00, Monday to Sunday. A ticketed booking system with 20-minute entry time slots will be available via online booking platforms. Walk-ins are only permitted depending on real-time visitor volumes and capacity.

2.4 No external works are proposed as part of the proposal.

3 Relevant history

The site (6-17 Tottenham Court Road)

3.1 **2015/1816/P** - Installation of 1 x air-conditioning unit at roof level. **Granted planning permission** on 20/10/2015.

3.2 **2007/3536/P** - Installation of four condenser units at roof level to existing retail unit (Class A1). **Granted planning permission** on 08/10/2007.

3.3 **2003/1980/P** - Relocation of fire doors to rear (on corner of Hanway Street) by moving them forward by one metre. **Granted planning permission** on 10/10/2003.

3.4 **PSX0104635** - The use of unit 6 (first floor level) as dual/alternative use for a retail shop (Class A1) or as an internet shop (sui generis), as shown on drawing numbers: 256 03 A09 E; 256.03-A04 H. **Granted planning permission** on 19/10/2001.

3.5 **P9601833R1** - Redevelopment by the erection of a three storey building to be used for purposes within the meaning of Classes A1, A3 and B1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 together with a refuse yard and adjoining highway improvements, the erection of a building linking across Hanway Place, and redevelopment behind the retained front facade of 5 Hanway Place to provide nine residential flats, as showing on drawing numbers 7410/S/210B, /211A to /214A, /215, /216A, /217A, /218 and /219, as revised by letter dated 8 October 1996.. **Granted planning permission** on 06/06/1997

The area

7-12 Hanway Place

3.6 **PS9905043** - The change of use from restaurant (Class A3) to office (Class B1) at ground floor level, as shown by drawing Numbers 8169 D 000; 7410 G 010 AG.. **Granted planning permission** on 28/01/2000.

18 Hanway Street

3.7 **9201186** - Change of use from offices to storage at basement level and retail on ground and first floors. **Granted planning permission** on 17/12/1992.

4 Consultation

Statutory consultees

Hanway Street CAAC

4.1 No response was received.

Charlotte Street Association

4.2 No response was received.

Transport for London

4.3 No comment on the application.

Adjoining Occupiers

4.4 Two site notices were displayed outside the application site and 6 Hanway Place. The notices were displayed on 15/10/2025 until 08/11/2025. The application was advertised on 16/10/2025, expiring on 09/11/2025.

4.5 No objection or comment was received from any adjoining occupiers.

5 Policies

National and regional policy and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

London Plan 2021 (LP)

E9 Retail, markets and hot food takeaways

SD1 Opportunity Areas

SD4 The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)

SD6 Town centres and high streets

SD7 Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents

D11 Safety, security and resilience to emergency

D14 Noise

T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

T5 Cycling

T6 Car parking

T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

London Plan Guidance (LPG)

Accessible London SPG

Air quality neutral LPG

Be Seen energy monitoring LPG

Circular economy statements LPG

Energy Planning Guidance

Whole life carbon LPG

Sustainable Transport, Walking and Cycling

Local policy and guidance

Camden Local Plan (2017) (CLP)

- G1 Delivery and location of growth
- C3 Cultural and leisure facilities
- C5 Safety and security
- C6 Access for all
- E1 Economic development
- E2 Employment premises and sites
- E3 Tourism
- A1 Managing the impact of development
- A3 Biodiversity
- CC1 Climate change mitigation
- CC2 Adapting to climate change
- CC5 Waste
- D1 Design
- D2 Heritage
- TC1 Quantity and location of retail development
- TC2 Camden's centres and other shopping areas
- TC4 Town centre uses
- T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and car-free development
- T2 Parking and car-free development
- T4 Sustainable movement of goods and materials
- DM1 Delivery and monitoring

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Most relevant Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)

- CPG Design (Jan 2021)
- CPG Community uses, leisure and pubs (Jan 2021)
- CPG Town centres, retail and employment (Jan 2021)
- CPG Amenity (Jan 2021)
- CPG Employment sites and business premises (Jan 2021)
- CPG Energy efficiency and adaptation (Jan 2021)
- CPG Transport (Jan 2021)

Other guidance

Hanway Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011
Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (March 2014)

Draft Camden Local Plan (DCLP)

The council has published a new Draft Camden Local Plan (incorporating Site Allocations) for consultation (DCLP). The Proposed Submission Draft Camden Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the 3 October 2025 for independent examination, in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Plan will now be examined by a Planning Inspector.

Previously, the Council published the draft new Camden Local Plan for consultation in January 2024 and published an updated Proposed Submission Draft Camden Local Plan for consultation from 1 May to 27 June 2025.

The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan is a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications but has limited weight at this stage. The weight that can be given to an emerging plan increases as it progresses towards adoption. In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the degree of weight to be given is a matter for the decision-maker, having regard to the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections, and the consistency of the draft policies with the NPPF.

6 Assessment

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

7	Land use
8	Design & Heritage
9	Impact on neighbouring amenity
10	Energy and Sustainability
11	Biodiversity Net Gain
12	Transport
13	Refuse and recycling
14	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
15	Conclusion
16	Recommendations
17	Legal comments
18	Planning Conditions
19	Planning Informatives

