
APPLICATION NO.	18/02747/FULLS
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - SOUTH
REGISTERED	02.11.2018
APPLICANT	Mr Randall, Haus Mortgages
SITE	4 Market Place, Romsey, SO51 8NB, ROMSEY TOWN (ABBEY)
PROPOSAL	Change of use from retail/cafe (A1/A3) to professional services (A2)
AMENDMENTS	Updated proposal wording to include A1/A3 – 12.12.2018
CASE OFFICER	Miss Sarah Barter

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application has been referred to the Southern Area Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation. The application is at committee as the application has been called in by the Local Ward Member for the reason 'We are trying to attract retail into the town and I do not consider that Mortgage Haus will be beneficial'.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located in Romsey town centre within the historic Market Place and Conservation Area. The building is a grade II listed three storey property with a ground floor shopfront, colourwashed brick elevations and a slate roof. It lies within a terrace of listed buildings of similar age and character. The property fronts onto the pavement and lies within a busy part of the town centre amongst shops and other town centre uses. Until recently the building was occupied by an ice cream parlour.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Change of use from retail/cafe (A1/A3) to professional services (A2).

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 15/00049/FULLS - Change of use from A1 to mixed A1/A3 to incorporate 18 seats to the ground floor – Permission – 13/04/2015.
- 4.2 TVS.00503/1 - Use of first and second floors as office/store and retail in conjunction with ground floor shop - Permission – 22/09/1984.
- 4.3 TVS.LB.235A Installation of new shop front and erection of rear extension, following demolition of existing extension - 4 Market Place, Romsey. Consent subject to conditions - 09/08/1985.

4.4 TVS.503/2 Installation of new shop front and erection of rear extension, following demolition of existing extension - 4 Market Place, Romsey. Consent subject to conditions - 09/08/1985.

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 Policy – Comment:

LE12: Ground Floor Uses in Romsey – The policy states that only class A uses will be permitted within the ground floor units within the primary and secondary frontages fronting a street or pedestrian thoroughfare. The site in question does lie within the primary shopping area within Romsey town centre and does have a primary frontage facing onto Market Place. Allowing the change of usage from class A1 to class A2 would take the proportion of non-class A1 use within the primary shop frontage to 38.92% which exceeds the 35% set out in this policy; the proportion is currently 38.32%. The use class of A2 would not result in a concentration of more than three consecutive units in non-shop (non-class A1) use. This application is in accordance with this policy.

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 07.12.2018

6.1 Romsey Town Council – Objection:

RTC objects as policy LE12 ground floor uses in Romsey of TVBCs adopted local plan 2011 needs to be preserved.

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)(RLP)

COM2, E9, LE11, LE12

7.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Romsey Town Design Statement

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning considerations are:

- The principle of development
- Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and listed building
- Other matters

8.2 **The principle of development**

The site is located in Romsey Town Centre and within the Romsey Primary Shopping Area where it is desirable to maintain a high proportion of retail uses (together with other town centre uses) in order to retain the vitality and viability of the town. Both of the pertinent Southern Test Valley policies regarding the Romsey Town Centre Shopping Areas seek to achieve this, with regard to the use of ground floor units and the existing mix of uses within the vicinity (policies LE11 and LE12).

8.3 Policy LE12 is as follows:

Policy LE12: Ground Floor Uses in Romsey

Only shops (Class A1 use), financial and professional services (Class A2 use), restaurants and cafes (Class A3 use), drinking establishments (Class A4 use), and hot food takeaways (Class A5 use) will be permitted within the ground floor units within the primary and secondary shopping frontages fronting a street or pedestrian thoroughfare (see Map 4).

Within the primary shopping frontages of Romsey, the use of ground floor units fronting a street or pedestrian thoroughfare for financial and professional services (Class A2 use), restaurant and cafes (Class A3 use), drinking establishment (Class A4 use) and hot food takeaways (Class A5 use) will be permitted provided that:

- a) the proposed use would not result in the number of units in non shop (non-Class A1) use exceeding the proportion of 35%; or*
- b) the proposed use would not result in a concentration of more than three consecutive units in non shop (non-Class A1) use.*

The site in question does lie within the primary shopping area within Romsey town centre and does have a primary frontage facing onto Market Place. Allowing the change of usage from class A1/A3 to A2 would introduce a use that is an acceptable Ground Floor use in this location. It would also take the proportion of non-class A1 use within the primary shop frontage to 38.92% which exceeds the 35% set out in this policy; the proportion is currently 38.32% and therefore the application does not meet the criteria set out in LE12 a). However, the policy does not only restrict the acceptability of scheme to the % mix of units, it asks for an assessment of the criteria set out in b). It is not necessary for both to be satisfied. The policy also discusses the use class not resulting in a concentration of more than three consecutive units in non-shop (non-class A1) use. Across this block on the Market Place are 4 units. The Town Hall (Sui generis), an Estate Agents (A2), an Opticians (A1), the application site (proposed to be A2), and a solicitors (A2). This application is in accordance with policy LE12 b) as there is an A1 retail unit next door at the opticians resulting in compliance with LE12 b).

- 8.4 Further to this the agent has provided some justification for this change as follows: The property is situated effectively in a corner position away from the majority of pedestrian flow which is concentrated on the opposite side of Market Place as shoppers access between Church Street, which has the Post Office located and the prime retail pitch in The Hundred. The agent is also of the opinion that the established pedestrian flow is soon to be further exaggerated with the current alteration works ongoing to extend the pedestrianised area linking towards the central roundabout which in turn will further isolate the trading position of the subject premises for retail purposes.

8.5 The agent advises that the current occupier, 'Sundae's Child' ice cream parlour/cafe, who are due to vacate imminently, commenced trading in February 2014 but have been unable to continue trading viably. Prior to this, the premises traded from June 2009 as 'The Style Room' which sold soft furnishings and home interiors items. However they vacated prematurely in May 2013.

8.6 It is considered that the development complies with policy LE12 b) as set out above and that given the presence of the A1 and A2 uses on this block of buildings on the Market Place it is considered that the overall function of the Town Centre and the retail experience would not be significantly affected by this development, and the vitality and viability of the town centre would not be adversely affected or undermined.

8.7 **Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and listed building**

No works are proposed to the structure, fabric, exterior or shopfront of the building under this application. The proposed use would not significantly alter the character of the building or the surrounding area and would not therefore have a significant impact upon its setting or fabric, with regard to TVRBLP policy E9.

9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposed development complies with relevant policy and is considered acceptable.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

PERMISSION subject to:

1. **The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. **The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers:**

Block plans / site / floor plans

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Notes to applicant:

1. **The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed strictly in accordance with the submitted plans, specifications and written particulars for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.**

- 2. In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.**
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