

CITY OF WESTMINSTER			
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE	Date 11 April 2017	Classification For General Release	
Report of Director of Planning		Ward involved Vincent Square	
Subject of Report	3 Meade Mews, SW1P 4EG,		
Proposal	Use of the ground and first floor as a clinic (Class D1) including ancillary training and office facilities.		
Agent	Zoe Simmonds		
On behalf of	The Listening Place		
Registered Number	17/00276/FULL	Date amended/ completed	18 January 2017
Date Application Received	13 January 2017		
Historic Building Grade	Unlisted		
Conservation Area	No		

1. RECOMMENDATION

Grant conditional permission.

2. SUMMARY

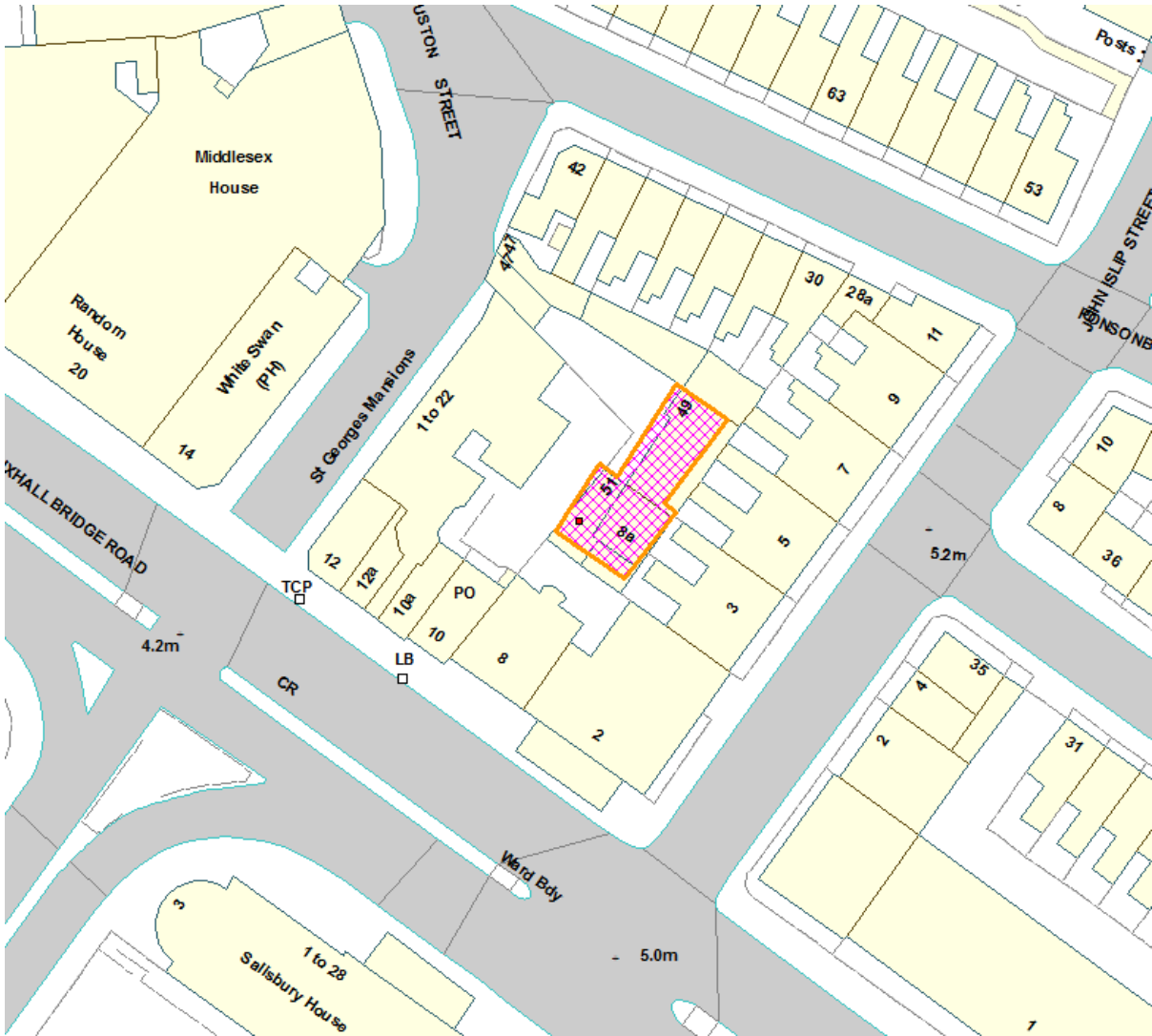
3 Meade Mews is an unlisted building comprises ground and first floors and is located outside of the Core Central Activities Zone. The building is currently vacant and has a lawful office use (Class B1). Permission is sought to change the use of the building to a clinic with training facilities (Class D1) in association with the occupation of the building by 'The Listening Place' charity.

