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| Delegated Report | | Analysis sheet | Expiry Date: | 11/08/2014 |
| | | N/A / attached | Consultation Expiry Date: | 08/07/2014 |
| Officer | | | Application Number(s) | |
| Fergus Freaney | | | 2014/3590/P | |
| Application Address | | | Drawing Numbers | |
| 7-9 Crowndale Road Camden Londn NW1 1TU | | | See decision notice | |
| PO 3/4 | Area Team Signature | C&UD | Authorised Officer Signature | |
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| Proposal(s) | | | | |
| Change of use of ground and basement floors from Local Authority Parking offices (Sui Generis) to community centre (Class D1) | | | | |
| Recommendation(s): | | Grant Planning Permission | | |
| Application Type: | | Full Planning Permission | | |

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|------------------------------------|--|-----------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| Conditions or Reasons for Refusal: | Refer to Draft Decision Notice | | | | | |
| Informatives: | | | | | | |
| Consultations | | | | | | |
| Adjoining Occupiers: | No. notified | 64 | No. of responses | 05 | No. of objections | 05 |
| | | | No. electronic | 00 | | |
| Summary of consultation responses: | <p>Consultation letters: 17/06/2014 – 08/07/2014</p> <p>A number of objections have been received, summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Businesses in the local area will be affected as the access road will be constantly disturbed. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>Please see section 4 of the report below, parking on the estate is for residents only therefore there is limited opportunity for people to arrive to the premises by car.</i> - There will be excessive noise, nuisance and general disturbance caused by an influx of people in a residential area. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>Please see section 5 of the report below.</i> - A community centre is out of character with the general area and the premises is not big enough for any community to be served. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>It is not considered that a community use is out of character with the area, there is a large Somali community which would benefit from the scheme and, as noted, already existing community centres in the area which will be complemented by this proposal.</i> - Concerns that the communal garden at the rear will be used by the community centre. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>The applicants have been informed that the planning permission does not cover the use of the rear communal garden, an informative will be added to remind them of this.</i> - There is already a community hall and community centre on the estate, an additional community centre would lead to a 'Community Centre Overload', the area is already adequately served with various kinds of community facilities. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>Community facilities are encouraged and protected by Camden's Policies and Guidance, there is a large Somali community in the area which will benefit from this proposal.</i> - There has been no information whatsoever as to who will be running this new centre, who its clients will be, whether it will be granted a license for the consumption or sale of alcohol or what facilities will be provided. <u>Officer comment:</u> <i>Details of the proposal have been displayed on the Council's website for the entire consultation period. The proposed end user will be a Muslim women's group aimed at training, support and education. It is unlikely that they will be applying for a license for the sale or consumption of alcohol on the premises.</i> | | | | | |

- There are currently problems with gangs of youths and drug dealing and it is considered that allowing more people to congregate on the estate would cause a lot of problems for existing tenants. Officer comment: *The proposed end use would not indicate that visitors will have drug or crime issues, however if this does become a problem the councils community support officers will be able to assist.*

In addition to the above a petition containing 72 signatures from local residents objecting to the proposal has been submitted.

An additional petition signed by local residents demanding that a Syheti speaking G.P is provided for Crowndale Road has also been submitted. Officer comment: *The current proposal complies with relevant policy and guidance and does will not impact upon the current operations of the neighbouring doctors surgery.*

CAAC/Local groups*
comments:
*Please Specify

Godwin & Crowndale Tenant Management Co-operative: Object on the grounds that:

