

# LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date : 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Report of**

Assistant Director, Planning,  
Highways & Transportation

**Contact Officer:**

Andy Higham  
Andy Bates  
Ms Maria Demetri

**Ward:**

Ponders End

Ref: 16/03937/RE4

Category: Full Application

**LOCATION:** Vincent House, 2E Nags Head Road, Enfield, EN3 7FN

**PROPOSAL:** Change of use from offices (B1) to public health treatment facility (D1).

**Applicant Name & Address:**

London Borough of Enfield  
Civic Centre  
Silver Street  
Enfield  
EN1 3XA

**Agent Name & Address:**

Corporate maintenance And Construction  
B Block South  
Civic Centre  
Silver Street  
Enfield  
EN1 3XA

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to conditions.

**Note for Members**

Although applications of this nature would normally be determined under delegated authority, the applicant is the Council and as such the application has to be determined by committee under the Councils scheme of delegation.

## **1. Site and Surroundings**

- 1.1 Vincent House is an established three storey corner building situated along both Nags Head Road and High Street in Ponders End. The building is highly prominent in the street scene due to its siting, wrap around corner design and height. The building is purpose built to be a community-based mixed use building. It includes residential units, a café, meeting rooms and offices. The element of the building subject to this planning application is the office unit on the far right hand side on the ground floor and the upper ground floor/mezzanine. Officers have been advised that this separate office element on the site has been vacant for some time.
- 1.2 The site is not in a Conservation Area nor does it benefit from Listed Building status. However, the site is within the designated Ponders End Large Local Centre (confirmed in the Town Centres Uses and Boundaries Review). This designation and its implication is discussed within the Committee Report.

## **2. Proposal**

- 2.1 This proposal seeks planning permission to change the use of part of the site which has been outlined in red from the established separate office use (B1) to a public health treatment facility use (D1).
- 2.2 This public health treatment facility is a service aimed at supporting only the residents of the London Borough of Enfield and aims to prevent ill health, prolonging life and promoting health and wellbeing. This service supports the Borough with the strategic aims of delivering effective health services which is a requirement of the Public Health England Grant allocated to this Borough. The proposed unit will offer treatments that will include pharmacological interventions to include medical and non-medical prescribing, psychosocial interventions to include cognitive behaviour therapy, relapse prevention therapy; person centred counselling, biochemistry testing, vaccinations and play therapy.
- 2.3 It has been confirmed that the Borough Council is the freeholder of the site. The reason that this application is being heard by the Members of the Planning Committee is because under the Scheme of Delegation, Planning Officers do not have the power to determine a change of use application from B1 to D1 when the Borough Council is the freeholder of the site.

## **3. Relevant Planning Decisions**

- 3.1 There have been no relevant planning decisions on this element of the site for the change of use from B1 to D1 previously.

## **4. Consultations**

### **4.1 Statutory and non-statutory consultees**

#### **4.1.1 Traffic and Transportation**

- 4.1.1.1 The Senior Traffic and Transport Officer has requested for more information to be provided with regards to cycle parking, disabled parking and refuse/recycling storage. This information has been provided by the Agent and has been discussed within the Committee Report.

4.1.1.2 The Senior Traffic and Transport Officer has confirmed that the existing pedestrian and vehicle accesses into the site are fit for purpose and can support the proposed D1 use. In addition, the proposed 3 car parking spaces for staff is considered acceptable given the Town Centre location and proximity to the public car park and public modes of transport. Matters regarding the lack of visitor parking, is discussed within the report.

#### 4.1.2 Environmental Health

4.1.2.1 Environmental Health does not object to the application for planning permission as there is unlikely to be a negative environmental impact. In particular, there are no concerns regarding air quality, noise or contaminated land.

### 4.2 **Public response**

4.2.1 Letters were sent to 52 residents including on the site, adjoining the site and nearby the site. Consultation ended on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016. No response has been received.

