

Planning Statement

Located at:

89 Howletts Lane,

Ruislip, HA4 7YG.



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CONTENTS

1. Introduction

2. Site Appraisal

2.1. Site Context

2.2. Existing Building & Use

3. The Proposal

3.1. Planning and Design Consideration

3.2. Design & Character

3.3. Access & Parking

3.4. Refuse Bin storage

3.5. Noise & Antisocial Behaviour

3.6. Impact on Neighbouring amenity

4. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The following planning statement has been prepared for an Application for a Certificate of Lawful Development (Proposed Use) under Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the change of use of the ground floor. The site located at 89 Howletts Lane, Ruislip HA4 7YG for a proposal of *“Change of use of ground floor from Class E(a) (Retail) to Class E(b) (Café)”*

According to national planning guidance, the proposed development is subject to lawful development as a change of use within Class E does not constitute development and therefore does not require planning permission. Both retail and café/restaurant uses fall within Use Class E under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, making the proposed change lawful provided no material changes or external works are involved.

2. Site Appraisal

2.1. Site Context

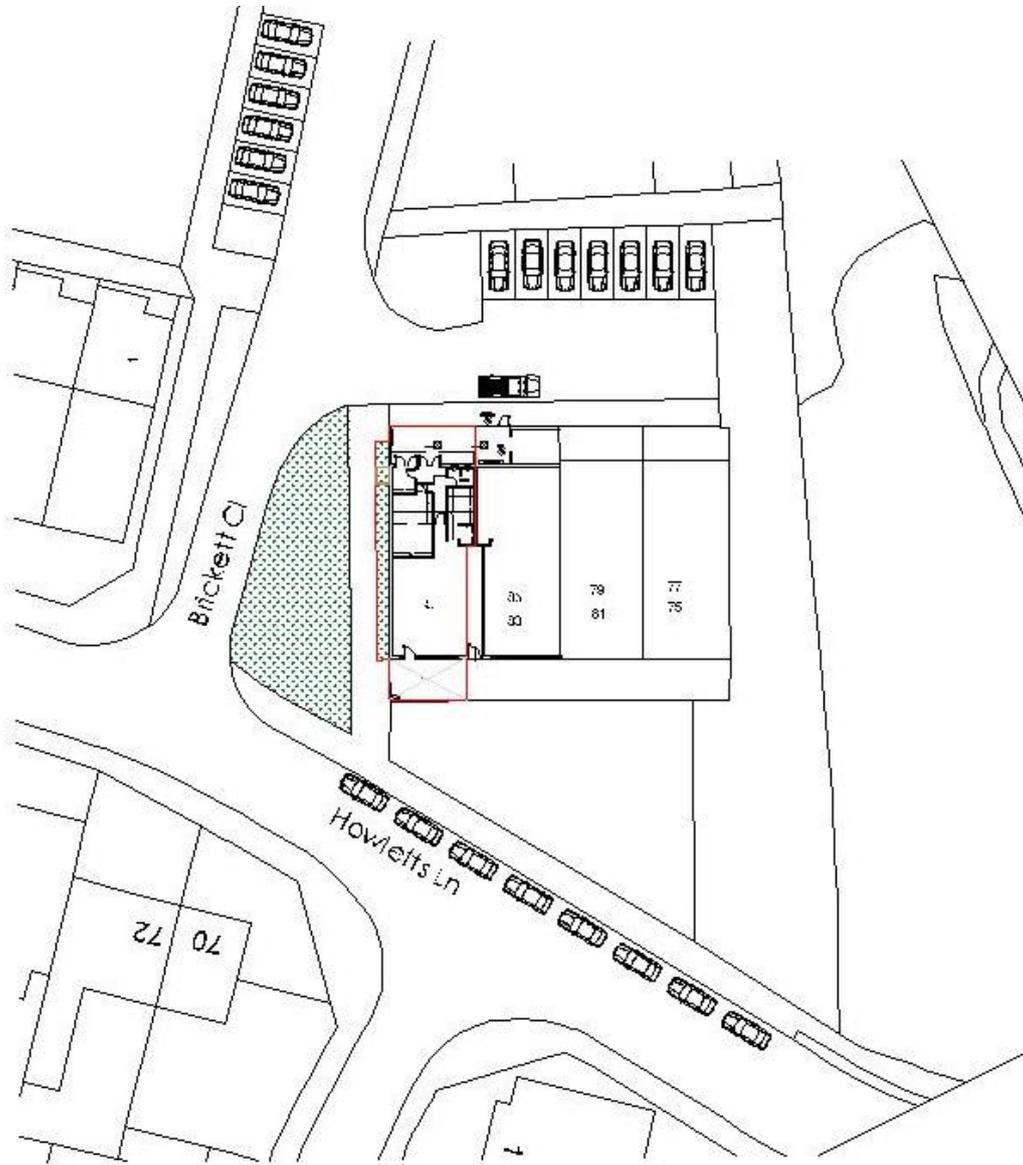
The site at 89 Howletts Lane, Ruislip, HA4 7YG, is situated within a well-established mixed use neighbourhood in the London Borough of Hillingdon. Positioned within an active small local parade. The parade includes essential local services such as a pharmacy, convenience shops, and independent businesses, forming a valued hub for day-to-day needs.

