m a t r i x

p l a n n i n g

South Holland Council
Planning Department

23 May 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed continued use of premises as Health and Well-Being Centre and retention of (a) extension to the side and rear of 204 Pennygate and (b) detached function room to rear of site.

This application is made following a review of the operation of the Pennygate Foundation, a growing and popular registered charity. It has existed to date with a temporary planning permission. Seeking permanent permission is necessary to allow for the Foundation to develop its services, to plan forward and to secure outside sources of funding.

This application is a re-submission of H16-0628-14 (refused).

Proposal

It is requested that planning permission is granted with new times of use:
Monday to Saturday 0730 – 2200 hrs (last event ends 930pm)
Sunday 10 -1700 hrs

Background

The use was established in 2013 in response to intense unmet local social, work and welfare needs. Temporary planning permission was granted in 2014 (H16-0628-14) until October 2017. Since that time the use has grown in popularity and the volunteer staff have responded in a direct and vigorous way. Their efforts are reflected in some of the testimonies attached as Appendix 7 to the Planning Statement.

Context

A very full Supporting Statement and Appendices is provided as it is felt the social benefits of the Foundation have previously been understated. The use is now supported by the emerging Planning Policy in the new Local Plan (March 2017) that supports new *community health and well-being* facilites like this. The Pennygate Foundation particularly welcomes the Policy's focus on promoting healthy eating and associated community use given success at Pennygate in getting locals to meet over a high quality meal. Food is central to social integration.

The recent Green Paper on *'Work health and disability'* (November 2016) looks at how employers, the welfare system and health services can work together to keep people healthy and in work. It echoes the Foundation's ethos. The Government wants to:

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- help and support more people into work
- improve assessments for benefits for people with health conditions
- help and support employers so they are happy to employ more disabled people and people with health conditions
- support employers to help disabled people and people with health conditions to stay in work
- make sure everyone gets high-quality health care to help them get into and stay in work

The complexity of the system inevitably require organisations like Pennygate who can signpost individuals to specialists or other services.

Recent review

The Foundation has reviewed its operations and the present application is made based on user needs. Clarity is given on the beneficial social impact of the Foundations activities. The use is now meeting local need that no other organisation in Spalding is able to. The user testimonies (see Appendix 7) provides some evidence of success.

The use has been tested over its 5 year life and there been no complaints of noise or parking that have been substantiated. Growth since its inception has shown it to meet real needs in a neighbourly fashion. In deciding this application, there has to be an acceptance of regular fundraising events for the use to remain sustainable and self-sufficient. These activities, often held in the detached function space, may include the very popular laughing yoga, dance and occasional parties. These activities are low-cost but provide some funding, but above all are affordable local activities aimed at promoting social integration.

Mainstream funding cannot be sought until a permanent permission is in place with reasonable hours -permission is sought the mixed use to function up to 10.00pm (when the gates will close). This limit strikes the right balance between meeting community needs and respecting the residential qualities of the area.

The appearance of the site is reasonable as it has been recently improved, despite very limited funds and donations. It is well located for community access and areas of deprivation in Spalding. It is grouped with another non-residential use (the medical surgery, managed separately). The closest houses to the south are screened by a substantial fence (double thickness in part). In environmental terms this use is in a good position.

Yours sincerely,



Gordon Smith, MRTPI

Planning Statement
Pennygate Foundation
204 Pennygate, Spalding, PE11 1LT

Proposed continued use of premises as Health and Well-Being Centre retention of (a) extension to the side and rear of 204 Pennygate and (b) detached function room to rear of site.

This Statement is to support a planning application for the above development.



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1. Summary

Proposal : Continuation of use of Health and Well-being Centre (health and welfare advice, leisure pursuits, and community support activity), retention of present extension and outbuilding.

New times of use :
Monday to Saturday 0730 – 2200 hrs (last event ends 930pm)
Sunday 10 -1700 hrs

Suggested conditions: the permission could made personal to Pennygate Foundation Registered Charity Number 1155986. Reason – to control future changes of use.

2. Background to the application.

2.1 The application has been made following a review of the operation of the Pennygate Foundation, a growing registered charity. Permanent permission is necessary to allow for the Foundation to plan forward and secure outside sources of funding.

2.2 The premises are a semi-detached house and associated land, located next to the car park of an existing Doctors Surgery. The use was established in 2013 in response to intense unmet local social and welfare needs that were then focussed inappropriately through the GP (thus overloading primary health care provision). The opportunity of immediately and effectively meeting welfare needs was taken with the purchase of an adjoining house. The use started as the needs were immediate, and temporary permission was granted in 2014 (H16-0628-14) temporarily until October 2017.

