

STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL TO OFFICE USE.

LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION.

Application Ref. FULL/2020/0451

The Application for Change of Use will involve the loss of an existing small first floor flat at the rear of the site to allow enlargement of the adjacent office space. The Flat is currently vacant.

The Design Statement that accompanied this Planning Application provides the background information and the reasons for enlargement of the Offices. This Statement provides the justification for loss of the residential provision in accordance with Policy GP12.

The Flat is well below current standards and the previous tenant has provided an email to explain the reasons why the flat is sub-standard and not suitable for residential use.

Under Policy GP12, there is scope for the loss of residential under sub-clause (a) if -

“it can be demonstrated that the accommodation is sub-standard by virtue of its size, location, form of construction or means of access to it and there is no reasonable way of upgrading the accommodation to provide satisfactory living accommodation or...”

- The Flat is located at the rear of the what is a multi-use commercial site and has no linkage to the commercial operations. The Flat is an anomaly on what is otherwise a fully commercial site with four substantial businesses operating from it. The commercial activities, particularly at the rear of the site where the Flat is located, are not conducive to a satisfactory residential environment.
- The Flat is on the First Floor within the shell of a metal-clad commercial building; with offices adjacent and a vehicle workshop immediately below. The Flat overlooks the rear of the site where there is another building used for vehicle spare parts and the external parking and collection area for vehicles under repair.
- It is unlikely that the construction of the building meets any of the relevant Building Regulations standards appropriate for residential comfort; thermal, noise and energy efficiency. Upgrading the fabric to meet these standards would be very difficult and uneconomic, particularly when there are a good number of new or recently built properties that would provide much better living conditions.
- Access to the Flat is through a busy commercial site with no dedicated external amenity space.
- The owner’s commercial property adviser, Tony Rowbotham of Savills, has prepared a report on the condition of the flat and their experience as the Letting Agents over a number of years. A letter will be submitted directly to the Planning Service with this information which we consider is material to the consideration of this application relative to Policy GP12.
- The previous tenant of the Flat has provided an email that highlights the many shortcomings of the Flat that make it unsuitable for family occupation. This is reproduced below (Appendix A).

Conclusion:

The Loss of a small, sub-standard Flat from within an established commercial site is justified under the Provisions of Policy GP12 (a) and the proposed Change of Use to Office Use has many benefits in that it will enable the enhancement and retention of an important commercial operation at this location.

Appendix A.

Email from John-Ross Hainey (previous tenant) to Jeremy Rihoy:

From: JR Photography <john@johnrossphotography.co.uk>
Date: 3 March 2020 at 16:01:26 GMT
To: Jeremy Rihoy <Jeremy@jwrihoy.com>
Subject: Landes du marche flat

Good afternoon Jeremy

Regarding the living experience at Landes du marche flat, it was extremely noisy during the day with the garage workshop directly below and during the evenings there was a lot of noise from the cleaners in the offices next door, including the fans from the shop fridges and the compressor, as well as the rattling of the shutters in high winds.

The property was very hot in the summer and extremely cold and damp during the winter with a lot of mildew coming through on the west facing wall, that affected my breathing during the night.

Kind Regards

John-Ross Hainey
Managing Director