Design and Access Statement

NO.77 LONDON ROAD, WATERLOOVILLE, HAMPSHIRE, PO7 7EL

CHANGE OF USE OF CLASS A1 SHOP TO ESTATE AGENTS OFFICE (CLASS A2); ALTERATIONS TO SHOPFRONT AND PROVISION OF PARKING AREA TO THE REAR

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 This statement accompanies and supports a planning application submitted by Pearsons Southern Limited for a change the use of No.77 London Road, Waterlooville from a Class A1 shop to a use within Class A2, financial and professional services. The proposed use would be facilitated by the carrying out of alterations to the existing shopfront and the provision of parking facilities to the rear. The business, an Estate Agents office, would employ in the region of 6 members of staff Monday to Friday, with additional staff at the weekend.

1.2 The existing premises have been vacant and on the market for sale for a period considerably in-excess of 9 months. The marketing agents, Messrs Hughes Ellard advise that the property has been offered at a realistic price but that the only acceptable proposal received to-date has been from Pearsons Southern Limited. A copy of the particulars of the property accompanies this planning application".

1.3 The building falls within the defined Waterlooville Town Centre and occupies a position within an area identified by the Local Planning Authority as a Secondary Frontage. As such, it has been necessary to undertake an assessment of the existing block of Secondary Frontage, within which the application site is located, to demonstrate that a minimum 40% of premises would remain as Class A1 units following a grant of planning permission for the use of the premises for Class A2 purposes.

1.4 This statement describes our Client's proposal and places it in context with relevant local policy. It will be concluded that our Client's proposal should receive support and be granted planning permission.

2.0 Appraising the Context

Assessment of the Site

2.1 The application site comprises a detached part two storey, part single storey building located on the north west side of London Road in the Waterlooville Town Centre. The property currently has an authorised Class A1 retail use with a shop floor and sales display area on the ground floor together with ancillary office and storage accommodation at first floor. Externally the building has white painted smooth rendered elevations beneath a grey slate roof. To the rear of the building is an area that is currently used for car parking. This area is accessed via a private drive from London Road which runs parallel with the buildings south elevation.



View of Site from London Road



View of Site from Rear Parking Area



View from North East of Application Site within London Road Secondary Frontage

2.2 As can be seen from the photograph above the existing premises is located within a row of commercial property within the Waterlooville Town Centre. Existing nearby uses within the stretch of Secondary Frontage either side of the application site consists of a mix of Class A1 and A2 uses as well as a book makers. The existing nearby uses are set out in detail in a table on pages 5 and 6 of this statement.

2.3 Vehicular access to this part of London Road is restricted to buses and service vehicles only.

Assessment of Policies

2.3 With regards to relevant planning policy it is considered that the proposed change of use is compliant with advice offered in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) and PPG13 (Transport). These national planning policy documents advocate the use and maximization of previously developed land in urban areas – especially those recognized as being in areas of good accessibility. PPS4 states at paragraph 4 that its policies "apply to other development which achieves at least one of the following objectives: -

1. provides employment opportunities
2. generates wealth or
3. produces or generates an economic output or product..."

2.4 Furthermore paragraph 7 states that "The main uses to which the town centre policies in this PPS apply are:

...3. Offices..."

2.5 Annex B of PPS4 defines the meaning of Primary and Secondary Frontages as follows:

"PRIMARY FRONTAGE

Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses.

SECONDARY FRONTAGE

Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses."

Development Plan Policy

2.6 The Havant Borough District-Wide Local Plan (HBDWLP) was adopted on the 30 September 2005 but as a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 was only able to be used for three years after its adoption. As that three year period expired on the 30 September 2008, the Saved Policies from the Havant Borough District Wide Local Plan form part of the Havant Borough Local Development Framework (HBLDF).

2.7 Many policies from the old HBDWLP have been saved for continued use and in time these policies will be superseded or replaced by Local Development Framework documents. As such saved policies D1, TC1 and TC7 of the HBDWLP are currently applicable to the consideration of this planning application.

2.8 Saved policy D1 relates to the need to achieve a high quality design. Policy TC1 identifies and places in a hierarchy the Boroughs shopping centres. Waterlooville centre is defined as a "Town Centre". Policy TC1 states the following: -

"TC1 HIERARCHY OF CENTRES

Planning permission will be granted for development of a scale and of a kind which acknowledges the different roles each of the Borough's centres performs in accordance with the following hierarchy.

