BJC

PLANNING STATEMENT

CHANGE OF USE OF FROM CLASS A1 TO A2

At 6 High Street, Emsworth

on behalf of

MESSRS BORLAND AND BOUND

Bryan Jezeph Consultancy Ltd
The Gallery
3 South Street
Titchfield
Hampshire
PO14 4DL

October 2010

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Location and Site Description

3.0 Planning History

4.0 Planning Policy Framework

5.0 The Case for Permitting the Change of Use

6.0 Why the Move is Necessary for Borland and Bound

7.0 Marketing of the Premises

Appendices

Plan showing Uses in the Primary frontage at Emsworth High Street

Details of Marketing of Premises

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

1.1 This statement accompanies an application which seeks the change of use of N° 6 High Street, Emsworth from a shop to a lettings agency (Class A1 to Class A2) The application is submitted on behalf of the applicants Messrs Borland and Bound.

1.2 The lettings agency business currently operates at 5 High Street and it is proposed to relocate the business across the road to the proposed new premises. This will provide much needed additional space together with a frontage presence which is necessary for visiting members of the public.

1.3 This statement addresses the relevant government guidance and planning policy and explains the intended use of the premises.



No 6 High Street Emsworth

2.0 LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site fronts the eastern side of the High Street in Emsworth.

2.2 Emsworth is a small market town which provides a district shopping and service centre function. The centre of Emsworth has a role as a small shopping centre. It has a pleasant village atmosphere.

2.3 The application site is currently vacant. It was formerly in use as a greengrocer's shop. There is another greengrocer's shop across the road at N° 9 High Street.

2.4 The premises comprise a two storey rectangular shaped terraced building. The application for the proposed change of use relates only to the ground floor of the premises.

2.5 The existing shop frontage will remain unchanged. The elevation takes the form of two Georgian styled fixed windows on either side of a centrally placed entrance with double doors.

2.6 The immediate neighbours to the premises are the hairdressers at No 4 and the Crown Hotel at No 8.

2.7 The ground floor of the premises has a rear pedestrian access. This comprises a narrow passage shared with the users of the first floor of the premises for whom it is their sole access. The rear passage exits close to the car parking area for the Crown Hotel.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The premises are currently vacant. However, they were previously in use by a greengrocer's as an A1 use. The premises have now been vacant for two months.

3.2 There is no relevant planning history on the premises at N°6 High Street

4.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 The planning policy relevant to the proposed development comprises national policy in the form of Planning Policy Statements, policies from the adopted Havant Borough Local Plan Review which have been "saved", and emerging policy from the Core strategy of the Local Development Framework.

Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4):

4.2 The principal guidance is established in PPS 4 which was adopted in December 2009 and which addresses planning for sustainable economic growth. The most relevant element is Policy EC4.1 which states that local authorities should *inter alia*:-

> **'support a diverse range of uses....ensuring that these are distributed throughout the centre'**

Havant Borough Local Plan Review 2005

4.3 The Havant Borough Local Plan Review was adopted by Havant Borough Council as the statutory Local Plan for the Borough in September 2005. After 30th September 2008 only the "saved" policies of the Local Plan remain relevant.

4.4 Of the saved policies the most relevant policies applicable to this planning application are:

UA1 Concentration of Development within the Urban Areas
EMP7 Conversion and Change of Use
TC1 Hierarchy of Centres
TC6 Changes of Use – Primary Frontages

Policy UA1

4.5 Policy UA1 seeks to concentrate development in urban areas, particularly in centres such as Emsworth. The proposed development seeks to bring a vacant unit back in to use.

Policy EMP7

4.6 Policy EMP7 states that the change of use of land is acceptable providing it does not result in a loss of employment.

4.7 The proposed relocation of the existing lettings agency from N°5 High Street to the application premises will provide additional space which may result in the employment of more staff. Furthermore, the retention of the existing premises at N°5 High Street may enable additional staff for administrative purposes to be employed in these premises.

Policy TC1

4.8 This Policy identifies Emsworth as a "District Centre".

Policy TC6

4.9 The Proposals Map of the Local Plan shows that N°6 High Street is within a primary shopping frontage.

4.10 Policy TC6 is concerned to protect the retail function of premises at ground floor level in primary shopping frontages and to retain premises that are open to visiting members of the public. The policy seeks to protect the vitality of the shopping frontage by avoiding a concentration of non retails frontages.

