

Application Number

P/2012/0455

Site Address25 Ilsham Road
Torquay
Devon
TQ1 2JG**Case Officer**

Mr Adam Luscombe

Ward

Wellswood

Description

Change of use from Co-op store to luxury high end beauty salon/spa offering a range of treatments to include manicure, pedicure, chiropody, facials, therapeutic massage, waxing etc

Executive Summary / Key Outcomes

The application seeks consent to change the use of the existing retail premises within the well populated local centre. The proposed use is not specifically categorised although does have a significant resemblance to those found within A use classes by providing a service. Several representations have been received which primarily object to the introduction of a further beauty salon. Overall the proposed use is considered to maintain the level of diversity that exists within the local centre whilst providing additional services and additional capacity in that market place which could lead to additional trade being introduced to the centre. The application, on consideration of the local planning policies and the national planning policy framework, is considered to be acceptable and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approval.

Site Details

The site is located centrally within the Ilsham Road (Wellswood) local centre. It is currently in use as a retail unit. The centre itself is medium sized and consists of a variety of services/uses.

Detailed Proposals

The proposal is to change the use of the premises from retail to a beauty salon and spa. Additionally minor changes to the front elevation are proposed.

Summary Of Consultation Responses

No Comments

Summary Of Representations

At the time of writing the report, 19 letters of representation had been received. All of the representations object to the proposal. There is a common concern/issue that is raised in every letter, which is that there are enough beauty salons and that another is not required. Some of the representations go further to also suggest the proposal would limit diversity; potentially lead to a loss of jobs in the existing businesses; and result in a lack of retail and variety.

Furthermore one letter of support has been submitted by the applicant. The letter responds to the issues raised in the objections and notes connections between the objectors. All the letters have been re-produced at Page T.203.

Relevant Planning History

P/2003/0080	Installation Of New Shopfront And Access Ramp With External Roller Shutter (As Revised By Plans Received 5/2/03) – PERMITTED 03.03.2003
P/2003/1639	Illuminated Shop Sign And Illuminated Projecting Sign – PERMITTED 05.11.2003

29-31 Ilsham Road

P/2012/0123 - Change of use from A3 restaurant to A1 retail; alterations and installation of new shop front to number 29; installation of an ATM – PERMITTED 16.03.2012

Key Issues / Material Considerations

The key issue in relation to this application concern the impact of the vitality and viability of district centre.

It is important to note that this application follows a recent approval for a change of use of 29-31 Ilsham Road. That application changed the use from a restaurant/bar to a retail unit. The proposed occupants of that unit are the existing occupants of this application site, therefore moving rather than creating a new business. The nett change is then one of a bar/restaurant to spa/beauty salon.

Principle and Planning Policy - With regards to this application policy S10 (Local Centres) is most relevant. Consideration is also given to policies BE3 (Shopfront Design) and BE5 (Policy in Conservation Areas) due to the change, albeit minor, to the shopfront. Additionally the national planning policy framework is a further consideration.

Vitality and Viability - The local plan policy states that the “Council would support the retention and successful operation of local shopping centres, including the maintenance of an appropriate range of facilities...” The policy continues “The introduction of non-retail uses may have a particularly significant impact on the smaller local shopping centres and could impair their ability to provide an adequate range of shopping facilities for local people. Appropriate

non-Class A1 uses may nevertheless be permitted where they meet community-related needs, provided that they are not to the detriment of the amenities and character of the centre.”

On this basis, and given that the use proposed is considered to be very similar and bare significant resemblances to ‘A class’ uses (i.e. shops/professional services/restaurants/drinking establishments), it is deemed that this use would be an appropriate non-Class A1 use and would help to provide a range of facilities within the local centre.

The most recent retail monitor, produced by the Council, indicated two hairdressers; a tanning salon; and a beauty treatment and hair salon within the Wellswood local centre. It also recognised that retail in one form or other accounted for 57% of the uses in the centre. There was one very similar use, the Beauty Salon and Hairdresser, which would provide a similar facility. However, it is not considered that two such uses in the same centre with over 25 units would over dominate the character or detract from the diversity or variety and primary retail use of the local centre.

Economy - The proposed business indicates, on the supporting information, that it will support four full and two part time employment positions. Concern has been raised, in the representations, for the potential loss of employment within the existing businesses. However, although it is a similar use it is not considered that there would necessarily be a direct correlation between a new business and loss of jobs in other businesses.

Built Environment - The changes to the shopfront do not extend to the existing windows and door which will remain as such. Individual lights will be included above the fascia. The design does not impact on the character of the conservation area and will maintain an acceptable shopfront design in the streetscene.

Accessibility - The access directly into the site remains unchanged and given that it is making use of the existing premises within the district centre it would no need to provide additional parking. The local centre is served by nearby bus routes.

National Planning Policy Framework - This document places an importance on local authorities to support small businesses and growth in the economy. The maintenance of uses within the local centres will aid this in both senses with the inclusion of new business and potential increase in footfall helping to promote other businesses and their services.

S106 / CIL - No additional impact is considered through the introduction of this use following mitigation of the existing use. Therefore no contribution under the Council’s Planning Contribution and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning

Document is considered appropriate or necessary.

Conclusions

The proposed use is considered not to detract from the amenities of the centre or to impact adversely on the vitality or viability of the environment. Whilst the use is similar to others, competition is considered to play a positive role in the sustainability of a local centre and there are differences which would set the individual businesses apart. Whilst there would be a resemblance between some uses it is not to such a significant proportion so as to impact on the principle shopping character of the area, particularly as the nett loss of units is a restaurant/bar and the provision of retail remains in an enhanced unit elsewhere within the centre.

The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Relevant Policies

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