Statement in Support of Planning Application for Proposed Change of Use from General Industrial B2 to Retail A1/A3.

The Site

The property is situated on the corner of Wood Walk and Dovecliffe Road, Wombwell about half a mile to the south west of Wombwell town centre. The Hut is situated at the junction of Wood Walk & Dovecliffe Road. Access to the site is via open entrance off of Dovecliffe Road. Dovecliffe Road is a B road (Off the main B6096 Woodwalk) and is a wide roadway.

The proposal has a gross floor space of approx. 209 sq. metres and is situated within housing and mixed businesses.

"The Hut" is currently used as a Picture frame manufacturing business on a part time basis which is run by the Owner who has owned the building since the 1960's. The owner is now wishing to retire and has offered the unit to let.



The Proposal

The proposal is to change of use from the existing business A1/A3 retail. The development of the business would require a substantial increase in floor space which would make "The Hut" ideal for future growth planning.

Requirements for a suitable building include:-

Large ground floor retail area to develop our sales areas and be suitable for elderly and disabled customers.

Good off street car parking - Our workshops mean equipment such as sewing machines etc. needing to be carried into the unit. The average age for our workshops is 50+ with the eldest being 80 so close parking is essential.

Disabled toilet.

Approximately 40% of the available shop floor to be used as retail fabric, wool & other related items sales.

Approximately 30% of the available shop floor to be used as a classroom/workshop space for our craft workshops.

Approximately 20% of the available shop floor to be used as a Tea room. Washing/cooking area to be screened from main retail & seating areas.

Approximately 10% of the available shop floor to be used as retail traditional weigh out sweets & appropriate 3rd party products e.g. locally made chutney, Honey, hand craft gifts etc.

Design

The proposal will enhance the current building which requires internal works to bring it up to retail standards.

This includes a disabled toilet, café and seating area, additional on-site parking.

Our overall aim is to keep this old scout hut as original as possible and therefore will not change the current materials or site configurations.

Curtilage

On site car parking will be delimited with simple markings to current size regulations. Current parking areas have gravel/concrete and we will maintain these.

Signage

Replacement of current signage to new.

"The Hut" was built in the 1930's as a community scout/guide hut and we feel that our proposal with try to capture that community feel again. The owner obtained planning permission dated 17th April 2008 which was granted by Barnsley MBC under reference 2008/0259 for Residential Development (Outline) on the site which we believe has since lapsed. The owner would refurbish the internals of the building to be suitable for purpose.

Access

The Hut is situated at the junction of Wood Walk & Dovecliffe Road. Access to the site is via open entrance off of Dovecliffe Road. Dovecliffe Road is a B road (Off the main B6096 Woodwalk) and is a wide roadway.

The site entrance is open and not covered by trees or other obstructions.

We propose to allocate a minimum of 6 customer car parking spaces, 2 staff car parking spaces plus the provision for overflow spaces as the business progresses and once adequate spaces have been assessed. Customers will be encouraged to park within the site walls and not on street.

The site will generate minimum commercial traffic for deliveries of stock only and this will generally be parcel courier vehicles (Not LGV/Articulated vehicles).

Statement of Intent

As a new business growth has been rapid and our current premises are too small to allow further expansion. We would look to replicate and develop our current business model which we know works and is based on developing a community hub for crafting and associated sales. A business plan of current activities can be provided.

Our vision is to become a crafting hub for the community and to be a destination that people will travel to, we would like to emphasise we are not just another 'retail outlet' Evidence and research has shown quilters/sewing/crafters will travel miles for a good quality fabric shop. We envisage groups, including those disadvantaged will engage in our community driven, creative workshops and therefore good transport links are essential. Evidence has shown that the skills we are teaching are being lost and are no longer taught as part of the National Curriculum. Our proposal will help to bring together people of all ages to share and participate in these skills.

The ability to offer workshops, retail, and food with excellent facilities (disabled toilets etc.) will allow us to offer a truly great experience for those that may not otherwise be able to attend such workshops.

We are mindful of existing food outlets and it is our intention to provide teas, coffee, cakes and a small selection of sandwiches only and to use local produce wherever possible.

The location of "The Hut" is close to motorway networks, within walking distance of Wombwell train station and has good bus connections.

Having considered retail units in the town centre of Wombwell and being aware of CSP31 Town Centre Policy requirements, no suitable premises either for sale or to let of suitable size with on-site car parking were available. Enclosed are properties from Rightmove to support this but a general search for similar premises offers up no town centre alternatives in this area of Barnsley and surrounding areas. Due to the size of the proposal we have been advised there is no need for any impact assessment.

Employment Policy

The site lies in a UDP housing policy area and is currently in employment use and is therefore covered by CSP19. The CSP19 Core Strategy has been considered which seeks to safeguard existing employment land and land previously used for employment to protect future employment potential. We found that the current owner/occupier is a single man due to retire (He is in his 70's) and the fact that he has considered planning to demolish and build housing on the site. Under the current proposal we will not only safeguard this community building but also create jobs and secondary income for the area. The proposal is to initially employ a minimum of 3 full/part time staff at Wombwell with an additional 2 at our existing site in Mapplewell.

Due to our involvement in Wombwell and the need to employ staff to look after our current business. This business currently also contracts 5-6 local tutors in our current location and will be replicated at Wombwell.

We plan to also hold intercity workshops and would utilise local hotels, restaurants and facility to help us achieve this.

We have considered local residents and have found that car parking has to be a consideration and to resolve this we propose to have on site customer car parking spaces within the boundary wall of the site.

We would generate less commercial type vehicle traffic to the site than is currently being generated due to the industrial nature of the current business. Deliveries to the proposed business would tend to be of parcel courier type traffic. There are two main policy issues:

We have approached the owner with our proposals and he informs us that he would fully back our application and wishes “The Hut” to continue to be used as a business.