

Updated Planning statement 9a Loverock Road, Reading.

The proposal is to Change the use of this site from B8 to B1 (Office/business) and D2 (gymnastics club) for the use of a dance studio by the company The Dance Studio School of Equality and Excellence Limited.

History of dance studio at Richfield Avenue (original Site)

The dance studio moved into 24 Richfield Avenue in March 2008, we are advised that the use from B1 to D2 had already been granted. We further understand that the whole building is now being returned to a B1 use.

During July 2018 The Dance Studio were notified that the landlord wanted vacant possession of 24a Richfield Avenue, Reading by December 2018.

This council believe this application conflicts with several policies and below we have set out our response to these policies in relation to this site.

Policy CS4 – This relates to the accessibility of the development. I have researched into the available options and the guests that arrive by car will have easy access to the site via Portman Road and ample parking due to the operation hours being out of office hours. The guests using a bus route can use either the Number 17,16,15 and disembark at Beresford Road bus stop and arrive at the development site in just an 11 minute walk. Those who choose to walk/cycle have pedestrian routes available to them also.

Policy CS11 – This policy relates to employment. The employment level as it currently stands is 2 people. With our development proposal we propose 5-6 staff at a minimum. This is an increase of at least 3 people.

Policy CS25 – This policy relates to the scale and location of the development. Firstly, I would like to point out the proximity to where the dance studio previously was on Richfield Avenue. We have moved it only 5 minutes' drive further than where the dance studio originally stood so this will not be detrimental to any journey the participants make to and from the studio. I would also like to highlight the different use classes within the area of Loverock Road. We have a funeral parlour, Trade counters, a community church and dog day care facility. I do not think that a dance studio would be out of place in this variety of

use classes. There has been great difficulty in finding a suitable site which meets the requirements of size and affordability to allow the applicant to continue a business which has done very well.

Policy CS31 – This relates to Additional and existing community facilities. We are providing an additional community service with our proposal for those people that enjoy dance and fitness.

The letting history (provided by the Landlord of the property – Queensgate residential)

Prior to the purchase of the property by Milltile Ltd on 9/12/2015, the owners were metal fabricators who were elderly and had tried to sell the property and business in order to retire. They had not been successful and in the meantime, one of the two owners passed away forcing the other to close the business and try to sell the unit on its own.

They had been marketing the property for sale and were unsuccessful for some months before Milltile Ltd approached them with an offer.

Milltile Ltd then attempted to market the unit for letting as a light industrial unit but did not receive any interest.

In order to alter this situation, a significant refurbishment was undertaken. The property was then remarketed for letting and after a few months, the current tenant approached us needing immediate access to try and start a fledgling business. As far as I am aware they were the only ones to have shown serious interest whilst it was on the market.

A new 5 year lease was drawn up and signed on 9th November 2016.

It soon became apparent to the tenant that their business was not going to be as successful as they had hoped for and they did not want to occupy the unit. They have therefore been looking to sublet the unit or find an alternative occupier since early 2017.

Sharon Vickers (the applicant) has been the only person that they have found to date who has expressed an interest in occupying the property and the existing tenant is very keen to vacate as currently they have significant rent arrears which are only increasing with time.

Therefore, the alternative to Sharon Vickers not occupying the unit is that the existing tenant will go into liquidation and the unit will in all probability will remain empty for a significant period of time.

Times of use

ADULT CLASSES:

Mondays 7.00pm/8.30pm Absolute Beginners

Wednesdays 7.00/8.00 Riff Raff Club

Wednesday 8.00/9.30pm Intermediate

Saturday Adult Workshop 9.30/11.00pm

CHILDRENS DANCE CLASS

Every Saturday 11.00/12.30

PRIVATE TUTITION, WHEELCHAIR TUTITION FROM 10.00AM DAILY

WEDDING DANCE LESSON FROM 10.00AM DAILY

History of dance studio at Richfield Avenue

The dance studio moved into 24 Richfield Avenue in March 2008, we are advised that the use from B1 to D2 had already been granted. We further understand that the whole building is now being returned to a B1 use & therefore there is a gain of commercial space to offset the D2 use at 9A Loverock Road.

Even if the application cannot be found this part of the building would now benefit from a Lawful Use as the D2 use has been in continuous operation since March 2008, more than 10 years ago.

Proposed use

The applicant is in agreement to a 5-year temporary consent for the Dance Studio use.

B1 floor space to be retained

The floorspace to be retained will amount to approximately 27sqm to the front of the building which also benefits from a separate access.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Chris Keen', is enclosed in a thin black rectangular box.

Chris Keen