

Planning Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/12/00411
Site Address:	69-73 Meridian Centre, Havant, PO9 1UN
Development:	Change of use from A1 to D1 to allow community drop in facility for Portsdown Community Church
Case Officer:	Sally Smith
Comments by:	Laura Grimason
Date of Comments:	16 May 2012

Comments:

Caring for our Borough: Core Strategy Policy CS1 states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that protect and contribute to the availability of community facilities. The proposals outlined in this application would help to achieve this key objective.

Promoting Havant Borough's Economy: Chapter 2 of the NPPF: 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres', states that Local Planning Authorities should allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of community development needed within their town centres. Community uses such as the one proposed in this application can therefore be considered as town centre uses.

While the ground floor of the Meridian Centre is identified as Primary Frontage in saved Local Plan policy TC6, the first floor is not included in this designation. Subsequently, saved Local Plan policy TC6 does not apply. A recent consultation document: 'What do you want from your Town, District and Local Centre's?' outlines the proposed changes to Primary Frontages within the borough to feed into the Local Plan (Allocations). This proposes that there will be no identified frontages on the first floor of the Meridian Centre.

Core Strategy Policy CS4 identifies town centres as being at the heart of local communities. The supporting text for this policy acknowledges that Havant Town Centre is at the heart of the former market town offering a range of facilities including community uses. The provision of a community drop in facility for Portsdown Community Church would strengthen the provision of community facilities within Havant Town Centre and is subsequently supported from a policy principle. This proposal substitutes one community use for another and therefore, Core Strategy Policy DM2 does not apply.

Policy Principle of Development: **Approve**