#### *Other*

4.2.2 In addition to the statutory duty of the Local Planning Authority informing the residents of Vincent House of the planning application, it has been confirmed in writing that the Head of Service for Learning Disabilities, who is ultimately responsible for the residents of Vincent House has been consulted to seek his opinion on the appropriateness of the change of use of the premises and suitability of the service. The Head of Service for Learning Disabilities confirmed that this proposed change of use would not cause any issues for the residents.

## 5. **Relevant Policy**

### 5.1 The London Plan

Policy 3.17	Health and Social Care Facilities
Policy 4.2	Offices
Policy 6.9	Cycling
Policy 6.13	Parking
Policy 7.1	Building London's neighbourhoods and communities
Policy 7.4	Local Character

### 5.2 Core Strategy

CP13	Promoting economic prosperity
CP16	Economic success and skills
CP17	Town Centres
CP24	The Road Network
CP25	Pedestrians and cyclists
CP26	Public Transport
CP30	Maintaining and improving the quality of the built and open environment

### 5.3 Development Management Document

DMD16	Provision of new community facilities
DMD22	Loss of Employment Outside of Designated Areas
DMD25	Locations for New Retail, Leisure and Office Development
DMD28	Large Local Centres, Small Local Centres and Local Parades
DMD37	Achieving High Quality and Design-Led Development
DMD39	The Design of Business Premises
DMD45	Parking Standards and Layout
DMD 47	Access, new roads and servicing
DMD 48	Transport Assessments
DMD 68	Noise

### 5.4 Other Relevant Policy

National Planning Policy Framework  
National Planning Practice Guidance  
Town Centre Uses and Boundaries Review  
Manual for Streets 1  
Manual for Streets 2

## 6. **Analysis**

### 6.1 Background

6.2 A key element of the Borough's public health treatment service is currently being delivered from the Forest Road Primary Health Care Centre. This Care Centre has 15 to 20 patients visiting per day using the public health treatment service due to its floor space capacity. The proposal is seeking to re-locate this service at Forest Road to Vincent House with the intention of moving in April 2017 and increasing the patients using the service to a maximum of 40 per day due to its increased floor space capacity.

6.3 It is prudent to note at this point in the Committee Report that the Forest Road Primary Health Care Centre is owned by the Community Health Partnerships NHS Trust. The Care Centre is occupied by a range of agencies including a GP Surgery. The Enfield Clinical Commissioning Group NHS Trust is liable for any voids at Forest Road rather than the Borough Council. The Officer has been informed that the re-location of the service would not render the Care Centre as redundant and measures are in place to occupy the vacant space at Forest Road. It has also been confirmed to the Officer that the rental rates at Forest Road are approximately ten times higher than those at Vincent House. The proposed change of use would offer the Borough the opportunity to significantly reduce spending and maximise savings without reducing delivery of this front line health service.

### Principle

6.4 The proposal would result in the change of use from B1 (office) to D1 (public health treatment facility). An assessment of the loss of the office would therefore need to be undertaken. The Borough of Enfield is not seen to be a major office centre, but evidence within the Local Economic Assessments (LEAs) suggest that there is a demand for quality office space, and from a strategic view the outcomes of the LEAs would expect this demand to be accommodated in a series of small office developments in town centres

throughout the Borough, concentrated on the existing centres of Enfield Town, Southgate and Innova Park. Therefore, there would be no objection to the loss of the office in principle in the Ponders End Large Local Centre as it is not in an area recommended by the LEA. However, an assessment of its change to D1 use would need to be undertaken.

6.5 A D1 use would fall within the term “community facility”. In terms of the provision of new community facilities, Policy DMD16 of the Development Management Document (2014) sets out that planning permission will only be granted where the proposed development complies with the following:

- a. Is demonstrated to have a community need;
- b. Makes an efficient and effective use of land and buildings, and where appropriate, provides opportunities for co-location, flexible spaces and multi-use;
- c. Is easily accessible to the community it is intended to serve by walking, cycling and public transport to reduce dependence upon private car transport;
- d. Is designed to provide access for physically impaired users, in accordance with DMD 37 'Achieving High Quality and Design-Led Development';
- e. Does not harm the amenities of neighbouring and nearby properties; and
- f. Does not have a negative impact on the area in terms of the potential traffic generated.

