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From: Jane Gibbs [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 October 2026 15:56
To: Hebe Smith <Hebe.Smith@arun.gov.uk>; Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Application R/138/26/CLE – 55–57 Sea Lane, Rustington

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Dear Hebe,

I am writing regarding planning application R/138/26/CLE – Certificate of Lawful Existing Use for the ground floor of 55–57 Sea Lane, Rustington.

Having reviewed the information submitted in support of the application, I would like to raise some questions about the evidence relied upon to establish continuous use of the specific premises from 6 April 2006.

The application states that Arun Office Services Ltd (AOS) took a lease of the premises on 6 April 2006 and remained in continuous occupation until August 2025. The 6 April 2006 date is clearly significant to the application, as it is relied upon to establish that the required ten-year period had elapsed by April 2016.

However, the actual lease dated 6 April 2006 does not appear to be included in the documentation available with the application. Instead, the application relies on statements from the former

freeholder and former leaseholder, together with subsequent documentary evidence.

I would therefore be grateful if the Council could clarify whether the actual 6 April 2006 lease has been provided and, if so, whether it specifically identifies the premises as 55–57 Sea Lane.

There is also a potentially relevant point concerning AOS's address history. Companies House records show the company's registered office at 59 Sea Lane in March 2013, followed by a change to 55–57 Sea Lane in March 2014. I appreciate that a registered office does not necessarily indicate the premises from which a business physically operated, so I am not suggesting that this information alone disproves the claimed occupation. However, I believe it is relevant and should be reconciled with the assertion that AOS had continuously occupied 55–57 since April 2006.

The application's own Street View evidence also appears to require clarification. The application describes the 2009 and 2012 imagery as showing AOS signage across 55–57 and 59–61 Sea Lane, whereas from 2015 onwards it identifies AOS signage specifically at 55–57.

The Business Rates evidence submitted with the application records AOS as liable for the premises from 27 February 2013 to 20 August 2025. This provides useful evidence from February 2013 onwards, but does not independently establish AOS's occupation of 55–57 during the earlier period from April 2006 to February 2013.

I would therefore be grateful if, when assessing the application, the Council could establish:

- what exact premises were covered by the 6 April 2006 lease;
- whether the actual lease has been provided and considered;
- what independent evidence establishes AOS's physical occupation of 55–57 between April 2006 and February 2013;
- how the Companies House address history is reconciled with the claimed continuous occupation of 55–57; and
- whether the 2009 and 2012 Street View evidence demonstrates occupation of 55–57 specifically, rather than a wider presence across the adjoining premises.

Effect of the proposed Lawful Development Certificate

I would also be grateful for clarification of what the proposed Certificate of Lawful Existing Use would actually establish if the application were approved, particularly in the context of the planning history of these premises.

As I understand it, the previous planning permission R/321/88 permitted the change of use from retail to professional offices but included a condition restricting the premises to an accountancy practice and no other purpose within the relevant use class. The current application appears to seek recognition that the subsequent professional/business office use by AOS, including property management, administration and secretarial services, has become lawful through the passage of time.

Could the Council therefore clarify:

- precisely what use would be certified if R/138/26/CLE were approved;
- whether the certificate would establish that the current or most recent use of the premises as professional/business offices is lawful, or whether it would relate only to the historic use relied upon in the application;

- what effect, if any, the certificate would have on the existing planning permission and its restriction to an accountancy practice; and
- how the certificate would interact with the subsequent planning history of the premises, including R/84/26/PL, which concerns works and a proposed commercial use of the ground-floor premises.

In particular, I would appreciate clarification as to whether approval of this LDC would simply establish the lawful planning use that existed during the historic period relied upon by the applicant, or whether it could have implications for the range of uses that could subsequently be carried out at the premises without further planning permission.

I believe these points are particularly important because the claimed occupation from 6 April 2006 is fundamental to the applicant's assertion that the required period of continuous use had been established by April 2016, while the precise scope and effect of any certificate should also be clear in the context of the premises' wider planning history.

I would be grateful if these points could be considered before the application is determined, and I would appreciate confirmation of the Council's response to the questions above.

Kind regards,

Jane Gibbs

Sent from my iPhone