AWDM/1272/18

Ready Steady Store
1 - 3 Eastern Avenue
Shoreham-by-Sea
BN43 6PD
01273 020794

shoreham@readysteadystore.com

Head of Planning Services
Adur and Worthing Councils
Portland House
44 Richmond Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 1HS

ADUR & WORTHING
10 OCT 2018
PLANNING SERVICES

4th October 2018

Dear Sir,

Ready Steady Store, 1-3 Eastern Avenue, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 6PD

I am the store manager with additional responsibilities as an Area Manager of the storage solutions business in Shoreham that is operated by Ready Steady Store on behalf of Albox Services Limited. This has been the arrangement since the store was opened in January 2017. I am present on site on several working days each week, normally between the hours of 8.30 – 5.30 weekdays and 8.30 – 13.00 on Saturdays. There are two other members of staff on site, who report to me regularly during each day when I am not on the premises.

I have recently been made aware of representations submitted by local residents, in response to the current application to extend the hours of operation. I have read through the letters / emails. I note that some of the representations are submitted in the form of a standard letter, whereby a number of points are repeated.

1. Since the store opening in January 2017, there have been the following specific isolated incidents:

- CCTV shows that one customer was dropped off with bags and boxes at 5.20am on 4th September to become a customer (not vacating). A store member arrived at 8.20am to open the store at 8.30am. The customer was driven to the store and was left there with her goods. Customers are prevented from entering the store prior to 7.30am and after 8pm by digital controls. Not all customers have access out of hours; it is a service that has to be paid for. If a customer is anti-social then the ability to access the store out-of-hours would be withdrawn.

- There have been two incidents on a Saturday when customers arrived at the premises close to the 1pm store closing time during the period January 2017 to September 2018 when the store management team sought to strictly observe the 1pm closing time. Both customers were asked to leave at 1pm and waited with their goods outside the premises until they were picked up with the goods. The customers had gone from outside the premises by the time that the store management team had completed locking up the building up at approximately 1.30pm in both instances.

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Neither of the above incidents generated a complaint at the time that the incidents occurred.

2. In addition, as a result of letters of objection to the planning application I have become aware that the lights have been left on all night. Examination of CCTV on 4 September in connection with the above incident confirmed this to be the case. The lights were left on all night in error; the timer issue has been resolved and the downlighters should no longer stay on all night; the instruction from Albox Services issued at the time that the store opened was that the lights should not be left on all night.
   I understand that Albox Services Limited are prepared to accept a planning condition whereby all lights are turned off 30 minutes either side of opening hours which is something that Ready Steady Store can implement with a properly functioning timer.

3. Since the store opening in January 2017, the store team has only received one direct 'soft' ie verbal complaint. Colin Snook of 128 Gordon Road (different name to resident at 128 Gordon Road who is an objector) discussed the angle of the external downlighters with a member of the store team at a marketing stand held at Co-op food store in Ham Road on 24th March 2018 that were causing shadows in his garden during hours of darkness.

   The issue was raised by me on 27th March with my line management. As a result, an instruction was issued by Albox Services Limited to adjust the angle of the downlighters and the work was completed 18th May. The store team visited Mr Snook on the same day (18th May) to advise that an adjustment had been made.

4. On the basis that the store team has only ever received one approach from local residents since the opening of the store (as described above), I am surprised and disappointed by comments made by residents in response to the current planning application.

5. I note allegations about parking problems, cases where cars have been scratched and dumping of goods and would respond as follows:

- There is ample parking within the premises and accordingly, there is no need for the store staff to park in neighbouring streets and they do not do so.

- With regard to allegations of car scratching, no such incidents have been reported to me or to any of my staff. I would have expected to have been notified of such incidents, especially if the subject of an insurance claim.

- I note allegations in relation to more traffic and noise. Based on my experience and the experience of my staff, the store does not generate noise nor does it attract regular traffic movements by the very nature of the operation. The store staff recorded the number of all visits to the store for the entire first year of operation and for a sample month this summer as the store approached being full in operational terms. I understand that the traffic movements were submitted in connection with the planning application.

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- I also note the suggestion that items are dumped in the neighbouring area. I have not witnessed any dumping in or close to our site and again I have never received a complaint in relation to this matter.

6. To confirm, in almost two years I have received no complaints from local residents, apart from the approach by Mr Snook. In any event, RSS are fully committed to conducting their business in an effective and efficient manner, without causing disturbance to neighbouring properties.

Yours faithfully

George Lawley

[redacted]

registered in England nº 05631335
VAT registration nº 887 9897 11