7 Land Use

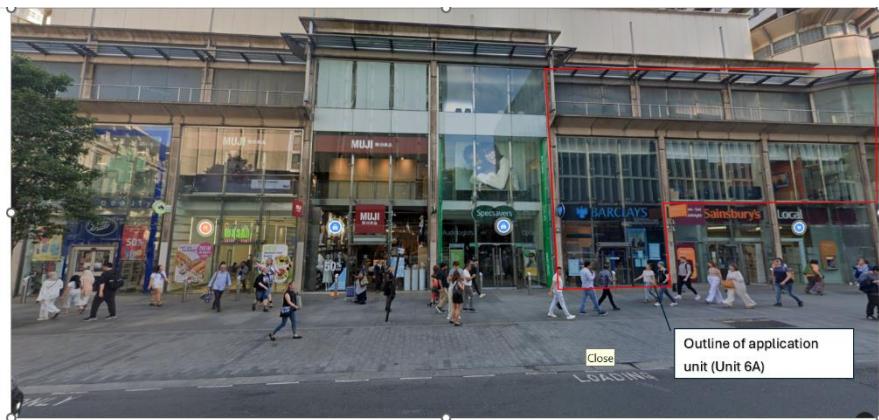


Figure 2 – The proposed application unit and the wider building and frontages

- 7.1 The application proposes a more flexible approach to land uses for the application unit, with flexible option for commercial (Class E) and an interactive museum (Sui Generis). Hence the proposal would be for 'Change of use from a bank (Class E) to dual use as an Interactive Museum (Sui Generis) or flexible Class E use.'
- 7.2 Flexible options for uses can be important in delivering viable and sustainable uses within developments, allowing a period of flexibility. Permission for a flexible use allows a landowner to implement a range of options for use, improving chances of finding tenants and minimising the chances of vacancy. Flexibility is provided by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Class V of Part 3 of the Order allows changes between the permitted uses (in this case commercial and education) for a period of ten years after the grant of planning permission, subject to any relevant conditions on the permission.

Flexible use – Use Class E or Sui Generis

Interactive museum (Sui Generis)

- 7.3 The proposed use would include a reception area and gift shop on ground floor, main interactive exhibits on first floor and ancillary office space, staff area, and storage on second floor.
- 7.4 The proposal is supported in land use terms by bringing cultural activities to the area and bringing the vacant unit back into active use. An interactive experience use is considered appropriate at this highly accessible location within the Central London Area, with a number of theatre and cultural venues in the proximity. The proposed use would contribute to the mixed character with prevalent retail and cultural uses along Tottenham Court Road. As such, the proposal is acceptable and in accordance with policies TC2 and TC4 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.
- 7.5 The former use of the unit as a bank included ancillary office space on first and second floor levels for approximately 134.52sqm. Although the proposed use would convert the first floor to the main exhibit area, a satisfactory level of ancillary office space would still remain on the second floor for approximately 100.06sqm. Since the existing office space within the unit has been ancillary for providing financial services, the moderate reduction in ancillary office space is considered compliant with policy E2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. Furthermore, the proposed interactive museum would also generate employment opportunities including 3 full time management staff, 24-34 number of hourly employed duty managers and floor staff which may vary depending on seasonal demand, and further indirect employment for security and cleaning staff. This contributes to the wider creative and cultural economy, in line with Camden's ambitions to support a diverse and dynamic economy. As such, the overall employment function of the unit is not considered to be undermined and would remain compliant to policies E1 and E2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

The proposed museum use would also include a gift shop on ground floor level and is considered in compliance with the local plan policies (policies TC1 and TC2) to keep a minimum 80% of retail frontage at this town centre location. As

such the proposed museum use would be in line with the Council's objectives to promote a successful and vibrant town centre in this location.

Class E

- 7.6 The existing use of the application unit, the wider application building, and the surrounding area along Tottenham Court Road is predominantly Class E use including a range of retail shops, restaurants and offices. The applicant currently proposes to use the unit as an interactive museum (*Sui Generis*) but also seeks to retain the option under this dual approach to change it back to Class E use when deemed necessary in the future.
- 7.7 Class E use provides a broad range of uses including the display or retail sale of goods, sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises or other appropriate commercial services. The former use of the application unit was classed as E(c)(i) as financial services under this class order. As such any change of use within the same use class order would not require planning permission.
- 7.8 It is considered appropriate to allow the unit to retain the flexibility for switching back to Class E use given the site's Central London Area location. As mentioned under 7.1 and 7.6, Tottenham Court Road is a highly accessible commercial street by a number of public transport options via the underground (Tottenham Court Road station and Goodge Street station) and different bus routes including 24, 29, 73, and 390. It is also identified as an opportunity area under policy SD1 of the London Plan 2021 and a growth area under policy TC1 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. Therefore, given this highly accessible town centre location, the proposed dual approach is considered sufficiently justified. The proposed retention of a Class E use would support the continuous vitality and viability of this unit and the associated economic growth in the Tottenham Court Road area.
- 7.9 The existing Class E use provides a broad range of commercial uses including display or retail sale of goods, sales of food and drink for consumption on the premises, provision of financial, professional or other services in a commercial, business or service locality etc. As mentioned in the above section, the wider application building and the surrounding premises around the area are various in land use term including retail, cafes, restaurant, offices, financial services and theatres. In this instance, it is not considered necessary to restrict the broad Class E use to a certain types of commercial uses given the site's central London location. Such a restriction would inappropriately limit the unit's diverse use under this Class and would unduly restrict its viability and flexibility. In the scenario the unit may be used as a restaurant which involves primary cooking on site and has potential impact on odour, any installation of kitchen extract or external equipment would need to be subject to a separate application for the Council's review.
- 7.10 As stated in the above section under 1.4, the application site has been allocated as an opportunity site within the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan 2014. The emerging draft Camden Local Plan 2025 would replace the policies and guidance set out in this action plan. The emerging draft local plan does not allocate the application

site as an opportunity site since it is not expected to come forward for development. The proposed development is considered in line with the character and development objective as set out under the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan in this part of Tottenham Court Road. The proposed development would be able to revitalise the unit back into active use and bring forward an expected increase in visitor flow in this central London location which would contribute to the economic and cultural development in the area. Despite this upcoming change in policy term, the proposal for change of use is not considered jeopardising the long term plan for this site allocated via the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan or the emerging draft Camden Local Plan 2025.

7.11 Overall, the proposed change of use is considered acceptable and would be in accordance with policies E1 and E2, TC1 and TC2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, policies SD1, SD4 and SD6 of the London Plan 2021 and the NPPF 2024.

8 Design and heritage

8.1 The proposal involves only the change of use to the ground, first and second floor of the application unit. The proposed development does not include any external alterations or extensions. There are no proposed changes to the supporting structure of the building and all of the sets within it are capable of being removed. Should any external alterations be required in the future then these would be the subject of a separate application, as required. The entertainment use is consistent with and supplements the character of the Central London location.