TOWN CENTRES
Havant, Waterlooville..."

2.9 Saved policy TC7 relates to development within Secondary Frontages. The application site falls within the defined secondary frontage so this policy is applicable. This policy states: -

"TC7 CHANGES OF USE - SECONDARY FRONTAGES

Planning applications for Class A2, A3, A4 and A5 and other service sector uses including leisure and entertainment will be permitted in the secondary shopping frontages shown on the Proposals Map provided:

(i) this would not lead to the concentration of non-retail uses at ground floor level such that this would begin to undermine the retail function of the secondary shopping frontages; and
(ii) the premises will be open to visiting members of the public."

2.10 Supporting text at paragraph 296 of the HBWLP states that "Most non-retail uses will be acceptable in secondary shopping frontages subject to the concentration test." This test is "aimed at maintaining a 40% baseline target of Class A1 retail representation [within secondary frontages]. This will be measured by unit counts and, in certain circumstances, by linear measurement of shopfronts. When planning permission is granted for a non-retail use it may be appropriate to impose a condition requiring a window display to be installed and maintained."

Assessment of Proposal in Relation to Current Planning Policy

2.11 The proposed development involves alterations to the existing shopfront, together with a change of use of the premises from Class A1 to Class A2.

2.12 Policy D1 states "Development will be permitted provided it achieves [in terms of siting, massing, scale, proportion, alignment, rhythm, layout, materials (finishes, details, features) spaces and views] all of the following:

(i) Creates an attractive environment that has its own distinctive identity but which respects and enhances local character...."

2.13 The proposal will result in significant improvements being made to the buildings existing shopfront. The existing aluminium window frames will be replaced by a new powder coated dark green frameand will ensure the retention of the original window pilaster and corbel details. The proposed replacement shopfront will also be constructed so as to be accessible to wheel chair users. It is considered, therefore, that the proposed alterations to the shopfront are compliant with policy saved policy D1.

2.14 The application seeks a change of use of the existing Class A1 premises at 77 London Road to an estate agents office which falls within Class A2 'Financial and professional services.' Current Government advice relating to economic development within town centres states (at para. 10, PPS4) "...new economic growth and development of main town centre uses to be focused in existing centres, with the aim of offering a wide range of services to communities in an attractive and safe environment and remedying deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities." Estate Agents offices are commonly found in areas which are on the periphery of town and local centres and close to both public car parks and local transport services. It is considered that the proposed change of use of this building to Class A2 would be entirely consistent with the guidance offered by PPS4 in particular.

2.15 Saved Policy TC7 relates to development within the Borough's secondary frontages. The policy allows for uses other than retail (i.e. Class A2, A3, A4 and A5 and other service sector uses) along these frontages providing this does not result in a high concentration (over 60%) of non shopping uses.

2.16 Prior to the submission of this application a survey of commercial uses within the block to the north and south of the appeal site was undertaken. The results of this survey are set out in Table 1 below: -

Table 1: Secondary Frontage Assessment

Assessment of Use Class A1 Representation along London Road Secondary Shopping Frontage – Nos 75 – 81 London Road & Units 1-5 Clock House **9th December 2010**		
Address	**Occupier**	**Use Class**
75/75a London Road	Ladbrokes Bookmakers	A2(c)
75b London Road	Selfwire Ltd (Vacant)	A1
77 London Road Application Site	Vacant	A1
79 London Road	The Heating Showroom	A1
79 London Road	Your Move Estate Agents	A2
81/81a	Barclays Bank	A2
81 b/c	A V World	A1
1 Clock House	Nirvana Health and Beauty	A1
1A Clock House	Stardust Leisure	Sui Generis
2-3 Clock House	Nationwide Building Society	A2
5 Clock House	Subway Sandwich Bar	A1
Existing A1	**A1**	**None A1**

Representation		
	54.5% (6 of 11 Units)	45.5 (5 Units)
Resulting A1 Representation	**A1**	**None A1**
	45.5% (5 Units)	54.5% (6 Units)

2.17 Prior to submitting this application we spoke with Ms Lucy Howard from the Council's Planning Policy Team. Ms Howard advised that Waterlooville Town Centre was a particularly "healthy" centre having a Class A1 representation within its Primary and Secondary Frontage areas of approximately 75% and 55% respectively (based on a survey undertaken in July 2010).