4.11 The policy also seeks to keep premises open to visiting members of the public.

4.12 The supporting subtext to the policy explains that the Council seeks to protect the retail function of the centre by maintaining a base line target of 60% of Class A1 retail representation in a primary frontage.

Emerging Core Strategy

4.13 The Havant Borough Core Strategy has now been the subject of an Examination in Public by Hearing and the Report of the Inspector is awaited. The policies of the Core Strategy have increasing weight in the consideration of planning applications.

4.14 The relevant policy in respect of the proposed change of use is Policy CS4 Town, District and Local Centres. The relevant extracts from this policy are

....Planning permission will be granted for appropriate town centre development proposals that

1 Promote and enhance the following hierarchy of identified centres:
Town centres- Havant and Waterloovile
District Centres - Cowplain, Emsworth, Leigh Park and Mengham/Gable Head...

4 Support small and independent businesses

5 Encourage high quality, mixed use development in designated centres that retain active ground floor frontages

4.15 Policy DM2 which refers to the change of use of "local" shops in the context of community facilities is not considered to be relevant in the context of Emsworth District Centre.

5.0 THE CASE FOR PERMITTING THE CHANGE OF USE

5.1 Policy TC6 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the vitality and viability of Emsworth District Centre. It is not considered that the proposed change of use of the premises at N°6 High Street would have any significant impact upon the vitality or viability Emsworth.

5.2 The subtext of the policy states that "In terms of the concentration test the policy is aimed at maintaining a 60% baseline target of Class A1 retail representation". It is understood from a Council officer that this 60% may be applied to the whole frontage or to specific sections of the frontage in the interests of maintaining a balance of uses on the road frontage.

5.3 The most recent survey of Emsworth District Centre was carried out in 2006. At that time it was recorded that there were 43 units classed as A1 in the primary frontage. These units comprised 60% of the number of units in the primary frontage. It was noted that this was a decline from 2003 when the figure was 64%.

5.4 Analysis by Bryan Jezeph Consultancy of the primary frontage in Emsworth District Centre has revealed some difficulty in relating to the figures quoted above from the survey undertaken in 2006. A count of the number of units

within the whole of the primary frontage does not accord with statistics in the report.

5.5 Appendix 1 shows a plan of the primary frontages taken from the adopted Local Plan to which use classes have been applied from a survey undertaken in October 2010.

5.6 It is noted in the subtext to the policy that the 60% baseline target would normally be applied in terms of unit numbers, but it can be applied by linear measurement of shop fronts. If this approach is applied to the Emsworth primary frontage then this will produce significantly different results due to the substantial frontage of some banks and hotels within the primary frontage.

5.7 If the 60% threshold is applied to only a short section of the primary frontage between Kings Terrace and Spring Gardens, as suggested by a planning officer, then this baseline cannot be met either on the basis of a unit count or on the basis of linear measurement. The substantial premises of the hotel and the bank, both long established buildings, distort the statistics.

5.8 In these circumstances it is more appropriate to look more widely at the uses at this end of the Emsworth High Street where it is evident from the survey in Appendix 1 that A1 uses are very well represented.

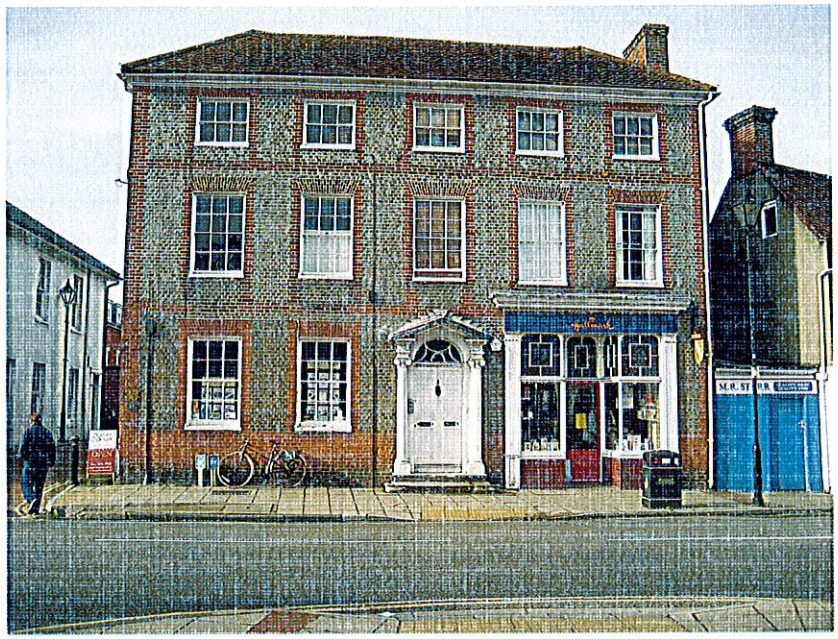
5.9 The second criterion of Policy TC6 which relates to the premises being open to the members of the public is also met by the proposed change of use. As a lettings agency the premises will be open for people to walk in to make enquiries. Indeed it is to facilitate the easier access of members of the public to the lettings agency that the new premises are sought.

