

Fitzrovia News

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Goodge Street Tesco could be shrunk

Tesco plc is considering shrinking its long-established Goodge Street store, writes *Linus Rees*.

In August the freeholder of the site, Estates and Agency, submitted a planning application to Camden Council seeking permission to change a loading bay door in Whitfield Street into an additional entrance to the neighbouring office building.

The planning application (incorrectly) stated that the door was no longer in use by the Tesco store and that the space behind the door had already been converted to office space under permitted development.

However, the details in the application were challenged by the Charlotte Street Association who wrote to Camden's planning department to point out that the door was used for transferring goods into the store and the space next to it was not office space but part of the shop.

The implication is that Tesco is considering reducing the size of the store, while the freeholder is considering its future options for the site.

Local residents and community groups view it as an important destination for grocery shopping and vital to keep Goodge Street as a local shopping street.

Tesco first appeared on the street in 1966 and it has weathered a number of changes and threats.

In 1988 it was under threat of closure, until residents and community groups brought Tesco bosses and landlords Estates and Agency together to strike a deal to keep it open.

Then in 2001 local people won another battle to keep the store open after Camden Council refused planning permission for the store to be enlarged.

The case went to a planning appeal where the landlords, Tesco and local residents won the argument for an expanded store.

But in the summer of 2021 Tesco Goodge Street was one of 89 stores that were downgraded from the "Metro" to "Express" format.

The automatic tills changed and those wanting to pay with cash now have to join a sometimes lengthy queue. Prices went up, staff were cut and opening hours reduced.

Now it seems another change is underway with less choice for local shoppers and more jobs at risk.

"We appreciate this Tesco Express plays an important role in the local community and we look forward to continuing to provide a high quality range of products at this store," said a Tesco spokesperson.

Tesco has several other small Express stores in the neighbourhood. But all these small stores carry a poorer range of goods than the Goodge Street store. Local people need easy access to affordable groceries to feed a family, especially during a cost of living crisis.

Our autumn issue

This two-page edition brings you only a fraction of the articles we publish on our website. See fitzrovia.com for all the stories, and reports on public consultations. You can also subscribe to our free email newsletter, which contains the latest public interest news and public consultations: newsletter.fitzrovia.com

Fitzrovia News is published in print every three months: at the beginning of March, June, September, and December.

This printed newspaper is always available outside Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street. Browse our nearly complete 49 years of back issues at archive.fitzrovia.com

Hospital charity asks government inspectors to reduce social housing on Middlesex site

A hospital charity has lodged an appeal to the planning inspectorate after Camden council rejected its plans to cut the number of social homes on the Middlesex Hospital annex and former workhouse site in Fitzrovia, writes *Julia Gregory*, *Local Democracy Reporter*.

In December 2021 Camden council's planning committee rejected UCLH Charity's request to cut the number of social homes for rent at the Cleveland Street site from 36 to 13, with four intermediate rented homes, and increase the number for sale on the open market from 13 to 40.

Without these changes it said the plan was no longer viable because of the challenges and costs of development.

The council "strongly opposed" this.

The charity said there was a "limit to the loss" it could sustain and could no longer run to 40 affordable homes.

The charity's development director Peter Burroughs told the December planning committee that the scheme "has become substantially unviable" even with no affordable housing provided. He said the charity was prepared to build 17 affordable homes and "carry that loss" and if circumstances change it could increase the number.

More news over page. ►

Fitzrovia News is produced by the Fitzrovia Community Newspaper Group, c/o Flat 2, 19 Tottenham Street, London W1T 2AN with support from the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association.

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News in brief

A former theatre in **Riding House Street**, the **Soho Poly**, could be revived after it was awarded £50,000 from **Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood CIL** money.

A monitoring report for **Camden Council** claims that motor traffic levels are down across the **West End Project** area when compared to 2017, despite some baseline traffic data being missing.

A decision on plans to redevelop a site at **North Crescent off Chenies Street** has been delayed until after an application to list a former telephone exchange as a heritage asset has been resolved.

A Georgian townhouse at 52 **Tottenham Street** can be knocked down, to make way for a new 11-storey development with four duplex homes, a **Camden Council** planning committee has decided.

Pollock's Toy Museum held a very successful **Fitzrovia Fete** on Saturday 13 August. Hundreds of local people enjoyed live performances, arts and crafts, circus skills, a tombola, face painting, and games in **Scala Street** and **Whitfield Street**.

In August a flourishing, semi-mature field maple tree on **Howland Street** was cut down by mistake by a tree maintenance contractor working for Camden Council.

Tenants of **Clarion** reported receiving increased spam and phishing since a cyber attack on the housing association's computer system in June.

