

Business Information Sheet

Number 5d: Commercial Property: Planning Use Classes Guidance

Even if you are proposing to use an existing unit you should check to make sure that the permission for the unit covers the use that you want to use it for.

In planning terms, there is a distinction between a shop (Class A1) a hot food takeaway (Class A5) or restaurant (Class A3).

- A1: a retail shop
- A2: professional and financial services (e.g. estate agency, bank)
- A3: restaurant or café
- A4: drinking establishments (e.g. pub or bar)
- A5: hot food takeaway

Even if the unit has permission for the relevant use, you may require separate permissions or consents for ventilation equipment etc. You also need to establish whether the building is a Listed building as further consents may be required.

If you wish to undertake building work on your premises, you may need to obtain planning permission.

How can you obtain advice on whether permission is needed?

The Government has published a guidance note Planning Permission: A Guide for Business which can be downloaded from <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpermission>.

This provides information on the planning system for businesses in England, provides guidance on when

planning permission is required, how to make a planning application, and what happens afterwards. However, it is not an authoritative interpretation of the law. If, after reading this booklet, you are still unclear how to proceed, you should ask the planning department at Harrow Council for advice.

You can check informally with the council whether your proposed development needs planning permission. Please see contact details below.

HARROW COUNCIL – INITIAL ADVICE

They can view the guidance on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/>

We also operate a Pre-application service, this provides them with professional guidance prior to submission of a formal application. There is a charge for this service and the cost is dependent on the size, scale and complexity of the proposal
http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/200074/planning/654/pre-application_advice

For basic enquiries they can email
planning.applications@harrow.gov.uk or telephone 020 8901 2650.

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