

Supporting Planning Statement
(Incorporating Design and Access (and Travel) Statement and Retail Assessment)

492824

To accompany the planning application for the change of use of
Sandleigh, Croyde
From residential to day- with residential unit
time café

PLANNING

27 OCT 2009

1.0 Background/ Context (including community involvement)

- 1.1 This application relates primarily to a change of use with minimal operational development involved. Therefore the focus of this statement relates to the planning justification for this use, in terms of the A3 cafe element, together with an 'Access (and Travel) Statement'. However for completeness it also covers all the headings set out in Circular 01/2006 in relation to *Design and Access Statements*.
- 1.2 Sandleigh is a two bedroomed dwelling house located on Moor lane Croyde outside of the main settlement boundary (that is the development boundary as identified in the North Devon Local Plan). The property is owned by the National Trust and lies within an extensive area of Trust land ownership at Croyde, which includes Middleborough Hill and Baggy Point.
- 1.3 The property has been in use as a single dwelling house since 1993 when the Trust took ownership.
- 1.4 In December 2007 the National Trust held a public consultation event in Croyde to invite suggestions as to the best future use of the property. This event was attended by around 50 people, with approximately 20 written responses. The overwhelming view of attendees was that the property should continue to be used in part as a residential property, but with also a tea room facility, and that the kitchen garden should be restored. The possibility was also raised of it incorporating storage facilities for local surfers ancillary to a cafe operation.
- 1.5 Following a marketing exercise a tenant has been selected to implement the use that had been established through the consultation event as the one being most preferred by the local community. This planning application seeks planning consent for that use.

2.0 Use/ Amount

- 2.1 This application seeks planning consent for the change of use of the ground floor of Sandleigh to a day-time café (A3 Use Class). The café will be open for business daily between 09.00 and 18.00 and will have a seated capacity of around 50. The first floor will remain as a self contained residential unit occupied by the tenant of the building.
- 2.2 The change of use only requires minor operational development, that needs planning consent, in the form of a new window in the rear elevation of the property which will be the sole window in the ground floor store room. The proposed window will be located in the north elevation which adjoins land in National Trust ownership.

2.3 In the yard the existing concrete surface will be broken up, and a walled garden created to grow produce to serve the tea room, together with a new concrete paving slab surface. The existing toilet in the outbuilding will also be improved to meet current regulations. However none of these additional works, in themselves need planning permission.

3.0 Planning justification – the Development Plan (including retail assessment).

3.1 The Development Plan currently consists of the adopted North Devon Local Plan (July 2006) and the saved policies in the Devon Structure Plan (adopted 2004). Policies in the Devon Structure Plan (DSP) and the adopted North Devon Local Plan (NDLP) that are considered particularly relevant to the proposal are assessed below:

3.2 DSP: Policy T03 (Tourism Development in Rural Areas)

The proposed facility, a day-time café, is directly related to existing recreational and tourist functions of the immediate area, and will in particular service the growth in surfing. It will support the local economy in Croyde which is dominated by tourism, with surfing playing a particularly important role (NDLP; para 31.13). The scale of the use, reusing the ground floor of an existing modest dwelling house, is compatible with the surrounding area, which includes tourist accommodation and facilities, as well as residential properties.

3.3 NDLP: Policy COM1 (Retailing Proposals)

The proposed use has arisen from a '*bottom up approach*', by the identification of the preferred use of the site by the local community. Therefore, although an A3 retail use (a day time café) is being proposed, a sequential approach to site selection, under the terms of Policy COM1, is not considered appropriate in this case. Not only does the NDLP not define or designate a 'village centre' for Croyde, but the use will serve a specific local and tourist need in the location it is situated, that cannot be provided for within the village development boundary. It will therefore not harm retail viability or vitality within Croyde village itself, but will rather support the local economy which, as mentioned above, is dominated by tourism, and surfing being particularly important (North Devon Local Plan; para 31.13). Accessibility and environmental issues will be considered separately under the following policies.