Public transport connections are readily accessible, with nearby bus routes offering links to Ruislip Station, which provides both Metropolitan and Piccadilly line services into Central London. Road connectivity is also strong, with easy access to routes leading to Ickenham, Eastcote, Northwood, and central Ruislip. These transport links make the location convenient for both local residents and visitors.

The wider area features a mix of residential housing, community infrastructure, and small commercial clusters. This established suburban context supports low-intensity commercial uses that serve the local community. The site therefore presents a suitable and sustainable location for a small café, complementing existing neighbourhood services and contributing positively to the local character and vibrancy.

2.2. Existing Building

The ground floor unit is currently in Class E(a) Retail use and is arranged as a typical retail shop layout. No external alterations, extensions, or operational changes have been undertaken. Property located on above floors is a residential unit.



EXISTING BLOCK PLAN

3. The Proposal: Change of use of ground floor from Class E(a) (Retail) to Class E(b) (Cafe)

3.1. Planning Policies and Considerations

Materials for Planning Considerations and in relevance to:

National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF (2023)

London Plan 2021

Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020)

The proposed development will comply with the following:

1. Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy of NPPF 2023
2. Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places of NPPF 2023
3. Policy DMTC 1: Town Centre Developments of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020)
4. Policy DMTC 4: Amenity and Town Centre Uses of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020)
5. Policy DMHB 12: Streets and Public Realm of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020)
6. Policy DMHB 13: Shop fronts of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020)

In accordance with the above mentioned Planning Policies and considerations, the proposed development will comply with all the relevant criteria as follows;

3.2. Design and Character

The proposed development seeks to change the ground floor use from Class E(a) retail to Class E(b) café, with no external alterations proposed. A counter/cashier area is proposed to the front and kitchen & staff area, is proposed to the rear of the property. The café will serve hot and cold drinks, light food, and simple refreshments associated with a daytime and evening community café.

Both the existing retail use and the proposed café use fall within Class E of the Use Classes Order 2020. No external alterations, intensification, or operational characteristics would move the use outside this class. The proposal therefore meets the criteria for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed Use.

The proposed opening hours would be: Monday to Saturday 7am to 7pm and Sunday – 8am to 6pm. These hours are suggested to minimize the detrimental impacts on the neighbour's amenity and the suggested operating hour is almost similar to that of the café units in the neighbourhood. The reduce late night hours will minimize the impact on the neighbourhood.

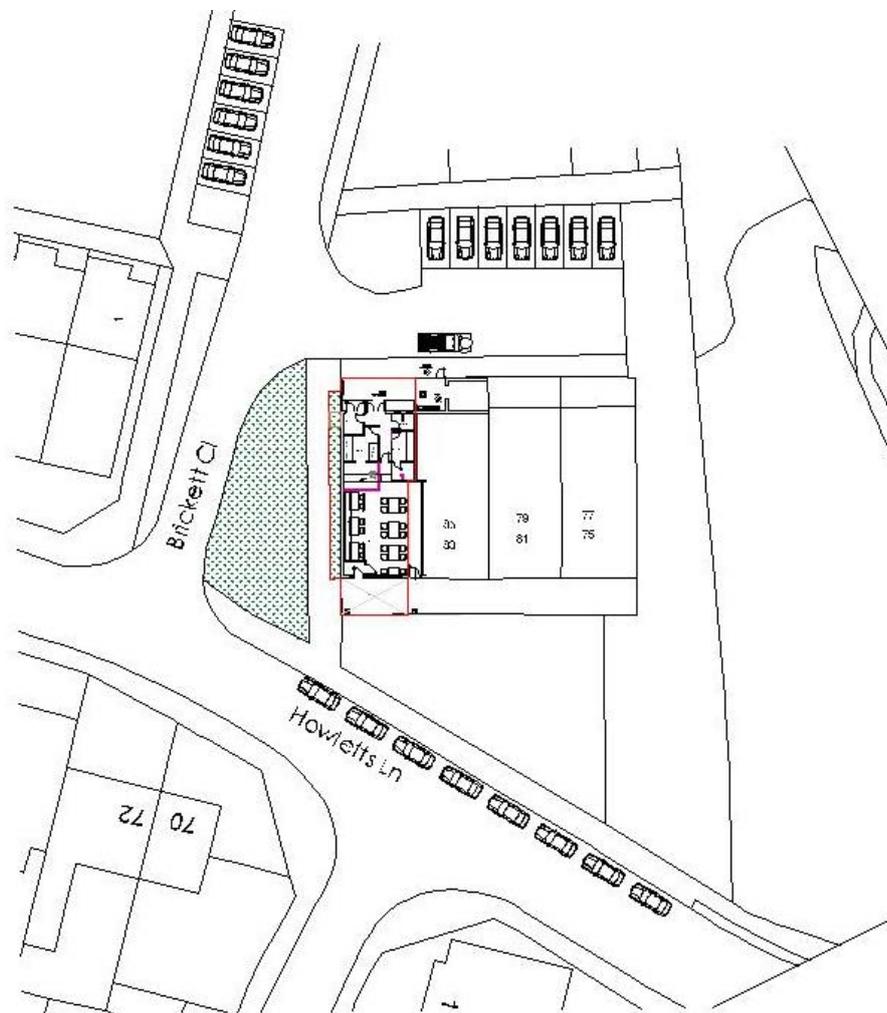
No external building works, changes to the shop front, or material alterations are proposed. The existing character and appearance of the parade will remain entirely unchanged. There is no new extraction system proposed. Any new installation of extraction system will seek for planning permission separately. As such, the proposal preserves the visual character of the area.

