

Village Stores And Post Office
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Contact: Mrs Chloe Johnson
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Our Ref: P1901/19/PREAPP
Your Ref:
Date: 7 February 2020

Dear Ms Bellingham

**Town and Country Planning Act,1990 (As Amended)
Village Stores And Post Office London House Hart Lane
Pre-application Enquiry - Change of use of Post Office / Village Store space back to residential use.**

I refer to your letter and plans received on the 6 December 2019 regarding the above proposal. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you.

Any planning application submitted in respect of this site would be considered against relevant policies in the Council's Core Strategy and the Allocations Plan relating to issues such as amenity, design and layout, trees, parking and highway safety. The Local Plan and other guidance can be viewed on the Council's website at www.fdean.gov.uk.

My understanding is that you wish to close the shop and post office which currently operate out of a room within your existing dwelling. You would then like to incorporate that room back in the dwelling. Planning permission was approved in 2014 for the use of a ground floor room to be used as the shop/ post office. Consequently, planning permission would be required for the change of use back to residential.

When considering the application we will take into account policy CSP.8, which relates to the retention of community facilities. This Policy states:

Retention of community facilities (Strategic objective: to promote thriving sustainable communities)

Development proposals which involve the loss of community facilities, including schools, shops, post offices, public houses, halls, places of worship, health services, will not be permitted unless alternative suitable and convenient facilities are available or will be made available as part of the proposal. Exceptions will only apply where it can be demonstrated that in the case of commercially provided services the facilities concerned are no longer

viable and cannot be made so. In the case of all others it must be established that there is no longer a need for such facilities.

Where development proposals comprise or include improvements to community facilities or services, that element of any proposal will be supported subject to other policy considerations.

The above policy is intended to maintain access to community facilities. It does not protect individual enterprises, but it does protect communities from not being able to gain access to a range of facilities or services

You will need to demonstrate in your application that the business is not commercially viable and cannot be made so. I would suggest that you submit accounts and financial details (which would be kept confidential), and any other information which you feel would support your case. It would be helpful to know if there are other shops within the village or if anyone else can take on the post office element and whether you have tried to market the business. However, the room is within your existing dwelling and therefore linked to your family, and it would be difficult for someone else to take over the business, if they didn't own the dwelling.

At this stage I cannot say that should you submit an application for the change of use that it would be acceptable, as I don't have enough information to reach that decision. I would therefore suggest that an application is made to fully consider the matter. The fee for an application would be £462, and you would need to provide plans which you may have from your previous application) and complete the relevant forms. I have provided a link in my email.

I see from your letter that you intend to close the business in July, just to clarify, to do so does not need any permission from the Council; it is only if the room changes to a different use that permission is required.

I hope that this information is of some help. However, I must advise you that the above informal observations have been made at Officer level only. This letter therefore does not prejudice any future decisions made by the Council should you submit a planning application.

Yours sincerely


Mrs Chloe Johnson MRTPI
Planning Officer