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01.00 INTRODUCTION

01.01 Generally

- 01.01.01 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of F&C Commercial Property Holdings Limited to support a full planning application for material changes at Unit 2 Strategic Park, Comines Way, Hedge End.
- 01.01.02 The site is approximately 1.74 Hectares / 4.30 Acres in area
- 01.01.03 The proposed changes comprise of:
- Change of use of B1(a) office, B1(b) research and development and B8 storage and distribution space uses into flexible Commercial, Business and Service use classes E (g) (i - iii) and B2 General Industrial / B8 Storage or Distribution use classes. Each will have ancillary office accommodation associated with the main use.
 - Associated changes to the external plant (removal of chiller plant and enclosure to south of building and provision of new chiller plant / enclosure) and the building elevations
 - Installation of 5no. new sectional shutter doors in the south elevation
 - Installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof
 - Removal of the sprinkler tank
- 01.01.04 The planning application is supported by the following drawings and documents:
- Application Form
 - 22009-A-PL-001 rev A Location Plan
 - 22009-A-PL-002 rev A Block Plan
 - 22009-A-PL-006 rev A Existing Floor Plans
 - 22009-A-PL-007 rev A Existing Elevations
 - 22009-A-PL-010 rev A Proposed Site Layout
 - 22009-A-PL-011 rev A Proposed Floor Plans
 - 22009-A-PL-015 rev A Proposed Elevations
 - Design Access and Planning Statement

02.00 ASSESSMENT

02.01 Site Location

02.01.01 The site is located close to the M27 motorway east of Southampton and to the west of the village of Hedge End.



Location of site in the context of Hedge End (image courtesy of Google Maps)



Aerial Photograph of the site (image courtesy of Google Maps)

02.02 Site Description

- 02.02.01 The site is approached via Comines Way, an access road off the traffic island linking the A27 and the A334. Before entering the site there is a junction with Upper Northam Drive, a cul-de-sac serving a mix of residential and industrial properties to the south.
- 02.02.02 The safeguarded employment site includes two large format commercial buildings with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Whilst the site is an established employment area which has an urban fringe character, it is within the designated countryside and Strategic Gap between Southampton and Hedge End.

02.03 Site Photographs

	
01 The site entrance on Comines Way	02 West Elevation
	
03 South Elevation / service yard	04 Service Yard looking across to Unit 1
	
05 East Elevation from Service Yard	06 North Elevation with plant enclosure



07 Foul water pump station and sprinkler tank



08 South Elevation with plant enclosure



09 External stair to north side



10 Bicycle Stores to north west corner of car park

02.04 Site History

02.04.01 Unit 2 was originally occupied by Tandberg Television from 2006, during which time they made various changes and alterations to the building to meet the demands of the developing business, cumulating in a two storey extension to the east side in 2012. Ericsson Media took over the lease in 2013, which then passed to Mediakind. They are in the process of moving out with the property becoming vacant in August 2022. Whilst the current use class is hard to define precisely, it was considered to fall within a Research and Development facility use class which included storage and distribution activities. The adjacent Unit 1 until recently was occupied as a distribution facility with associated infrastructure.