8.2 As such, the development would not impact the character or appearance of the host building, the streetscene, or this part of the Hanway Street Conservation Area, and would be in accordance with policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

8.3 The Council has had special regard to the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and the setting and special interest of adjacent listed buildings.

9 Impact on neighbouring amenity

9.1 Policies A1 (Managing the impact of development) and A4 (Noise and vibration) of the Camden Local Plan 2017 and the Amenity CPG are all relevant with regards to the impact on the amenity of residential properties in the area, requiring careful consideration of the impacts of development on light, outlook, privacy and noise. The thrust of the policies is that the quality of life of current and future occupiers should be protected and development which causes an unacceptable level of harm to amenity should be refused.

9.2 The proposal does not include any external alterations or extensions. Therefore there would not be any increased opportunities for overlooking of neighbouring residential properties or impact their outlook, daylight or sunlight. The principal consideration is therefore the potential impact on noise and disturbance arising from the use itself and from visitors entering and leaving the premises.

9.3 The nearest residential properties and noise-sensitive receptors are located to the rear of the application site, which are the upper floor residential flats in 5 and 6 Hanway Place. These nearest residential flats would be approximately 40m away from the main entrance of the application unit. The submitted Operational Management Plan (OMP) confirmed that the proposed museum use would not include any external operations, amplified entertainment, or outdoor activities. A timed ticketing system would be adopted with arrivals in a 20-minute entry slots. Groups must be pre-booked while walk-in entries would only be allowed depending on real-time capacity. Any queuing or waiting would be within the internal reception area on the ground floor. Given the location of the site and no external activities, therefore it is considered there would be limited noise disturbance arising from the museum use itself. A condition (**Condition 3**) would be attached to ensure no amplified sound within the unit would be audible from adjoining neighbour residential properties.

9.4 The submitted plans indicate the proposed museum would not include any designated area serving food and drinks. Given that there is no kitchen or primary cooking involved in the proposed use, it is not considered there would be harmful amenity impact in terms of odour to the neighbouring residential properties.

9.5 No bar area is included in the proposed plans and the OMP states that no alcohol is sold or permitted during the day-to-day museum operation. However the applicant has indicated the intention to retain flexibility for alcohol service for controlled corporate events in the future and this would be subject to a separate licensing application. The applicant would be required to submit an updated OMP and inform the Council should the circumstances change in the future.

9.6 The OMP sets out the proposed opening hours of the museum for visitors of 09:00 – 22:00 Monday to Sunday. Typical operational hours would be 08:00 – 23:00 Monday to Sunday, which include an additional hour for opening checks and staff briefing before its daily opening and an additional hour for cleaning, safety checks and closing after. The proposed opening hours are considered acceptable for this central London location and would be secured by a condition (**Condition 4**).

9.7 The venue would be overseen by the venue management team consisting of 3 full time employees including the General Manager, main operations, and sales leads. It is anticipated that 24-34 hourly employees would be hired and this number would vary depending on the season, customer demand and normal staff turnover. The customer experience would be self-paced and naturally staggering movement. Staff would be positioned near the exit to encourage a smooth and quiet departure to the nearest Tottenham Court Road station. Details of visitor dispersal are included in the submitted OMP.

9.8 Given that there would be no external activities, the staggered entry and departure times, the entertainment style use with limited space to congregate post-event, the potential disturbance arising from customers entering and vacating the site is considered to be limited. As such, it is not considered to cause

undue impact on neighbouring amenity and the proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

10 Sustainability and energy

- 10.1 Non-residential changes of use of more than 500 sq. m of floorspace are expected to provide an energy statement setting out how a development has been designed to follow the steps in the energy hierarchy set out in the London Plan. Policy CC1 requires all developments to achieve a 20% reduction in CO2 emissions through renewable technologies wherever feasible. Applicants are also expected to submit a sustainability statement, the details of which are to be commensurate with the scale of the development, showing how the development will implement the sustainable design principles.
- 10.2 The proposal would not include any external or internal changes to the building fabric and the existing overall functions within the building would not significantly change. As no alterations or physical changes would be proposed that would affect the sustainability of the building a BREEAM assessment was not required to support this application.

11 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 11.1 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is an approach to development that requires new developments to result in a measurable increase in biodiversity compared to the pre-development baseline. However, there are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.
- 11.2 In this case, the development does not trigger the requirement for BNG because it is below the de minimis threshold (because it does not impact an onsite priority habitat AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat).

12 Transport

Trip generation

- 12.1 Normally a Transport Assessment would be required for a major planning application relating to a change of use of over 1000sqm floorspace. In this instance, the proposed museum would adopt an online booking system and the expected number of visits would be able to be predicted through the booking system. Although walk-in visits would be considered, it would only depend on the real-time volume of visits and capacity of the unit. As the museum would be operating and accepting visitors mainly via the online pre-booked system, the number of visits would be largely confined to the unit's capacity to receive visitors. Therefore, it is not considered that the resulting transport impact from trip generation by the visitors would be harmful to the surrounding area.

Cycle parking

12.2 Local Plan Policy T1 requires developments to sufficiently provide for the needs of cyclists in accordance with London Plan standards. For Sui Generis uses, the guidance advises that the standard for the most similar use should be applied.

12.3 Whilst there would be a cycle parking requirement for a retail or office use (Class E), it is considered that it would be unreasonable to require the applicant to provide formal cycle parking facilities within the unit given the limited ground floor space available. It is noted that there are some cycle parking facilities available within the communal back of house area, which were secured as part of the redevelopment of the site. Given that there is no increase in floorspace and the proposed immersive experience does not generate a direct demand for cycle parking, it is considered unnecessary to secure additional cycle parking provision.

Car parking

12.4 Policy T1 of the Local Plan promotes sustainable transport by prioritising walking, cycling and public transport in the borough. Policy T2 seeks to limit the availability of car parking and requires all new developments in the borough to be car-free.

12.5 The venue is expected to attract visitors from across London, the UK and overseas, the majority of whom will be visiting other attractions in the central London area at the same time. As such, there is not expected to be any significant increase in passenger numbers on the local public transport network.