2.3 Since that time the use has grown in popularity and the volunteer staff have responded in a direct and vigorous way. Their efforts are reflected in some of the testimonies attached as Appendices.

2.4 Unmet local health and welfare needs have found an outlet that works, and the enthusiasm of the volunteers supported success. This included accepting the gift of structures used to quickly extend the premises (including a garden shed donated by the Council). These temporary structures were given an extended life by being enclosed with UPVC to improve appearance, and insulated to allow greater fuel efficiency (all management and maintenance costs comes from volunteers).

2.5 Permission was applied for retrospectively yet was refused in December 2016 (H16-1019-16). The structures were not granted permission given fears that the greater intensity of use was not appropriate for the area, and the appearance of the buildings was deemed not fitting.

2.6 The Foundation thereafter decide to review its operations and the present application is made as the outcome of that review. New hours of operation are advanced based on user needs, and greater clarity is now given on the beneficial social impact of the Foundations activities. The use is now shown to meet local needs that no other organisation in Spalding is able to.

2.7 In the five years that we have been operating, there been no formal complaints of noise or parking that have been substantiated, and the use makes less noise than children and friends playing in the garden on a trampoline and having a barbecue, living close to the boundary of the foundation.

2.8 There has to be an acceptance of regular fundraising events in order to remain sustainable and self-sufficient, whilst having some resources to help those in need that need e.g. food, clothing, fares, etc. The type of events will be determined by the service users and their needs. During the Foundation's 5 years life there have been no complaints about events that have been justified.

2.9 Mainstream funding cannot be sought until a permanent permission is in place. Growth since its inception has shown it to meet real needs in a neighbourly fashion, and a permanent permission is now sought.

2.10 Various appendices are provided as full background. The applicant's Statement at Appendix 1 provides an important review of need and their successes. Other appendices describe operations in detail.



Left :
The site now







Right:
The site around 2013, before the use started.





3. The use

3.1. The use is a Health and Well-being Centre promoting social integration, and offering health and welfare advice. This is a composite use combining – for example - health and welfare facilities, with leisure pursuits, and community support activity such as after school homework classes. A list of activities is attached as Appendix 2. In broad terms, the Foundation aims to support the physical, social and mental well-being of the Spalding Community. It is well located; this is a part of Spalding that has a high need for welfare and other support.

3.2. The user reception area is a non-commercial café that provides the identity and core for the centre as a whole. Food is of a high quality, and will have been donated. Hot meals are mostly prepared elsewhere and reheated. Meals are also provided for off-site meals on wheels services, and to visitors mostly in the period 11-2.

3.3. The use is unique, and can only be provided by the Pennygate Foundation. A personal permission to this registered charity is acceptable. As there is no one activity that dominates the site as a whole, this use does not fall in any one planning use class (and is therefore a 'sui generis' activity).

3.4. A survey of activities was carried out between January and March 2017 that sought users views on why they use Pennygate and the frequency of that use. The answers given for the most frequent reason why the Foundation is used are self-defined and put social reasons high in the list (loneliness, meeting new people, listening ear, meals) but volunteers are aware that these reason mask underlying welfare and medical needs (see Appendix 3).

3.5. It is for this reason that a café is the most prominent element of the Foundation. Users are attracted by such the non-stigmatised character of the attractive café. They are readily encouraged to pass the time with a meal or cup of tea, and review problems with volunteers at their own speed. Appointments are not necessary nor desired.

3.6. A prime objective is to combat loneliness, now seen as a lead contributory factor to much mental and physical ill health. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments. The Foundation is doing what emerging national policy is promoting - Section 7 below reviews the *Green Paper on Work health and disability* (November 2016). This paper looks at how employers, the welfare system and health services can work together to keep people healthy and in work.

3.7 A function room lies to the south-west of the site, adjacent to the Doctors surgery but away from residential boundaries. This will be used for events such a yoga, singing, exercise as well as family parties (all an essential element in helping integration of different element of the local community). Health Education events are also held here – a recent example being evening use, a low-pollen meeting time, for sufferers of obstructive pulmonary disease.

Referrals to other agencies

3.8 It is not possible for all individual needs to be managed at the Foundation. Initial references to or from the Foundation are shown in Appendix 4. This begins to illustrate the spider's web of agencies and complication connected with welfare management and promotion of well-being. Given the contraction of state funded services, it is an established fact that the third sector (community and voluntary organisations) needs to take up the slack.