02.05 Site Access and Parking

02.05.01 The existing vehicle and pedestrian entrance to Strategic Park is from Comines Way.

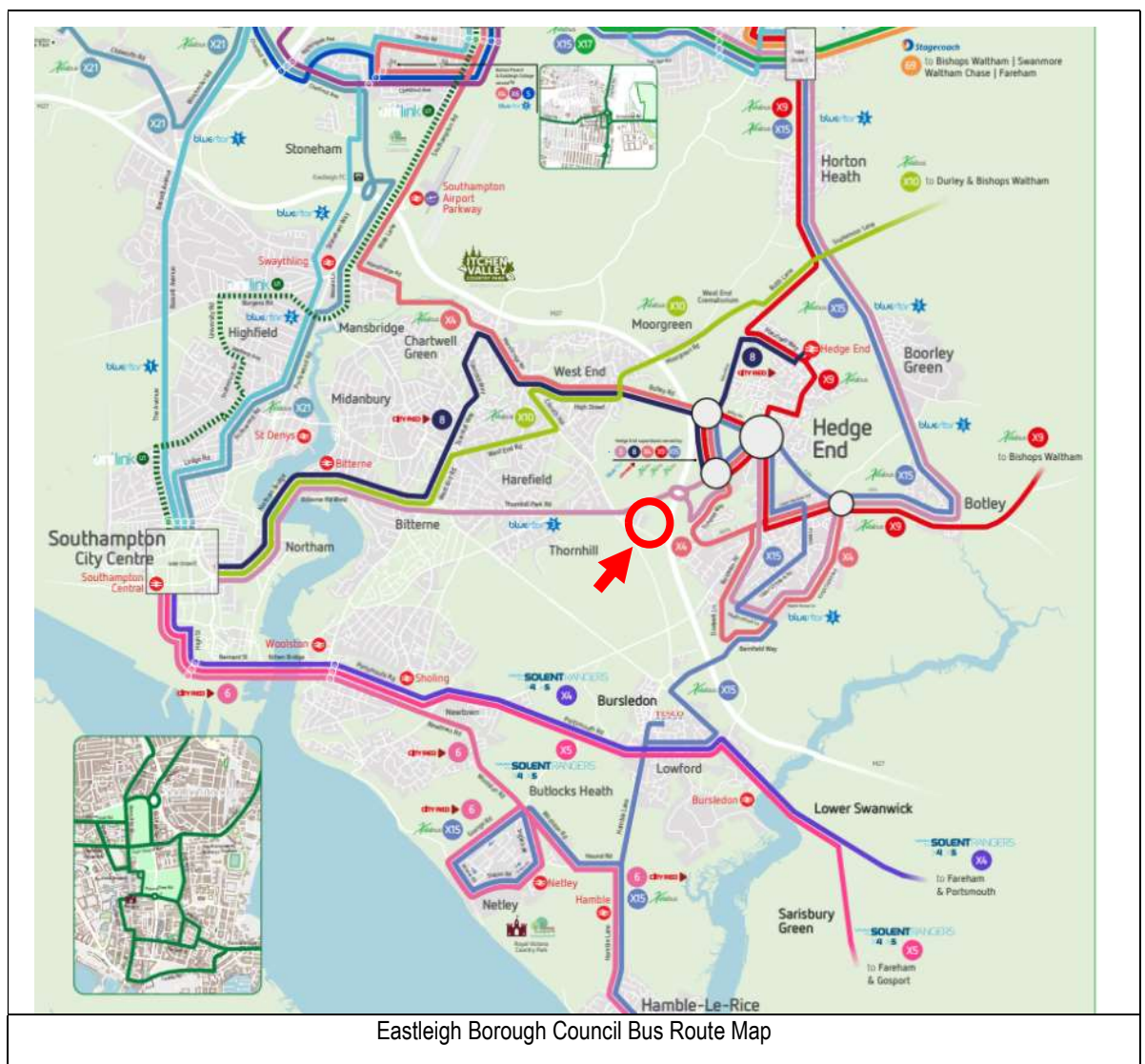
02.05.02 A car park with spaces for 91 vehicles, 6 disabled spaces, 10 motorcycle spaces and 42 bicycle spaces in covered storage is located to the west of the building.

02.05.03 The access road runs east to the service yard with spurs off to the car park to Unit 1 Strategic Park to the south.

02.06 Transport Infrastructure

02.06.01 The site is in a sustainable location with access to public bus services via the No.3 route, an hourly service passing along the A334 adjacent to the junction with Comines Way.

