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Church Lane, Marchington, Staffs ST14 8LJ

22 May 2019

Dear Sirs

Application for change of use for The Dog & Partridge, Marchington

Please find enclosed a completed application form for change of use.

I purchased the Dog and Partridge located in the village of Marchington, Staffs, in September 2012. The business is primarily a restaurant but is also licensed to sell alcohol. We currently live above the business, but we are now seeking a change of use with the intention to convert the whole of the property into to a family home for ourselves. The reasons for this request are listed below.

- When we bought the business, there was very little in terms of competition in the immediate area however, this has changed radically over the past 3 years and we are now competing for restaurant trade with the Roebuck Arms, Draycott (2.5 km), The Swan Inn, Draycott (3 km), The White Hart Uttoxeter (6.5 km), and Neil Morrissey's restaurant in Bramshall (10k), to name but a few. This competition has resulted in a significant downturn in visitors to our restaurant and as a result has severely affected our livelihood. Additionally, the Meynell Ingram Arms near Abbot's Bromley has now been bought by Berkeley Inns and has reopened after a major refit. We are very much a 'destination restaurant' and as we are located in a small village, we do not have the undeniable benefit of attracting passing trade.
- The previous owners of the Dog & Partridge ran the business as a restaurant for 3 years, and before that the place had a very chequered history and was either closed or changed hands regularly. I have worked very successfully in this industry for all of my life and have managed to revive many failing businesses but with the current over-saturation of competition around us, even for someone with my extensive experience in the trade, keeping the Dog & Partridge as a viable local business is becoming impossible. I also believe that it would be extremely difficult to sell as a going concern because of the reasons listed above.
- Approximately 90% of our diners are from outside of Marchington, with locals eating with us only very occasionally. As stated above we are, of course licensed, but the majority of people drinking with us are diners.

- The Bulls Head, which is located in the centre of the village, is the preferred place for Marchington locals to drink. This is a 'wet' business and they do not serve any food and Marchington Parish Council have, in fact, placed an Asset of Community Value (ACV) on this business. I believe that the closure of the Dog & Partridge as a business would only serve to strengthen local trade for the Bulls Head as it would be the only, and the preferred, place to drink in the village.
- Additionally, there have been several craft/micro-breweries which have opened up over the past few years which are very popular and in direct competition with the wet trade we do. There is the Cask and Pottle in Tutbury but in particular, two in Uttoxeter, the Horse and Dove and more recently the Uttoxeter Brewing Company, both of which are the preferred choice for the majority of the members of Uttoxeter Camera.
- Uttoxeter Cricket Club have recently moved to play their home matches in Marchington and there has been significant investment in the clubhouse. We understand that the cricket club have now been issued with a license to serve alcohol but that aside, the Bulls Head is still their preferred location for a drink on match days as it is located just across the road.
- In an attempt to increase turnover, we have tried to host more events at the Dog and Partridge, some of which have been held outside. These have caused significant complaints from neighbours, some going as far as to try to raise a petition to stop us holding events, despite us having all the correct paperwork/permissions. As we have a very small carpark, there have also been 'issues' from neighbours regarding visitors parking on the road.

In conclusion, I believe that it is worth mentioning that we do not intend to develop or extend the current footprint of the building, in fact we would perhaps at some point in the future reduce the footprint and seek permission to demolish the ugly single storey, flat roofed modern brick built addition to the rear of the property, which would mean that the property would be taken back to its original state. It is purely our intention to cease trading as a business and change the downstairs of the original building into our family home.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Paul Needham