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My Ref. HSP/C/12

5th January 2012.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Design and Access Statement - Proposed change of use from A1 to a mixed use of A1/A3 at 67, London Road, Cowplain, Hampshire.

Introduction.

I refer to the above and set out below those matters relating to design and access that address the requirements of DCLG "Guidance on information requirements and validations" March 2010, and in particular Section 6 "Design and Access Statements".

Enclosed is a cheque to the value of £335 being the required fee.

This Statement should be read *in conjunction* with the detailed planning application for the above proposal that comprises existing floor plan, roof plan and elevations together with location plan, site plan and proposed floor plan.

This Statement provides the District Council, consultees and local residents with a written justification for the planning application as well as a consideration of relevant "saved" Local Plan Policies with reasons given as to why the proposal accords with such Policies and should therefore be approved.

The Proposal.

The premises currently have an A1 use for the sale of blinds that attracts customers who in the main visit for a specific purpose rather than impulse purchases by passers by.

The use proposed would comprise a patisserie selling bread, cakes and various confectionary with just six tables available for customers to have food and drink purchased from the counter and consumed on the premises.

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The main use would therefore remain a Class A1 use with an A3 use as ancillary.

Assessment of physical context.

Cowplain has a linear shopping area on the west side of London Road, with a mixed ribbon of residential development on the opposite (east) side of London Road. A large car park is situated behind the shops with access off King's Road.

No. 67 is a single storey building with a main pitched roof, a smaller pitched roof towards the rear and a flat roofed area over the existing kitchen and w.c. There is some limited outside space at the rear where the refuse bins are stored.

Evaluation.

As can be seen from the submitted drawings, the only alterations proposed are internal to provide an improved kitchen area and the provision of a disabled toilet. A new counter and sales cabinet is proposed, allowing sufficient room for a limited number of tables and chairs.

Planning considerations.

Following adoption of the Council's Core Strategy in March 2011 an updated list of "saved" policies and their accompanying text was published. The "saved" policies have been retained and operate simultaneously with the updated Core Strategy Policies until replaced by the Development Delivery (Allocations) Plan Policies.

The Havant Borough District Wide Local Plan.

Saved Policy TC6 "Changes Of Use – Primary Frontages".

In relation to the current application, the policy requires that A3 uses within primary shopping frontages will be permitted provided that :-

i this would not lead to the concentration of, or creation of, adjacent non-retail uses at ground floor level such that this would begin to undermine the retail function of the primary shopping frontage; and
ii the premises will be open to visiting members of the public.

The Council seeks to ensure that there is a balance between retail and non retail uses in town and district centres to maintain their attractiveness to residents. Non A1 uses should not be allowed to dominate primary frontages such as to undermine the retail function of a particular centre.

To this end the Council has a concentration test that is aimed at maintaining a 60% baseline target of Class A1 retail representation. This is measured by unit count and in certain circumstances, by linear measurements of shopfronts.

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Following a site survey of the relevant frontage that comprised 11 units, there are 5 A1 uses, 4 A2 uses and 2 A3 uses at present. This gives an existing A1 baseline figure of 45%.

Were the proposed use to be solely an A3 use, then the resultant figure would be reduced to 36%. However, the application proposes a continuation of the A1 use with the A3 use being wholly ancillary. Indeed, the expected takings from the cafe element are unlikely to exceed 20% of the gross takings.

"What do you want from your District Centre" is a consultation document prepared by the Council that has been in the public domain since the 5th December 2011 and concludes on the 6th January 2012.

The purpose of the consultation is to gain the views of residents on the future of Cowplain as a district centre. The Council for its part has provided a map that shows the main shopping area and identifies two locations where primary frontage requires that at least 50% of the units must be shops and a secondary frontage where at least 25% of the units must be shops.

The application premises are located within the blue frontage that is now shown as secondary frontage.

Clearly, were the application to be solely a change of use to A3 then the 36% figure given above would be within the suggested criteria for a secondary frontage. However, as stated previously the main use remains A1 with A3 being ancillary.

Energy Statement.

Energy and CO2 Emissions

At least 75% of new internal fixed lighting, and all external lighting, will be dedicated low energy.
All white goods will be supplied as energy rating efficient (A+ or A rated).
Consideration will be given to using materials and construction that have a low environmental impact, such as those achieving an A+ or A rated under BRE's Green Guide.
Where possible materials will be chosen that are responsibly sourced such as FSC timber, recycled or reclaimed.
All insulation materials will have a GWP (Global Warming Potential) of 5 or less.

Water Use.

Indoor water use will be restricted by use of fittings with low flow rates, with smaller capacity, dual flush toilet. Any dishwasher fitted would have low water usage.

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Amount.

The proposal has a floor area of 55sq.m

Car parking.

Given the town centre location and the proximity of a public car park there is no requirement for car parking.

Access.

The property has good vehicular communications with the local highway network and customers can visit the premises regardless of age or disability and the premises will comply with the Building Regulations as well as the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995.

Refuse collection.

The provision of bins for waste as well as for recyclable materials are shown situated at the rear of the premises

Conclusions.

It is understood that the existing property has been on the market for some two years. The proposed change of use from retail to a mixed use of retail and cafe would not in any way undermine the retail function of the centre.

Experience of other Heidi's Swiss Patisseries within many centres in Hampshire has shown that not only are the bakery and confectionary products extremely popular, including sandwiches and rolls for employees of local businesses, but the pleasant albeit limited, cafe environment, serves as a regular meeting place, particularly for the elderly who then become potential spenders in other shops in the centre.

The proposal should therefore be welcomed by the Council as it prevents a shop unit from becoming vacant which is a real prospect, and continues an A1 use whilst at the same time providing a valuable social function, by way of the ancillary cafe use.

In the event that the application is formally considered by the Planning Committee I would be pleased if this Statement, albeit summarised, is incorporated into any Report.

Should you require any further information then please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

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