02.06.02 Junction 7 of the M27 motorway is in close proximity to the site.



02.07 Topography

02.07.01 The site is relatively flat with very little variation in levels.

02.08 Ecology

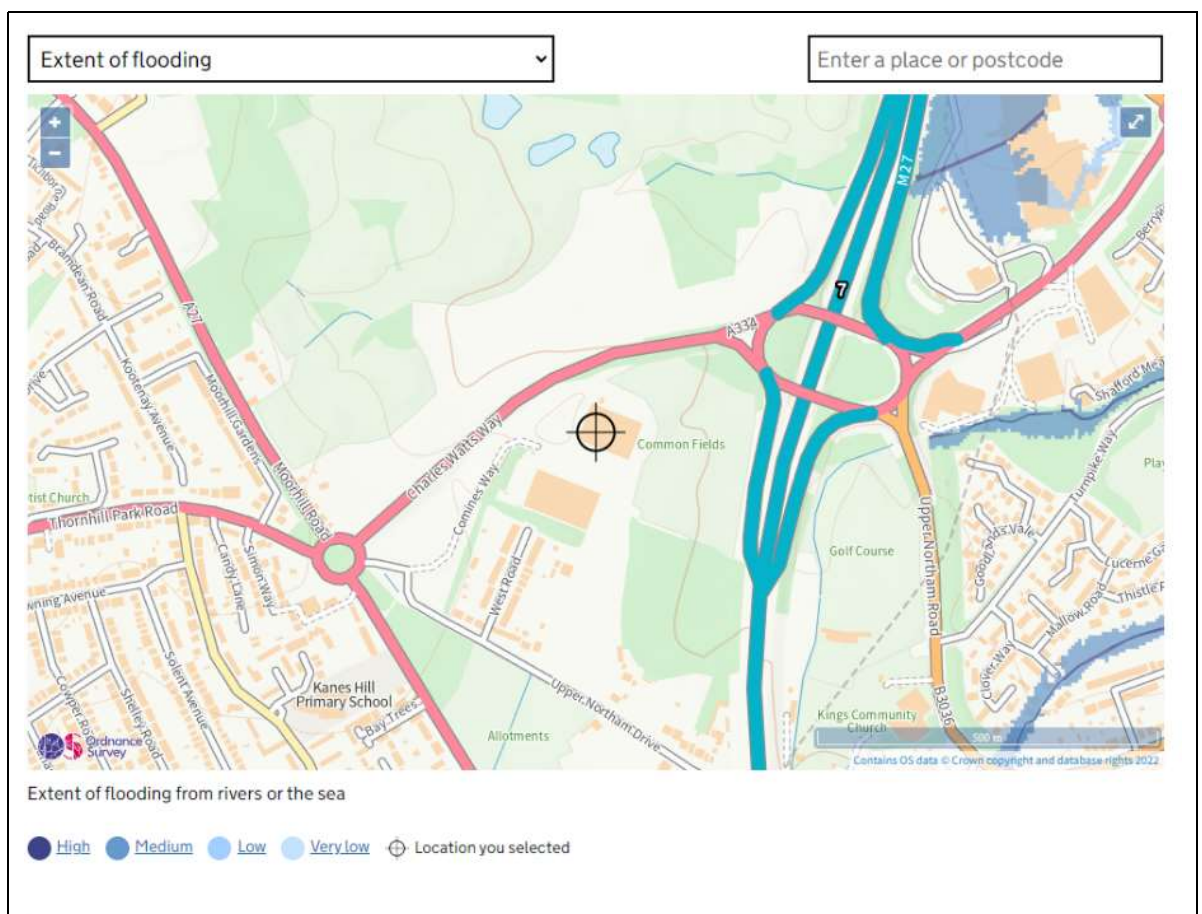
02.08.01 All habitats within the site have been deemed by previous surveys to be of negligible ecological importance. The woodland strip adjacent to the north-western site boundary is important at local level, but the activities within the site do not impact on this habitat.