5.10 The supportive sub text of the policy also indicates that there may be a requirement for the premises to maintain a window display. The proposed users wish to make use of the windows to display properties for rental. The shop window will be an important part of the trading of this company.

6.0 WHY IS THE MOVE NECESSARY FOR BORLAND AND BOUND

6.1 Currently the lettings agency is accommodated across the road from the application premises in part of a large Georgian style building at N°5 High

Street. The agency occupies an office with windows which look out onto High Street. They use these windows to advertise their business. However there are two principal problems with the current premises.



Existing premises at N° 5 High Street Emsworth
(Ground floor to the left of the front door)

6.2 Firstly the premises are too small to comfortably accommodate staff and customers. There are 5 employees in the office and when they are joined by customers there is limited space to comfortably accommodate their clients.

6.3 Secondly the entrance to the premises is difficult to find. It is via a door on the side street known as School Lane. Although the entrance is only a few metres down this side road it is a considerable deterrent to customers to have to search for the entrance. On entering the building they then pass through a hallway before entering the main office. It is likely therefore the business loses custom because people are uncertain and uncomfortable about where to enter the agency.

6.4 This business use needs the public to be able to freely enter the premises without the uncertainty of not finding the correct entrance. The proposed new premises provide an obvious and immediate access for customers.

6.5 The existing front door at the front of the building at N°5 is used exclusively to service the residential accommodation on the upper floors and is not available to the tenants of N° 5 High Street.

7.0 MARKETING OF THE PREMISES

7.1 There is no adopted policy of the Borough Council requiring a specific marketing programme before the change of use of premises within a primary shopping frontage is sought. Notwithstanding this absence of policy it is understood that the Council has been supported on appeal with regard to requiring some marketing exercise. The Council therefore wishes to be informed of any marketing which has taken place.

