

Address:	Stephenson House 75 Hampstead Road London NW1 2PL	
Application Number:	2009/4100/P	Officer: Max Smith
Ward:	Regents Park	
Date Received:	01/09/2009	
Proposal: Change of use of ground floor from Office (Class B1) to flexible Health Care (Class D1) use / Office (Class B1) use, including ancillary use of existing loading bay and basement.		
Drawing Numbers:		
Site Location Plan; 2904/02(A); 2904/100 (B); 2904/101; Letter Dated 12/08/09 from Nigel Wallnofer; Information; Business Case for GP Led Health Centre NHS Camden; Operational & Servicing Management Plan; Justification Statement; Sustainability Statement		
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant planning permission		
Applicant:	Agent:	
Mr Andrew Ulyett Camden PCT Estates and Facilities St Pancras Hospital 4 St Pancras Way LONDON NW1 0PE	DTZ 125 Old Broad Street London EC2N 2BQ	

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace
Existing	<i>B1a Business - Office</i>		1706m ²
Proposed	<i>D1 Non-Residential Institution or B1a Business - Office</i>		1706m ² (dual use)

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	8	0
Proposed	5	2

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: The proposal is a major application involving the change of use of more than 1000sqm of non-residential floorspace (3 i).

At the time of this report's completion, the consultation period for responses from members of the public to this application had yet to expire. However, it is noted that no objections were lodged to a recent similar application for a health centre at this address, which was withdrawn (application no. 2009/1981/P). Any responses received will be reported to the committee.

1. SITE

- 1.1. The application site consists of part of the ground floor of a large, part five part six storey office building, located where Hampsstead Road and Drummond Street intersect, which is known as Stephenson House. The building has an underground car park for 70 cars, which also includes provision for 15 cycles. This, along with a servicing bay at ground floor level would be available in association with the development. The new use would occupy part of the ground floor fronting onto Drummond Street. Approval has already been granted, but not implemented, for a new pedestrian entrance onto this frontage.
- 1.2. Stephenson House is located in the 'Central London Area', as defined by the Replacement UDP. The area around the building is characterised by a mix of commercial and residential uses. To the west along Drummond Street are student flats at nos. 164-166 and sheltered accommodation at Schafer House. On the south side of Drummond Street opposite, a 0.8 hectare site has been cleared for a future mixed use office, retail and residential scheme. The ground floor of Stephenson House on the corner of Drummond Street and Hampstead Road is occupied by a vacant public house. On the eastern side of Hampstead Road are more residential buildings, some with retail units on the ground floor. The building is not located in a conservation area.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1. Permission is sought for the change of use of part of the ground floor of Stephenson House from offices (use class B1) to a dual use as either a Health Centre (Use Class D1) or office (Class B1). The submitted plans indicate that the floorspace would be laid out as a Health Centre, but granting a dual use permission would allow the site to revert back to offices within ten years of the permission being granted.
- 2.2. The proposed D1 use would include a 'GP Led Health Facility' and a Polyclinic and is intended to serve a catchment including Camden and Islington, with an anticipated practice register of 4,700 after 5 years of operation. The opening hours of the facility would be 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday. However, it is also intended to operate an Out Of Hours Service from the site from 8.00pm until 8.00am and throughout the weekend.
- 2.3. The floorplans show 11 consulting rooms and two treatment rooms. Part of the rear of the site has not been laid out as it has been reserved for future expansion. No external works are proposed.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 2009/1981/P. Change of use of ground floor from Office (Class B1) to a Health Centre (Class D1). Withdrawn by applicant.
- 3.2 2009/2234/P. Installation of automatic glazed doors and canopy on the Drummond Street elevation at ground floor level to offices (Class B1). Approved 29/07/2009.
- 3.3 PS9705336. Change of use of part ground floor of Drummond Street frontage from retail (Class A1) and photographic studio (Class B1(c)) to office use (Class B1). Approved 20/02/1998.

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

Statutory Consultees

- 4.1 None.

Local Groups

- 4.3 No responses received to date.

Adjoining Occupiers

	Original
<i>Number of letters sent</i>	164
<i>Total number of responses received</i>	0
<i>Number of electronic responses</i>	0
<i>Number in support</i>	0
<i>Number of objections</i>	0

- 4.4 Neighbours have been consulted directly by letter. A site notice has also been placed on the street in front of the building and an advertisement placed in the local newspaper. No responses have been received to date.

