

I wish to make the following observations on this application.

Change of use class here would inevitably increase the occupancy hours of the development and the occupant load factor over the proposed opening hours. Although the site has a history of light industrial use dating back to at least 1976 it has been accessed only by pedestrians in small numbers from Seagull Lane. Considering that there is no longer a building on site it could be argued that rather than a change of use application what the applicant is proposing here is in effect an application for a new D2 use and in a brand new building. This arguably should be decided as a brand new development. This goes well beyond simple change of use in existing commercial premises.

There are considerable access implications associated with this development. Pedestrian access from Seagull Lane is down a narrow passage maximum width 1.7 m. The vehicle access from North Street is suitable only for light vehicles in small numbers. No medium or large commercial vehicle could access the site from North Street even by reversing and access for emergency vehicles would be problematic. Indeed given these access constraints, which would mitigate against access by any large construction equipment, approval of this development could cause considerable inconvenience and traffic congestion on adjoining streets during the construction period.

Should the development be approved the pressure on local parking areas including residential streets would be considerable and unacceptable. As far as I can see from the deposited plans no provision has been made for staff parking and I can find no plan for a parking scheme which would address the inevitable concerns of local residents and businesses arising from an increased parking demand. Both access streets are already heavily regulated by parking orders and it is facile to assume that customers will walk many hundreds of yards from the nearest public car parks.