12.6 In accordance with Policy T2 of the Camden Local Plan, all new non-residential developments will also be expected to be car free. This will prevent the development from adding to existing on-street parking stress in the surrounding residential streets, whilst encouraging staff to travel by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

12.7 It is noted that no off-street parking is currently provided and none is proposed as part of this development. As such it is considered unnecessary to secure this development as Business permit free as this is an existing commercial unit which will remain in essentially a commercial use.

Deliveries and servicing

12.8 The OMP indicates that the proposed museum would be a low-servicing venue with light deliveries including merchandise once or twice a week. No large vehicles would be required for servicing and deliveries and maintenance visits would be scheduled outside public hours where possible. There are also designated loading bays to the front of the unit which are considered sufficient to meet the demand for the proposed museum use. Overall it is not expected that the proposed use would generate an undue increase in scale or intensity of servicing compared with its former use as a bank while maintaining robust safeguards to protect neighbouring amenity.

13 Refuse and recycling

13.1 Camden Local Plan policy CC5 (Waste) and Camden Planning Guidance (Design) are relevant with regards to waste and recycling storage and seek to ensure that appropriate storage for waste and recyclables is provided in all developments.

13.2 The proposed use as an immersive entertainment experience is likely to generate little waste and refuse. Any waste generated is likely to arise predominantly from the ancillary retail and refreshment areas which would be easily accommodated within the existing waste disposal arrangements.

14 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

14.1 The CIL applies to all proposals which add 100 sq. m of new floorspace or an extra dwelling. The amount to pay is the increase in floorspace (m²) multiplied by the rate in the CIL charging schedule.

14.2 The proposal would not be liable for either the Mayor of London's CIL2 (MCIL2) or Camden's CIL as there is no net increase in floorspace or creation of residential units.

15 Conclusion

15.1 In conclusion, the proposed use is considered appropriate in this central London location by preserving and enhancing the vitality, function and viability of Tottenham Court Road. The development does not involve any external alterations and as such, would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the building, the wider streetscene or the Hanway Street Conservation Area. Subject to the suggested conditions and obligations including an Operational Management Plan secured by legal agreement, the proposed development would be operated without resulting in harmful disturbance to the neighbouring properties. As such, the proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance with polices TC2, TC4, E1, E2, D1, D2, A1, A4, T1 and T2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

16 Recommendation

16.1 Grant conditional full planning permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement with the following heads of terms:

- Operational Management Plan

17 Legal comment

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

18 Conditions

1. Time limit

The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. Approved drawings

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Existing:

A010; A011; A012; 002-MOI TOTTENHAM COURT RD - P001 Rev. B.

Proposed:

A090 Rev. 1; A091 Rev. 1; A092 Rev. 1; A200 Rev. 1; A201 Rev. 1; A202 Rev. 1; 002-MOI TOTTENHAM COURT RD - P002 Rev. B.

Documents:

Cover letter dated 04 September 2025 prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning; Design and Access Statement Rev.1 dated 26/08/2025 prepared by rpa: group; Operational Management Plan v.1.1 dated 21/11/2025 prepared by Museum of Illusions.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning

3. Noise breakout

No music or amplified sound shall be played on the premises in such a way as to be audible within any adjoining residential premises or on the adjoining highway.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally in accordance with the requirements of policies D1, A1, A4, TC1, TC2, and TC4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

4. Operating hours

The use hereby permitted shall not be carried out outside the following times:

08:00–23:00 Monday to Sunday

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally in accordance with the requirements of policies A1, A4, TC1, TC2, TC4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

19 Planning informatives

1	Your attention is drawn to the fact that there is a separate legal agreement with the Council which relates to the development for which this permission is granted. Information/drawings relating to the discharge of matters covered by the Heads of Terms of the legal agreement should be marked for the attention of the Planning Obligations Officer, Sites Team, Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street, WC1H 8EQ.
2	You are advised that the alternative use permission hereby granted gives flexibility of use for 10 years from the date of this permission. After 10 years the lawful use will revert to whichever of the uses is taking place at the time.
3	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).
4	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, 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.
5	All works should be conducted in accordance with the Camden Minimum Requirements - a copy is available on the Council's website (search for 'Camden Minimum Requirements' at www.camden.gov.uk) 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) 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 4 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.
6	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (1/3): The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("1990 Act") is that planning permission granted in England is subject to the condition ("the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

	<p>(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>The local planning authority (LPA) that would approve any Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) (if required) is London Borough of Camden.</p> <p>There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are summarised below, but you should check the legislation yourself and ensure you meet the statutory requirements.</p> <p>Based on the information provided, this will not require the approval of a BGP before development is begun because it is below the de minimis threshold (because it does not impact an onsite priority habitat AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat).</p>
7	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (2/3):</p> <p>+ Summary of transitional arrangements and exemptions for biodiversity gain condition</p> <p>The following are provided for information and may not apply to this permission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The planning application was made before 12 February 2024. 2. The planning permission is retrospective. 3. The planning permission was granted under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the original (parent) planning permission was made or granted before 12 February 2024. 4. The permission is exempt because of one or more of the reasons below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is not "major development" and the application was made or granted before 2 April 2024, or planning permission is granted under section 73 and the original (parent) permission was made or granted before 2 April 2024. - It is below the de minimis threshold (because it does not impact an onsite priority habitat AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat). - The application is a Householder Application. - It is for development of a "Biodiversity Gain Site". - It is Self and Custom Build Development (for no more than 9 dwellings on a site no larger than 0.5 hectares and consists exclusively of dwellings which are Self-Build or Custom Housebuilding). - It forms part of, or is ancillary to, the high-speed railway transport network (High Speed 2).
8	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (3/3):</p> <p>+ Irreplaceable habitat:</p>

If the onsite habitat includes Irreplaceable Habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements. In addition to information about minimising adverse impacts on the habitat, the BGP must include information on compensation for any impact on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The LPA can only approve a BGP if satisfied that the impact on the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

+ The effect of section 73(2D) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990

If planning permission is granted under section 73, and a BGP was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier BGP"), the earlier BGP may be regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition on this permission. It will be regarded as approved if the conditions attached (and so the permission granted) do not affect both the post-development value of the onsite habitat and any arrangements made to compensate irreplaceable habitat as specified in the earlier BGP.