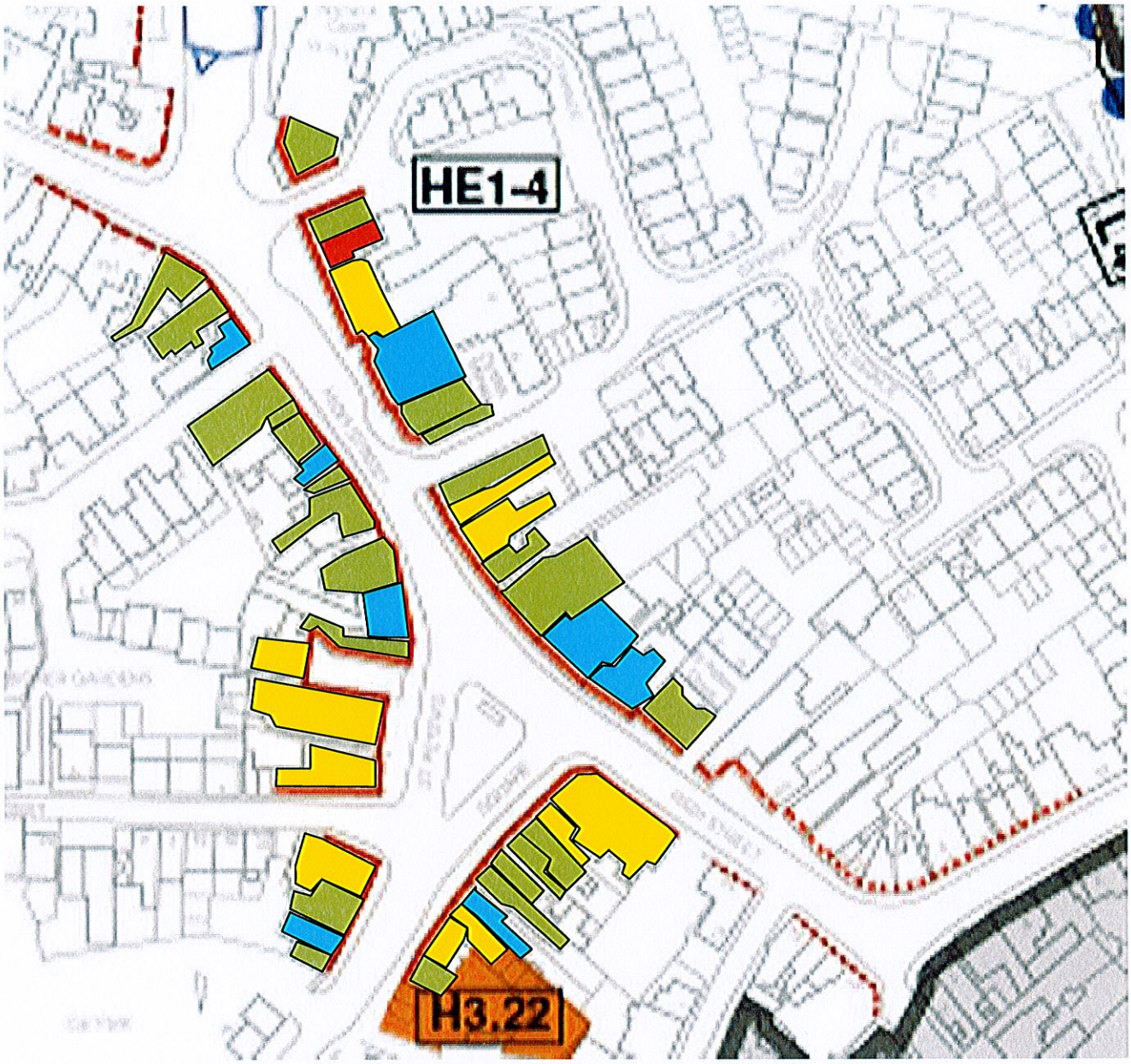
7.2 The premises at N° 6 High Street have been on the market since 17th August 2010. There has been some interest in the property but the expressions of interest have not progressed due to a variety of reasons, such as size of premises, viability given rental and rateable values.

7.3 The owner has provided a summary of the enquiries received in response to the marketing exercise which is provided as Appendix 2.

7.4 The owner of the property at 6 High Street has also indicated that she is keen to secure a tenant for the premises as soon as possible. In these difficult economic times the owner is anxious to avoid loss of rent. Furthermore a vacant unit, particularly at the present time, is damaging to the overall vitality of the district centre.

Appendix 1

Plan showing Uses in the Primary frontage at Emsworth High Street



Extract from Proposals Map showing the Primary Frontages in Emsworth District Centre

Survey undertaken October 2010

- Class A1
- Class A2
- Other Use Classes
- Application Site
- Primary Frontage

Appendix 2

Details of Marketing of Premises

Details of Marketing of N° 6 High Street

As owner of the above property I confirm that the above property became vacant on 17th August 2010. At that time the premises were advertised for rental.

The following potential tenants have expressed interest in the ground floor unit at N°5 High Street.

Hairdressers
A Tattoo Artist
A Beautician
A Garden Furniture retailer
An Estate Agent
A Cafe
An Aroma therapist

However these expressions of interest have for a variety of reasons not progressed. In some instances the premises have proved unsuitable and in other cases appropriate rental terms were not agreed.

The proposed tenancy by Borland and Bound meets my requirements and I have indicated my willingness to accept the company as tenants. I am most anxious in these difficult financial times to avoid a long void on this unit.

Signed.....

F Manley

Date.....22/10/10.....



BJC

Development Planning, and Property Consultants

Bryan Jezeph Consultancy
The Gallery 3 South Street
Titchfield Hampshire PO14 4DL
Tel: 01329 842668
Fax: 01329 844726
Email: mail@jezeph.co.uk

Location Plan
6 High Street Emsworth

Scale: 1:500
Plan no.: H/102/11.10.10 LP
OS Lic No 100017622

Plans are for planning purposes only and subject to copyright.

RTPI RICS

Scale bar 1:500