

Gordon Mansions Residents Association

Please reply to: Sandra Wheen, Secretary, Gordon Mansions Residents Association, 56 Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HG. email: [REDACTED]

Patrick Marfleet
Planning Department
London Borough of Camden
Sent by e-mail to: Patrick.marfleet@camden.gov.uk

29 February 2020

Dear Patrick Marfleet

**Objection to Planning Application 2019/6210/P re Condition 5 of 2016/3701/P
re Imaging Centre, Roger Williams Building, 69-75 Chenies Mews, London WC1E 6HX**

This letter is written on behalf of Gordon Mansions Residents Association - 22 of our flats, including my own, look out onto Chenies Mews. But we also have in mind all the other residents of the Mews whose quality of life is affected by activity in the Mews. We wish to object strongly to the proposed extension of clinic hours at the Imaging Centre.

In the past the Mews was occupied largely by a mixture of Residential and Office/Research use. These uses are complimentary and worked well for many years. Offices tend to be open Monday to Friday 9-5 leaving the residential peaceful in the evenings and at weekends. The Planning Permission for the Imaging Centre, 2016/3701/P, sought to retain this balance by imposing **restrictions on Clinic hours of:- Mondays-Fridays: 8.00 to 18.00; Saturdays:None; and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays**, 'to safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally'.

Every time this Monday-Friday 9-5 envelope has been pushed in the Mews there has been a further distressing erosion of quiet for residents. Currently the pressure is towards earlier starts on weekday mornings. These begin with arrivals on foot at 6.30 and take off sharply at 7.00am when the first large vehicles start backing the full length of the Mews. After this opening salvo the Mews is often congested with large and medium sized delivery, collection and construction vehicles until mid-afternoon or later. Some of the deliveries are noisy and protracted such as the transfers of oxygen.

Now the Imaging Centre wants to push the envelope into evenings and Saturdays. It is becoming stressful to live here and to have to fight so hard (in this case for a second time) to hang on to what little peace and quiet remain. The Mews does not act like a normal street in terms of noise. Half of it is cobbled and cobbles are noisy. Because it is an enclosed space with high buildings on either side and at the end it acts like a canyon, amplifying noise and vibration. And because it is narrow the sound of a car going past your home feels personal, like a car entering your driveway.

The Imaging Centre wish to **extend weekday clinic hours to 20.00 hours and import additional clinic hours of 8.00 to 18.00 into Saturdays**. This encroachment into evenings and weekends is greater and more complicated than it looks at first glance, for the following reasons:

Car movements

Patients arriving during the proposed additional hours are more likely to arrive by car as they will be travelling outside Congestion Charge hours, at times when roads will be less busy and parking easier. This could mean three car arrivals and departures (ie 6 traffic movements) for each additional proposed clinic hour (based on the facility's own estimate of treatment numbers at 30-35 visits in the current ten-hour day). This would represent a lot of extra vehicle movements in this narrow Mews street and will disturb Residents during our quiet times.

Cleaning

We assume cleaning of the building will need to be wrapped around the proposed new hours, Monday to Saturday. This may add a further two hours of comings and goings before or after clinic times. eg if cleaning is in the evenings, cleaners could be leaving the building around 22.00 hours on weekdays and 20 hours on Saturdays. This will extend disturbance for residents well beyond the additional clinic hours sought.

Air Conditioning

We understand that MRI scanners require extreme cooling and therefore need powerful chillers. We believe this is why the building has to have such heavy-duty air conditioning. Condition 7 of Planning Permission 2016/3701/P states: *'Automatic time clocks shall be fitted to the proposed air conditioning (VRF) and air handling units (AHU) hereby approved, prior to the commencement of the use, to ensure that this plant/equipment only operates between the hours of 07:30 - 20:00 Monday to Friday, 09:30 - 15:00 Saturdays and not at all on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays. Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally.'*

Extending clinic hours to those sought presumably will also require an extension of air conditioning hours and the associated noise. It is hard to see how extending air conditioning hours can be justified when the reasons for the hours restrictions remain the same. The nearest residential building as identified in the original Planning Application is only some 13 feet (some 4 metres) from the Imaging Centre with many other homes nearby including those in Gordon Mansions.

Building maintenance

One of the chief sources of disturbance to residents is the carrying out of work to buildings on Sundays. The Imaging Centre does not have a good record in this regard, as a good deal of recent work at roof level was carried out on Sundays, disturbing the entire neighbourhood. If clinic hours at the facility are extended as requested, we think this will leave no other time than Sundays for essential maintenance. This would be absolutely unacceptable in a residential area.

To sum up: Our Association wishes to argue that the proposed extension of clinic hours to late evenings on weekdays and for the whole day on Saturdays, will, as described in detail above, detrimentally encroach on the periods when the Mews is currently quiet. Residents desperately need these quiet times because they are subjected to an invasion of noise and disturbance every weekday from early morning onwards.

This planning application is being made by UCLH. But the company who run the Imaging Centre are the private company QS Enterprises who also run the Imaging Centre in Queen Square less than a mile from Chenies Mews. If more evening and Saturday clinic hours are needed in WC1 this would seem a less sensitive location (though still easily accessible) in which to hold them.

We therefore urge that this application is not granted and would like to emphasise particularly the need to protect the current quiet times in Chenies Mews.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Wheen
Secretary, Gordon Mansions Residents Association
cc Clive Henderson, Chair and The GMRA Committee