

Planning Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/15/00828
Site Address:	First Floor, 10 Mengham Road, Hayling Island
Development:	Change of use from former Private Snooker Club (D2) to Fitness Centre (D2).
Case Officer:	Mrs T Pickup
Comments by:	Gavin Stonham
Date of Comments:	7 th August 2015

Policy Status:

The Local Plan is now comprised of the Core Strategy (2011) and the recently adopted Allocations Plan (2014). It should be noted that Saved Policies are no longer relevant.

Comments:

This application is for a proposed change of use of a snooker club to a fitness centre. Change of use would normally not require planning permission as the proposed fitness centre is within the same D2 use class as the existing snooker club. However an application is required in this case as the application for the previous use was subject to a condition limiting the building's use to a snooker hall only. A previous application (APP/14/01126) was submitted for change of use of the site to a fitness centre and gym, which this application supersedes, which was granted permission subject to a condition limiting the opening hours to 0600 to 2200 daily to take account of the close proximity of residential properties at the same floor level. The design and access statement for this latest application sets out recommended measures to restrict the opening times of the building and limit noise output.

The site is in an accessible central location on Hayling Island, within Menham district centre. It does not have its own parking; however there are two public car parks (Mengham Lane and Elm Grove) within close walking distance of the site, which could be used for visitors to the new facility. There are also 7 bike racks available at its entrance and bus stops very close by.

Mengham district centre falls within South Hayling Island which is a priority area for regeneration under Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy CS6 (Regeneration of the Borough). It is also in an urban area and a new leisure use at this location would help to prioritise development on derelict or underused land and buildings in accordance with policy CS17 (Concentration and Distribution of Development within the Urban Areas).

The site is in the primary shopping area and therefore subject to policy AL3 of the Local Plan (Allocations) (Town, District and Local Centres). AL3 (1) supports proposals that provide main town centre uses in district centres, and thus contribute to their vitality and viability. The proposal is considered to be a main town centre use in this context with reference to the definition in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy AL3 (3) states that at least 50% of units in an unbroken run of primary frontage should be retained in retail (A1) use. The proposal is for change of use of the first floor which does not form part of the frontage and it would therefore not have any impact on the proportion of units in A1 use. The ground floor is currently occupied by an actively trading A1 retail unit (Sainsburys Local).

The site has been vacant for six years and it is considered that bringing it back into an active use that provides both employment and a community facility as well as health benefits would be supported by policies CS1 (Health and Wellbeing) and CS4 (Town, District and Local Centres), in addition to policies CS6 and CS17.

The applicant has stated that music levels will be controlled to avoid causing a nuisance to neighbours. Improvements will be made to the building including replacing the existing single glazed windows with double glazing and sound attenuation will also be incorporated by the introduction of acousting linings to the separating wall with the adjacent property. The case officer report for the previous planning application APP/14/01126 recommended a condition for windows to be closed at all times and an air conditioning system to be used instead to further limit noise emission from the premises. This seems an appropriate condition and should be applied again to this new application.

Principle of development:

The case officer report for the previous application for change of use to a fitness centre already noted that the bringing into use of a currently vacant space within Mengham District Centre is to be encouraged as a matter of principle; with reduced hours the detailed proposal should not have any detrimental effect on nearby residents, subject to a personal condition being imposed to ensure the gym operates as intended. This new application is therefore supported.