

Planning statement in respect of proposed docking platforms at Building One and for the provision of a 3m high acoustic fence to the southern car park boundary, with associated planting, at Broadway Farm, Broad Oak, Botley

The following statement seeks to set out the rationale for the provision of two docking platforms to the immediate south of Building One and 3m high acoustic fencing, with associated landscaping, at Broadway Farm, Broad Oak, Botley.

The site has an authorised use as warehouse (i.e. B8 Storage and Distribution) with no restrictions on operation. There are no known issues, with regard to local residential amenities, in respect of noise or nuisance.

The operators provide quality storage facilities in a secure and safe environment. However, in the interests of efficiency and meeting on-going client needs, this requires the regular upgrading of on-site facilities.

Such upgrades include the provision of enhanced loading facilities to Building One – allowing for the more efficient loading and unloading of HGVs. In addition, the application includes the provision of a 3m high acoustic fence on the perimeter of the southern car park, with associated native landscaping.

The provision of the docking platforms will provide for enhanced on-site facilities, thus providing greater efficiency and reduce existing noise levels. There will be no change in the use of the warehouse, Building One. However, unloading is currently carried out by using a large mobile ramp, situated between buildings 1 and 2. The installation of the permanent loading docks will reduce the noise levels currently generated by the use and movement of this mobile ramp.

The removal of the mobile ramp will also facilitate easier access within the site and specifically to the proposed new parking apron to the north-west of the site (planning application number F/25/99762). Removing the mobile ramp and replacing it with two loading docks will reduce the time and disruption of loading and unloading within the site.

The proposed use is entirely consistent with the authorised use of the site and it will be demonstrated that the proposed development will not create harm to the local area and residential amenities. In fact, the proposals will reduce noise created on-site. Whilst there are currently no wider concerns associated with the site this is a clear benefit of the proposed scheme.

The application also includes the provision of a 3m high acoustic fence around the majority of the perimeter of the southern car park. On the site's eastern boundary, it is intended to remove the existing earth bund to be replaced with the acoustic fencing and a native planting hedge row, thus screening the fencing from the wider area. Whilst there is a clear benefit of the proposed fencing in that it will reduce noise from the site to wider area these works are also part of the on-going improvements to the site - namely to improve on-site security and improve the character of the area. The removal of laurel hedging and replacing with native hedging was stated as a preferred hedging by the council at planning appeal hearing number (APP/W1715/C/25/3361911). This replacement hedging will provide further biodiversity gain in the eastern field.

The application is supported by the following:

- Location plan
- Site plan
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Landscape scheme

The Noise Impact Assessment clearly demonstrates that the existing operation does not create harm to local residential amenities and furthermore that any activity associated with the use of the loading bays will be acceptable. The measures as proposed, namely the provision of acoustic fencing and the provision of the docking bays will provide for further safeguards in respect of noise mitigation.

Site and surrounding area

The whole site extends to some 3.5 hectares and comprises a storage and distribution operation, and associated land located to the north of Broad Oak, Botley involving the following uses:

- Warehouses at the centre of the site to include circulation space and vehicular parking area
- Dwelling
- HGV parking and loading area in the northern portion of the eastern field
- Open fields – to include the western and eastern paddocks.

The wider site is as per the following extract:



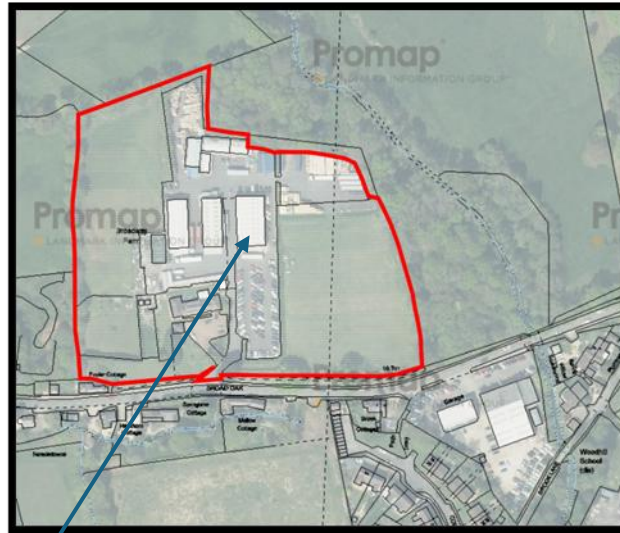
The site is located to the north of Broad Oak (the A334) which provides the vehicular access to the site. Broad Oak provides the primary western approach to Botley and comprises the easiest route to the M27.

The operational element of the site is characterised by the presence of a number of warehouses and circulation space. In addition, there are two areas that are largely hardsurfaced, namely a parking area in the southern portion of the site (the southern car park) and a smaller area of land currently used for pallet manufacturing and storage.

Existing use

The existing use is well-established and operates as a warehouse, haulage, and pallet business.

The current use of the site is set out in the following aerial photograph;



The operational core is located at the centre of the site and comprising some 6 warehousing units with associated hardsurfaced areas and office buildings.

Building One is located at the centre of the site adjacent to the eastern paddock.



The following photograph shows the existing loading ramp – currently located between Building One and Two.



At present HGVs are manoeuvred so as to enable loading by fork lift trucks.

Planning history

Relevant planning applications on site are as follows:

1. F/25/99762 - *Creation of hardsurfaced area for the loading and unloading of HGVs.*

This application has been approved, subject to a legal agreement. Once implemented it will require the removal of the existing hardsurfaced area in the eastern paddock approved as part of the following application.