02.09 Arboriculture

02.09.01 The site is bounded to the north, west and east by groups of mature trees which are not affected by the activities within the site. The trees along the boundary to the north and north-west are protected by a Group Tree Preservation Order reference 226-E, predominantly oak with some birch, beech, hawthorn, cherry and holly.

02.10 Flood Risk

02.10.01 The Environment A flood risk map indicates that the risks of flooding rivers, sea or from surface water is very low.



03.00 PLANNING

03.01 Relevant Planning History

- F/11/68675 Two storey rear extension to existing research and development/ industrial facility, new internal mezzanine floor to existing building and new plant compound, parking area, landscaping and cycle enclosure- Approved 05.01.2012
- F/07/60963 Installation of 1no. cycle shelter- 26.11.2007
- Z/32223/010/00 Extension to mezzanine floor for office use class B1 and installation of windows on east and south elevations of Unit 2- Withdrawn 15.01.2003
- Z/32223/009/00 Installation of three chiller units between industrial Units 1 and 2- Approved 23.12.1997
- Z/32223/006/00 Siting of satellite dishes to the east of Unit 2- Approved 11.06.1997
- Z/32223/005/00 Change of use of 1,234 square metres of production space in Unit 2 to offices- Approved 23.05.1997
- Z/32223/004/00 Change of use of existing **production floor space** and addition of mezzanine for office use. Car parking within yard- Approved 1996
- Z/32223/002/00 Siting of Sprinkler Tank and Pump House- Approved October 1995
- Z/32223/004/00 Reserved matters pursuant to application 32223, including external appearance, layout and details of roads, footpaths, drainage, street lighting, enclosures, levels, sound insulation, storage of refuse and materials- Approved June 1996 (as amended).
- Z/32223/00 Outline: Redevelopment of land to provide 9568.9 sq.m (103,000 sq.ft footprint, including and allowance for first floor office accommodation of 10,260 sq.ft) of **industrial** and warehouse floor space (B1c and B8) together with new access, parking, servicing- Approved April 1995

03.02 Planning History Summary

Having reviewed the planning history and various planning officer's reports, it is clear that a variety of occupiers have used both premises since the 1990s when the buildings were first constructed. Whilst the description of the development indicated a predominant B8 Storage and Distribution use and B1 office / research and development uses (now Class E g (i)(ii)), the premises have been used as the following over the years:

- Class E - Commercial, Business and Service

E(g) Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity:

E(g)(i) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions,

E(g)(ii) Research and development of products or processes

E(g)(iii) Industrial processes

- B8 Storage or distribution

- B2 General industrial - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class E(g) (previously class B1). It is important to note the reference to 'Production floorspace' in the planning history. Also note the original Outline permission included 'industrial' in the description of development (highlighted in bold above) although B2 use class not explicitly mentioned.

Chiller units were also granted permission previously and are still evident on the site today, implying manufacturing has taken place in the past.

03.03 Planning Policy

03.03.01 Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 (April 2022)

03.03.02 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

03.03.03 The recently Adopted Local Plan seeks to support Local Growth Sectors in Policy P7, resist pressure on existing employment land for other non-employment uses in Policy P8, secure the quality of local jobs in Policy P9, deliver a range of employment (including non-B Use-Class) in Policy P10 and meet the needs of local employers in Policy P11. All of which are relevant to this proposal.

03.03.04 Of most relevance is Policy DM15, which seeks to safeguard existing employment sites. This policy states that:

1. The major existing employment sites as identified on the policies map shall be retained predominantly in employment use classes B2, B8 and E(g). Within these sites the Borough Council will permit:

1. the redevelopment and intensification of use of sites for Use Class B2, B8 and E(g)(ii)/(iii) employment uses;
2. changes of use between use classes B2, B8 and E(g)(ii)/(iii); and
3. workforce training opportunities as defined in policy DM16 below;

Subject to the general development criteria and transport policies of this Local Plan including the impact on residential areas.

