

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/26/100819

Site Address: UNIT B5, ST GEORGES INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, GOODWOOD ROAD,
EASTLEIGH, SO50 4NT

Case Officer: Katie Lasham

Description: New office floorspace on existing mezzanine floor with installation of 3no. windows to front elevation.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within urban edge Within designated employment site Great crested newts – Amber Within EA 1000-year flooding event from surface water flooding.		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
The site has undergone a variety of change of use applications with the most recent planning application approved in 1998 for a change of use application to Use Class B8 Storage and Distribution. <i>Z/18057/002/00: Change of Use Class B8 (Storage and Distribution). Approved July 1998.</i> <i>Z/18057/001/00: Change of use from Warehouse (B8) to General Industrial (B2). Approved October 1990.</i> <i>Z/27845/001/00: Use for light industrial / warehousing and car hire. Approved November 1987.</i>		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	No representations received.		
Boyatt Wood Parish Council:	No objection.		
Ecology	No objection. A bat box has been proposed as an ecological enhancement. The north-west facing front elevation of the building is not appropriate for a bat box but that appears to be the only elevation that is accessible. A bird box such as a swift nest box or a sparrow terrace would be more likely acceptable.		
Hampshire Highways	No objection. Betterment of existing facilities within industrial unit and no intensification of site or additional trip generator, despite floor space increase.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 25 March 2026		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S4; and Development Management policies DM1; DM2; DM5; DM8; DM11; DM14 and DM15. Supplementary Planning Documents:

Assessment:

Summary of site and proposal

The application site is within an industrial unit located at St Georges Industrial Estate, in Eastleigh and set immediately east of the M3. The industrial estate is part of a designated employment site identified within the Local Plan and is utilitarian in its character, offering a ranging scale of industrial units to meet the needs of different businesses.

Unit B5 is located to the north-eastern most part of the site and comprises a gated entrance with vehicle parking to the site forecourt. The ground floor area of the unit includes a warehouse for storage and distribution as well as an ancillary office area, a WC, and trade service desk. An existing internally accessed metal framed mezzanine has been used as additional storage.

The application proposes to relocate ground floor offices to the existing mezzanine floor to create space for a large open plan office, three separate small offices and a storeroom. The existing mezzanine comprises metal beams that are to be boarded over to create permanent floor space. External alterations include the installation of three first floor windows to the front elevation serving the new open plan area of the office. A large staff room / training room is also proposed at ground floor level. The proposal does not seek to intensify the number of staff members but instead is relocating the offices at first floor level to better utilise the existing mezzanine and create a larger ground floor warehouse to increase the amount of available storage space.

Initial Matters

From reviewing site history, there has been a range of planning applications approved at the site, the latest of which approved in 1998 is for a storage and distribution (Use Class B8) unit (planning reference: Z/18057/002/00). A site visit confirmed the application site remains in use as a storage and distribution unit and includes a retail trade counter. Use Class B8 classification allows for the operation of a trade counter and associated storage facilities, making it suitable for retail and distribution activities.

Principle of development

The application site is located within the urban edge and as such, the principle of development at this site is likely acceptable in accordance with Policy S2 of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the site is identified in the Local Plan as a designated employment site, and this application proposes additional floor space for the employment use. Policy DM15 of the Local Plan permits the intensification of B2/B8 and E(g) uses in employment sites in principle subject to transport and other relevant development criteria which are discussed below.

In principle, the intensification of this site by way of increased permanent employment floorspace is likely acceptable and in accordance with the aims of Policies S1, S4 and DM15 of the Local Plan.

Impact on character and appearance of the area

Policy DM1 of the Local Plan requires all development to respect and where possible enhance the character and appearance of the area, taking full account of scale, materials and design both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views.

This application proposes to add three windows to the first-floor front elevation to provide a source of natural daylight serving the proposed office space. The UPVC white windows shown on the proposed elevation plan are an acceptable size and scale to ensure the preservation of the character of the area and will assimilate well with the existing building.

There are examples of industrial units in the immediate vicinity that comprise windows in the same location as those proposed to this unit, demonstrating the windows will be entirely appropriate for their surrounding context. The plan does not show how the windows are to be opened however within a context of a utilitarian industrial estate, there is no concern raised regarding the design for how the windows are to be opened.

The windows are to be located where an existing advertisement sign is located on the building. Any new or amended advert to be erected will require a separate advertisement consent that must also be submitted to and approved by the Council prior to installation.

All other alterations are internal to the building and as such the character and appearance of the area is safeguarded in accordance with DM1 of the Local Plan.

Impact on amenity

Policy DM1 of the Local Plan requires all development to preserve the amenity of neighbouring residents and where possible enhance it. The Design and Access Statement explains that the proposed first floor windows will provide natural daylight and ventilation, which will therefore be openable windows. The site does not undertake any manufacturing processes on site, and the hours of use will remain as existing, from 07.30-17.30. Therefore, within the context of an industrial estate, the proposed openable windows will not create any undue harm by way of noise to amenity of neighbouring buildings and will allow for employees to benefit from natural ventilation.

Overall, the proposed increase in permanent office space to the first-floor mezzanine and openable windows proposed to the first floor serving the offices are not considered to create any harmful impacts on the amenity of surrounding neighbouring units within the industrial estate units and demonstrate compliance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Local Plan.

Impact on highways

Policy DM14 of the Local Plan requires all proposals to provide adequate parking to ensure highway safety/traffic management. Provision will take account of the adopted Eastleigh Borough Council's Parking Standards SPD which sets out minimum requirements for parking provisions.

Hampshire Highways were consulted on this proposal due to the increase in permanent floor space proposed to the mezzanine. The officer raised no objection to the scheme, commenting that there are no access changes to or from the highways and only internal changes are proposed, further adding that the works are a simple betterment of facilities rather than a potential generator of additional trips on the highway.

For the reasons outlined, the scheme is acceptable with regards to vehicle movements and parking with the increase in permanent floor space of the mezzanine, in accordance with Policy DM14 of the Local Plan.

Impacts on ecology

Policy DM11 of the Local Plan requires the protection, conservation and enhancement of all international, national and local nature conservation and designations and networks of habitats. It also requires a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites.

The site is located within a wet woodland, designated as a designated Priority Habitat. The proposed works are unlikely to have an interrelationship with this designated priority habitat as there are no alterations proposed that will create additional new floorspace other than that of the existing mezzanine and within this regard the proposal is likely acceptable. The site is also within an area where great crested newts are prevalent, again as there are no external works proposed other than the installation of three windows at first floor, there is no harmful impact on these protected species.

The proposal is exempt from 10% biodiversity net gain as it impacts less than 25m² of habitat, however biodiversity enhancements will be required in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Local Plan. A bird box such as a swift nest box or a sparrow terrace would be more likely acceptable than the proposed bat box stated within the Design and Access Statement. There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA. Overall, the scheme is in accordance with Policy DM11 of the Local Plan.

Impacts on flooding and drainage

A river is set to the north of the site but is outside of the EA consultation buffer zone. Furthermore, a 1 in 1000-year flood event flood designation is located to the rear of the site.

As the site only proposes internal works and no additional ground floor footprint proposed, no Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems are required and the scheme will not create any harmful drainage / flooding impacts, in accordance with the aims of Policy DM5 of the Local Plan.

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.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. 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:

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

Comments ...