- There is currently a Community Centre and Mosque located in Godwin Court which serves members of the community. Officer comment: *Community centres are encouraged and protected by the Council's Policies and Guidance.*
- The proposed Community Centre is not inclusive of all the groups that live on the estate. Officer comment: *This is not a planning consideration. However, as noted there is an existing community centre which could cater for all the groups represented on the estate if there was demand.*
- There is limited parking spaces on the Estate and the increase of vehicles that this centre would bring would cause parking problems. Officer comment: *Please see section 4 of the report below.*
- The proposal would not bring anything to the estate and the TMC would rather encourage services that benefitted the local community and encourage community shopping. Officer comment: *The proposal would provide a range of services to the community, see section 3.8 of the report below for further details.*
- The neighbouring dental practice should be allowed to expand into the premises to allow for a medical centre to be created. Officer comment: *This is outside of the remit of Planning's control as we have no power over who the premises is let to.*
- Concerns that the communal garden at the rear will be used by the community centre. Officer comment: *The applicants have been informed that the planning permission does not cover the use of the rear communal garden, an informative will be added to remind them of this.*
- The increase in footfall would put additional strain on the maintenance of the estate. Officer comment: *This is not a planning consideration*

Cllr Robinson, Object on the grounds that:

- Community centre will be used for Somali youths, but there is already a Somali community centre and a Mosque on the estate. Officer comment: *Please see section 3 for details on who will be using the premises, the existence of other community centres on the estate is not a planning matter, the proposed end user will have selected the site based on their own needs and we can only assess the proposal based on our LDF Policies and Camden Planning Guidance.*
- The use as a community centre will increase traffic and add to parking stress. Officer comment: *Please see section 4 of the report below.*
- The space should be given over to existing businesses to expand into

such as Metrolab or the Mornington Dentist. Officer comment: *This is outside of the remit of Planning's control as we have no power over who the premises is let to.*

- There will be increased cleaning costs for the management of the estate. Officer comment: *This is not a planning consideration*
- The premises is too small to be used as a community centre and it will mean greater noise and impact on Crowndale Court residents. Officer comment: *The size of the premises is not a planning consideration, the organisation has chosen the site based on their own needs. Given the nature of the proposed use as a support, education and training facility it is unlikely that noise will be a significant issue. Nonetheless, if it does become an issue the matter can be dealt with by the Council's Environmental Health Team*

Site Description

The site is located on the south side of Crowndale Road. It comprises a double bay commercial unit located on the ground floor of a large residential building which is part of a wider housing estate.

The site is not a listed building, nor is it located within a conservation area. The site is located within a Neighbourhood Centre.

Relevant History

PS9905116 - Change of use of the basement and ground floors from (Class A1) retail use, to use as local authority offices and parking shop for the public (sui generis). *Granted 31/01/2000*

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS1 – Distribution of growth

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

CS7 – Promoting Camden's centres and shops

CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP10 – Helping and promoting small and independent shops

DP12 – Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses

DP15 – Community and leisure uses

DP16 – The transport implications of development

DP17 – Walking, cycling and public transport

DP18 – Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking

DP19 – Managing the impact of parking

DP24 – Securing high quality design

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Camden Planning Guidance 2011

NPPF

Assessment

1. Proposal:

- 1.1. Permission is sought for the change of use of vacant ex-council parking offices (Sui Generis) to a community centre of a woman led refugee community centre (Class D1).
- 1.2. The use would change across the ground and basement floors.

