

PLANNING STATEMENT 22 STEVENSON WAY NW1 2HD

This planning statement has been prepared to support an application for planning permission to change the use of the ground floor of the above property from to a pilates studio with ancillary physiotherapy and similar treatments.

The proposal

Pilates is a system of exercise based on fairly gentle routines. The system emphasises the need for good posture – bad posture being the cause of many perceived problems – and is said to be suitable for almost everybody. It is not like a body building gym or martial art.

The applicant, Alan Herdman, has been teaching pilates for over 30 years and set up the first pilates studio in the UK. He came to pilates from dance. He is the author of several books on the subject and also trains pilates instructors. Alan Herdman Pilates Studio currently has premises in Homer Row, Marylebone.

Physiotherapy is a natural adjunct to pilates. The people attracted to pilates may be suffering back or other problems as a result of poor posture and as such may require treatment by a physiotherapist. Some physiotherapists in turn recommend pilates as a way of correcting problems.

Pilates is therefore a health resource for residents and workers in Camden.

The applicants would accept a personal permission if the Council wish to ensure that it cannot be used for other purposes within the Use Class and might accept a limited period permission.

Planning considerations.

The premises the applicant intends to move into are on the ground floor of 22 Stevenson Way. Stevenson Way is just north of Euston Road It does not appear to be a designated frontage. The existing use of the premises is B1, office.

The statutory development plan comprises the Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which was adopted in 2006.

The UDP designates the premises as within the Borough's 'central London' zoning.

UDP policy E2, retention of business use, advises that the council will not grant planning permission for development that involves the loss of a business use on

a site where there is potential for that use to continue. It states that the Council will consider:

- a) whether the site is in or adjacent to the Industry Area;
- b) the size of the site and whether it could potentially provide for servicing by large vehicles;
- c) whether the site is particularly suitable for small firms;
- d) the accessibility of the site by public transport and by service vehicles;
- e) the relationship of the site to nearby land uses;
- f) the demand, supply and variety of sites that are suitable for employment uses, firstly in that particular use class, and secondly in business use in general, and
- g) the retention of design features that enable flexible use, including use for light industry as part of schemes for the redevelopment or alteration of industrial premises for B1 purposes.

The building is a typical older office type building in an area which has seen much new building. There is no shortage of office accommodation available in the area and the premises have been vacant for 8 months. It has been marketed for longer than that period.

The building is not in an industrial area and the site is not well serviced. It does not have capability for being serviced by large vehicles. It is unlikely that the owners would welcome light industrial use.

UDP policy C3 - Location of leisure development – states that the Council will grant planning permission for suitable leisure development in the King's Cross Opportunity Area, the Central London Area and Town Centres except for Hampstead. Outside of these areas, planning permission will only be granted for leisure development that:

- a) has been justified by an assessment of need;
- b) would not cause harm to the character or function of an area;
- c) will not harm residential amenity, the environment or transport networks;
- d) is easily reached by a choice of means of transport; and
- e) would attract travel primarily from the area within walking distance.

The site is within the defined central London area and therefore no assessment of 'need' is required nor is it necessary to assess the affect on character and amenity.

Public transport accessibility

The premises are within 250m of Euston Station (Network Rail and London Underground) and within 150m of Euston Square (London Underground).

Euston Station offers rail services to north west London and to major provincial towns and cities in the Midlands and north-west. It is also served by the Northern (both City and West End branches) and Victoria tube lines. Euston Square is served by the Metropolitan, Hammersmith and City and Circle line tube services. In addition bus routes 18, 59, 68, 253 and 476 terminate at Euston Station and routes 10, 30, 73, 205 and 390 pass along Euston Road. Bus routes 24, 27, 29, 88 and 134 pass along Hampstead Road about 200m to the west.

It will be seen that the site is therefore readily accessible by public transport.

Because of the obviously very good public transport accessibility, no assessment has been done of the public transport accessibility level (PTAL). The PTAL methodology is based on equation which takes into account the distance to the public transport, the number of routes and the frequency of service between 0815-0915. Given that there are so many routes (several train routes, six tube routes, 15 bus routes) the resulting score would clearly be very high but an accurate figure would require investigation of the scheduled service for each route. This seems unnecessary. Based on the assumption that the Victoria and Northern lines operate at least 12 services per hour in the peak (the scheduled peak hour Victoria Line service is actually 30 trains per hour), the other tube lines 4 services per hour (the Hammersmith and City line actually has 8), Euston mainline 8 services and each of the bus routes 4 services in the peak hour then the PTAL accessibility index score would be over 30, which puts it in PTAL level 6, which is the highest category. The real score would almost certainly be higher.

The PTAL level can be assessed if required but there seems very little purpose in so doing when even based on conservative assumptions about service frequency the PTAL level is in the highest category.

Conclusion

The site is located within the defined 'central London' zone and no assessment of need is required.

The site is suited to the proposed use in that it is readily accessible by public transport.

It will involve the loss of office accommodation but there is no shortage of such accommodation in the area and the premises have been marketed unsuccessfully for office for a considerable period.