

Consultation response from Economic Development, Camilla Sharp

Economic Development supports this application for the following reasons:

- The borough is short of employment space. The Local Plan (Chapter 2.17) notes that 192,000m² of employment floorspace was lost to other uses between 2001 and 2014 and (Chapter 3.5) that 103,500m² (net) of new employment floorspace is required between 2016 and 2036. Policy DM15 for Safeguarding Employment space refers.
- Further support for the provision of employment space is enshrined in the following:
 - o NPPF chapter 6 paragraph 81 which determines that "Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt"
 - o PfSH Economic Development Strategy 2010 and South Hampshire Spatial Position Statement 2016
 - o Solent LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2020 in which the unlocking of critical employment sites is one of six objectives
- The proposed change of use to B2 is a positive step for Eastleigh which has constant, documented demand but limited space for general industrial activities. B2 activity requires significant capital investment in plant and machinery and, as such, is a long-term commitment to an area, allowing supplier and customer networks to develop close by and providing training opportunities for local residents. Operating hours are typically more sociable than those of B8 (storage and distribution) activities and associated traffic is contained within the normal working day.

Whilst commending the applicant's modest proposal for parking space – averaging 3 spaces per unit – we take note of concerns from previous studies and marketing reports that the site is poorly served by public transport and would welcome some provision of transport services to the site: shuttles, shared vehicles etc.