

Design & Access Statement

April 2018

Proposed Change of Use Application – Mix use of A3
and A5 and installation of extraction flue vent

Unit 3, The
Arcade, High
Street,
Bogner Regis
PO21 1LH

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is provided to accompany the planning application for a change of use consent for Unit 3, The Arcade, High Street, Bognor Regis PO21 1LH. The document is intended to:

- Meet the local and national validation requirements for planning applications;
- Provide the information necessary to assist the planning officer in determining the application;
- Demonstrate how issues relating to the development have been dealt with;
- Summarise any design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
- Explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting; and
- Demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

In accordance with national guidance; the level of detail in the Design and Access Statement is proportionate to the complexity of the application.

2. Site description and planning history

The site is a ground floor commercial unit.

The area is a busy mixed use area forming a shopping arcade / precinct with a wide variety of commercial (typical town or local centre A1-A3 uses).

The unit has been vacant for almost 2 years. It is been marketed by Flude Commercial. I have enclosed copy of the marketing evidence from Flude Commercial.

The unit has no planning history. Its last use class is A1 retail unit selling shoes.

2. The proposal

The development proposal is a change of use at ground floor level to an mix use of A3 and A5 restaurant and installation of an internal extraction system and small external flue vent to the rear elevation which will not be visible at the rear.

3. Relevant planning policy

The proposal has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and the local Core Strategy and found to be in accordance.

There is also no over-concentration of restaurants or takeaways.

In modern planning parlance, it is now widely recognised that the contemporary urban centre needs to contain a mix of uses rather than solely retail in order to be sustainable and vital and attract a diverse range of people at different times of the day. The proposed use is a main town centre use as defined in the NPPF and is considered to complement the retail and

mixed use function of the area. The restaurant will clearly directly serve customers and attract visitors and activity, nay vibrancy to the area. An active shop front will be retained and will provide direct interaction with the street.

The applicants have stated that the unit has been vacant for around two years and remains so. It currently is shuttered / boarded up with temporary MDF in place of signage. It therefore clearly makes a very negative impact on the visual amenity of the area and on the vibrancy and vitality and viability of the area. The proposed change of use would facilitate investment in the unit and introduce an active use which would make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area and on the vibrancy and vitality and viability. It would also create jobs.

It is clear that the market has dictated that there is no demand for the unit to be A1 retail and instead the proposed change of use to A3/A5 should be allowed in order to facilitate economic development and boost town centre vitality and vibrancy in accordance with the NPPF.

Thereby turning to the NPPF; the Framework is clear that planning decisions must help to achieve economic growth, with local planning authorities required to respond positively and proactively to proposals which meet the development needs of business.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF confirms that planning applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless *significant* detrimental impacts would result; and, as summarised below, the application fully satisfies this:

- Economic role – the proposal will facilitate economic development and in a long vacant unit and provide employment;
- Social role – the proposal will provide a eating facility to local residents and visitors alike in a very accessible location, complementing the current range of commercial uses available locally;
- Environmental role – ample professional extraction and ventilation arrangements are proposed (see section 5) which demonstrates the proposal has taken its environmental impact seriously.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with local policy and moreover wholly in accordance with the NPPF.

4. Design and how the proposal relates to its context

The design implications arising from the proposal are very limited.

In terms of the physical alterations to the building, the proposal has been designed to have no impact on the main public realm of the arcade. No alterations to the front elevation are proposed.

Some new ventilation and extraction equipment is necessary to protect amenity (as set out in section 5). This is almost wholly internal. A small extraction flue vent has been sited to the rear of the building to minimise impact. Moreover, it is limited to a very small extraction vent which sits more or less flush with the plane of the building. There is no 'traditional' extraction

flue / chimney. The extraction vent will therefore have a minimal impact on the character and appearance of the building or area.

Moreover, the context of the area and the rear of the building is not a sensitive one. The rear of the buildings to the service-type roads which serve the rear of the arcade are characterised by a functional appearance, befitting the commercial nature of the area. Extraction and commercial plant are commonplace in the vicinity as are blank façades and bleak urban aspects and fencing.

The proposed extraction flue would not be out of character with the appearance of the parent building nor the character of the area with numerous existing extracting plant visible locally and the functional appearance of the rear of adjoining units.

To reiterate, it is now widely recognised that the contemporary local centre needs to contain a mix of uses rather than solely retail in order to be sustainable and vital and attract a diverse range of people at different times of the day and night. There is a mix of surrounding uses which include shops, services and A1-A3 uses generally. The proposed use is a 'main town centre use' as defined in the NPPF and is a use congruous with national and local policy to maintain and enhance town centre vitality and viability.

The proposed use is considered to be an appropriate response to this context. The proposed mix use of A3/A5 restaurant use is therefore appropriate to its location and context.

5. Amenity

The proposal has been carefully designed so as to mitigate any potential impact on residential amenity arising from odour.

Amenity from potential cooking odours and fumes will be protected by purpose built professional equipment designed for use for the filtration and extraction of fumes from commercial kitchens. Full details of this ESP equipment are provided with the application. The submitted plans and details of the extract/ventilation system cover the external appearance and the technical specification of the proposed equipment. It is considered that the use of this equipment can be controlled by planning condition if deemed necessary by the planning officer.

In terms of potential noise from customers; a number of noise generating uses exist locally in close proximity to residential units as is common in the modern urban centre where convenience at all hours is expected.

The proposed mix use will be professional and well managed and will be a responsible neighbour. The proposed change of use would therefore not introduce a conflict of uses incongruous to that which already exists in the commercial area.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with the local development plan amenity policy and the NPPF. The proposed change of use,

individually and cumulatively, will not result in 'significant adverse impacts' on amenity.

6. Access

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable transport and states that development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts are severe.

There will be no change to the current pedestrian access to the building which are currently accessible and have served its current commercial uses without issue. Any visitors to the premises on foot will continue to access the building from the current safe access door onto the arcade frontage.

Parking and car access arrangements will remain unchanged. There is adequate parking nearby which already serves the surrounding commercial centre and public transport links. Servicing will be to the rear. No intensification of traffic / parking from existing use will therefore result from the proposal from its current commercial use.

The unit is sited in a very suitable sustainable location. It is accessible to a large number of people by public transport. Enabling people to access work and facilities via a variety of sustainable travel modes is in accordance with section 4 of the NPPF. It is therefore considered that that there will be no negative access or highways impacts as a result of the development.

7. Consultation

This proposal is not a complex one. As set out above, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy and to have no material negative impacts. It has therefore not been considered necessary to undertake any additional consultation with the wider community or statutory consultees other than those which will be statutorily made under this planning application.

8. Conclusion

This statement demonstrates that the proposal is in principle in accordance with the development plan and represents sustainable economic development under the NPPF.

The proposed change of use:

- **Would have no significant adverse material impacts; and**
- **Would enable sustainable economic development – an underpinning principle of the NPPF.**

It is therefore considered that the proposal should be 'determined under the presumption in favour of sustainable development' and 'approved without delay' as is the NPPF requirement.
