

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Application for change of use of the
highway for tables and chairs

2-4 Circus Road

On behalf of Pret A Manger

June 2021

Introduction

This statement is intended to provide a clear overview of the design and access elements associated with the renewal of the permission for the outside seating area at the premises. The aesthetic appearance and the access arrangements will be discussed, and it will be demonstrated that these are entirely acceptable and comply with Strategic Policy S41, UDP Policies TRANS 3 and TACE 11 and with the Supplementary Planning Document 'Westminster Way – Public realm strategy'.

Application Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the use of the area in front of the premises for an outside seating area (Circus Road frontage). This will be used in conjunction with the operation of the existing sandwich shop. This application seeks planning permission by proposing 5 tables and 10 chairs to be placed outside the premises on the pavement.

Design

The furniture selected for the seating area has been chosen to ensure easy and safe storage when not in use.

The premises is located within the St John's Wood Conservation Area, and particular attention has therefore been taken to ensure that the furniture is not bulky and will not detract from the rest of the street scene. The tables and chairs are of one design with a metal frame, which complements the surroundings and the existing shopfront. Overall the design is sympathetic to the adjoining buildings and character of the area (see Furniture Schedule).

The furniture is of a high specification, strong and durable. The tables and chairs are all stackable, which ensures that they can be stored easily within the premises when not in use. The staff will ensure that the furniture is kept clean and tidy at all times and they will be responsible for replacing any furniture which may become damaged.

The proposals are also considered to be in accordance with UDP Policy DES 7 Townscape Management, through being of a suitable standard of design, in accordance with the patterns of items already in use, being sited so as to be visually unobtrusive, and having regard to the character and quality of the existing townscape.

The tables will be closely monitored by the shop's staff, which will ensure that the furniture is kept within the approved layout and is well managed at all times.

Access

Consideration has been paid to the relevant access requirements associated with this application. Care has been taken to ensure that the area is accessible to all. In particular, the proposed seating area has been designed in order that the current access arrangements are not impaired.

Full and inclusive access exists to the premises via the existing entrances. The existing entrance from the pavement into the restaurant has level access and is wide enough for wheelchair access.

Paragraph 246 of the Westminster Way SPD states that clearances need to take into account highway and disability concerns and the space needed to use seating, tables etc. The minimum pedestrian clear zone should be 2m. Indeed, the layout allows for 3.5 metres of space for pedestrian movement. The external seating plan demonstrates that the proposals maintain a pedestrian clearance zone in accordance with the SPD and local policy.

The proposals are in accordance with Strategic Policy S41 Pedestrian Movement and Sustainable Transport through ensuring pedestrian movement and maintaining a convenient, safe and attractive pedestrian environment. The tables and chairs will be removed from the pavement when not in use and stored within the restaurant and therefore comply with guidelines.

Further the proposals comply with Policy TRANS 3 of the UDP through having full consideration to the conditions for pedestrians and wheelchair users and aiming to ensure

a safe and attractive walking environment. The seating area is also considered to be in compliance with UDP Policy TACE 11 Tables and Chairs on the Footway which seeks to ensure the appearance, attractiveness, and safety of streets whilst safeguarding the environment, maintaining free and safe passage for pedestrians, and protecting residential amenity and the established character and function of the area. In accordance with the Policy, the proposals do not:

1. unacceptably intensify an existing use
2. cause obstruction
3. endanger pedestrians and wheelchair users
4. cause or exacerbate a problem with refuse storage or street cleansing
5. have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the area, or the setting of a listed building
6. cause a nuisance to residents
7. harm the amenity of the area
8. create opportunities for crime

The access arrangements for the seating area have been designed in accordance with health and safety requirements and fire regulations.

Summary

These proposals should be considered to be appropriate in size and scale to the premises and care has been taken to ensure that the area is accessible to all. It is considered that these proposals will improve the vitality and viability of the local area.