2.18 The proposed development would also result in the retention of a shop window display onto the London Road. Given the above it is considered that the proposed change of use of the property to Class A2 is compliant with policy TC7 of the HDWLP.

Involving the Community

2.19 Prior to submitting this planning application the principle of changing the use of these premises from Class A1 to A2 was discussed with two Planning Officers (Stephen Cantwell and Lucy Howard). Both Officers advised that the proposed development would need to satisfy the tests in relation to HBDWLP saved policy TC7.

2.20 Given that the proposal: - Has been discussed with Council Officers; that it satisfies the tests of policies D1 and TC7, and; that the premises are located within the recognised Town Centre area for Waterlooville; it has not been considered necessary to consult with the local community. However, when submitted, the planning application will be the subject of a neighbour notification and publicity exercise which will be undertaken by the Local Planning Authority. Neighbours and members of the local community will be given 21 days in which to comment on the proposed development.

3.0 Identifying the Design Principles and Solutions

3.1 It is considered important that the proposed replacement shop front and change of use to a Class A2 office is of a high quality design that is carried out in a manner that was accessible to all.

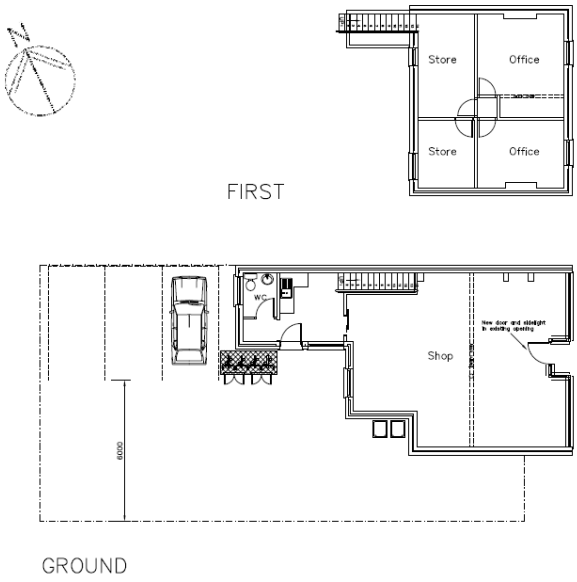
Amount

3.2 It is proposed to change the use of the ground and first floors to a use within Class A2 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order. The ground floor will accommodate the shop floor sales area, whilst the first floor will comprise offices and storage areas. Additionally, three on site car parking spaces would be provided for staff together with secure cycle parking.

3.3 It is estimated that the proposed development would provide employment for 6 or more members of staff.

Layout

3.4 The internal layout of the building would remain unchanged. The ground floor area would comprise the sales area with the first floor accommodating offices and storage. The rear area would be laid out to provide three car parking spaces together with secure cycle storage and refuse/recyclable storage facilities.



Proposed Layout (Not to Scale)

Scale

3.5 Not Applicable.

Landscaping

3.6 Not Applicable.

Appearance

3.7 The existing shop front would be replaced as shown on the submitted drawings and on the extract copied over leaf (not to scale). The proposed development would ensure the retention of the important original features of the shop front which would be of a scale and design that would complement and improve the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding Secondary Frontage.



Existing Shopfront



Proposed Shopfront

4.0 Identifying the Access Principles and Solutions

Public Access

4.1 As has been stated the site is located within Waterlooville Town Centre and, as such, is accessible to a large proportion of the town's residents. The town centre is served regularly by numerous bus services which are set out in Table 2 below. The proposed development would make provision for onsite parking together with secure cycle parking facilities. The site is also located close to several public car parks. Consequently, it is not anticipated that customers or staff would encounter access difficulties.

