

Planning Justification – Change of Use from Office to Cookery School

The application seeks planning permission for a change of use from **office use (Use Class E)** to a **cookery school for children and adults**.

The proposed use will operate as a small-scale, session-based cookery school providing structured cooking and food education classes for both children and adults. The activity is educational in nature, focusing on practical life skills, nutrition, confidence-building and family engagement. Sessions will be pre-booked, supervised, and delivered in small groups, ensuring the use remains well managed and controlled at all times.

Safeguarding and Children's Safety

The cookery school will operate with a strong focus on **child safeguarding and safety**. All sessions involving children will be fully supervised by appropriately trained staff, with clear staff-to-child ratios in place to ensure safe and effective supervision. Age-appropriate activities will be delivered in a controlled environment, with equipment and layouts designed to minimise risk.

Safeguarding policies and procedures will be in place and adhered to at all times, including safe arrival and collection arrangements for children attending sessions. Where appropriate, parents or carers will remain on site or will follow agreed drop-off and pick-up procedures. All staff working with children will be suitably vetted and trained in safeguarding and food safety.

The internal layout and operation of the premises will ensure clear visibility and safe movement throughout the space, reducing the risk of accidents and allowing continuous supervision. The nature of the use is fully contained within the building, with no external play or congregation areas, ensuring minimal impact on neighbouring properties while maintaining a safe environment for children.

Impact on the Area

The proposal is considered appropriate within its setting and compatible with surrounding uses. Unlike a traditional school, the cookery school will not operate on a full-time, all-day basis. Instead, activities will take place during defined time slots, primarily after school hours, weekends and occasional daytime sessions. This limits the overall intensity of use when compared to continuous office occupation.

The change of use is not expected to result in unacceptable impacts in terms of noise, disturbance or traffic. All activities will take place indoors, with no external amplified noise. The number of attendees per session will be limited, and arrival and departure times will be managed to minimise congestion. Overall footfall is anticipated to be comparable to, or less intensive than, a typical office use over the course of the day.

Planning Balance

The proposal supports local and national planning objectives by encouraging community-based learning, improving food skills, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting family wellbeing. It provides a positive and inclusive facility that benefits both children and adults without detriment to the character or amenity of the surrounding area.

In design and operational terms, the proposal represents a sustainable and appropriate reuse of an existing building. No significant external alterations are proposed, and the development makes effective use of existing infrastructure. For the reasons set out above, the proposed change of use is

considered acceptable in planning terms, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.