The key considerations in assessing the proposal are:

- The loss of the office use; and
- The impact of the proposals on the amenity and security of neighbouring residents.

The proposal is considered to comply with Council policies in relation to land use and amenity as set out in our Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Westminster City Plan (City Plan) and is therefore recommended for approval.

LOCATION PLAN



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3. PHOTOGRAPHS



Entrance to no.3 Meade Mews



View from first floor over Meade Mews towards rear of Ponsonby Place

4. CONSULTATIONS

WESTMINSTER SOCIETY

No objection.

HIGHWAYS PLANNING

Acceptable subject to conditions.

CLEANSING OFFICER

Acceptable subject to condition securing waste and recycling storage.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Any response to be reported verbally.

NHS (Central London)

Any response to be reported verbally.

Environment Agency

No objection.

ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No. Consulted: 72

Total No. of replies: 20

No. of objections: 1

Objections from neighbours have been raised on the following grounds:

Amenity

- Noise created by visitors within the mews and within the building itself;
- Loss of privacy resulting from overlooking.

It should be noted that the application initially received six objections. Five of these have subsequently been withdrawn.

Supporting comments from neighbours on some or all of the following grounds:

- Facility provides assistance people who are in significant need support;
- Well run, professional, and much needed organisation;
- Nature of client means are not people likely to generate significant noise;
- Organisation provides support to gaps in local authority services.

Neutral comments raised the following matters:

- Need for greater detail regarding use;
- Justification for hours of operation;
- Potential amenity impacts.

The applicant has provided a letter of support from Professor Peter White, one of The Listening Place's professional advisors. It outlines that the service provided by the

applicant is unique in the service that it provides and fills a major gap in the support available to suicidal people. The letter has been included in the background papers.

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT / SITE NOTICE: Yes

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 The Application Site

3 Meade Mews is a two storey building located off Causton Street close to the junction with Vauxhall Bridge Road. The application site is not within a conservation area and is located outside of the Core Central Activities Zone. The lawful use of the building is as offices (Class B1) and it has been let for this purpose until recently, when it became vacant to enable the refurbishment of the building for the currently proposed change of use.

Meade Mews is a non-residential mews, with no.1 currently let as offices. The mews is accessed via a gate underneath no.47 Causton Street leading to an open courtyard providing access to both properties. While Meade Mews is itself non-residential, it is surrounded by the rear of residential dwellings on Ponsonby Place, John Islip Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road including the residential flats at St John's Gardens and 8 Vauxhall Bridge Road.

5.2 Recent Relevant History

None relevant.

6. THE PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the change of use from offices to a non-residential institution use (Class D1) comprising counselling clinic rooms, ancillary training and office facilities in association with the building's occupation by the charity 'The Listening Space'. The charity is currently located a short distance away on Osbert Street and has sought new premises due to the expiry of their existing lease.

The proposed primary use of the building is for the purposes of counselling people who feel that life is no longer worth living. They are referred from other charities and the NHS, including GP's, mental health services, A&E departments, and psychiatric liaison services. Visitors to the charity will be by appointment only and it will not offer a drop in service.

At present, the charity receives approximately nine visitors per day and is open three days a week. The applicant now seeks permission for the service to run between 09.00 and 21.00 hours each day and they do not anticipate the number of visitors per day to increase significantly.

