PLANNING STATEMENT

Land at Unit 1, Hound Farm, Hound Lane, Netley Abbey

Prepared For

HOUND FARM PARTNERSHIP

Job No: 6412

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of the Hound Farm Partnership who own the land and buildings at Hound Farm, Hound Lane, Netley Abbey.

1.2 The application follows the refusal of application F/11/70000 on 17th January 2012 and has been made following a meeting on site with officers and local ward member on 25th January 2012. Subsequent to this meeting further information and amended plans was submitted to officers for further consideration. The feedback from officers to this additional information was favourable.

1.3 The application proposes an extension to the existing industrial compound to the western side of the Hound Farm industrial complex, occupied by Glulam Supplies Limited, to provide turning space for articulated lorries within the compound.

1.4 Section 2 of this statement describes the site and the proposal. Section 3 considers the relevant policy background against which the application falls to be considered and Section 4 sets out the reasons why the additional turning space is required and considers the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the countryside. Section 5 concludes that the benefits deriving from the proposals outweigh any concerns over the loss of openness of the local gap and impact on the character and appearance of the countryside.

2 THE SITE AND PROPOSAL

2.1 The site lies in open countryside and originally formed part of the complex of farm buildings at Hound Farm and now used for a variety of industrial purposes. The site now has the appearance of an industrial estate. The buildings are well screened from the road by a well developed front boundary hedge and hedgerow trees and the buildings on the site are set well back from the road. Glimpses into the complex are available though the two access points into the site from Hound Road.

2.2 The application site lies to the western side of the Hound Farm complex and is enclosed by well developed boundary hedges to the western and southern boundaries. The land immediately to the south of the site between the southern boundary hedge and roadside hedge is currently in agricultural use and is in the same ownership as the application site. The field is currently accessed by a field gate in the southern boundary hedge of the site.

2.3 Photographs of the site are attached to this statement as **Appendix 1**.

2.4 The application site is occupied by Glulam Supplies Limited which is a company which specialises in the supply and manufacture of laminated beams used in construction. Glulam have operated from the site since 1996 and employ 8 staff on site.

2.5 The site contains a number of buildings. The largest building is the former agricultural building which contains the workshop (see photograph 1) with attached single storey office building to the eastern side of the workshop. In addition there are a number of timber storage buildings to either side of the principal building and to the south of the principal building adjacent to the site access. To the front of the principal building is a concrete base used for the storage of unfinished laminated beams and for the manoeuvring of a forklift vehicle used for moving the beams (see photographs 2 and 3).

2.6 The application proposes to extend the yard area to the south to provide space within the site to allow for the turning and parking of articulated lorries within the

site. It is proposed that this area be surfaced in scalpings. A new boundary hedge and trees provided to enclose the extended yard.

2.7 The application proposes the re-positioning of the agricultural access into the adjoining field and full details of the proposed hedge and tree planting are submitted as part of the application.

3 RELEVANT POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 The relevant policy framework is set out in the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review.

3.2 The site is located in a local gap as defined in the proposals map of the Local Plan and therefore Policy 3.CO is relevant. This policy states that new development in the local gap will only be permitted for appropriate development where the development cannot be located elsewhere and it would not diminish the gap physically or visually.

3.3 Policy 17.CO relates to proposals to alter existing commercial sites in the countryside and states that such development will be permitted provided the proposal is in keeping with its surroundings and would not result in a significant increase in traffic associated with the site.

3.4 The frontage to the site is defined in the proposals map of the Local Plan and a frontage identified for landscape improvements. Policy 20.CO of the Local Plan states that proposals that would prejudice such landscape improvements or which would be detrimental to the quality of the landscape in these areas will be resisted. The policy also states that the developer's willingness to contribute towards improvements will be a material consideration.

4 EXPLANATORY COMMENTS

4.1 The application site is accessed over land in separate ownership, owned by Weston Plant Services, who occupy the front part of the site. The applicant's have a right of way over this area leading from the main road into the application site but have no rights to turn lorries on the Weston Plant Services land.

4.2 The laminated timber is delivered to the site by articulated lorry as the timbers are imported in 15.1 metres in lengths and cannot therefore be transported by smaller lorry. Currently there is insufficient space within the application site to enable an articulated lorry to turn within the site and therefore delivery lorries are required to turn on the land occupied by Weston Plant Services before reversing into the site.

4.3 This arrangement results in the access to Weston Plant Services, and the other industrial units to the north, being blocked whilst the delivery lorries turn right on entering the access and then reverse into the application site. This raises safety issues for other drivers and pedestrians accessing and leaving the complex and significantly reduces the land available to Weston Plant Services for the parking and turning of their vehicles. Complaints have been received from Weston Plant Services in relation to health and safety issues and damage caused to their vehicles by a lorry visiting Glulam turning on their land (see letters from Weston Plan Services and Glulam attached as **Appendix 2**).

4.4 Once lorries have entered and parked within the application site there is no space available for other lorries to enter the application and park. Each lorry takes about 45 minutes to unload and load and this results in lorries having to wait outside the site whilst loading and unloading takes place. Glulam currently have on average 30 to 40 lorry movements a week and about 10 of these movements are made by articulated lorry.

4.5 The application scheme seeks to address the problems highlighted above by providing an extended yard of sufficient size to allow articulated lorries to enter and access the site it forward gear. There would also be sufficient space to allow vehicular movements in and out of the site whilst loading and unloading takes

place leaving adequate space for the parking of other lorries and vans within the site.

4.6 The proposal would also increase the amount of manoeuvring space for the operation of the forklift available within the site. Currently the forklift unloads and loads lorries in a confined area. Bearing in mind that the beams are 15.1 metres in length; are of considerable weight and the beams are balanced on the forks of the forklift, increasing the space available for manoeuvring will significantly improve the health and safety for staff working on the site and visitors.

4.7 It is not proposed that the extended compound area would be used for the external storage of timber products or for any other purposes other than manoeuvring and parking of lorries during the working day. It is not anticipated that the extension of the compound will result in any material intensification of the use of the site.

4.8 The proposal requires the removal of the existing southern boundary hedge. This would be replaced with a new hedgerow forming the new southern boundary and further tree and understory planting is proposed in the area between the new southern boundary hedge and the roadside hedge. This would reinforce the screening provided by the existing roadside hedge.

4.9 Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal will result in new development within the defined Local Gap, the proposal is necessary to allow Glulam to continue to operate from the site and would improve the safety within the site and the Hound farm complex as a whole. Clearly it is not possible to locate the proposed development elsewhere outside the Local Gap. Whilst there would be a loss of part of the openness of the Local Gap as a result of the development, this loss in minor, and it is considered that this harm must be weighed against the benefits to Glulam and other businesses on the site and the benefits which will derive from the proposal.

4.10 Following the refusal of the previous application relating the site further discussions took place with officers on site and a number of questions were raised by officers. The questions raised relate to whether it is possible to reduce the amount of parking for lorries on site by staggering the times of deliveries and pick-up from the site; whether the business could relocate to another site; and whether it was

possible to redevelop the whole industrial estate to address the deficiencies of the access and turning. Attached as **Appendix 3** to this statement are the responses to these questions.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The proposal would enable the current problems associated with the turning of articulated lorries on the site to be addressed.

5.2 Whilst there would be some diminution of the Local Gap, bearing in mind the landscape mitigation which would be provided, it is considered that benefits to the businesses operating on the site outweigh any concerns there may be over the loss of openness in the Local Gap.