

Support statement for Planning Application No, PP 05566617

Reference 40 Links Avenue, Felpham. PO22 7BX

Purpose of application – Change of use from Dwelling house to Mixed Use Dwelling.

Please refer to drawing file “Change of Use – layout” attached to the application. The shaded area designates the ground floor portion of our house that has a dual use.

As you will see from this re-application we have amended our hours to the recommended times to welcome visitors. This has been done to ensure there are no undue effects on any neighbouring houses and to help alleviate any specific parking problems. It should also be noted that our application to extend a welcome to our house to those people who may need to visit us in times of need, would be less onerous than if the application was for a private nursery, playgroup or small school, all of which operate in residential areas. Most childminders for example start around 7am and finish about 6pm in the evening, causing much more disruption to local houses.

To assuage local residents concerns about Olive Tree Cottage, and what we offer those families less fortune, and how this might impact on their way of life, we have always tried very hard to work with them. We have on four occasions since we opened sent leaflets round to each house, over 130 houses, asking them to visit us, with a free voucher, and talk to us about any concerns. We have kept them up to date with what we are offering and this is something we will continue to do.

Background

To facilitate the requirements of two of our four sons who have special needs, planning approval was requested (Planning approval FP/75/15/HH) and subsequently approved for the modification of our house at 40 Links Avenue, Felpham. The approved changes were to build a single story extension to the south elevation of the property. In addition to the external structural changes a number of internal layout changes were made.

1. Removal of internal doors and frames within the ground floor to facilitate the navigation of the property with a wheelchair.
2. Installation of a ground floor toilet.
3. Relocation of the kitchen into the new extension.
4. Removal of the walls between the extension and original house to create an open free movement internal space.
5. Provision of glass bi-fold doors on the front elevation of the extension leading to the garden.
6. Installing a deck outside of the extension to allow wheelchair access to the house and garden.
7. Converting a previously installed wooden children’s playhouse into a play and sensory area for children.
8. Installing a cabin/shed to house our garden tools. etc. plus provide accommodation for the families pets (rabbits and Guinea pigs).

On completion of the extension and the above changes we decided to share the home environment we had created for our own family with other families with special needs children and the local community in general. We therefore opened our home as a home from home environment, a place to relax and enjoy some light refreshments.

Prior to our initial opening in April we sought advice from the planning department about the need for planning approval for our intended use of our home. At that time the advice was that we could begin the activity and see how things develop as our plans were for such an unusual venture that it was difficult to know how things would develop.

In May we had a visit from a member of the ADC planning department. We were not present at the property at the time of her visit, but she subsequently sent us a number of questions regarding the nature of the activities and works on site. Our answers to the questions which reflected how the situation was at the time of responding were returned on the 24th May. (See planning questions document included within the attached documents for this planning application) As a result of the information supplied to answer the questions raised, the response from the planning department was that the activities and some of the external works now required planning approval.

To comply with that request this planning request has been submitted. To ensure compliance with hygiene standards for the offering of tea and cakes on the premises we originally enquired before opening as to what we should do. We spoke with Nick Howard, senior environmental officer, and we made sure we had everything in place on opening. We then further asked for a visit by the Food standards agency. Following their visit we were awarded a rating of 4 out of 5 and given advice as to further improvements. Those changes have now been made too and been updated by Nick Howard.

Current Situation

Our open house is open Wednesday – Saturday 10am- 4pm.

It is a place where families can meet in a small home from home, safe, non-judgemental environment. We have light refreshments. *The items offered do not include any fried or hob cooked food.* The hot food is limited to pizza and savoury pastries and Ciabattas. In addition, salads and sandwiches are available together with cakes and hot and cold drinks.

The visitor numbers ranging from 0-15 currently per whole day and do not, in our opinion, create a significant impact of the local area beyond what is normal activity for the area. We were not aware of any reports of noise disturbance until our planning notice went up sometime later. In fact our visitors with special needs are generally quieter than children without special needs.

We still have days where only 1 or 2 people visit such as a parent and child. Via our Facebook page and on posters in our home and verbally we instruct visitors to use the local free car parks. These factors together mean that there is on average 2 or 3 additional cars parking for a limited duration in the roads local to our property each day. Some people walk or come to us or come via other means. The transport report completed for the previous application detailed we are not causing extra parking issues as we are open outside of the peak parking demands for this area, when the road is generally quieter due to most people being at work.

We do have some volunteers that help us to run. We have currently two students from Felpham College who come for 2 hours each per week. We will not ever have any paid staff.

We currently run 3 classes a week such as a community sewing class, a craft class and a children's art session. These are small groups maximum 10 people and run during the daytime for two hours only. We hold a parent/carer support group, again maximum 10 people once a month.

We are happy to restrict our numbers to a maximum of 20 at any one time as suggested by the environmental report for the previous application.