The counselling service is to be provided by volunteers who will be trained on site as an ancillary activity to the counselling service. It is proposed that a maximum of five volunteers will be on site at any one time. Six times per year a fixed Saturday session between 10.00 to 17.00 hours is sought for training of up to 12 volunteers. Additional

training is also proposed to be undertaken on weekday evenings between 18.30 and 21.00 hours.

An ancillary office function will also take place at first floor to provide administrative support to both volunteers and visitors.

7. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Land Use

The application site is located outside of the Core Central Activities Zone, Opportunity Areas and the named streets and as such, the existing office use is afforded little protection under City Plan or UDP policies.

Policy S10 of the City Plan, which relates specifically to activities within Pimlico, outlines that the primary use in the area will be residential with supporting retail, social and community, and local arts and cultural provision. The proposed clinic falls within the category of 'social and community facilities' as defined in the City Plan.

It is considered that the change of use from Class B1 to Class D1 is supported by Policy S10, which seeks to ensure that residential activity is the primary land use within Pimlico and that appropriate activities that support that residential use are acceptable. The activity would provide a valuable health service that would serve vulnerable members of the community and complement the predominantly residential land use in Pimlico.

UDP Policy SOC 4 outlines that '*the retention, improvement and redevelopment of facilities for health service uses that meet local needs will be supported*'. The policy outlines that local health facilities are important for communities and that in considering applications for local health facilities, Council will balance the need to meet demand for health services against the effect of the proposals on the surrounding area and nearby activities.

There is a demand for the services that 'The Listening Place' provides, evidenced by the existing number of people seen by the charity and the number of referrals from NHS services. This is further highlighted by the statistics raised in Westminster's Public Health profile, published in June 2015 that outlines the boroughs suicide rate, at 10.1 people per 100,000, is in excess of the national average of 8.8. Indeed, the Council's 'Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Westminster 2017-2022' outlines the need for 'Improving mental health through prevention and self-management' as one of the borough's four health priorities.

The proposed use of the application site is a valuable one that provides a much needed service to vulnerable people within the community, targeted at a specific health need that has been identified by Council. This is of importance to the borough and is supported by Council policy and London Plan policy (summarised in Section 7.8 of this report). The proposal would enable a valuable service to be retained and improved within the borough.

The value of the proposal is supported by a lack of adverse effects on the surrounding area, nearby activities and neighbours. While concerns have been raised by a neighbour regarding amenity (see section 7.3) and were initially raised regarding transportation (see

section 7.4), it is not considered that the proposal would result in such significant negative impact that would outweigh the benefit to be gained by permitting the proposed change of use.

7.2 Townscape and Design

The building is unlisted and no external alterations are proposed. The proposal therefore has no implications for townscape and design matters.

7.3 Residential Amenity

Of relevance in assessing the amenity impacts of the proposal are the potential impacts from overlooking and noise generated as a result of the use of the site as a clinic. These issues were also raised by the one objector and other neighbouring residents who initially objected to the proposal.

Overlooking

With regard to potential impacts from overlooking, it is noted that currently the windows at both ground and first floor on the rear and eastern side of the site allow both direct and indirect views into neighbouring dwellings. However, given the current use of the building as offices, the level of overlooking resulting from this proposal is likely to closely comparable. The applicant has made the point that, given the sensitive nature of the charities work and the vulnerable type of visitors the charity serves, it is in their interest to ensure there are no opportunities for mutual overlooking.

The applicant suggests that they will install blinds within the clinic rooms that will be pulled at all times while counselling is to take place. While officers do not consider it necessary to install internal blinds to make the proposal acceptable on amenity grounds, if the applicant does undertake this, it is likely to result in less overlooking than that currently afforded between the application site and surrounding residential dwellings.

While the concerns raised by neighbours are noted, it is considered that there are likely to be no greater impacts from overlooking than currently afforded. It is considered that the objection on privacy grounds is not sustainable.

Noise from Activity

Concerns were initially raised by neighbours that the level of activity proposed was likely to result in a noise nuisance. These concerns were raised on the basis of the built up nature of the surrounding residential dwellings and the relatively quiet nature of the mews courtyard, leading to potential for echoing and noise nuisance.