6.6 Criteria c, d, e and f have been discussed within this Committee Report and it is considered that the proposal would adhere to these criteria. This element of the report will focus on criteria a and b. It is considered that the Agent has successfully demonstrated that there is a need for the change of use from B1 to D1. The move from the Forest Road Care Centre fundamentally supports the Borough in meeting the pressures placed by central government on the Public Health Grant without affecting patient care locally and this front line health service. The need for such a care facility is apparent and is demonstrated by the fact there are such treatment facilities throughout the Borough, including that at Forest Road Care Centre. In addition, the fact that patient numbers will increase with the change of use demonstrates a need in the Borough that was currently not being fulfilled by the Forest Road Care Centre. In this regard, criteria a is considered to be satisfied.

6.7 The location of the proposal is appropriate and would adhere to DMD 16 and DMD 25, which requires D1 uses to be in a designated centre location. The proposal will be regenerating this element of the Ponders End High Street given that it will be bring back into use a vacant unit in this key and important location. The space to be used within the unit is to be efficient and effective given that the unit has been designed to increase patient numbers to the unit compared to the existing Forest Road Care Centre. Whilst the space would not be flexible or multi-use this does not cause concern given that the unit is situated within a community based mix use, at Vincent House. In this regard, criteria b is considered to be adhered to.

6.8 At this point in the report, it should be noted that the site is not situated within the traditional employment areas designated as Locally Significant Industrial Sites (LSIS) nor Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL). Whilst it is acknowledged that the vacant office may have resulted in job dispersion, this in itself would not warrant a reason for refusal. This is because the proposed use would be employing 19 members of staff. The staff team due to be based at Vincent House will consist of full time and part time staff with one or more senior

members of staff located on site at all times. The staff will be mix of medical and non-medical roles, counsellors, therapists and administrators. Approximately a maximum of 19 staff will be based at the site and it is expected to have between 5 and 19 on site at any one time. On average it is anticipated that an average of 12 to 14 staff members in attendance daily. It is considered that the proposed number of staff is high particularly when compared to a B1 office use, where numbers would generally be lower.

#### 6.9 Impact on Character of Surrounding Area

6.10 No alterations are proposed externally. Any and all changes to either the front or associated advertisements would require additional consent. It is therefore considered that the proposed change of use would have no impact on the setting, character or appearance of the subject property or surrounding area having regard to Policy CP30 of the Core Strategy (2010) and DMD 37 and 39 of the Development Management Document (2014).

#### 6.11 Impact on Neighbouring Properties

6.12 The Local Planning Authority would maintain that the characteristics and inherent sensitivities of Centres are such that changes of use require additional scrutiny. Given the predominantly residential composition of the building, the greatest concern relates to the potential impact the proposal will have on the amenities of nearby residential sites. It is considered that the function of the property is unlikely to alter significantly as a result of the change and in consultation with Environmental Health, no objections have been cited on the basis of increase noise and disturbance particularly given the degree of separation to the nearest residential units, the existing use of the site and the degree of ambient noise levels resultant from this busy location. It is however considered prudent to impose a condition ensuring that the hours of operation are controlled to ensure that the service is in sociable hours. The hours of operation suggested to be imposed are those stipulated on the submitted application form.

#### 6.13 Traffic and Transport

6.14 DMD 45 relates to car parking, cycle provision and parking design. A proposal would need to adhere to the requirements of DMD 45 and the London Plan to be deemed as acceptable. DMD 47 states that new development proposals will need to demonstrate that enough space for servicing, circulation and access to, from and through the site is provided. All developments must be fully accessible to pedestrians and cyclists and assist with general permeability within an area and the current development does not provide this.