2. Exceptionally, employment uses other than those in use classes B2, B8 or E(g)(ii)/(iii) (but not E(a)/(b)/(c) uses or pubs, drinking establishments or hot food takeaways) may be permitted on these sites provided that:
 1. they would not have a significant impact on the continued primary use of the site
 2. the existing site is causing, or could cause, significant harm to highway safety or to the amenities of the area or to local residents.
3. The redevelopment or change of use of other existing employment sites not identified on the policies map currently in class B2, B8 or E(g)(ii)/(iii) uses to non-employment uses, where this is not permitted development, will be permitted provided that it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer in demand for employment use and that criteria a. and b. above are satisfied.

03.03.05 Whilst the site is not specifically identified on the policies map, the premises continue to be in demand locally for a flexible set of commercial uses. The refurbishment works taking place would enable the building to better reflect modern day business needs and give greater height internally once some of the mezzanine floors are removed. There is a high demand for flexible commercial premises in this location given its proximity to the key strategic road network, alongside its ability to attract a potential workforce across the south coast.

04.00 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

04.01 Description

04.01.01 The current Use Class designation is B1a Offices, B1b Research and development of products or processes and B8 storage and distribution use class. Given the recent changes to the use classes order, B1 a-c now fall within the broader Class E (g) (i, ii and iii) category which includes commercial uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity.

04.01.02 The proposals seek to make the precise use of the premises clearer and flexible enough to attract a new commercial occupier. The proposals seek a change of use within a broader range of commercial use classes. This includes:

- B2 General Industrial,
- B8 Storage or Distribution,
- E(g)(i) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions, E(g)(ii) Research and development of products or processes, and E(g)(iii) Industrial processes.

04.01.03 The proposed change of use also includes some internal and external minor works. The existing internal layouts are to be amended to create a much larger open floor plan more suitable for a B2 or B8 use, with the removal of existing mezzanine floors in approximately three quarters of the building envelope to the eastern side. The residual areas of mezzanine floor and existing ground floor reception spaces will be used as ancillary office accommodation to the main commercial function of the premises.

04.01.04 External works include the installation of 5no. new section shutter on the southern elevation to provide adequate access from the existing service yard, with associated pedestrian doors alongside.

04.01.05 The south elevation is to be re-clad with matching microrib composite panels to suit the new fenestration and windows for the flexible commercial use and will have security obscure film applied.

04.01.06 The existing cooling plant and enclosure adjacent to the service yard, which will become redundant, will be removed and the associated boundary treatment amended to reflect the changes made.

04.01.07 The existing cooling plant and enclosure to the north side of the building, which will become redundant and are proposed to be removed.

04.01.08 New cooling plant and an enclosure area is to be provided adjacent to the existing sprinkler pump room.

04.01.09 Photovoltaic panels are also to be installed on the roof as part of the overall enhancements to the premises.

04.01.10 We are also seeking the removal of the sprinkler tank.

04.02 Landscape

04.02.01 The existing landscape setting of mature trees lining the boundaries and planters within the car park will not be changed by the proposals

04.03 Highways / Parking

04.03.01 Vehicular access to and from the site will remain as existing.

04.03.02 The site lies in a high to medium accessibility area as defined in the Hampshire Parking Strategy and Standards document. Although this document appears to have been withdrawn and not replaced, and in the apparent absence of an adopted Local Authority standard for non-residential buildings, it has nonetheless been used to assess the standards in the development.

04.03.03 The existing parking provision of 91 car spaces and 42 bicycle spaces easily complies with the maximum standards quoted in the document, if say a 50% of maximum standard for high to medium accessibility is applied for cars (against 30% of maximum standard for high accessibility). The calculations have used three scenarios, either a 100% occupancy as either a B2 or B8 use or a blended mix use. Each scenario demonstrates there is sufficient parking provision currently.