Services Provided by Pennygate – expanded in Appendix 2
Advice, Counselling, Emotional Support and Practical help
Form filling – all welfare areas
Money matters Advice, Emotional & Practical Support
Domestic Violence
Other Domestic Matters
Homelessness, Hot bedding & Evictions
Education

4. The site and premises

4.1. The activities are focussed on the main building at No 204 where a family-friendly non-institutional pleasant environment has been created**.** This is necessary to maximise comfort for users of this drop-in service.

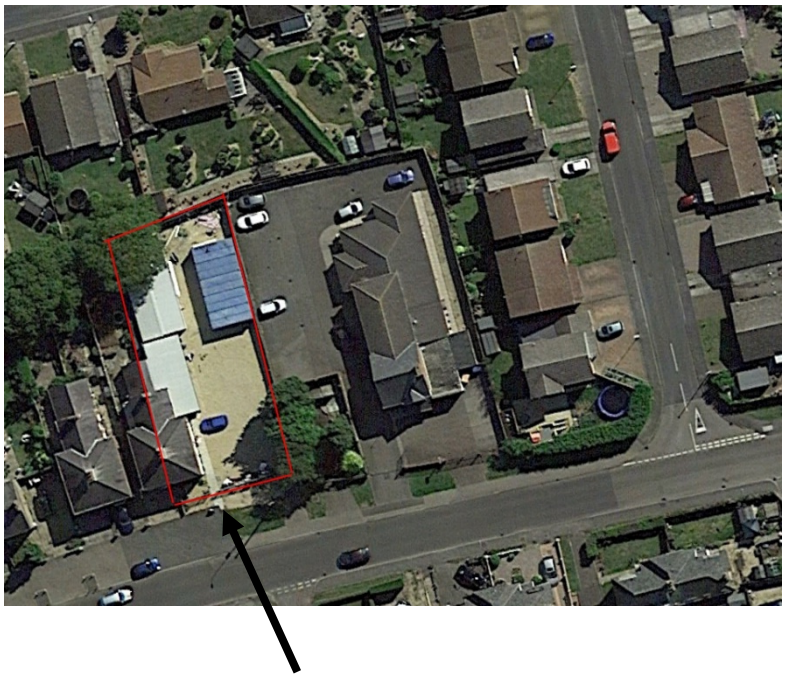
4.2. A friendly café style environment has been created in the central section of the main building, with meeting and other activity space created in small compartmented rooms to the rear of the premises. This presents the creation of a healthy environments for people of all ages which supports social integration.

4.3. A function room lies to the south-west of the site, adjacent to the Doctors surgery but away from residential boundaries. This will be used for events such a yoga, singing, exercise as well as family parties; all an essential element in helping integration of different element of the local community.

4.4. The exterior is used for parking and a timber decked patio area has been created to the rear of the main building – as secure area for parents and young children.

4.5. Considerable effort has been taken to ensure the use is attractive to its users. This is within the small budgets available to an unfunded volunteer-staffed enterprise. To 'normalise' the environment, and encourage volunteer access, refreshments are also offered to the walk-in public (thus assisting modestly with income generation).

4.6. The facilities are maintained to a high standard (with meals supervised by a *cordon bleu* chef). Plainly this also assists income generation, necessary to support this non-profit making service.




Looking south from Pennygate

5. Parking

4.7. There is sufficient space for off-road parking for staff and storage of the donated minibus used for outings. Customers tend to be primarily walk-in, but it is accepted that some events may attract users from further afield. In these instances, the adjacent Doctor's surgery car park is available for overflow.

4.8. This is a small scale enterprise but there is a need for some delivery of food and goods. This can be accommodated by vehicles driving into the car park, or by pulling off the road into the access. Any inconvenience to users is short term and readily tolerated.

4.9. The Highways Auhtority are unlikely to object. The applicants will offer a *parking scheme* with overflow parking at the adjacent medical surgery available for use whenever there is a booked event at the small Function Room.

6. New proposed times of use

6.1 The proposed time of operation are:

Monday to Saturday 0730 – 2200 hrs (last function ends 930)

These are times chosen to meet the needs of a key client group –shift workers with a common shift pattern that spans 0800-2000 hrs, and to allow for reasonable events.