2. Assessment:

3. Change of use

- 3.1. The site is located within a neighbourhood centre Camden Planning Guidance advises that Camden's Neighbourhood Centres provide for the day-to-day needs of people living, working or staying nearby. They generally consist of groupings of between five and fifty premises which focus on convenience shopping.
- 3.2. Generally the Council would resist schemes that result in less than 50% of ground floor premises being in retail use, or more than 3 consecutive premises being in non-retail use.
- 3.3. Permission was granted for the previous use of the site as a council parking office with public access (Sui Generis) in 2000, this use continued until approx. 2013 and has been vacant since. As the property is designated as Sui Generis use class there is nothing in Camden's Policy or Guidance to protect this type of use class.
- 3.4. The property forms part of a small parade of 6 commercial properties at ground floor level, the units range in use from an internet café (vacant A1 Use), to a Laundrette (Sui Generis), Office (B1 Use Class) and Dentist (D1 Use Class). Therefore the guidance above for at least 50% or 3 consecutive remaining in retail use does not apply in this situation as it would not result in the loss of any retail units.
- 3.5. As the property is a vacant Sui Generis use a change of use away from this would not harm the existing retail function of the parade and it is considered that a change of use would be acceptable in principle.
- 3.6. Policy DP15 (Community and Leisure uses) of the Local Development Framework (LDF) states that It is important that Camden's community and leisure facilities are located close to the people who use them. Locating these facilities where they are easily reached by a choice of means of transport, particularly walking, cycling and public transport will enable as many people as possible to have access to them. Central London and our town centres are appropriate locations for community and leisure uses, particularly those that may attract large numbers of people, as they are generally easily reached by a range of means of transport. Smaller facilities which will attract people from a local area should be located within their catchment area or in other locations where they are easily reached by the community they serve.
- 3.7. Policy DP15 goes on to state that new community and/or leisure uses should not harm residential amenity, the environment or transport networks in line with all the policies in this document. They must also be consistent with their surroundings in terms of scale, character and mix of uses.
- 3.8. The proposed use would be a community centre for a woman led refugee community organisation, they offer a range services and projects such as a weekend supplementary school, a project to raise awareness of FGM, a Parents'/Family support project, and Elder

Women and Careers Projects. The office would be open from Monday to Friday between 9am to 5pm, however some work may extend to the weekends.

3.9. The applicant has confirmed that the space would be used for low numbers of people, spread across a range of activities, namely: 15-20 older women for social meetings and activities a few times a week; a once a week drop-in for general health and women's advice and FGM Campaign and Awareness sessions in conjunction with the Royal Free Hospital; Consultation with parents in relation to their children's needs with multi-agency services (Met Police and Schools and Health Services); Awards, project end celebration and cultural events (2-3 times a year). In the future there may be potential for child education use on 2 days (Thursday and Saturday) with approx. 25-40 children at each session.

3.10. It has been confirmed by the applicant that no queuing or any other activity will take place outside of the property; no prams or buggies (or similar) will be left outside the premises and no parking spaces will be used and no vehicles will be allowed onto the estate (except where entitled).

3.11. The proposal is considered to be acceptable as it would not harm the character, function, viability and vitality of the local area.

4. Transport

4.1. The premises has a PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) of 6a (Excellent) as it is located within close walking distance of King's Cross St Pancras, Euston and Mornington Crescent stations, there are also bus routes serving the site.

4.2. Given the location of the site it is considered that most visitors would be arriving by public transport, driving would not be a viable option as there is limited parking in the area and parking on the estate is restricted to residents only.

5. Amenity

5.1. It is not considered that the uses of the community centre - which revolve mainly around support, education and training - would be such that there would be harm to the amenity of local residents. There is unlikely to be excessive noise from the premises and the amount of people visiting the location would be spread over the week during opening hours.

5.2. Given the busy inner city location it is not considered that the number of people using the premises would be excessive or result in there being such a considerable increase in the amount of visitors so as to disturb or affect residents. The site is not on a quiet back street but a busy main thoroughfare.

5.3. However, in order to ensure the amenity of residents is protected a number of conditions will be attached to restrict the hours of operation to 8am-8pm Mondays to Saturdays and 9am-4pm Sundays and Bank Holidays; to ensure no music which is audible outside the premises is played; that the area is not used as a prayer room and that the maximum number of people permitted on the premises at any one time shall be 40 people.

6. Summary

6.1. The proposal is considered to comply with policy DP15 in that it is located so as to be easily reached by its audience, and it would not result in harm to the amenity of local residents. As the property is a vacant Sui Generis use the change of use is considered to be acceptable as it would not result in harm to the retail function of the area.

Recommendation: Grant Planning Permission

DISCLAIMER: Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 20 October 2014. For further information please click [here](#)