

Design and Access statement

168 BEXLEY ROAD, ELTHAM, LONDON, SE9 2PH

Introduction:

This statement has been prepared to support a planning application for a Change of use from Retail (Use Class E(a)) to a Bar/Drinking Establishment (Sui Generis), provision of external seating to the front, recessed front elevation, alterations to the shop front, single storey rear extension and all associated external works.

This statement has been prepared to consider the proposals against the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Plan, and all other material planning considerations.

The remainder of this report is set out as follows:

- Section 2, Site Description: provides a description of the site and the surrounding area in addition to setting out relevant planning history.
- Section 3, Proposed Development: provides a detailed description of the proposed development, highlighting the key aspects of the scheme.
- Section 4, Planning Policy: sets out the planning policy framework against which the planning application should be assessed.
- Section 5, Planning Assessment: provides an analysis of the material planning considerations pertinent to the proposed development and provides a detailed justification for the development.
- Section 6, Conclusions: summarises why planning permission should be granted.

Use:

The building is a four storey mixed used property with following use,

Ground Floor – Retail (Use Class E) use at present

First Floor – Residential use

Second Floor – Residential use

Third Floor - Residential use

Location and Layout:

The original footprint of the building remains largely the same. All the spaces provided in the property have a purpose and are designed specifically for the purpose in mind. The main access is from the front of the shop and the proposal is to maintain this access. This section is considered to be used as customers sitting area.

The property is located in a Neighbourhood Parade where various type of shops which consists of general grocer, newsagent, post office, plumbers shop, betting shop, kitchen showroom, dental surgery etc.

The unit already benefits from a flexible use class which would allow its occupation to multiple types of business. As the Council is aware, all primary uses are capable of accommodating ancillary uses without this resulting in a material change of use. Furthermore, whether a use is ancillary, or incidental, is always a matter of fact and degree and there is no formal guidance to establish how active the proposed use will be.

The proposed use would also allow the business to adapt to temporary changes in operations which have come about in light of the recent Covid 19 pandemic and the subsequent need for businesses to rapidly adapt to changes in business operations.

Greenwich council Economy & Employment Planning Policy

No Employment Loss Currently is the site is vacant and it has been vacant for a while. Present leaseholder wants to convert the present use **to a Bar/Drinking Establishment (Sui Generis)**, use to generate income. It is the intention of the applicant that there will be no loss of employment on the site.

The change of use would increase the employment density from the existing situation. The client states that proposed use would initially employ 6 members of staff and anticipates that this could rise to 7 members of staff [including full and part-time positions].

Local Transport

The site is well situated near public transport focal points and local bus routes stopping on Bexley Road that will facilitate commuting to and from the proposed development. There are also car parking facility in front of the shops.

- Design The proposal has no design implications, as the building will be internally fitted out, with some external alterations (new signage) (New Shopfront) to the exterior of the building. There will be a rear extension so maximise the internal space.
- Surrounding development There are various types of developments nearby that comprise food and drink, financial services and other commercial activities in the ground floor of the neighbouring properties. Proposed **Bar/Drinking Establishment (Sui Generis)**, will ensure increase of job opportunity.

Refuse Collection

Proposed refuse collection area is allocated at the rear of the property.

Opening Hours

It is proposed that the use of the unit will operate between the hours of 1100 to 2300 daily. This ensures that the proposals do not encroach into the night time hours when people can expect reasonable levels of peace and quiet.

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which means that unless material considerations indicate otherwise approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Section 6 refers to building a strong, competitive economy and states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Paragraphs 84 and 85 emphasise that the Government is committed to supporting economic growth and productivity, in order to allow each area to build on its strengths. It states that planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth.

Section 7 sets out policies to ensure the vitality of town centres which includes Primary Shopping Areas as identified on the local authority's policies map. Paragraphs 86 - 91 relate to town centres and state that planning policies should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Planning authorities should encourage town centre uses to promote their long-term vitality and viability. Annex 2 defines main town centre uses as including retail and leisure and recreation uses such as restaurants and takeaways.

Development Management Local Plan 2014

DM Policy 17 'Restaurants and cafés (A3 uses) and drinking establishments (A4 uses)' supports proposals for restaurants and cafés (A3) and drinking establishments (A4) where the location and design is acceptable and the proposed use does not detrimentally affect the vitality of the shopping area; there is no harm to the living conditions of nearby residents; parking and traffic generation is not a danger to other road users, public transport operators or pedestrians.

Conclusion

In summary, it is our belief that the change of use planning application should be fully supported by Greenwich council for the following reasons:

- The retention and increase in employment space on the site;
- Encourages new employment uses in the area;
- No adverse increases in local traffic or parking will result from the proposal.
- There will be no adverse amenity effects given the nature of the surrounding uses.

Principle of development

The site is located within a defined Town Centre where, in accordance with national planning guidance, where town centre uses such as restaurants or takeaway uses are acceptable in principle.]

The proposals would also bring back into economic use an otherwise currently vacant town centre unit. This would enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and encourage footfall in the vicinity of the unit. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.