Sunday 10 -1700 hrs

It is requested that no bank holiday hours restrictions are imposed given that social and welfare needs continue during those times

6.2 It is suggested that these are modest hours that strike a balance between allowing the use to meet needs, to generate necessary income, yet respect the residential qualities of this area.

6.3 Out of hours service will be based on local networks. At such times access for individuals/family groups will be allowed at any time for emergencies but such use will be limited. The premises will then be functioning very much as a family residence consistent with the area's character.

6.5 It should be noted that the premises are identified by SHDC as a Crisis Management Centre where, in an emergency (flood, fire, explosion etc) one could expect large groups of possibly traumatised people to congregate. This is described in Appendix 6.

7. Planning and other relevant Policy.

7.1 National Guidance (NPPG)

"What is the role of health and wellbeing in planning?

Local planning authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making. ….*"*

"The range of issues that could be considered through the plan-making and decision-making processes, in respect of health and healthcare infrastructure, include how:

- *development proposals can support strong, vibrant and healthy communities …create places and spaces to meet to support community engagement and social capital;*
- *the local plan promotes health, social and cultural wellbeing and supports the reduction of health inequalities;*
- *the local plan considers the local health and wellbeing strategy and other relevant health improvement strategies in the area;*
- *…*
- *opportunities for healthy lifestyles have been considered….;*
- *… access to the whole community by all sections of the community, whether able-bodied or disabled, has been promote*d.

What is a healthy community?(…)

The creation of healthy living environments for people of all ages which supports social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

7.2 Local Plan

2006 adopted Local plan. The present plan is silent on the issue of Health and Wellbeing.

South east Lincolnshire Local plan Publication Version March 2017. This may be accorded some weight albeit limited as it is not yet adopted. However it appears consistent with the NPPF and It shows the direction of travel for the Council's decision making.

The Publication Version is the subject of a final round of consultation. The consultation period runs from Monday 10th April to Monday 22nd May 2017 and it will be the last chance for people to comment on the Local Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State in the summer.

Policy 28 Community Health and Well Being . The key provisions are:

"Development shall contribute to: the creation of socially-cohesive and inclusive communities; reducing health inequalities; and improving the community's health and well-being.

New community facilities shall be located so as to be;

1. as close as possible to the community they will serve;

2. readily accessible by public transport, on foot, and by bicycle;

3. compatible with nearby uses and the character and appearance of the neighbourhood; and

4. located and designed to enable (where possible) shared use with other services/facilities. "

7.3 Broader national policy context – recent Green paper on Work Health and Disability Reform

This statement is not the right place to rehearse the present evolution of national welfare and employment policy but it is relevant to show that the Pennygate Foundation is going in the right direction.

The Pennygate Foundation advise the recent *Green Paper on Work health and disability* (November 2016) is relevant. This paper looks at how employers, the welfare system and health services can work together to keep people healthy and in work. The Government wants to:

- *"help and support more people into work*
- *improve assessments for benefits for people with health conditions*
- *help and support employers so they are happy to employ more disabled people and people with health conditions*
- *support employers to help disabled people and people with health conditions to stay in work*
- *make sure everyone gets high-quality health care to help them get into and stay in work"*

The Social Security Advisory Committee's response in February 2017 was:

> *"The Government is right to aim at least to halve the disability employment gap. We should not accept that long term unemployment should be a normal outcome of a serious health problem or impairment is; so we applaud the Government for its ambition. We also agree with the Government that 'the right type of work is good for our physical and mental health and good health and support helps us in the workplace'. The corollary of this is that not any employment will do. It needs to be right for the individual's circumstances and wellbeing, and individuals need financial security if they can't find work that is right for them".*

This is a complex area that Pennygate are endeavouring to translate into practical outcomes in Spalding.

8. Evaluation of the use

A. MEETING LOCAL NEEDS

6.1. The Foundation meets broad based Health and Well-being needs. It is not a commercial facility nor an NHS funded use. It does not offer clinical services, and receives no funding from the Lincolnshire health and care system. It is next to a GP's surgery, but it is not managed by that surgery. Management is by a Board of 4 Trustees. The proximity and association with the GP is helpful for referrals for non-clinical welfare problems.

6.2. The founders, in their other roles, both presently provide health and wellbeing services to the community of Spalding and surrounding area. They are keenly aware mainstream services are either missing, or not performing due to austerity measures and cuts to services. Appendix 5 by a summary of the new vision for health care in the Lincolnshire Area that acknowledges current service deficiency. The Pennygate Foundation directly responds to such deficiencies.