3.4 NDLP: Policy DVS3 (Amenity Considerations)

Immediately opposite the site on Moor Lane are two residential properties, and others are nearby. However a day-time café of the scale proposed is not anticipated to bring significant new activity along Moor Lane. It is expected to serve people already walking along the lane, whether they have parked in the nearby National Trust car park and on their way to or from the beach, or they are walking along the South West Coast Path. There will be no evening operation of the use when activity would be more likely to harm residential amenity.

- 3.5 **NDLP: Policies TRA1 (Sustainable Transport Choices), TRA 3 (Walking and Cycling) and TRA 6 (General highway Considerations)**
The development is not likely in itself to generate a significant amount of travel or have an impact on the local highway network. Despite the fact that Moor lane does not have a separate footway for its whole length, the site can be said to be located on a relatively “safe, attractive and convenient” pedestrian and cycling route, being located on the South West Coast Path as well as on the identified *Strategic Pedestrian / Cycle Network* in the NDLP, which runs down Moor Lane. The site is within easy reach of the main village. Car parking and cycle parking is provided for by the existing National Trust car park on Moor Lane.

4.0 Layout

- 4.1 The site was not chosen for the use, rather the use was chosen for the site. A day-time café was considered an appropriate use of the site through the community consultation exercise. It is considered to be compatible with the surrounding area, which includes tourist accommodation and facilities.
- 4.2 The ground floor of the building will operate as the café with kitchen and seating areas as shown the supporting plans. The toilet facilities will be located in the existing outbuilding.

5.0 Scale/ Appearance/ Landscaping

- 5.1 The operation development associated with the change of use is minimal. The proposed new window is not considered to be harmful to the appearance of the building, and is necessary to bring natural light to a ground floor store room, and will help reduce electricity consumption.
- 5.2 The walled garden is not visible to passers by but bringing it into productive use as a kitchen garden for the use of the café will have positive sustainability benefits, and contribute to wider campaigns to maximise the use of locally sourced produce, and minimise food miles.

6.0 Climate Change

- 6.1 The proposed change of use is not expected to contribute to greenhouse gas emissions by generating significant amounts of vehicular travel. Electricity and fuel consumption from the operation of the use will be minimised as far as possible. Waste recycling will be incorporated wherever possible.

7.0 Access and Travel Statement

7.1 Access to the site and travel generation:

The site is located on Moor Lane and a National Trust public car park is located approximately 50m away up the lane. The development is not likely in itself to generate a significant amount of travel or have an impact on the local highway network. Although Moor Lane does not have a separate footway for its whole length, the site is located on an existing pedestrian and cycling route, being located on the South West Coast Path as well as on the identified *Strategic Pedestrian / Cycle Network* in the NDLP, which runs down Moor Lane. The site is also within easy reach of the main village on foot.

7.2 Approaches/ entrances

Approach to the front entrance door is directly off the lane and is suitable for wheel chair access. An additional pedestrian access will be created from the rear elevation providing a link from the adjoining Baggy Point Car Park.

7.3 Circulation

The café will only be on the ground floor with no stairs

7.4 WCs

Outside toilet accessed from the courtyard

7.5 Access Conclusion

The site is accessible by sustainable transport choices, in terms of walking and cycling, and also has a public car park nearby. Access for wheelchair users has been considered and can be accommodated.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 The proposed use of the ground floor of Sandleigh as a day-time café has arisen from community consultation and is considered to not only be an appropriate use of the building, and compatible with the surrounding area, but to positively support the local tourist economy. The day-time use should not harm the amenities of neighbouring residents and is not likely to impact on the local highway network. The use is conveniently located on the *Strategic Pedestrian / Cycle Network* and will serve tourists using other facilities within Croyde.

8.2 The operation development associated with the change of use is minimal and will not harm the appearance of the property or the area.

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