+ Phased development

In the case of phased development, the BGP will be required to be submitted to and approved by the LPA before development can begin (the overall plan), and before each phase of development can begin (phase plans). The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition in phased development are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.

Planning Committee

11th December 2025

2025/4131/P

Unit 6A, 6-17 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 1BG







Main frontage



Adjacent bus stop

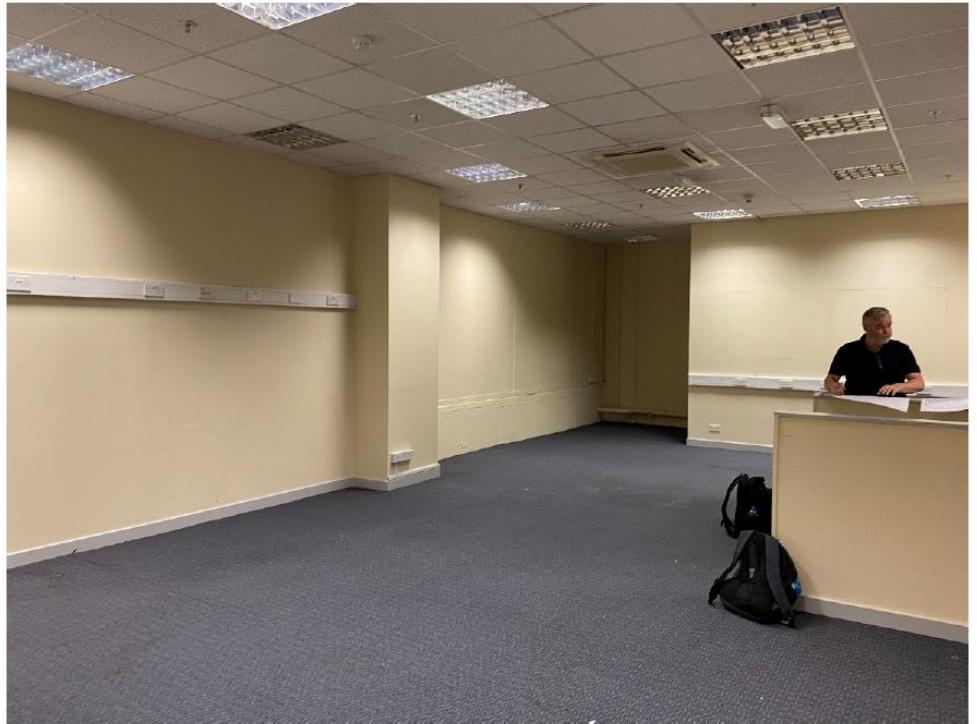


Adjacent retail units

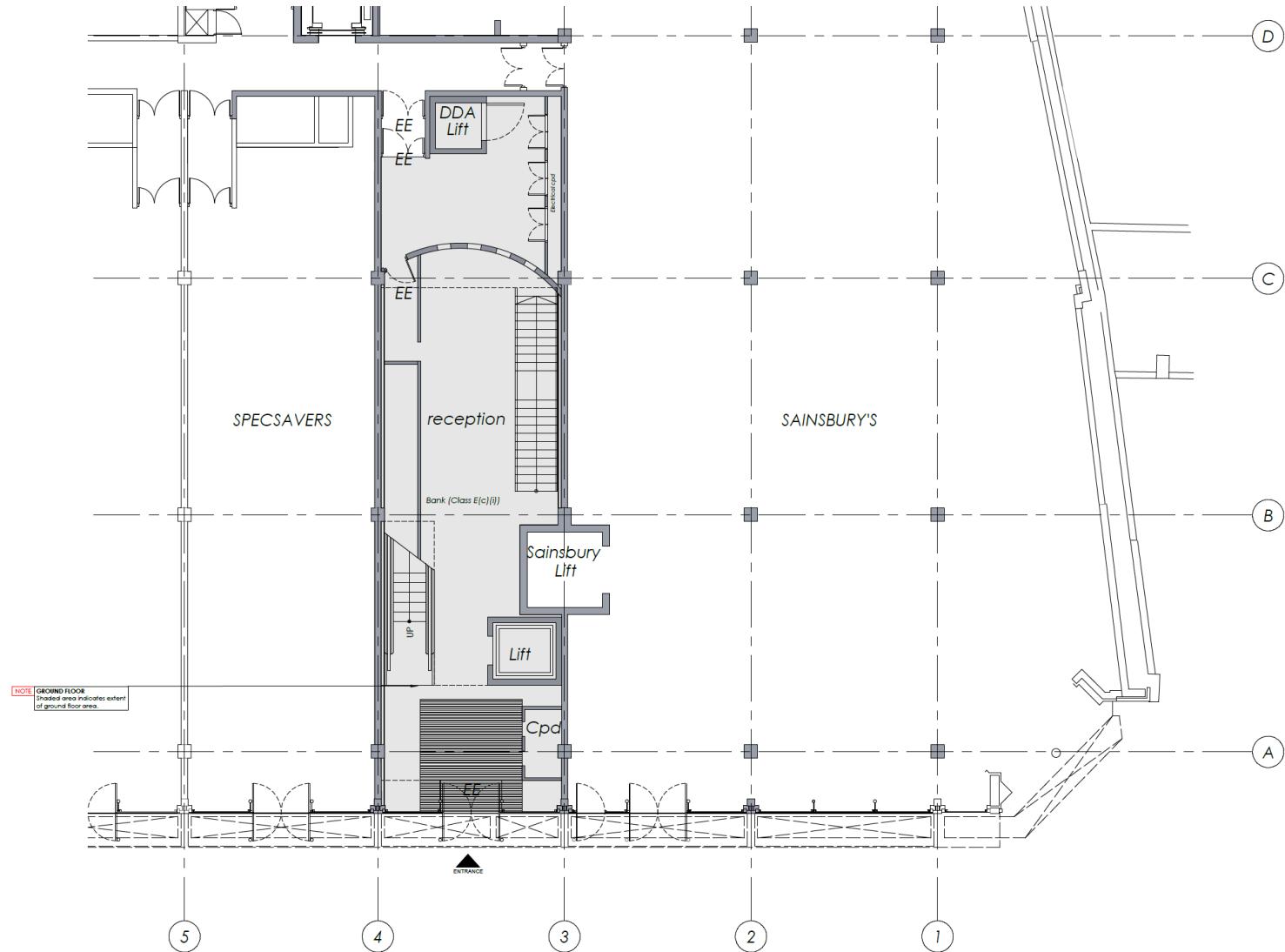




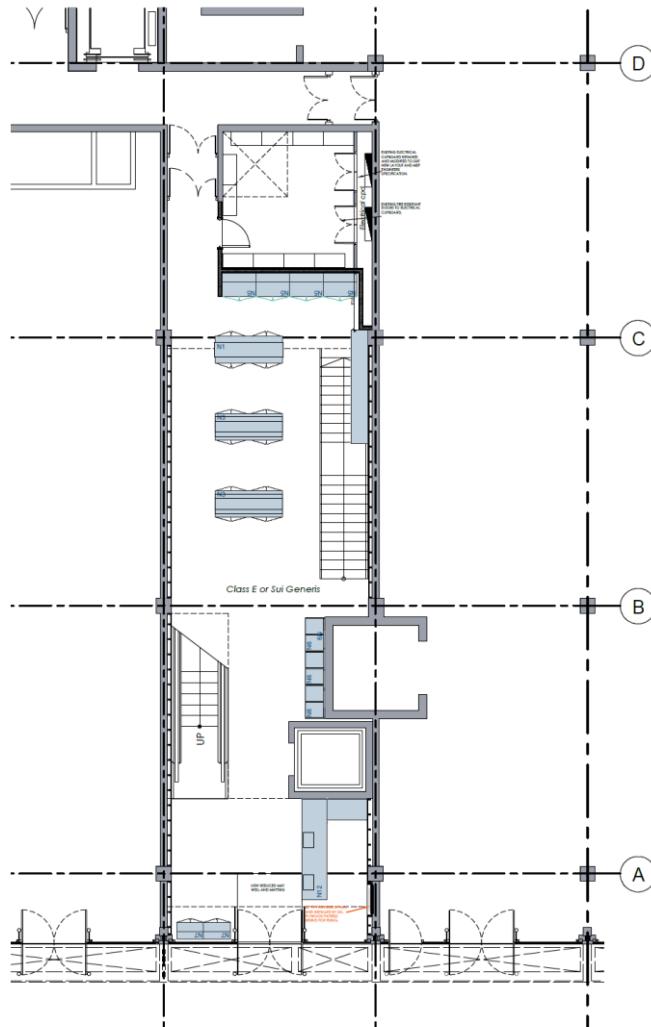
First floor banking hall.