5. **POLICIES**

5.1. **Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006**

- SD1 – Quality of life
- SD6 - Amenity for occupiers and neighbours
- SD9 - Resources and Energy
- T3 – Pedestrians and Cycling
- T9 – Impact of parking
- T12 – Works affecting highways
- E2 - Retention of existing business uses
- C1 – New community uses

5.2. Other Relevant Planning Policies

Camden Planning Guidance is also relevant.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Main Issues

The main issues relating to this application area considered to be as follows:

- The Principle of the Proposed Development
- Transport
- Neighbourhood Amenity
- Sustainability

6.2 Principle of Proposed Development

- 6.2.1 New Community Use: Policy C1a of the UDP states that the Council will grant permission for the development of community uses in suitable locations. Facilities with a local catchment should be located close to the community they serve and/or be easily accessible by public transport.
- 6.2.2 The UDP further states that sites within predominantly residential areas may be acceptable for community uses provided the proposals meet a local need and would not harm neighbouring amenity, and would not cause or contribute to local traffic problems. The Health Centre would serve both local residents as well as patients from a wider area across the Borough, with the catchment identified as being Camden and Islington. The site also has a PTAL rating of 6b (excellent) and is located in close proximity to a range of stations and bus routes. Therefore it is considered that the proposal would meet the main tests of Policy C1a in that it would serve the local community and that patients would have no difficulty in reaching the facility by public transport. Assessments on the residential amenity and transport implications of the proposal are provided below.
- 6.2.3 Loss of Employment Floorspace: Policy E2 seeks to retain existing employment floorspace where there is potential for that use to continue. The policy gives a higher priority for the retention of flexible space for B8 or B1 light industry uses than B1 (a) offices. As an exception to the general rule, the policy allows for B1 (a) offices to be converted to community uses, including health centres. The basement car park of Stephenson House is not deemed to have a sufficiently high ceiling to accommodate flexible B1c/B8 uses, as large goods vehicles would not be able to access the site. As a B1 (a) office use, policy E2 therefore permits the change of use to a Health Centre. It should also be noted that the proposed use would be a significant employer in its own right and that the flexible B1/D1 permission would allow it to revert back to an office use at a future date. A condition is recommended to ensure that the site cannot change to other uses within Use Class D1 which do not have this specific justification under policy E2.

6.3 Transport

- 6.3.1 The site is located on Hampstead Road within the Clear Zone Region. There is vehicular access to the site and it is proposed to retain this. The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b (excellent).
- 6.3.2 Cycle Parking: Camden's Parking Standards for cycles states that 1 storage or parking space is required per 250sqm, or part thereof, of floorspace for staff and 1 also for visitors. The proposal is for 1,706sqm of D1 use; therefore 7 cycle storage/parking spaces are required for staff and 7 for visitors. The plans include provision for 8 visitor cycle parking spaces within the building on the ground floor next to the entrance. These would consist of Sheffield stands and would comply with Camden's design requirements. Staff would utilise existing cycle parking in the basement of Stephenson House. However, the location of these have not been indicated on the submitted plans. Further details should be secured by condition. A staff shower and changing facilities would also be provided on the ground floor, making it practicable for staff to commute by bicycle from further afield.
- 6.3.3 Car parking: Eight parking spaces are available in the basement for staff parking in association with the existing office space. The applicant has agreed to convert three of these to two disabled parking spaces for the use of patients attending the site. Access to the ground floor would be via an existing lift. The provision and maintaining of the disabled parking would be secured by condition. It is understood that the operation of the Out of Hours facility may require staff to work unsociable hours, necessitating the use of cars. The five spaces in the car park at Stephenson House are considered to be sufficient for these purposes.
- 6.3.4 Given the high PTAL rating of the site and the limits on parking in the vicinity, Drummond Street has single yellow lines and Hampstead Road double red, it is expected that the majority of staff and visitors would arrive by public transport in any case and the loss of these parking spaces would not present a problem in terms of overspill parking. The single yellow lines give some flexibility for visitors to be dropped off and picked up outside the site.
- 6.3.5 Servicing Management: The applicant has provided detailed information on the servicing needs of the development once it is occupied. This outlines that the existing servicing bay will be used for most servicing needs. There are also single yellow lines on Drummond Street outside the site and this road is considered to be sufficiently wide to accommodate some servicing. Furthermore, the frequency of service vehicle movements is not large enough to warrant concern. Therefore it is not considered that a legal agreement to secure a Servicing Management Plan is required.

