

Item No 06:-

17/03213/FUL

**Compton House
High Street
Moreton-In-Marsh
Gloucestershire
GL56 0AX**

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Change of use of existing offices to part beauty salon/spa and part offices at Compton House High Street Moreton-in-Marsh Gloucestershire GL56 0AX

Full Application 17/03213/FUL	
Applicant:	Centred In Beauty
Agent:	
Case Officer:	Joe Seymour
Ward Member(s):	Councillor Alison Coggins
Committee Date:	11th October 2017
RECOMMENDATION:	PERMIT

Main Issues:

(a) Principle of Change of Use

Reasons for Referral:

The property is owned by Cotswold District Council.

1. Site Description:

Compton House is an office building located on the High Street of Moreton-in-Marsh. The building is listed Grade II and it forms part of the same range of buildings that is used by Cotswold District Council as its Moreton Area office. The site is also located within the Moreton-in-Marsh Conservation Area.

2. Relevant Planning History:

None.

3. Planning Policies:

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
LPR15 Conservation Areas
LPR18 Develop within Development Boundaries
LPR24 Employment Uses

4. Observations of Consultees:

N/A

5. View of Town Council:

No response.

6. Other Representations:

One letter of objection has been received which raises concerns with the fact that there are already three beauty salons within the town, including one next door.

7. Applicant's Supporting Information:

Application form

Drawings

8. Officer's Assessment:

(a) Principle of Change of Use

The application seeks planning permission to change the use of Compton House from an office (B1) use to a beauty salon/spa (sui generis) use. A sui generis use is simply a miscellaneous use class that includes certain land uses that are not covered by the rest of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As Amended).

Local Plan Policy 24 (Employment Uses) states that proposals resulting in the loss of B1 uses should only be permitted if:

- a) the site is not required to meet existing or future employment needs,
- b) the use of the site for employment purposes is causing serious environmental or amenity problems; or
- c) an alternative use would offer local community benefits which outweigh the loss of the employment use.

In this particular case, the proposal does not involve the loss of an employment use, even though the proposed change is to move away from B1 office use. This is because the proposed sui generis use is an employment-generating use. The applicant is an entrepreneur who is looking to establish a business at the site and employ local people to help it operate. This is considered to be a positive for the town and the street scene generally because the site is currently vacant and allowing a new business into the premises would help to contribute to the vitality of the High Street.

A local resident has raised concerns that the proposed use is already popular in the High Street and that another beauty salon is not required. Local Plan Policy 24 and indeed other local and national planning policies do not preclude the duplication of this type of use within commercial centres. It is considered that the market, and not the planning system, should dictate whether there is a demand for another beauty salon in Moreton's commercial centre.

Changing the use of the building and allowing a new business to operate from the premises would help to sustain the use of the listed building as a heritage asset. The longer a listed building remains vacant increases the likelihood of it falling into disrepair. The proposed use is considered to be compatible with the listed building because only minor internal alterations (which are subject to a separate application for listed building consent) are required and the historic fabric of the building would remain unaltered.

For these reasons, the principle of changing the use of the site from an office to a beauty salon/spa is considered to be compliant with Local Plan Policy 24 a) and c) with criterion b) not being applicable in this case. The proposal is also considered to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) aim of boosting economic growth in town centres (NPPF Section 2) and re-using designated heritage assets for alternative uses to sustain their significance (NPPF Section 12).

9. Conclusion:

The application is recommended for approval, subject to the following conditions.

10. Proposed conditions:

The development shall be started by 3 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the following drawing numbers: 202/H/100B PLAN 1, 202/H/101B PLAN 2 and the unnumbered site location plan and block plan.

Reason: For purposes of clarity and for the avoidance of doubt, in accordance with paragraphs 203 and 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework.