

Our ref: T3828

Your ref: 2019/6120/P

Date 10th March 2020

Planning and Development
Camden Council
5 Pancras Square
Kings Cross
London
N1C 4AG



Dear Patrick

69-75 Chenies Mews, WC1E 6HX, application to vary operational hours of planning permission 2017/3701/P – Response to an objection made by The Gordon Mansions Residents Association

Further to our planning application of 12th December 2019, made valid from that date, we are writing in response to an objection by the Gordon Mansions Residents Association on 29th February 2020, which arrived after the end of the application consultation period (24th February 2020).

We understand from conversations with yourself, that due to the objection coming from a Residents Association, the application will be referred to the Members Briefing Panel on 16th March 2020, where it will be decided if the application can be determined via delegated powers or planning committee.

This letter is in response to the objection issued by the Residents Association, using the same sub-headings for ease.

Car Movements

The letter has stated that the proposed extended hours could generate a further 6 car movements in The Mews per additional hour. The objectors are concerned that the additional patients will choose to travel by car as the additional hours will allow them to avoid the congestion charge and traffic.

However, based on transport surveys submitted with the original planning application, 85% of patients are likely to travel via public transport and there is very little use of private cars. This will remain the case and it is conjecture that the position should be any different for the proposal. The application confirms that the majority of existing patients travel to the site via public transport, and there is no reason why that should differ within the hours sought by the application.

Cleaning

The objectors also raise concern over the potential noise caused by cleaning staff working later in the day but acknowledge that is only an assumption. At present, cleaning staff arrive early in the morning, prior to the clinic opening and do not attend the site in the evening after closing hours. There will be no change to this and therefore, no cause for concern.

Air Conditioning

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The Clinic hosts a number of MRI scanners that require air conditioning units, already approved by the Council, to regulate the temperature to allow for peak performance. The objectors have raised concern that the proposed hours would require the air conditioning units to operate for longer, generating noise disturbance.

The lowest background noise level measured during the hours set out in condition 7 (air conditioning) is 48 dB $L_{A90,5min}$. This is the same as the lowest background noise level recorded for the existing operating hours of the clinic and is the same for what is being proposed.

As the plant operates without justifiable concern now (there have been no noise complaints), no justifiable concern is anticipated for the proposed operational hours.

It should also be noted that the applicant has recently installed acoustic screens on the roof of 69-75 Chenies Mews to provide acoustic mitigation from the air conditioning units in line with Camden's requirements. The screens significantly reduce any noise generated from these units, which could otherwise potentially cause disturbance to those living in The Mews.

The noise data previously recorded and referred to in this letter was prior to the installation of this screening. To date, there have been no noise complaints to either the Applicant or the Council.

Building Maintenance

Notwithstanding the above, the objection letter says that the chief concern i.e., more so than anything else, is noise generated by building maintenance activities on Sundays and saying that the Clinic does not have a good record in this regard. The Objectors concern appears to be that if the proposed hours are approved it will mean that building maintenance work will be carried out on Sundays, causing noise disturbance to residents.

The Applicant does not recognise this - no building maintenance works are carried out outside of the normal working week (Monday-Friday) and time slots are booked out within the clinic to allow for this. Moreover, the proposal does not involve any building maintenance work or require any new works and the issue is not relevant to this proposal.

Alternative Site

The Residents Association have suggested that the hours sought by the application can be accommodated at Queen Square, another site owned by the Applicant, as they believe it to be easily accessible and less sensitive than the site in Chenies Mews. The reason for this application is that the facilities at Queen Square are currently operating to full capacity and the huge patient demand for MRI facilities within Camden needs to be accommodated in Chenies Mews.

It should also be noted that the Government have acknowledged that there is an acute shortage of scanning capacity within the capital and as a result are looking to roll out a significant expansion programme of facilities. The extended hours proposed would allow the existing facility to help towards the existing supply and demand issue, supporting the Government's expansion plans.



In summary, whilst we appreciate the comments put forward, a number of the points raised are neither specific to 69-75 Chenies Mews nor the application itself. Equally, as there is no difference in the background noise levels within the existing operational hours and those proposed and the clinic has operated without justifiable complaint, there should be no cause for concern in approving the application proposals under delegated powers.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Keith
Consultant