



69-73 Meridian Centre
Havant

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30th April 2012

Mrs J Clark (Planning)
Havant Borough Council
Civic Centre Road
HAVANT
PO9 2AX

Your Ref: APP/12/00411

Re: **Planning Application for 69-73 Meridian Centre, Havant**

Dear Mrs Clark,

I am writing in response to the issues you have raised in your letter of 24th April 2012 concerning our planning application for change of use of one of the units we lease at the Meridian Centre in Havant.

In response to your points:

1. I sent you a revised Ownership Certificate B to include Havant Borough Council Estates Department as requested by e-mail on 25th April..
2. A supporting statement for our application is provided as an annex to this letter.

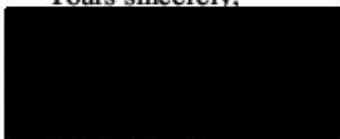
3. I can confirm that the original detailed drawing produced by David F Young is under our ownership as it was produced for us and to our requirements. There is no copyright statement on the drawing.

I can also confirm that PWP Architects have given their permission for the reproduction and alteration of their drawing of the Meridian Centre first floor which was copied from our lease. I am sending their e-mail confirmation of this authorisation with this letter.

I am also supplying a replacement PDF file for this drawing as the file supplied with our original application was not correctly scaled to A3 size as intended.

I trust that these responses and the additional information supplied will enable this planning application to proceed.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Butcher
Trustee
Portsmouth Community Church

SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PLANNING APPLICATION APP/12/00411

Description of Proposal

Change of Use of retail shop area of unit SU24 (currently Class A1) to Class D1 in line with the rest of the premises. The proposed use of the former retail area is a community drop-in facility with limited non-profit making sales (eg tea/coffee, photocopying).

Justification for Proposal

Portsmouth Community Church have operated since 1996 from two leased units (MSU6 and SU24) on the first floor of the Meridian Centre, Havant. One of the requirements of the lease was to operate the front half of the smaller unit, SU24, as a retail premises. This has been carried out successfully for 15 years initially as a FairTrade shop and then, since 2001, as a Christian book, music and card shop.

However, in the past couple of years the environment for operating a retail unit in this location has changed significantly. Firstly, a large proportion of Christian book and music sales are now being made via the Internet and, secondly, the first floor of the Meridian Centre has been evolving into more of a public service area, as acknowledged to us by the Centre owners.

At the same time the community projects operated by our church have been growing, as well as the hiring of our premises by other community and charitable organisations. A strategic review of the use of our premises has concluded that a welcome/drop-in area would make an important addition to our community-facing activities, providing a point of access not only to Christian services in the Borough but also to other community organisations. Our vision as a church is to reach out particularly to the vulnerable and the lonely and this area will enable us to develop this, as well as providing easier access to the Beacon Food Bank, which is currently only by appointment, and to Beacon Debt Advice which currently only operates one evening a week. As volunteers allow we hope to develop drop-in sessions targeting specific groups, for example young people on Saturdays and the elderly or young mothers on a weekday.

Bringing the Class of Use into line with our larger unit (Class D1 - Place of Worship) will enable this area to be operated as a more integral part of our overall premises and provide greater flexibility for future activities of the church.