In assessing the potential impacts from noise, it is important to note the lawful use of the premises as offices, for which there is currently no restriction on hours of use. While office users would not normally be present later into the evening, the number of movements throughout the mews is likely to be similar.

During the evening hours when the applicant seeks permission to operate until 21.00, the training of volunteers is likely to take place on an occasional basis. While this is later than most office staff would usually remain, it is considered extremely unlikely that the level of activity that is proposed, and indeed could be accommodated in such premises, would be

sufficient enough to have a material impact on residential amenity. It is not considered unreasonable late for people to be present, or for activity to be taking place within what is a non-residential mews.

The concerns raised by residents relating to Saturday and Sunday operation of the premises are noted. In response to concerns raised by neighbours, the applicant produced additional supporting information justifying the need for weekend operation. The document highlighted that in order to enable the training of volunteers, who are almost always employed on a full time basis elsewhere, there must be opportunities to offer training outside of the standard working hours. This justification is considered sufficient in so far as it provides clear reasoning to why the flexibility of the operation is critical to the effective provision of the service. It is therefore considered that the premises should be permitted to operate 09.00 to 21.00 seven days a week, as requested by the applicant.

Summary

In summary, while the concerns raised by neighbouring residents with regards to amenity are noted, it is considered that the potential impacts would not be sufficiently detrimental to be harmful and the change of use is therefore considered to be acceptable on amenity grounds.

7.4 Transportation/Parking

The proposal does not include the provision of car parking or cycle parking spaces. As noted by the applicant and Council's Highways Planning Manager, the majority of trips generated by the proposal are likely to be taken by public transport, cycling or walking given that the large proportion of visitors to 'The Listening Centre' reside within Westminster. The site is very well supported by public transport.

Given the current office use of the site it is unlikely that the number of trips will increase as a result of the change of use. The impacts of the proposal on parking levels in the area will be minimal and this is supported by Council's Highways Planning Manager. It is also noted that the site is situated within a Controlled Parking Zone and that any vehicular traffic that does seek to park in the area will be subject to those controls.

The likelihood of any negative impacts on parking or the transportation network as a result of approving the proposal are minimal and it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on these grounds.

However, the lack of cycle parking provided by the applicant is not considered to be acceptable given the sufficient space within the building and that the building is easily accessible from the street. It is therefore recommended that cycle parking provision in line with the London Plan is secured by condition.

7.5 Economic Considerations

No economic considerations are applicable for a development of this size.

7.6 Access

The proposal does not seek alterations to the existing access arrangements.

7.7 Other UDP/Westminster Policy Considerations

There are no other UDP/Westminster policy considerations relevant to this development.

7.8 London Plan

London Plan Policy 3.16 'Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure' outlines that *'London requires additional and enhanced social infrastructure provision to meet the needs of its growing and diverse population'*. The policy outlines that 'social infrastructure' includes health provision and other services and that these activities contribute to places being more than just places to live. Further, London Plan Policy 3.17 'Health and social care facilities' indicates that the provision of high quality health and social care will be supported. Both policies indicate that when considering planning applications high quality health and social care facilities will be supported, particularly where they are in places easily accessible by public transport, cycling, and/or walking.

7.9 National Policy/Guidance Considerations

The City Plan and UDP policies referred to in the consideration of this application are considered to be consistent with the NPPF unless stated otherwise.

7.10 Planning Obligations

Planning obligations are not relevant in the determination of this application.

7.11 Environmental Impact Assessment

The proposed development is of insufficient scale to require an Environmental Impact Assessment. Where relevant, the environmental impact of the development has been assessed in earlier sections of this report.