6.3. The Foundation was set up with the personal funding of the trustees, and receives no public funding. Ongoing management, repair and running costs is reliant upon volunteers' input.

6.4. Set up in 2013, the primary purpose of the Centre is to provide a space to advise and educate those who seek welfare and practical assistance, and to do this by working in partnership with other charities and relevant agencies. This non-profit making, volunteer-only agency has yet to produce an improved web site and communications strategy but has an emerging theme to present themselves as: *"The friend that walks in, when the world walks out".*

6.5. A friendly café-style environment has been created in the central and front section of the main building, with meeting and other activity space created in small compartmented rooms to the rear of the premises. This presents the creation of a healthy environments for people of all ages which supports social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments. A local increase in migrant populations, problems with low pay, and so on, has created a growth in demand for this kind of multi-purpose space and multipurpose advice services.

6.6. Growth has been in response to need but is not sustainable without further internal investment and realistic opening hours. Investment is needed in :

a. The physical environment requires upgrading to ensure it further meets the needs of, for example wheelchair users.
b. Computer connections and investment is needed, and associated security upgrades to the premises.
c. There is no central heating and long term running costs would be aided by it installation
d. Maintenance has not been neglected. Leaks in the roof led to a successful appeal for assistance from local traders. Future improvement needs to be planned in.

6.7 Once permanent planning permission is granted then the security granted will allow the enterprise to seek mainstream funding for staffing and to improve the internal space.

B. POLICY SUPPORT IN FAVOUR OF THE USE

6.8 The NPPF and the emerging South East Lincs Local Plan (now at an advanced stage) seeks to create of socially-cohesive and inclusive communities; reduce health inequalities; and improve the community's health and well-being. It also guards against the loss of existing valued community facilities. Although only on a temporary permission, refusal of permission will lead to closure. This is contrary to policy expectations.

C. COMPATIBILITY WITH NEARBY USES AND THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Looking south





Ci. Suitability of the site, and impact on neighbours

6.9 To the west lies a present Doctor's surgery car park. Gardens lie to the south and east. A road lies to the north. Consequently any activity or disturbance associated with the use ideally needs to face westwards or to the road. The site lends itself very well to the use. This is as the access and parking area, most windows, and the function room lie all face westwards, and the entrance to the road is to the south. Whilst not directly part of the GP's surgery, it presents a logical grouping of uses.

6.10 Impact on neighbours to the south and east has been examined. The eastern face of the site is a blank face of a single storey structure, so there is no scope for noise escape.

6.11 The southern face of the site faces residential property. Windows face this more sensitive direction, and there is also a small area of decking (presently used, for example, for afternoon tea integrating elderly persons with toddlers). Although levels of activity will be similar to use by a large family, there is scope for disturbance to No 48 Mansell Close, but that is unlikely given the :

- nature of the use (mostly the elderly and young),
- hours of operation now presented, and
- bottom of no. 38 is occupied in part by a large shed that act as a shield from activity.

Any fugitive sound escape from windows and doors opening is in any event 'caught' by the present substantial perimeter fencing on the northern boundary.

6.12 There is no outdoor activity behind the detached function room; only an exterior storage/parking area. A double fence has been erected here given the instability of the neighbour's fence (no 50 Mansell Close), thereby aiding sound capture. A trellis has also been installed to act as a visual filter to the upper portion of the Foundation buildings.

Cii. Compatibility with the appearance of the area.

6.13 Although the area is characterised by residential property, the present use stands as a non-residential enclave. It lies adjacent to the Doctor's surgery and its substantial car park. Given this grouping, it fits in well with the area.

6.14 Given cost constraints associated with an enterprise based on volunteer effort, the Foundation has done well to cloak previously temporary buildings with cladding to offer clean and simple lines. They have avoided the need to repaint by use of a material, white UPVc, that well last for many years.

The frontage to the road is marked with a fence set back from the public footpath. Previous attempts to soften this with planting have failed given vandalism.

Ciii. Other matters: Planning use class.

6.15 The main use does not fit into the common Use classes. The Health and Well-Being function requires a blend of uses that might be described as falling within variously Class B1 (business use) D1 (health services, day centre, education), Class D2 (indoor recreation), and A3 (food and drink use). On balance, the use is in its own class, a 'sui generis' use.

Appendices

1. A statement by the Pennygate Foundation April 2017
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3. User survey
4. 4 Referrals to and from the Foundation, and agencies contacted
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