6.15 Three staff car parking spaces are provided in the basement. This is deemed to be sufficient for the proposed change of use and would adhere to the requirements of the London Plan and the sustainable location of the unit. With regards to patient parking, the plans have been annotated to demonstrate that car parking spaces number 4 to 10 (7 spaces in total) will be designated for the patients of the proposed unit. This however would be difficult to enforce as it would be hard to prove that only patients are using these spaces. Therefore, it is considered that an on balanced view is need to be taken into account. It is considered that given the units siting in the designated Centre, the access to public transport, the size of the unit, the

number of patients that would visit the unit at any one time and the public car park opposite, it is considered that there would not be a significant impact on traffic generation or parking demand on and off the site. In this regard, there is no objection raised.

- 6.16 There is a requirement for 3 staff cycle spaces in order to accord with the London Plan requirements. There are cycle facilities in the basement to be utilised by members of staff. These spaces have not been specifically allocated to the unit given that the cycle spaces are utilised by the whole site and in this regard a refusal cannot be soundly warranted. Members of the public will be able to use the cycle facilities in the designated Centre. The provision of an additional 2 visitor spaces on the site would hinder the management of the existing and established private basement car park.
- 6.17 With regards to disabled parking, there is a public car park opposite the site which offers disabled car parking spaces. Such spaces can be utilised by the patients of the unit and thus no objection is raised.
- 6.18 The refuse and recycling on the site remains the same on the whole site. The proposed unit can utilise the same refuse and recycling. In this regard, no objection is raised to this element of the scheme. The servicing of the site will remain as it is now.

6.20 CIL

- 6.21 As of April 2010, legislation in the form of CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) came into force which would allow 'charging authorities' in England and Wales to apportion a levy on net additional floor space for certain types of qualifying development to enable the funding of a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. Since April 2012 the Mayor of London has been charging CIL in Enfield at the rate of £20 per sqm. The Council adopted its own CIL on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and a rate of £40 per sqm in this designated zone. The proposed change of use would not be CIL liable as it would not fall within the criteria of the CIL Regulations.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed change of use would not impair provision of viable office / employment uses within a designated Large Local Centre nor would it compromise the amenities of nearby residential properties. Further, it would preserve the vitality, viability and retail character of the Ponders End Large Local Centre while providing a valuable community use. Furthermore, the intended use of the premises does not give rise to conditions prejudicial to the free flow and safety of traffic on the adjoining highways.

## 8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that this application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of S.51 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, as set out in the attached schedule which forms part of this notice.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Hours and days of operation

The premises shall be open for business and working only between the hours of 09:00 – 17:00 Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 09:00 – 20:00 Tuesday and Thursday and at no other time.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining and nearby residential properties.

4. No subdivision

The premises shall not be subdivided and occupied by separate businesses or used for habitable accommodation or any other use whatsoever unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