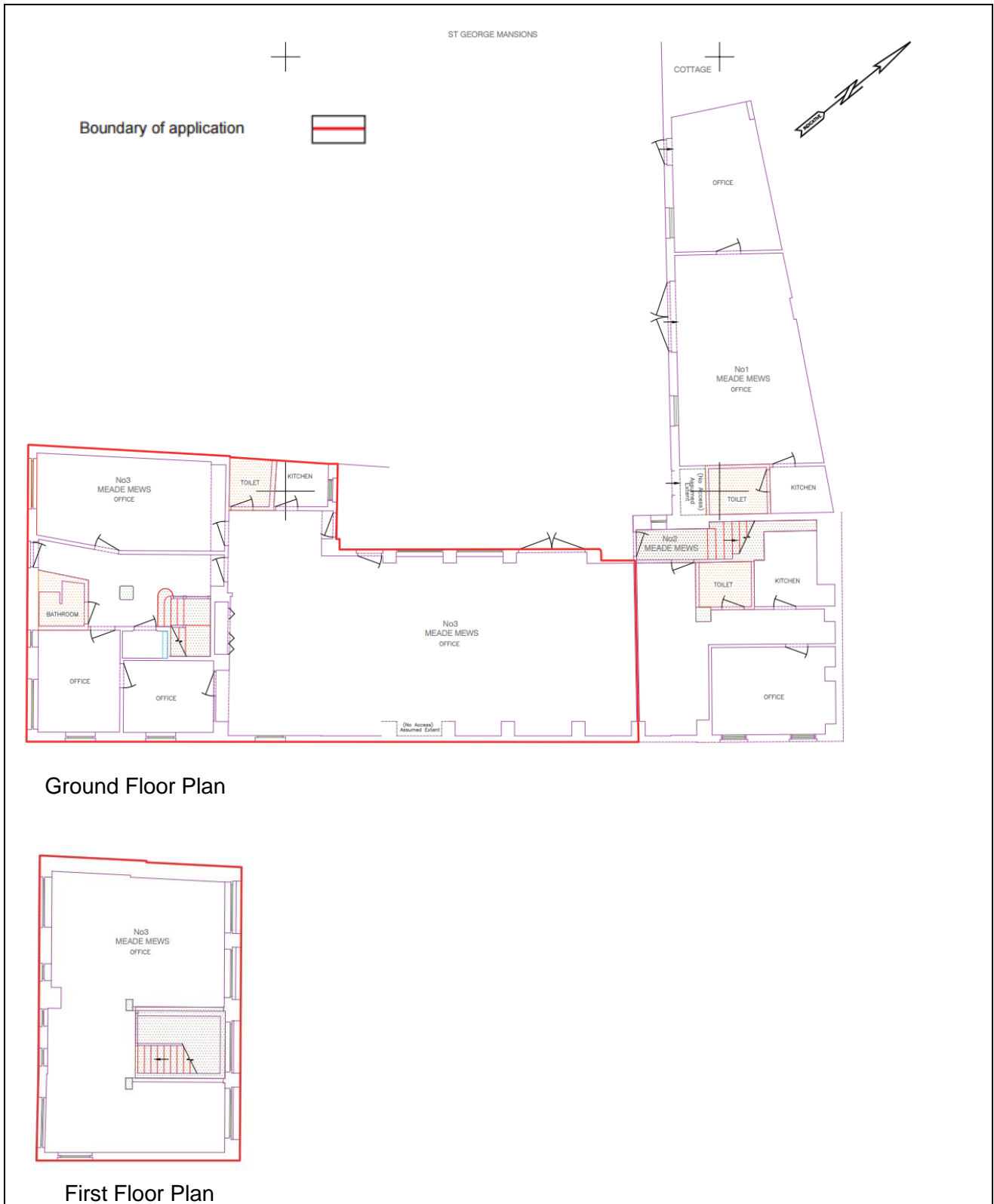
8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form.
2. Response from Westminster Society dated 24 January 2017.
3. Response from Environment Agency dated 27 March 2017.
4. Response from Highways Planning dated 6 February 2017.
5. Response from Cleansing - Development Planning dated 27 January 2017.
6. Letter from occupier of 4 Warwick Square dated 23 March 2017.
7. Letters from the occupiers of 14 Sutherland Street dated 23 March 2017.
8. Letter from occupier of 9 Ecclestone Square dated 23 March 2017.
9. Letter from occupier of 15 Westmoreland Terrace dated 23 March 2017.
10. Letters from occupiers of 45 Sussex Street dated 23 March 2017.
11. Letters from occupier of Flat 4, 8 Vauxhall Bridge Road dated 31 January and 27 March 2017.
12. Letter from occupier of Hopkinson House, 6 Osbert Street dated 24 March 2017.
13. Letters from occupiers of 35 Sutherland Street dated 23 March 2017.
14. Letter from occupier of Flat 12 St. George's Mansions, Causton St dated 30 January 2017.
15. Letter from occupier of Flat 3, 8 Vauxhall Bridge Road dated 31 January and 15 March 2017.
16. Letter from occupier of 7 John Islip Street dated 8 February 2017.
17. Letter from occupier of Flat 1, 8 Vauxhall Bridge Road dated 4 February and 9 March 2017.
18. Letter from occupier of Flat 2, 8 Vauxhall Bridge Road dated 5 February and 20 March 2017.
19. Letter from occupier of Flat 86, Marsham Court, Marsham Street dated 23 March 2017.
20. Letter from 29 Westmoreland Place on behalf of Westmoreland Triangle Residents' Association dated 27 March 2017.
21. Letter from occupier of 58 Sussex Street dated 3 April 2017.

