



Design Statement

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Design Statement in support of planning application for a change of use from B1 to A1, ref. 2016/3823/P

The statement is intended to support the argument to allow the existing shopfronted unit on the corner of Jamestown Road and Oval Road to operate as a coffee shop open to the public.

The argument is set out under a series of headings for clarity. In addition, we attach a document prepared by a local historian with information dating back to when the building was first tenanted.

Visual Suitability

The part of the building that this application applies to looks like a traditional shop not office space. It would provide a positive, interesting addition to the streetscape as well as a space that the locals and passers-by can interact with.

An office is most likely be a closed space without any real street presence.

Historical suitability

The building was a shop or restaurant previously before it was converted to B1 by the previous owner. Therefore, there is precedent.

The last use of the space was a coffee shop called *The Corner One*. The temporary licence from B1 to A3 was given as Permitted Development in 2012 and the coffee shop was an extremely popular destination for the years before the residential development began in earnest on the floors above (the reason why the shop shut down).

See also final section of this document outlining a more detailed history of the building and its uses. This demonstrates that the building acted as a coffee shop, cafe or dining rooms for most of its existence



Contextual suitability

The corner site best suits a shop use that would add activity and interest to an otherwise lacklustre junction. It would fulfil a need that is missing currently among all of the surrounding offices and residences. Indeed, there is an abundance of offices and other businesses in the area but no A1 shops to serve those users.

Social suitability

There is no coffee shop within the immediate location. If people want to find a coffee or a bite to eat they need to go to the high street, which is more a tourist destination than the local feel a coffee shop here would provide for the local community.

The most recent user of the premises, the coffee shop called The Corner One, was popular and formed a focal point for people working and living in the immediate vicinity.

Spatial suitability

The actual shop space is more suitable for A1 use because of its orientation and large windows. On sunny days it has direct sunlight all afternoon, which would not be comfortable for desks unless blinds were introduced, hence creating a negative appearance. In contrast, a sunlit coffee shop can be a more pleasant experience and does not require blinds.

Commercial suitability

A shop or A1 use is more likely to provide employment than an office space that would fit very few people given the constraints in size and experience. Indeed the previous B1 use created practically no employment previous to the coffee shop because it was a one-man printing workshop.

There are already potential leaseholders interested in running the shop as a coffee shop.



A historical perspective

The first mention of someone at the building is the **1855** Post Office London Directory, which lists a WM Brown there, running "coffee and dining rooms". It's probably safe to assume that he (or someone) had been there for a year or more before that; so perhaps he is the first business to operate there. He seems to have operated from then through to 1875.

"Coffee & dining rooms" remains the designation from **1876 to 1879**, run (briefly) by Chas Hill. In **1883** an Arnold Samuel is listed as running "dining rooms" there. In **1884** the Rate Book has a William Portman running "dining rooms" there too. He is listed through till 1887. Thereafter the directories show "Mrs Susan Portman, dining rooms" and she is listed in the Rate Books also.

In **1895** the dining rooms were taken on by August Emil Martin. He was born in Germany. In the 1901 Census, at no.85, he described himself as a "restaurant proprietor". They employed a restaurant foreman and four waitresses. After that, the business seems to have contracted a little: the **1911** Census shows no live-in employees. August Emil describes himself now as a coffee house keeper and his new wife and daughter May Amelia are shown as assisting in the business. Also living at no. 85 are the Clover family, 4 people in two rooms. Mr Clover calls himself a "hotel waiter" so it's just possible he was actually working in the coffee shop.

Directories suggest that William James Allen took over the dining rooms in **1915** and Mrs Hannah Allen (his widow?) from 1916 to 1919, then Ernest West in 1920 and 1921, and George Daniel Millis in 1922 and 1923. Charles Bardwell took over in **1924** and continued till at least 1945. The 1939 Register shows him (recorded as "caterer") there (born 17 May 1895) with his wife Ivy (born 1899) and their son Herbert, a warehouse assistant (born 1923). The directories are silent after WW2 until **1959** when Albert Henry Bagg is listed running dining rooms at no.85 up till 1966.

In **1967** it is listed simply as "Jim's Café" through till 1974. Nothing then till 1978 when it is listed as "'Eats' café". Nothing is listed thereafter through to 1991 when the last directory was published, not necessarily because nothing was there, but the directories themselves became much more cursory and would look at a street of mostly residential houses and just move on.