

**Statement in support of a Prior Approval Application for Change of Use
offices (Use Class B1) to a one bedroom dwelling under Schedule 2, Part 3,
Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted
Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)**

At

54c High Street, Northwood, London HA6 1BL

Dated 18 May 2022

This statement accompanies a prior approval application for the change of use of part of the ground floor of existing offices at 54c High Street, Northwood, London HA6 1BL into one x one bedroom dwelling. All the works proposed are internal works.

The application is a revised application following a refusal of a previous application ref: 70476/APP/2022/706. This was refused for one reason only which was:

"The proposed development would involve external changes to the property, including alterations to the door on the front elevation of the building. The proposed external changes would fall outside the remit of Class MA, Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)."

The current application retains the doors as is which means that there are now no external changes whatsoever being proposed.

Included with this application is the following documents:

1. Completed Prior Approval Application form
2. Plan 3443/1M – Existing and Proposed Plans, including a Location Plan
3. Valuation letter dated 27/09/2017
4. Valuation summary dated 2/03/2022

The plans have scale bars and dimensions so that the proportions of the layout and the scale of the building can be easily deduced. There is also descriptive objects shown on the plans which clearly indicates the rooms and their uses. Consequently it is considered it meets with the provisions of paragraph W of the Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

It should be noted that a previous application for Change of Use of offices (Use Class B1) to 2 x 1-bed flats (Use Class C3) (Prior Approval) was determined as permitted development "Prior Approval not required" on 1 May 2015 (ref: 70476/APP/2015/739) under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013.

Work did start on undertaking the conversion in 2017 but for various personal and business reasons, the change of use did not take place within the required relevant time period. Hence the submission of this application.

Attached is letter dated 27/09/2017 from the valuation office indicating that zero business rates were payable the offices and premises were undergoing conversion. Also attached is an up-to-date valuation summary from the Valuation office website which confirms that from 1 April 2017 – present that the ground floor were Offices and premises – undergoing conversion to domestic. The property has remained vacant since 2017 but as the change of use to residential has not occurred, the lawful use remains as B1 offices.

Class MA provides for the conversion of commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses. It states:

Permitted development – Development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

Provision MA.1 (1) sets out criteria when development is not permitted by Class MA. These are considered below:

- a) The property has been vacant for well over 3 months as described above.
- b) The site falls within Class B1 offices (Class E after 1st September 2020) and has been in that use class for the last 2 years as demonstrated above.
- c) The cumulative floor space would be under 1,500 square metres.
- d) The building and land is not within or forms part of a
 - (i) Site of special scientific interest;
 - (ii) Listed building land or land within its curtilage;
 - (iii) Scheduled monument or land within its curtilage;
 - (iv) Safety hazard area;
 - (v) Military explosives storage area.
- e) The building is not within
 - (i) An area of outstanding natural beauty;

- (ii) An area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- (iii) The Broads;
- (iv) A national park; or
- (v) A World Heritage Site
- f) The site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy; or
- g) Been subject to the operation of a direction under Article 4(1) that has not since been cancelled in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3.

In respect of the conditions laid out in MA.2, in regard to conditions 2(a),(b) and (c) – transport impacts, contamination risks and flooding risks, these matters were considered by the previous prior approval applications (refs: 70476/APP/2015/739 and 70476/APP/2022/706) and not found significant to prevent the decision that prior approval was not required.

With regard to condition MA.2.(2) (d) – impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers, the upper floor has a lawful use as a three bedroom flat whilst the remainder of the ground floor premises will remain in use as a B1 office. It is contended that such neighbouring uses will not cause undue noise to the intended occupiers of the proposed new flat. This was agreed in the officer report for application ref: 70476/APP/2022/706.

In regard to MA.2(2)(e), the building is not located in a conservation area so the other considerations do not apply.

With regard to condition MA.2(2)(f), it is considered that there is sufficient natural light to all the habitable rooms as shown on the submitted plans. The existing external doors that would lead to the bedroom and lounge/kitchen area would both be half glazed. In conjunction with the existing windows, this would ensure sufficient natural light is provided to these areas. Again, this was agreed as noted in the officer report for application ref: 70476/APP/2022/706.

In respect of MA.2.(2)(g), the area is not in use for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses.

In regard to MA.2(2)(h), the development does not involve a loss of services provided by a registered nursery or health centre.

In regard to MA.2(2) (i), the development does not meet the fire risk condition, being less than 18m high.

In regard to MA.2(3), the application is being made after 1 August 2021 so meets this condition.

With regard to MA.2 (4), it is not considered that the Environment Agency or the Health and Safety Executive require to be consulted so paragraph (a) does not apply. With regard to (b), it is considered that there already exists safe site access.

Consequently it is considered that the proposed development satisfies the relevant criteria and conditions. It therefore comprises permitted development.

Please come back to me should further information be required.

Jeremy Peter MRTPI
18 May 2022.