(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: VINCENT NALLY BY EMAIL AT VNALLY@WESMINSTER.GOV.UK.

9. KEY DRAWINGS



DRAFT DECISION LETTER

Address: 3 Meade Mews, SW1P 4EG,

Proposal: Use of the ground and first floor as a clinic (Class D1) including ancillary training and office facilities.

Reference: 17/00276/FULL

Plan Nos: Site Location Plan, IL 15573-001, IL 15573-002, Cover Letter dated 13 January 2017, Additional Support Statements dated 21 February 2017 and 10 March 2017.

Case Officer: Joe Whitworth

Direct Tel. No. 020 7641 1968

Recommended Condition(s) and Reason(s)

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and other documents listed on this decision letter, and any drawings approved subsequently by the City Council as local planning authority pursuant to any conditions on this decision letter.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 You must use the premises only for providing clinic services in association with the operation of 'The Listening Place', training members of staff/volunteers of the organisation, and ancillary office uses. You must not use them for any other purpose, including any within Class D1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or any equivalent class in any order that may replace it). (C10BA)

Reason:

Because this is a residential neighbourhood, we need to prevent use of the property for any unsuitable purposes. This is as set out in S29 and S34 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and SOC 1 (B) of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R10AC)

- 3 Visitors and volunteers shall not be permitted within the premises before 09.00 or after 21.00.

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6, ENV 7 and ENV 13 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R12AC)

- 4 Access to the premises must be undertaken in accordance with the 'Security' section of the Supporting Statement dated 21 February 2017 unless otherwise agreed to by Council.

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6, ENV 7 and ENV 13 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R12AC)

- 5 You must apply to us for approval of details of how waste is going to be stored on the site and how materials for recycling will be stored separately. You must not start work on the relevant part of the development until we have approved what you have sent us. You must then provide the stores for waste and materials for recycling according to these details, clearly mark the stores and make them available at all times to everyone using the premises. (C14EC)

Reason:

To protect the environment and provide suitable storage for waste as set out in S44 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 12 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R14BD)

- 6 You must apply to us for approval of details of secure cycle storage for the Class D1 use. You must not start any work on this part of the development until we have approved what you have sent us. You must then provide the cycle storage in line with the approved details prior to occupation. You must not use the cycle storage for any other purpose.

Reason:

To provide cycle parking spaces for people using the development as set out in Policy 6.9 (Table 6.3) of the London Plan 2015.

- 7 You must not offer a drop-in service to the premises and access for visitors must be by appointment only.

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6, ENV 7 and ENV 13 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R12AC)

Informative(s):

- 1 In dealing with this application the City Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in Westminster's City Plan (November 2016), Unitary Development Plan, Supplementary Planning documents, planning briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre application advice service, in order to ensure that applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably. In addition, where appropriate, further guidance was offered to the applicant at the validation stage.

- 2 Please contact our Cleansing section on 020 7641 7962 about your arrangements for storing and collecting waste. (I08AA)

Please note: the full text for informatives can be found in the Council's Conditions, Reasons & Policies handbook, copies of which can be found in the Committee Room whilst the meeting is in progress, and on the Council's website.