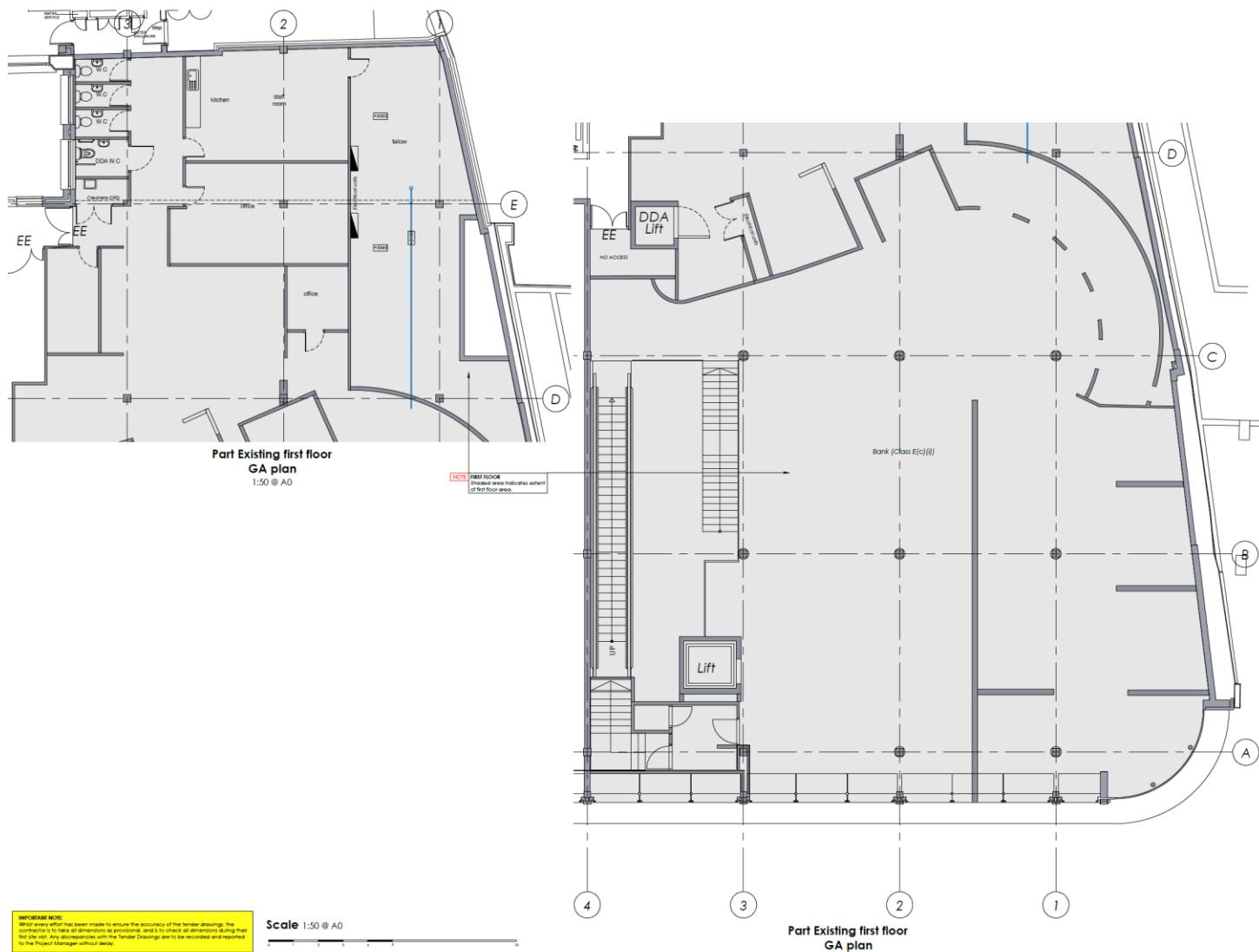
Second floor office

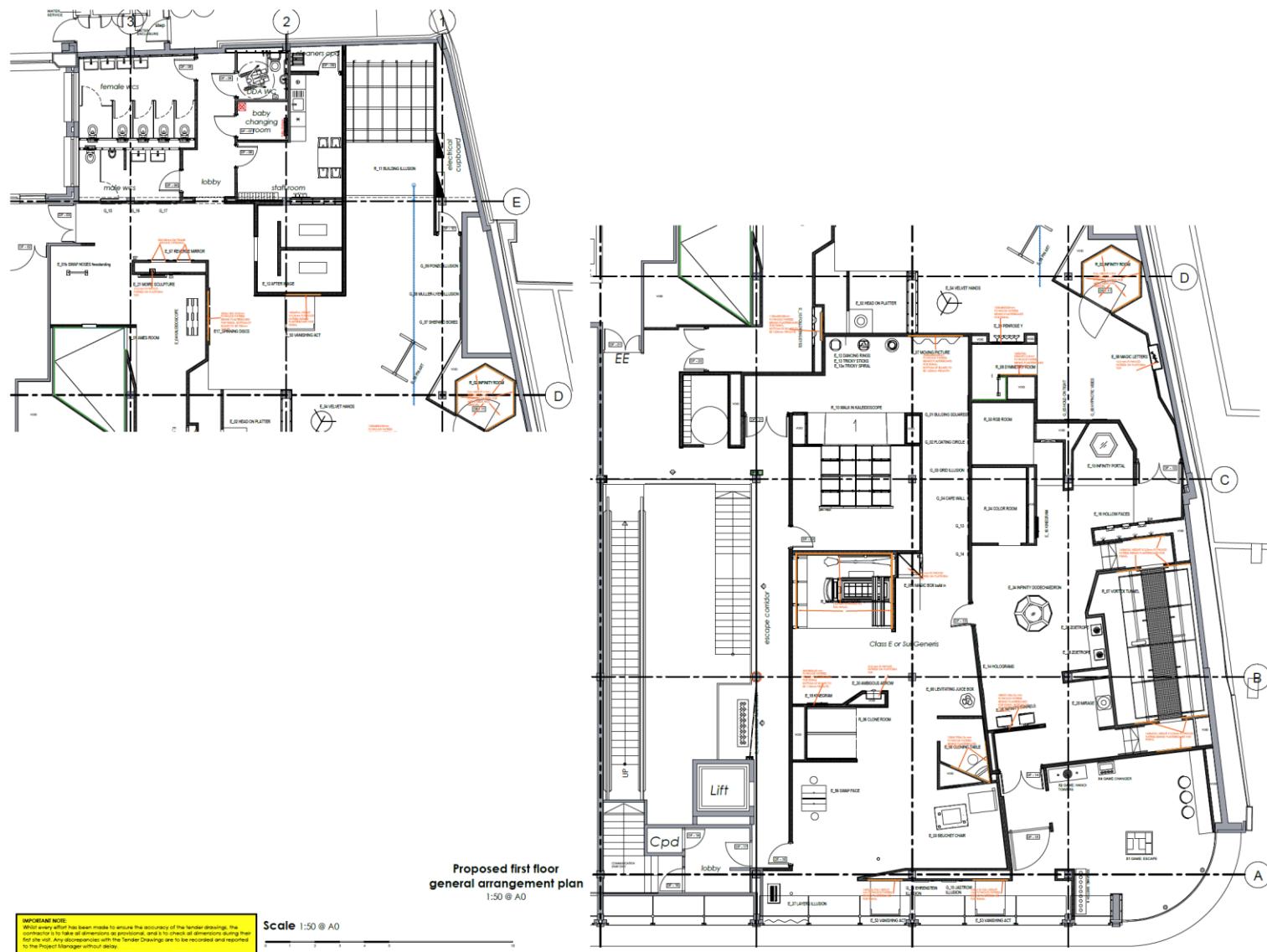