The parking provision calculated is as follows:

Option One and Two: Car Parking provision

Cars- 1 space per 60 sq.m for Class E (formerly Class B1a)	= 16
1 space per 90 sq.m for Class B2 (100% of B2 floor area)	= 51
1 space per 180 sq.m for Class B8 (100% of B8 floor area)	= 26
	= 67 spaces for a B2 use
<u>Total</u>	<u>= 42 spaces B8 use</u>

Option Three (blended uses): Car Parking Provision

Cars- 1 space per 60 sq.m for Class E (formerly Class B1a)	= 16
1 space per 90 sq.m for Class B2 (50% of B2/B8 floor area)	= 25
1 space per 180 sq.m for Class B8 (50% of B2/ B8 floor area)	= 13
<u>Total</u>	<u>= 54 spaces</u>

Option One and Two: Cycle Parking provision

Cycles- 1 space per 150 sq.m long stay for Class E	=7
1 space per 500 sq.m short stay for Class E	=2
1 space per 350 sq.m long stay for 100% Class B2	=13
1 space per 500 sq.m short stay for 100% Class B2	=9 (12 + 9)
1 space per 500 sq.m long stay for 100% Class B8	=9
1 space per 1000 sq.m short stay for 100% Class B8	=5 (14 + 9)
	= 31 spaces for a B2 Use
<u>Total</u>	<u>= 23 spaces for a B8 use</u>

Option Three: Cycle Parking provision

Cycles- For a blended use	
1 space per 150 sq.m long stay for Class E	=7
1 space per 500 sq.m short stay for Class E	=2
1 space per 350 sq.m long stay for Class B2	=7
1 space per 500 sq.m short stay for Class B2	=5
1 space per 500 sq.m long stay for Class B8	=5
1 space per 1000 sq.m short stay for Class B8	=3
<u>Total</u>	<u>=29 spaces</u>

- 04.03.04 The changes of use with a significant reduction in the former class B1a and B1b space through the reduction in the mezzanine floorspace available and change the premises into a flexible Class E (g), B2 and B8 space will lead to a reduction in car movements to and from the site during the peak hours, in particular that previously associated with the larger office space available.

04.04 Arboriculture

- 04.04.01 No trees or other areas of planting will be affected by the proposals.

04.05 Impact on neighbouring properties

- 04.05.01 The proposals, by virtue of being largely internal and with the building and service yard lying a significant distance away from the residential properties in Upper Northam Drive are not perceived as having any negative impacts. The presence of Unit 1 Strategic Park lying between the building and the properties, also serves as an acoustic buffer. The cooling plant to the south side of the building is being moved to the north side, thereby removing a source of noise.

04.06 Access

- 04.06.01 Access to the building for pedestrians will remain as existing via the entrance and reception on the west side. A lift provides access for disabled workers and visitors to the first floor.

05.00 CONCLUSION

The proposals will in all respects have a minimal impact on the site and its surroundings. Policy DM15 is supportive of appropriate alterations or changes to established commercial premises to reflect modern business needs. A more flexible and clearly defined set of commercial uses that can operate at the safeguarded employment site will ensure a new occupier will be found promptly once the site has been refurbished.

The proposals do not indicate that there would be any increase in traffic generation associated with the site. The proposals indicate that these important works will help to bring employment opportunities to the local area, in line with the Local Plan ambitions.

Trees and ecology will not be affected by the works or the change of use, and traffic movements should be reduced overall during the peak hours.

The changes will not give rise to undue noise and disturbance given the site has been used for a variety of commercial uses in the past, even before the site was redeveloped in the 1990s. There is also a large format commercial premises (Unit 1) which helps to contain any noise associated with the Unit 2 from residential properties in West Road and Upper Northam Drive. The clarification of uses at the site and the minor works proposed are not considered to give rise to amenity concerns to residential amenity.

In light of the important investment being made to attract a new occupier for the existing commercial site, with the employment opportunities this brings, it is hoped that the application will be supported by the Council and approved without delay.