

**PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

10th August 2011

PLANNING APPLICATION 2011/179/COU

CHANGE OF USE FROM B1 (BUSINESS USE) TO A3 (CAFE USE)

**UNIT 14 NEW MEADOW ROAD, LAKESIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
REDDITCH**

**APPLICANT: MS A BENNETT
EXPIRY DATE: 31ST AUGUST 2011**

WARD: LODGE PARK

The author of this report is Steven Edden, Planning Officer (DC), who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

Site Description

The site is located in a Primarily Employment Area within the Lakeside Industrial Estate. The premises are one of many modern glazed and metal clad Industrial Units, accessed off New Meadow Road. The existing unit is unoccupied and has been on the Councils (Economic Development) computer database since August 2010. The unit was formerly occupied by a B1 (Business use). A large number of (shared) car parking spaces are provided within this complex of units. Unit 14 measures 98 square metres in area.

Proposal Description

This is a full application for the change of use of this vacant B1 unit to an A3 use. The applicant has specified in this case that the unit would be used as a Café. The Town and County Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended also states that restaurant uses fall under the A3 category of the order which is sought under the application. No details have been submitted regarding a likely menu of foods which would be sold to customers at the unit although floor plans have been submitted which show that the existing toilets to the rear of the unit would be retained and that the servery and cooking area would be located to the northern side of the unit. Tables and chairs would be accommodated within the remainder of the available floorspace (26 covers / place settings). Access to the Café would be via the existing set of double doors facing towards the communal car parking area to the east.

Relevant Key Policies:

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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National Planning Policy

PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

CS.7 The Sustainable Location of Development

E(EMP).3 Primarily Employment Areas

C(T).12 Parking Standards

S1 Designing out crime

SPDs

Designing for community safety

Relevant Site Planning History

None relevant to Unit 14

Adjacent unit (Unit 8)

2011/077/COU Change of Use from B2 to D2 (Boxing Club)
approved 04.05.2011

Public Consultation Responses

None received

Consultee Responses

County Highway Network Control

No objection

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

No objection. To protect nearby amenities, recommends the imposition of a condition in the event of planning permission being granted in respect to a scheme of odour control being submitted to the LPA prior to development commencing

RBC Development Plans Section

Comments awaited

Police Crime Risk Manager

Comments awaited

RBC Economic Development Unit

Comments that the unit is currently vacant and that the property has been on the Council's EDU database since 27th August 2010

Procedural matters

All applications for Class A3 use are reported to Planning Committee for determination.

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Assessment of Proposal

The key issue for consideration in this case is the principle of change of use.

Principle of Change of Use

The site is within an area designated as a Primarily Employment Area in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 where the primary aim of Policy E(EMP).3 of Local Plan No.3 is to maintain uses within Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) or B8 (Storage or distribution) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and to safeguard employment land.

The change of use of this unit to an A3 (Café and Restaurant) use within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) is therefore at odds with the aims and objectives of Policy E(EMP).3 of Local Plan No.3.

The above policy states that non-employment development within Primarily Employment Areas will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that the loss of the site will not have an unacceptable loss on the supply of employment land within the Borough and that the use is compatible with the use of adjacent land for employment purposes. It should also be demonstrated that the site is not capable of being developed for employment use. No such evidence has been advanced with this application. Notwithstanding application 2011/077/COU as detailed earlier in this report, where planning permission for a non-employment use was granted earlier this year against the advice of your Officers, the majority of units in this area are in employment use. Whilst the unit is currently vacant, it appeared on the Councils vacant units database as recently as August 2010 and therefore Officers do not consider that the unit could not be let to an employment user (falling within the B1, B2 or B8 category) in the future. The proposal is therefore in the opinion of your officers to be in conflict with adopted Policy E(EMP).3 of Local Plan No.3.

Policy CS.7 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 states that uses that attract a lot of people will be directed to the Town Centre. The proposed development, being one such use would be ideally suited to a Town Centre site rather than an out of centre location such as the application site, which has relatively poor public transport links. The proposal is therefore considered to be unsustainably located having regard to that Policy.

Conclusion

Your Officers consider that this proposal should be resisted in the interests of protecting employment land within the Borough. Such uses should be located within or on the periphery of the Town Centre and the application on this basis is recommended for refusal.

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Recommendation

That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be REFUSED for the reasons below:

1. The proposed change of use to A3 would result in a loss of land designated for employment (B1, B2, B8) purposes. In the absence of any justification for this loss, the proposal is considered to be harmful to the employment land supply of the Borough and therefore contrary to Policy E(EMP).3 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.
2. The creation of an A3 use in a location outside the town centre in an area poorly served by public transport would be likely to generate a significant quantity of unsustainable trips in private vehicles contrary to Policy CS.7 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.