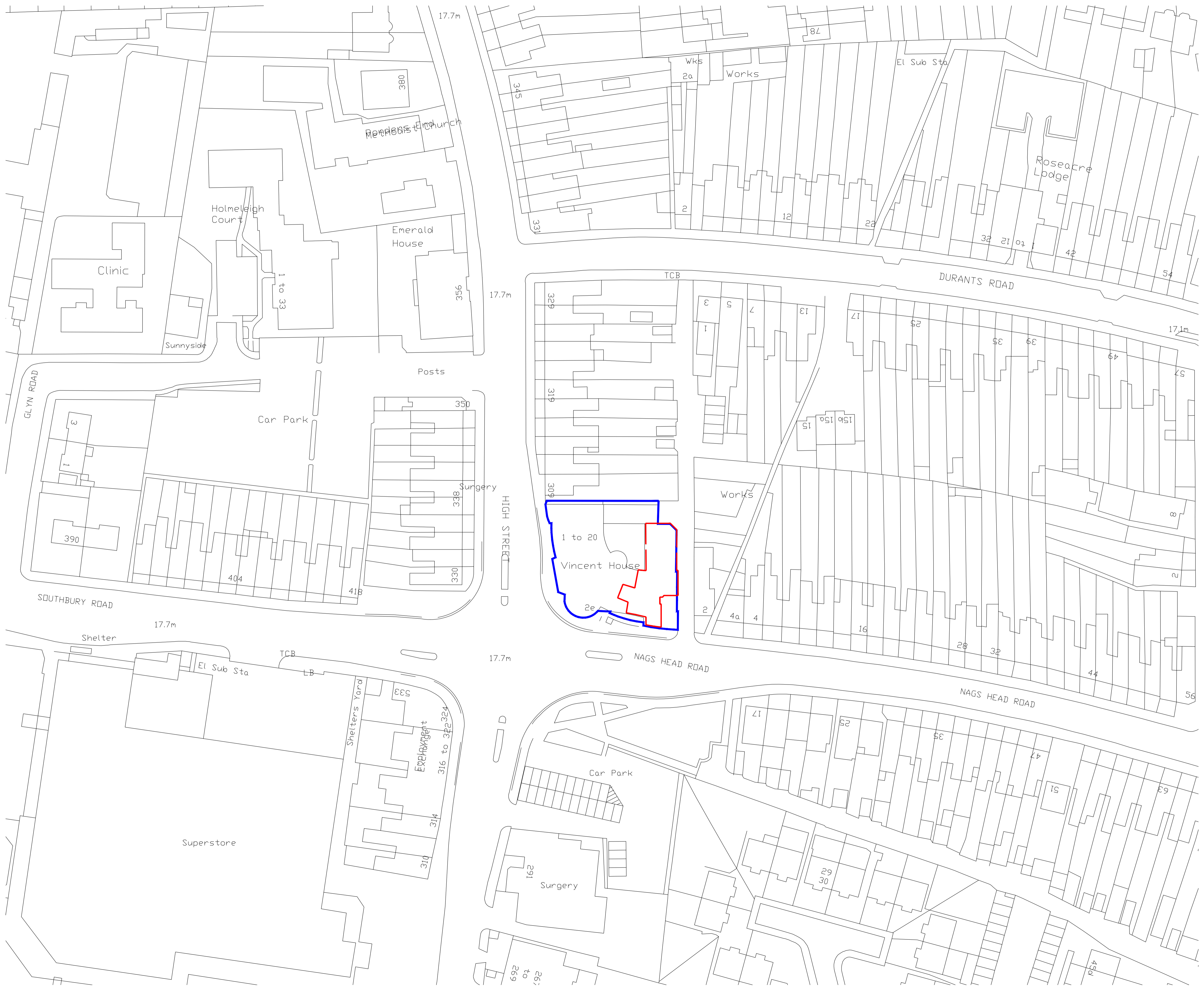
Reason: To ensure that the development complies with adopted standards and is in character with the existing form of development in the locality.

5. No change of use

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, or any amending Order, the premises shall only be used as a public health treatment facility for purposes within Use Classes B1 and D1 as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and for no other use whatsoever.

Reason: To ensure an appropriate use within this Town Centre commensurate with the sensitivities of the site and to preserve residential amenity.





Area: 265.89

Rev	Notes	Date

CAD File No. 15/09/2016

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STATUS  
**Planning Submission**

CLIENT  
**London Borough of Enfield**

JOB TITLE  
**VINCENT HOUSE  
2E NAGS HEAD ROAD  
ENFIELD, LONDON, EN3 7FN.**

DRAWING TITLE  
**Site plan**



London Borough of Enfield  
Corporate Maintenance & Construction Team  
15/09/2016  
EN3 7FN  
020 899 6100  
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ARCHITECT I.S.O.	DRAWN	DATE
-	N.Toufan	15/09/2016
SCALE	CHECKED	RIBA WORKSTAGE
1:500 @ A1	KM	-
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