

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/100669

Site Address: SUITE 6, CRESCENT HOUSE, YONGE CLOSE, EASTLEIGH, SO50 9SX

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: Change of Use from Use Class E (Offices) to Specialist Learning Facility (Use Class F1)

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within the Urban Edge		

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
The wider Crescent House site has a planning history relating to its use as a business park. However, there is no relevant planning history specific to Suite 6.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One comment and one objection have been received. A comment was received raising concerns regarding potential disruption to access and manoeuvrability within the parking area during any construction works. An objection was received raising concerns in relation to: • potential noise and disturbance arising from the proposed use; • the compatibility of the use with the surrounding residential area; • perceived intensification of the use of the site; • lack of information regarding student management and movement; and • potential impacts on neighbouring amenity and community well-being.		
Parish Council:	No comments received.		
Environmental Health:	No objection subject to conditions, including a restriction on the number of students on site at any one time and the implementation of sound insulation measures in accordance with the submitted acoustic report.		
HCC Highways:	No objection.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 4 th February 2026.		

Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan:

The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1, S2, S4 and S10; and Development Management policies DM1, DM13, DM14, DM15.

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisal for Eastleigh (ELAC 12)

Assessment:

Site context and surroundings

The application site relates to Suite 6 within Crescent House, a single-storey building currently in office use, which benefits from two allocated parking spaces.

The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of uses, including residential properties alongside commercial and community uses. The site is also located in close proximity to Eastleigh town centre.

Proposal

The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of an existing commercial unit (Use Class E – Offices) to a specialist learning facility (Use Class F1) at Suite 6, Crescent House.

The proposal involves internal reconfiguration of the existing unit to provide two classrooms, a breakout/foyer area, two WCs and a small pantry. No external alterations to the building are proposed.

The submitted information indicates that the premises would operate as a specialist alternative education facility for students aged 11–16 with special educational needs. The applicant advises that the facility would accommodate up to approximately 10 students per day, with typically no more than 4–5 students present on site at any one time, supported by staff.

The supporting information further indicates that the use would operate primarily during daytime hours, with teaching activities generally taking place on weekdays.

Policy and Principle

- The application site is located within the defined urban edge, where the basic principle of development is acceptable, subject to ensuring that it does not give rise to unacceptable impacts and accords with the relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan and any supplementary planning guidance.
- The proposal relates to the change of use of an existing commercial unit (Use Class E) to a specialist learning facility (Use Class F1). Whilst this would result in the loss of a small amount of office floorspace, the unit forms part of a wider mixed-use building, and the proposal would introduce a community use. In this context, the change of use is considered acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed assessment of impacts.

Layout, design, and impact upon the character of the area

- Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that all new development should respect the character and appearance of urban areas, take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character, appearance and land uses of the locality or neighbourhood, and be compatible in terms of mass, scale, layout density, design, and siting.
- The proposal relates solely to the change of use of an existing unit and involves no external alterations to the building. As such, the development would not result in any changes to the external appearance of the building or the wider street scene. The proposal would therefore preserve the existing character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
- The application site forms part of Crescent House, which accommodates a mix of office-based businesses and service providers. In this context, the proposed use as a specialist learning facility is considered compatible with the established character of the building and would not introduce a materially different or incompatible form of activity.

Impact on residential amenity

- Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) amongst other matters, stipulate that all new development should not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenities of both new and existing residents.
- The application site is located within an established commercial building accommodating a range of office and service provider uses. However, residential properties are also situated in proximity to the site. Concerns have been raised by a neighbouring occupier in relation to potential noise and disturbance, the suitability of the use in this location, and the perceived intensification of activity associated with a specialist learning facility.
- The Council's Environmental Health Consultant initially raised concerns regarding the suitability of the premises, including matters relating to student numbers, internal layout, and potential noise impacts. In response, the applicant submitted additional information, including an acoustic assessment and a detailed operational statement.
- The submitted acoustic report demonstrates that internal noise levels would meet the standards set out in BB93: Acoustic Design of Schools, and that appropriate sound insulation measures can be secured within the building. Environmental Health has reviewed this information and does not object subject to conditions, including a restriction on the number of students present on site at any one time and the implementation of the recommended sound insulation measures.
- The additional information provided indicates that, although up to approximately 10 students may be registered with the facility, typically no more than 4–5 students would be present on site at any one time, with staggered arrival and departure times and periods of off-site activity. This is considered to represent a relatively low intensity of use within the context of an established commercial building.
- Concerns regarding student behaviour and the use of surrounding public areas are noted. However, such matters are not determinative planning considerations, and there is no substantive evidence to indicate that the proposed use would give rise to unacceptable impacts in this regard.

Highways and parking

- Policy DM14 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) requires residential development to provide off-highway parking which is adequate in terms of highway safety/traffic management.
- The application site benefits from two allocated parking spaces and is located within an accessible area in close proximity to Eastleigh town centre.
- HCC Highways has reviewed the proposal and raises no objection. It is noted that the previous office use of the unit accommodated approximately 10 - 15 staffs, whereas the proposed use would involve a reduced number of staff and students on site at any one time. As such, the development is not expected to result in a material increase in vehicle movements or parking demand.
- Whilst concerns have been raised regarding student drop-off and pick-up arrangements, the scale of the proposed use, together with the anticipated staggered arrivals and departures, is not considered likely to result in a severe impact on the highway network.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Conclusion:

Permit subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