3.3. Access & Parking

The pedestrian access to the property will remain the same, which is through the front part of the site. The café will draw customers from the immediate surrounding and existing parade visitors, resulting in predominantly walk-in, linked and pass-by trips rather than new car-borne primary trips. There are no late hours; therefore there is no long-stay parking stress. Staffs levels are modest and will not likely increase parking.

There are number of existing car parking area present at the rear of the properties for the staffs and occupants on floors above. There are no changes proposed to the car park.

Consequently, the change of use will not materially increase footfall or off-street parking demand, and any effect on local highways conditions is expected to be negligible.



PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN

3.4. Refuse Bin Storage

The existing refuse bins is stored in the rear side part of property. Waste generation is anticipated to be similar or less than a small retail unit. The proposed bin location will in the rear part of the site ensuring:

- Bin capacity 1100L
- Stored away from customer access.
- Bins with self closing and secured lids
- No obstruction to pedestrians or vehicles
- Clear and safe access for trade waste contractors
- Compliance with food-business hygiene expectations
- Bin movements to the kerbside (where required) can be managed safely and promptly
- Daily monitoring of bin levels
- Immediate action if waste approaches capacity (request extra collection)

The operator will enter into a commercial waste collection contract with a licensed commercial trade waste company. The contract will cover:

- Scheduled weekly collections
- Additional collections available upon request to prevent overflow
- Provision of waste transfer notes to satisfy Duty of Care

All waste will be stored and removed in accordance with national waste-handling legislation.

3.5. Noise & Antisocial Behaviour

The café will operate only during daytime hours and evening hours. The café will not be open during the late hours. There are no alcohol sales in the cafe.

The presence of a well-run café can actually increase natural surveillance, improving safety rather than diminishing it.

Therefore the proposed use is not expected to attract large groups or individuals associated with anti-social behaviour.

The café will function as a low-intensity daytime facility with no late-night activity, no amplified music, and no high-intensity cooking or extraction equipment, ensuring that any noise remains comparable to the existing retail use. The development will not increase noise or disturbance to neighbouring properties and is therefore considered to have a negligible impact on the local amenity.

3.6. Impact on Neighbouring amenity

A café is a low-impact use that aligns with the existing character of the neighbourhood parade. The café will:

- Operate quietly
- Be closed in the late evenings
- Provide a social benefit to the community
- Maintain a tidy and attractive shop front
- Generate similar or less disturbance than the previous retail use as the retail unit was open for longer hours. With a lot of servicing.

This type of use is common and appropriate within suburban centres and neighbourhood shopping parades.

4. Conclusion

The proposed change of use from a Class E(a) retail unit to a Class E(b) café at 89 Howletts Lane, Ruislip, HA4 7YG represents a carefully considered and wholly appropriate form of development within the context of the existing neighbourhood parade. The proposal fully respects the established character of the area and maintains the integrity of this local shopping frontage, ensuring that the function and appearance of the parade remain uninterrupted.

The transition from retail to café use sits entirely within Use Class E, meaning that no material change of use occurs in planning terms. National planning guidance confirms that premises within Use Class E may change to another Use Class E use without the need for planning permission, as the change is not considered development under the Town and Country Planning Act.

In addition, the proposal aligns positively with the Policies of the Hillingdon Local Plan, including the overarching strategic direction outlined in the Local Development Scheme, which confirms the importance of maintaining vibrant and sustainable local centres across the borough. The proposed café will provide a local service, helps sustain footfall, and supports the vitality of the parade—consistent with the aims of these policies, which seek to ensure appropriate use mix in local parades.

Operational considerations have also been fully addressed within the proposal. No external alterations or intensification of activity are proposed, ensuring that residential amenity is preserved, with no late-night opening. The café represents a low-impact, community-serving use that respects neighbouring properties and contributes positively to the area's character. Overall, the proposal represents a lawful, sustainable, and beneficial addition to the existing neighbourhood parade.

For these reasons, the applicant contends that the proposal represents sustainable development and respectfully requests for the certificate to be granted.