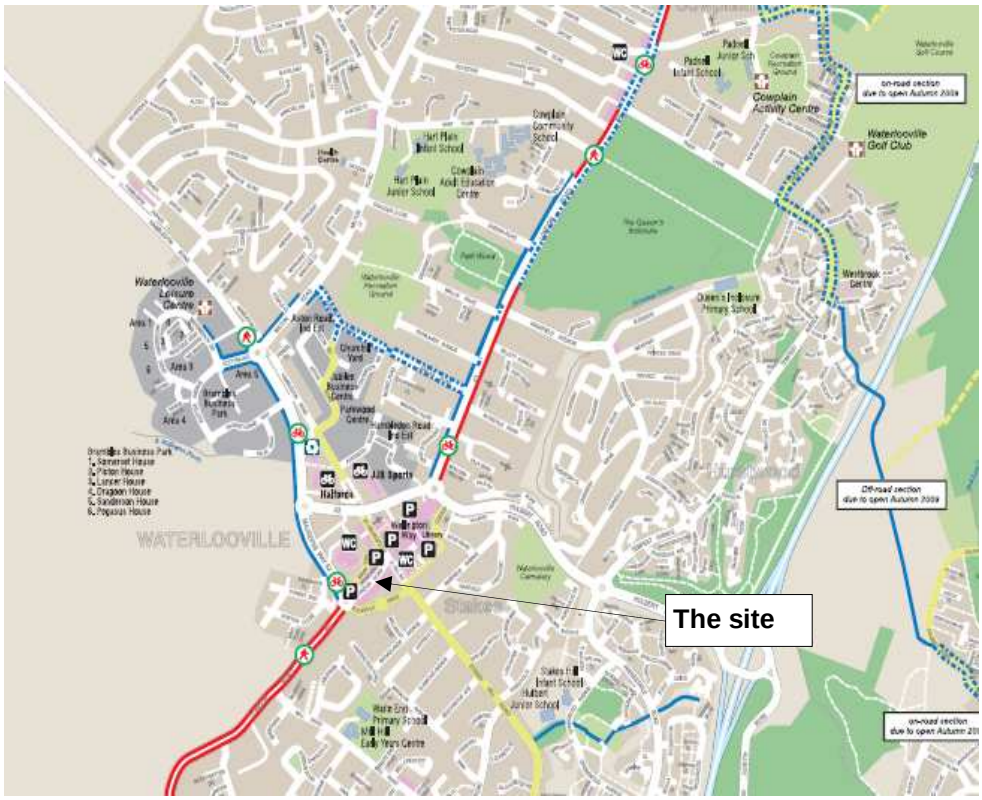
Table 2: Bus services operating to or via Waterlooville centre

Service	Operator	Destinations served	Weekday daytime frequency
37	Stagecoach	Havant - Cowplain - Horndean - Clanfield - Petersfield - Liss	Hourly
39	Stagecoach	Havant - Wecock Farm	15 mins.
40	First	Wecock Farm-Crookhorn-Portsmouth	15 mins.
X40	First	Horndean-Wecock Farm-Crookhorn-Portsmouth	Peak times only
41 (ZIP)	First	Clanfield-Horndean-Cowplain-Widley-Portsmouth	15 mins.
X41	First	Clanfield-Horndean-Cowplain-Widley-Portsmouth	Peak times only
X42	First	Portsmouth-Crookhorn-Southdowns College	30 mins.
45	First	Hambledon-Denmead-	Hourly

		Widley-Portsmouth	
45A	First	Denmead-Widley-Portsmouth	Hourly
300	Emsworth and District		1 per day
30	National Express	Portsmouth-Havant-Petersfield-Hindhead-Guildford-London	9 per day
RL (Rail Link)	Stagecoach	Petersfield	Hourly

(Excludes services operating on schooldays only)

4.2 As part of the wider sustainability agenda the local councils have invested in cycling infrastructure, particularly along the route of the A3 London Road. The site is located close to dedicated cycle lanes as can be seen from the cycling map[1] (below) produced for Havant Borough Council. The site can be seen to be accessible by cycle for staff and customers. The site is also close to numerous public car parks.



Inclusive Access

4.3 The shopfront alterations would be undertaken in order to ensure access is possible for wheel chair users. The proposed development would, therefore, be compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations.

[1]http://www.havant.gov.uk/PDF/Havant_Back_FINAL%20low.pdf

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 In conclusion it is considered that the proposed alterations to the shop front and change of use of the premises to Class A2, financial and professional services, would be in compliance with both National planning policy guidance and the saved policies of the HBDWLP.

5.2 It is respectfully requested, therefore, that Officers and Members of the Borough Council look favourably on this proposal and grant planning permission.