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| West Malling West Malling And Leybourne | 568052 157744 | 06.07.2006 | TM/06/02043/FL |
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| Proposal: | Change of use to class A2 (financial and professional services) |
| Location: | First Floor 79 - 81 High Street West Malling Kent ME19 6NA |
| Applicant: | Coral Estates Limited |

1. Description:

1.1 The proposal seeks planning permission to change the use of the property from a B1 (business) use to an A2 (financial and professional services) use.

2. The Site:

2.1 The site comprises a modern building located within the historic High Street of West Malling. The site lies within the Conservation Area of West Malling. Either side of the property and on the opposite side of the High Street from the site are retail units – many of which are Listed Buildings. A public car park is located to the rear (east).

3. Planning History (selected):

3.1 TM/06/02517/AT Pending Consideration
Stainless steel lettered shop sign (1.80 x 0.30 m) and projecting timber sign (0.75 x 0.70 m)

3.2 TM/06/02391/FL Pending Consideration
Alterations to entrance door, installation of satellite dishes and air conditioning units on roof to second floor

3.3 TM/75/0182 Approved 15.08.1975
Change of use of storage to first floor offices.

4. Consultees:

4.1 PC: Members OBJECT to this application. The proposed location was considered completely inappropriate. This is an area which already attracts people to congregate e.g. for bus stop, waiting for taxis, using the alleyway to the car park, pharmacy, cash point, as well as Tesco store itself. Based on experience in other parishes, the customers of a Betting Office almost certainly tend to wait outside and this could be intimidating to others, especially children and the elderly who already use the area.

4.2 Members point out that no information is given regarding opening times and vehicle movements; details of these must be provided before any decision is achieved.

4.3 KCC (Highways): No objection.

4.4 Private Reps: 17/0S/0R/0X.

5. Determining Issues:

- 5.1 The main determining issues associated with the application are whether the proposed use of the property is acceptable in the location and whether the proposal will have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of the surrounding locality.
- 5.2 The site is situated within a Retail area within the TMBLP. Policy P6/20(g) of the TMBLP states that proposals for Business (B1) and town centre office uses (A2) on upper floors will be permitted except where this would involve the loss of existing residential accommodation.
- 5.3 The proposed use is one that requires a town centre location. The property is currently vacant. The area is characterised by a variety of A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and B1 uses. The addition of an A2 use in this area would not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the area given the previously approved use and mix of existing uses.
- 5.4 The use would have less of an impact on the surrounding residential properties than adjacent A3, A4 and A5 uses may potentially have.
- 5.5 I note the PC's comments. The application has been made for an A2 use. All of the uses within a use class are deemed to be of similar effect because changing between these uses is deemed not to be a material change of use. A2 uses are uses appropriate for shopping centre locations.
- 5.6 The site is situated within the town centre. No parking provision would be provided for staff or visitors within the site. Behind the site lies a public short stay car park. It is proposed to employ permanent members of staff and two part time staff. Customers are likely to be local residents/workers or visitors attracted to other venues in the town. I am of the opinion that the proposal will not have significant highway or parking implications.
- 5.7 The only external alterations proposed as part of the application are a replacement door on the front of the building. Details of air conditioning systems, satellite dishes and advertisements to accompany the use have been submitted for considerations under separate applications. As such, I am of the opinion that the current proposal will not have a detrimental impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.

6. Recommendation:

6.1 **Grant Planning Permission**, as detailed in letters dated 16.06.2006 and 04.07.2006 and COR855/AS01 and COR855/SK03, subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. (Z013)

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Contact: Glenda Egerton