Licensing applications

Camden: The Blue Jay (sports bar) 27 Warren Street. Seeks permission for the sale of alcohol for consumption both on and off the premises from 2pm to 11pm on Mondays, and from 2pm to 11.30pm from Tuesday to Thursday; 2pm to 11.59pm on Fridays, 12noon to 11.59pm on Saturdays, and from 12noon to 11pm on Sundays. Deadline 16 September.

Camden: Tesco Express, 264-267 Tottenham Court Road. Seeks permission for the provision of late-night refreshment (indoors) until midnight every day, and for sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises from 8am to 11pm, Monday to Saturday, and from 10am to 10.30pm on Sunday. D/L 9 September.

Camden: Pentole & Padelle, 35 Store Street. Seeks permission for the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises from 10am to 11pm every day of the week; and the for the performance of live music from 5pm to 11pm every day of the week. D/L 14 September. See: camden.gov.uk/public-licensing-register

Planning applications

Camden Council registered planning applications, August 2022 in Bloomsbury ward, which includes Fitzrovia East.

Included in the monthly list are: alterations to entrance and service door at **40 Whitfield Street** (affects Tesco Goodge Street); sub-division of ground floor to create five commercial units including new entrance doors along **Warren Street** and **Conway Street**; tables and chairs on the pavement at **14 Warren Street, 15-17 Goodge Street, 252 Tottenham Court Road, and 100 Tottenham Court Road**; alterations to **51-52 Tottenham Court Road**; variation of condition of planning permission already given at **13 Tottenham Mews**.

There is also an appeal lodged against a previous planning decision: UCLH Charity to reduce the amount of affordable housing on the site of the former **Middlesex Hospital Annex, 44 Cleveland Street**.

See: planningrecords.camden.gov.uk for details and the latest applications.

Westminster Council validated planning applications, August 2022 in Fitzrovia West.

Included: amendments to approved application at **50-57 Newman Street**; new partially openable shop front, and railings to windows on upper floors at **76 Great Titchfield Street**; a rear extension at **111 – 113 Great Titchfield Street**; addition of a window, removal of skylight to terrace and replace with decking, and associated works at **6 Bourlet Close**; use of ground floor as a drinking establishment with expanded food provision (sui generis) and associated internal renovations at ground floor **48 Margaret Street**.

See: idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk for details.

Advice for responding

Residents should check camden.gov.uk/public-licensing-register and idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk for the latest applications.

Residents in Westminster can contact licensingadvice.org for free advice, and should also email the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association fna@fitzrovia.org.uk

In Camden email the Charlotte Street Association at csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk where they can also seek advice.

It is also a good idea to contact your ward councillors well before the closing dates with your concerns about any planning or licensing applications.

Fitzrovia News publishes the latest planning and licensing applications on our website: fitzrovianews.com

Free housing and welfare advice for residents

The Fitzrovia Advice Service, run by Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, is able to help residents in Fitzrovia with private and social housing problems, housing and council tax benefits, disability benefits, Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance, pensions and Pension Credit, Working and Child Tax Credits, fuel poverty; and help with benefit, passport and other forms.

Advice is available to Camden and Westminster residents by telephone and email only, three days a week, and for speakers of English, Bengali, Sylheti, Urdu and Hindi.

Contact 020 3984 6364; or email: advice@fitzrovia.org.uk

Neighbourhood listings

Covid-19 advice and vaccine information is available from Camden and Westminster councils. See Camden.gov.uk/coronavirus and Westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus Covid-19 booster jabs are likely to be offered to most adults this winter.

Fitzrovia Community Centre has a number of activities available throughout the week for children and adults. They have books, board games, and a community garden. You can find out more about what they offer from their website or by paying a visit to their building at 2 Foley Street or call 020 7580 8680.

All Souls C of E Primary School, Foley Street takes children from ages 3 to 11. See allsoulsprimary.co.uk for more.

Fitzrovia Youth in Action is a local charity for young people. They provide a number of activities. See fya.org.uk or call at Basement 66-68 Warren Street or call 020 7388 7399.

Rainbow Angels Nursery Fitzrovia is a new nursery located at 54A Whitfield Street, Fitzrovia. More information at rainbowangels.co.uk

Age UK provides services for people over 50 years old. In Camden call 020 7239 0400 or visit ageuk.org.uk/camden; in Westminster call 020 3004 5610 or visit ageuk.org.uk/westminster

American International Church offers services including worship, a soup kitchen for the homeless and those in need as well as rooms for hire. See amchurch.co.uk, call 020 7580 2791, or visit 79A Tottenham Court Road.

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