6.4 **Neighbourhood Amenity**

- 6.4.1. As the proposal would not involve any external alterations to the building, there would be no impact on neighbouring residents in terms of loss of light, privacy or outlook. The main impact on amenity would be from noise and disturbance from people and vehicles attending the Health Centre, as it would be likely to attract a greater number of visitors than an ordinary B1 office.

- 6.4.2. The residential properties most likely to be affected would be those on Drummond Street, as it is along this road that the Health Centre would be accessed. The nearest residential addresses to Health Centre's entrance are approximately 25m to the west along Drummond Street, with the existing servicing area and basement vehicular access located between the two. It is acknowledged that the night time use of the Out Of Hours facility use would see people accessing the site at times beyond that which would occur if the site were maintained for office use. However, the applicant has indicated that the patients would visit use this service by appointment only, which would serve to reduce the number of visitors. As the site is in the Central London Area, close to a TfL Red Route (Hampstead Road) and has numerous existing commercial premises in the vicinity, it would be expected that local residents would be used to a relatively high level of activity and noise throughout the day and night. Given this, and the distance between the entrance to the facility and the nearest residential units, it is not considered that the development would cause significant harm to neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance compared to the existing situation.
- 6.4.3. It should also be noted that the proposal would provide an amenity for local residents that many would doubtless find convenient. The proposed use would also bring more activity to a part of the street currently characterised by a blank façade and vehicular access doors. This would be a small improvement to the general amenity of the area. The D1 use class permits a range of uses that have the potential to generate significant volumes of people and traffic that may harm the amenity of neighbours, without the benefit of a health facility. It is therefore considered appropriate to limit to use of the site within the D1 use class to a health centre. This would be secured by condition.
- 6.4.4. Subject to this, it is considered that the development complies with Policy SD6 of the Unitary Development Plan.

6.5 **Sustainability**

- 6.5.1. Camden Planning Guidance and Policy SD9 of the UDP anticipate that new developments, particularly major schemes, incorporate sustainability principles into their design. However, it is acknowledged that the current application does not involve any external works and involves internal works to a relatively small part of a larger building with several other occupants. As such, the applicant has very limited options for enhancing the sustainability of the scheme, with improved insulation and on-site energy generation not being practicable. The applicant would not have any discretion to alter the building's central heating system and as tenants would not be in a position to install on-site energy generation such as solar panels or air source heat pumps.
- 6.5.2. Nevertheless, the applicant has provided a Sustainability Statement with the application which details a range of energy saving and sustainability measures that would be applied under such constrained circumstances. These include energy efficient lighting, an energy management system and energy efficient appliances. It should also be noted that the application site is in a very sustainable location, easily accessible by public transport, the use of which would be further encouraged by the removal of staff parking.

6.5.3. These measures are welcome although the Sustainability Statement is considered to lack sufficient detail regarding the proposals and could incorporate a range of other measures. These could include local insulation, air tightness, limiting over heating due to solar gain, energy efficient lighting, efficient pumps, chillers, sensors, zoning, efficient building services, building management system and staff training. A condition is therefore recommended to further expand of the sustainability measures to be incorporated into the proposal and to ensure that they are installed and maintained.

6.6 **Other Issues**

6.6.1. Open Space Contributions: As the overall floorspace for employment is not increasing, demand on open space will not increase. Therefore there is no requirement for an open space contribution under Policy SD2.

6.6.2. Disabled Access: The applicants have cited the relative ease of disabled access to the site as being one of the primary reasons for choosing this particular location. The building has level access from the street and, as the entire Health Centre would be at ground floor level, ensuring adequate access within the facility would also not present a problem.

7. **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The principle of the change of use of the office building to an alternative use of either offices (Class B1) or non-residential institution (Class D1) is considered acceptable as the proposed use would not conflict with highway safety or residential amenity and the loss of B1 floorspace is considered acceptable in the context of the provision of a Health Centre.

7.2 Planning Permission is recommended to be granted.

8. **LEGAL COMMENTS**

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