

Design and Access Statement for the Proposed Demolition of Existing Workshop/Store and Construction of Replacement Steel Frame Workshop and Secure Compound Area at The Botley Centre, High Street, Botley, SO30 2ES

Introduction

This application is submitted on behalf of the Botley Parish Council (the applicant) by BTG Eddisons (the agent) for the Proposed Demolition of Existing Workshop/Store and Construction of Replacement Steel Frame Workshop and Secure Compound Area at The Botley Centre, High Street, Botley, SO30 2ES (the site).

The existing building has become unfit for its current purpose due to its size and condition and is now failing to meet the operational needs of the applicant's growing workload and machinery.

The proposal aims to deliver a modern, efficient and fit-for-purpose building with more space, welfare facilities, enhanced security and better working arrangements both internally and externally.

The Site

The site is situated to the North of The Botley Centre, adjacent to the car park and playing fields. The existing workshop/store is currently in a poor condition, leaving it vulnerable to unwanted access and creates an unsuitable working environment due to its size and facilities.

Principle of development

The proposal replaces the existing structure with a larger workshop building designed to accommodate a growing fleet of machinery and vehicles, along with providing additional storage capacity and helping improve operational efficiency. The use will remain consistent with the existing function.

The internal layout has been designed to support the current and future needs of the applicant, their staff and their fleet of vehicles. Vehicle storage/workshop area has increased to accommodate a growing fleet of vehicles and their servicing requirements. Additional storage has been allocated for materials and equipment. A break room for staff along with a dedicated office/meeting room and welfare facilities have been provided which are not present in the existing building to help improve usability and working conditions.

The proposed building is larger than the existing building in both height and footprint. The height has been raised to accommodate larger access doors required for some of the larger pieces of equipment and the space must allow for the future growth of the applicant's fleet as their workload expands over the coming years. Despite the increase in size, the design and materials have been chosen to help mitigate this and keep it proportionate to its use and context. The structure will remain single storey in form, and is designed with a simple, low-profile massing.

The proposed structure will be steel portal frame construction clad with insulated cladding panels with a louvre-like finish to give a more sympathetic finish and reduce the visual impact of the proposed structure. Solar panels are proposed to cover the roof, in accordance with an engineer's final design, to contribute to the environmental impacts of the building along with much higher energy efficiency of the building envelope.

The proposal incorporates a secure external compound with additional hard standing areas to accommodate vehicle movement and access. The secure compound will be formed via '308' mesh fencing with sliding access gates. The compound is required due to the increase in unwanted access to the existing building and to protect the valuable vehicles and machinery stored within, along with helping to protect the general public from venturing into the vicinity of the workshop, where vehicle movements will be present on a regular basis, due to its proximity to the public car park and playing fields.

Although the additional hard standing area will result in the loss of some green space, as shown in the ecological report also submitted with the application, the site area is largely uninhabitable due to its hostile environment.

Access

Existing vehicle access will continue to be utilised up to the compound area. An access gate on each side of the compound will be provided to allow suitable access both from the car park and onto the playing fields. Pedestrian access will not be affected to the site and surrounding areas, and the incorporation of the secure compound will help keep pedestrians safe from vehicle movements within and around the new workshop structure.

The building has been designed to include appropriate welfare facilities in line with accessibility requirements and level access where required in line with current building regulation requirements.

Conclusion

The application aims to replace an outdated and inadequate workshop building with a modern, efficient and secure building and compound.

The proposed development meets the current and future needs of the applicant, whilst introducing welfare facilities to improve the working environment. Safety, accessibility and usability is being enhanced to increase the overall functionality of the building whilst maintaining an appropriate design approach.

While the proposal represents a sustainable and justified improvement to the existing infrastructure, the loss of green space and increased size is necessary, justified and proportionate to the operational and functional needs of the applicant whilst minimising the effect it has on the site and local character along with the inclusion of solar panels and increased thermal efficiency for sustainability and environmental mitigation.