

Planning Statement

Application: Retrospective Change of Use to Pilates Studio and Approval of Operating Hours

Site Address: 22 Church Road, Burgess Hill RH15 9AE

Applicant: Amy Bennett

Local Planning Authority: Mid Sussex District Council

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning application for the change of use of the premises at 22 Church Road to a Pilates studio, together with approval of the proposed operating hours.

The premises are being fitted out internally to facilitate Pilates instruction and wellbeing services. No significant external alterations have been undertaken as part of the development.

2. Site Description and Planning History

The application site comprises an existing commercial unit within an established commercial area.

Historically, the premises have been used as both an American diner and a retail unit. The proposal therefore represents the continued occupation of an established commercial property rather than the introduction of development into a previously undeveloped location.

3. Description of Development

The application seeks retrospective consent for:

- Change of use of the premises to a Pilates studio.
- Retention of internal alterations associated with the operation of the studio.
- Approval of the following operating hours:

Day	Opening Hours
Monday to Friday	07:00 – 20:30
Saturday	08:00 – 17:00

Sunday	08:00 – 15:00
Bank Holidays	08:00 – 15:00

The works undertaken are primarily internal in nature and were required to provide a safe and functional environment for Pilates classes and individual instruction.

4. Planning Considerations

Appropriate Commercial Use

A Pilates studio is a low-impact use that provides health, fitness and wellbeing services to the local community. The use generates significantly less noise, odour and general disturbance than many alternative commercial uses, including the previous restaurant use.

The proposal therefore represents a suitable and sustainable use of an existing commercial unit.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The operation of a Pilates studio is generally quiet in nature. Activities take place indoors and do not involve amplified music, extraction equipment, late-night activity, alcohol sales or deliveries associated with restaurant operations.

The proposed hours are considered reasonable and appropriate for a health and fitness facility and are unlikely to result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers.

The Pilates studio represents a significantly lower-impact use than the previous restaurant use. Unlike a diner, the proposed use does not require cooking operations, extraction equipment, food deliveries and waste collections associated with restaurant activities. As a result, the proposal is expected to generate less noise, odour and disturbance than the lawful use previously operating from the premises.

The 07:00 opening time is intended to accommodate early-morning classes for local residents and commuters before the working day. The nature of Pilates instruction is low intensity and takes place entirely within the building, meaning the early opening is not expected to cause unacceptable disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.

Highway and Parking Considerations

The premises occupy an existing commercial unit and utilise established access arrangements.

Pilates classes typically operate through booked sessions with staggered arrival and departure times, reducing pressure on parking and local highway infrastructure.

The proposal is therefore not expected to create significant adverse transport impacts.

Design and Appearance

No significant external alterations have been undertaken and the character and appearance of the building remain unchanged.

The proposal preserves the visual appearance of the property and surrounding area.

Economic and Community Benefits

The Pilates studio provides a valuable local health and wellbeing facility, encouraging physical activity and supporting public health objectives.

The business contributes positively to the local economy by:

- Bringing a commercial unit into active use.
- Supporting local employment.
- Increasing footfall within the area.
- Providing accessible health and wellbeing services for residents.

5. Building Regulations

Internal alterations carried out within the premises have been addressed separately through the Building Regulations process where required. These matters are distinct from the planning issues under consideration within this application.

6. Conclusion

The proposal represents an appropriate and low-impact commercial use within an existing commercial premises.

The Pilates studio provides health and wellbeing benefits to the local community, makes productive use of an existing unit and results in fewer potential amenity impacts than the previous restaurant use.

No significant external alterations have been undertaken and the proposed operating hours are reasonable for the nature of the business.

For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.