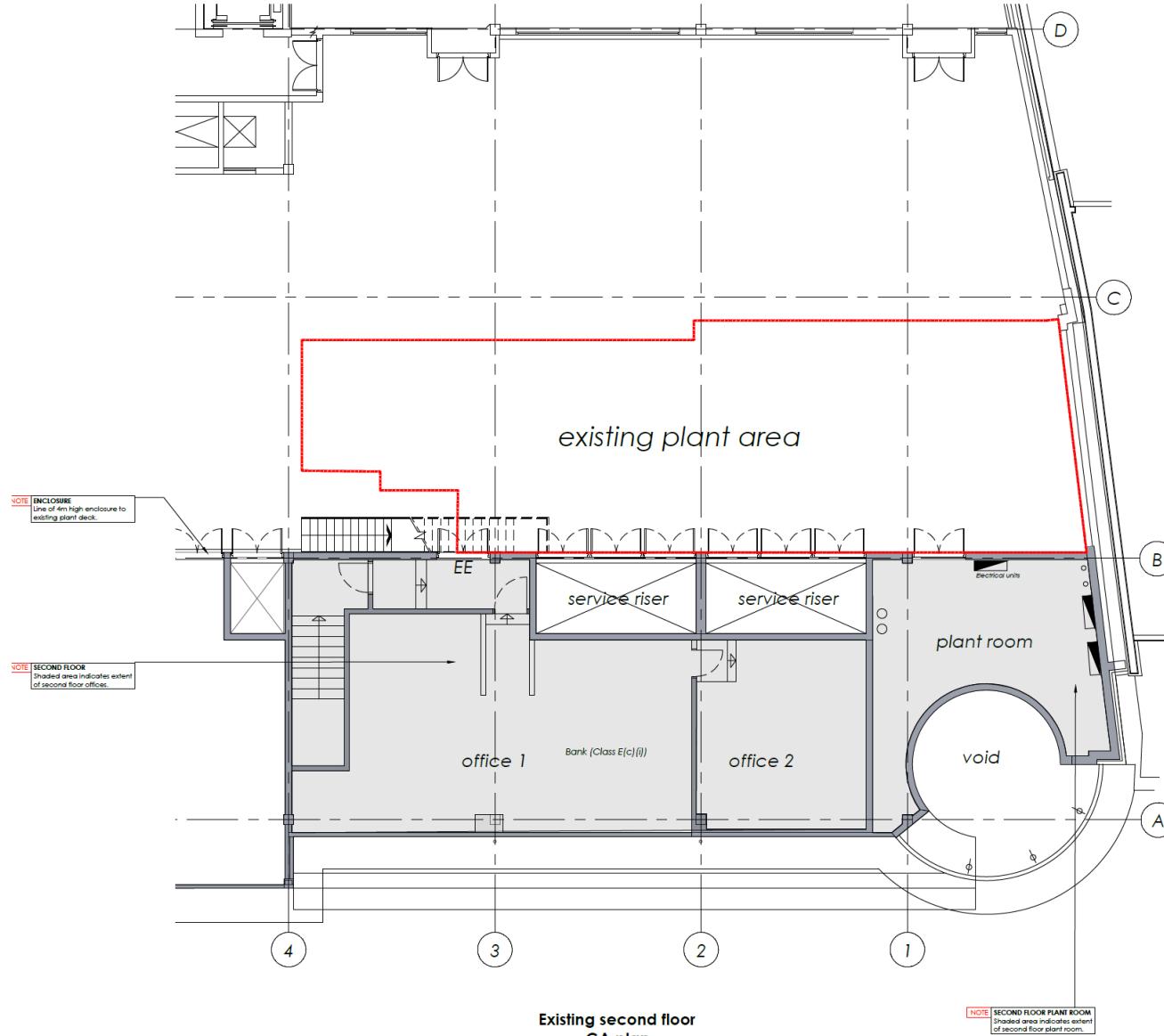
Existing ground floor
GA plan
1:50 @ A0

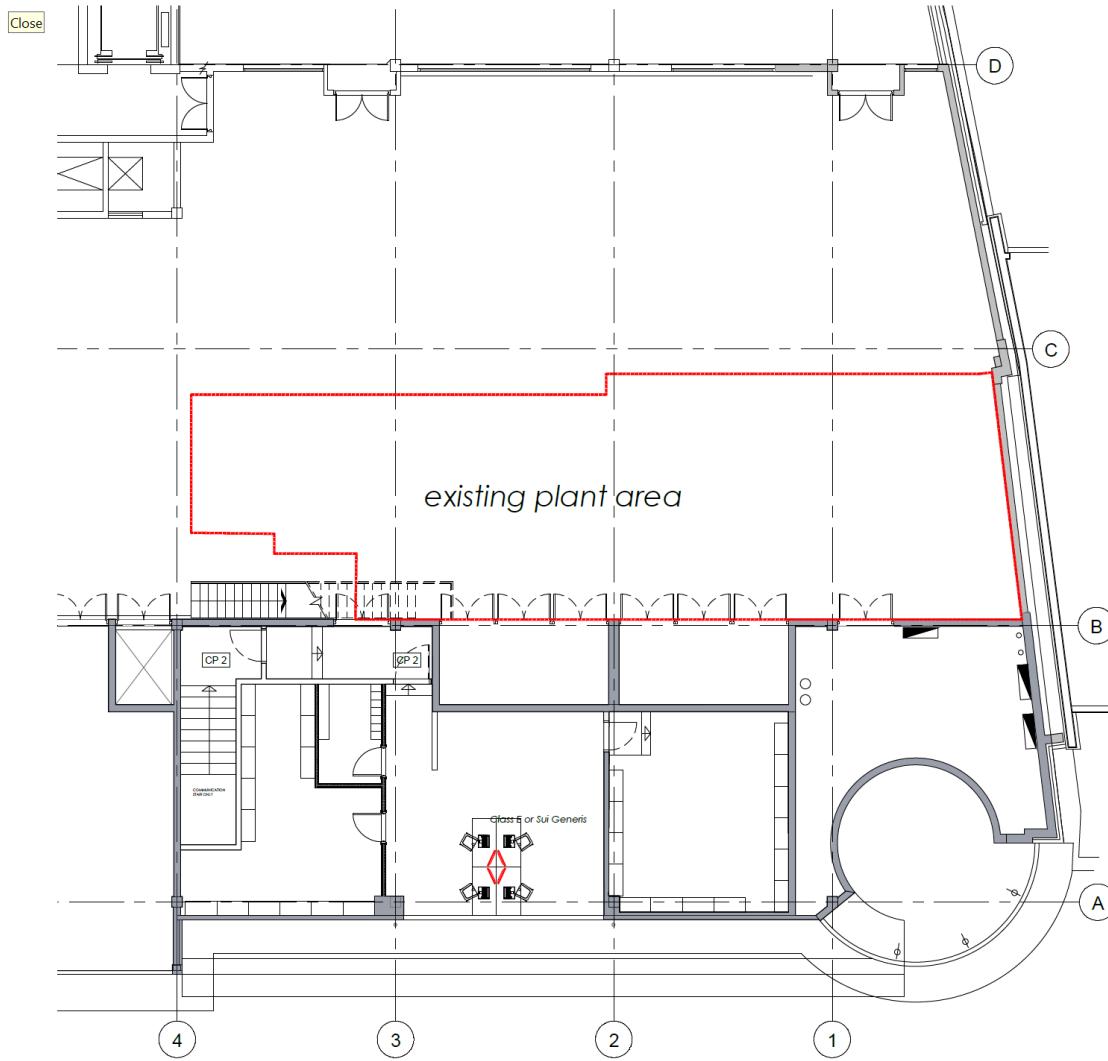


Proposed ground floor
general arrangement plan
1:50 @ A0









Proposed second floor
general arrangement plan
1:50 @ A0