

Clarification statement in support of planning application FP/245/16/PL

It appears that there are some significant misconceptions about the dividing line between this application and our family life that takes place in our home.

This statement seeks to clarify those activities that are material to the planning application, and those that are directly associated with our normal family life.

The ones that refer to our family life should therefore not be considered as material with respect to the planning application for the change of use. It is extremely important for people to divide these two.

We as a family are active in supporting our local community in many ways but especially for those who like ourselves have the challenge of having children with special needs.

What is material to the change of use:-

1. To allow the sale of light refreshments to help fund the costs and materials used.
2. The opening times for item 1.
3. The range of refreshments associated with item 1.
4. The potential impact on the local area directly associated with the above.

These in summary are:-

- a. **Additional traffic and on street parking.** – Confirmed not to be an issue during our opening hours by the highways department report.
- b. **Noise** – The noise levels outside of the property boundaries are no greater than is normal for our own large family. This issue is therefore not significant and cannot be material to the application.
- c. **Smell** – The application restricts the range of items offered to prevent any issues in line with the Environmental department suggestions.
- d. **Number of people on site** – The application restricts the numbers to that suggested by the environmental Department.

Therefore, we feel that the only issue that significantly relates to the “change of use” application, (which is in title only), is allowing the sale of light refreshments.

What is not material to the change of use:-

These are legitimate and normal activities for us as a family that have occurred prior to the application, continue to occur in parallel with our open house activities and will certainly continue in the future:-

- a. The occasional purchase of new and used items such as sofas and furniture.
- b. The selling of our used furniture made surplus when new/used furniture is purchased.
- c. Supporting the community by getting involved in the redistribution/recycling of unwanted items of clothes, toys etc. This is for the people we know through our Facebook page and by working with many other local charities.
- d. The sale of items donated by our visitors that can't be redistributed promptly. This will be either via the internet or visitors to our home, the proceeds of which are

used to fund community support. This is no different to anyone else selling things on ebay or facebook.

- e. The hosting of charity based events in our home e.g. the summer lights event last year in support of MacMillan cancer (Over £300 raised for the charity), thousands of people did this all over the country.
- f. Making use of our home to host monthly support group meetings that are relevant to our own family situation i.e. special needs children. This is no different to other people running book clubs or bible meetings from their home.
- g. Collection, and delivery of donated food items to make up Xmas hampers for those in need in the local community. Lots of people do this at Christmas.

The above things can be done by anyone, just because we do it as part of our open house and use facebook as a medium, does not make them commercial or above the activities of a normal family home.

- h. Delivery of our family food, such as Sainsburys, and various goods, by courier is also normal family life. Being carers ourselves we order lots from the internet as getting to the shops isn't easy. This will not change.
- i. We have four lively small boys who play in the garden, which is to the front of the property, they are audible outside the boundary line of the property. This will not change.
- j. The delivery of wood for our wood burner stove, this will not change.
- k. Our two boys with special needs are transported to and from school via a mini bus provided by West Sussex school transport. This will not change.
- l. Workmen who have assisted in the ongoing refurbishment of our family home (The scope of the works is as per a fully approved planning application). This is again normal family behaviour and will not change.
- m. The parking of our family vehicle outside our home, it is big yes! It is a 9 seater to accommodate our family, push chair, and is wheelchair friendly. It's our family car. It is not an obstruction as per the definition within the highway regulations. This will not change.
- n. The keeping and enjoyment of our family pets, (dog, cats, rabbits, guinea pig and ducks). The care and companionship of these animals are a key part of our children's development and wellbeing, particularly our boys with special needs. Our little dog has been trained by us as a therapy dog for their benefit, and assists in exercises and emotional support. This will not change.
- o. The carers that have been provided by West Sussex county Council for our children. They support us on several days a week, coming and going as required, day or night. This will not change.
- p. Friends that regularly visit us. As any other normal family home, this will not change. We have friends for breakfast and dinner, on most days of the week.

In summary, we do lots of things on top of our Open House. This should not be confused with what we need approval for.

The above we hope may help to explain, that we are not doing additional activities or opening longer than our current hours. We simply live in our house. They are our family activities that occurred without issue or complaint from our local residents for several years before the change of use application.

Currently, we are aware these activities are commonly and wrongly being referred to as additional activities and being used for justification for objecting to our application.

If the application is refused and the resulting appeal is not upheld, we will continue to support the local community and families with special needs children - charging for refreshments, is the only thing that may change.

Robert and Samantha Staniforth