2. Appeal APP/W1715/C/25/3361911 (joined appeal with PP/W1715/C/25/336912) – *the alleged unauthorised change of use of land at Broadway Farm, Broad Oak, Botley to parking and storage B8 with associated unauthorised tarmac hardsurfacing, unauthorised drainage and unauthorised lighting.*

The appeal was allowed in the sense that the majority of an hardsurfaced area in the eastern paddock will be retained. It is intended to remove this once consent no F/25/99762 has been implemented.

3. F/17/81201 - *Retention of 2No. product handling/storage buildings and alterations and extensions to existing pallet storage building in association with the continued use of the site for storage and distribution (Use Class B8).*

Permitted March 2019

4. LDC/17/80680 - *Lawful Development Certificate for proposed construction of a new material handling/storage building (Use Class B8).*

Certificate Issued February 2018

5. Z/17963/001/00 - *Use of rear yard for pallet repair and storage with retention of relocated portable office and shed.*

Refused July 1997 – granted temporary approval at appeal September 1998

There are no available documents on-line that refer to the length of time the temporary consent was relevant or any conditions attached to the consent.

Planning policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchases Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in December 2024. Paragraphs 7 and 8 refer to the principles of sustainable development, as follows:

7. *The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs⁴. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.*

8. *Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

a. an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- b. *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c. *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

Paragraph 85 confirms that it is important to support businesses.

Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Paragraph 86 denotes that policies set out within local plans should;

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;*
- b) set criteria, and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*
- c) pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics;*
- d) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and*
- e) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, and allow for new and flexible working practices and spaces to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.*

Para 89 seeks to support businesses in rural areas;

Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

Chapter 11 seeks to ensure that new development make efficient use of land, as set out in paragraph 124:

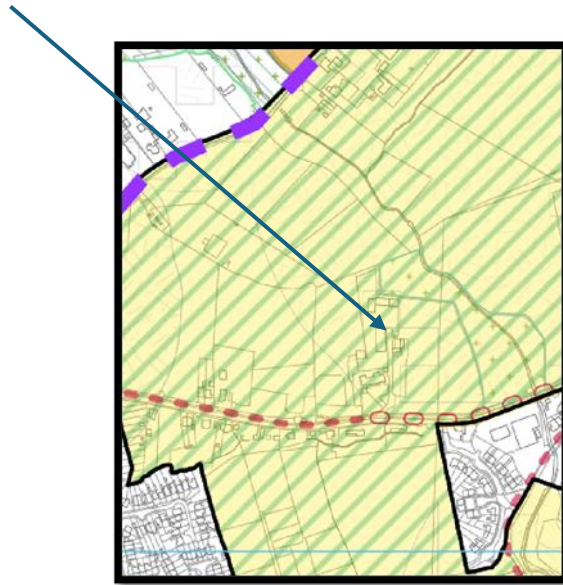
Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.

Paragraph 127 require decisions to reflect changes in demand for land:

Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated for development in plans, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan: a) it should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or, if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped); and b) in the interim, prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.

The adopted local plan is the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036.

The development site is identified as being located in the countryside and the Settlement Gap;



Policy S1 looks to deliver sustainable development;

Strategic policy S1, Delivering sustainable development

1. *To be sustainable, new development in the Borough should:
 - c. *maintain and help to grow a high-performing local economy that benefits the Borough, south Hampshire and the wider economy, without adverse impact on south Hampshire's city, town and other centres, the quality of the local environment or local transport networks;...**
2. *When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*
3. *Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:*

- a. any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- b. where specific policies in that Framework or other international or national legislation indicate that development should be restricted.*

Policy S4 refers to employment provision

- 1. To contribute towards sustainable economic growth, provision will be made for additional floorspace for uses in the B2, B8 and E(g) use classes and other employment-generating uses through:*
 - d. new employment development within the urban edge and by the re-use and/or redevelopment of buildings in the countryside (policies DM18 and DM19, Chapter 5);*
 - e. retaining existing (and allocated) employment sites which have the potential to contribute towards future employment needs, and intensifying their use (see policy DM15, Chapter 5);*

Policy S5 refers to new development in the countryside;

Strategic policy S5, New development in the countryside

- 1. Planning permission will be granted for new development in the countryside provided it is related to:*
 - a. the provision of employment through agricultural development (policy DM17), the extension and replacement of existing employment uses (policy DM18) and the re-use of existing buildings (policy DM19);*
- 2. In permitting new development in the countryside the Borough Council will seek to:*
 - a. avoid adverse impacts on the rural, woodland, riparian or coastal character, the intrinsic character of the landscape including the avoidance of adverse landscape impacts on areas adjoining national parks and their settings, the significance of heritage assets and on the biodiversity of the area;*
 - b. secure long-term beneficial management practices that will enhance the landscape and biodiversity of the countryside and coast;*
 - c. avoid sterilisation of mineral resources, in accordance with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan;*

d. safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land unless the benefit of the development clearly outweighs the loss; and

e. protect soils during construction wherever possible in line with the 'Defra code of practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites'.

Policy S6 refers to the protection of settlement gaps:

Strategic policy S6, Protection of settlement gaps

1. Development within a Settlement Gap as set out in the policies map will be permitted provided that:

a. it would not undermine the physical extent and/or visual separation of settlements; and

b. it would not have an urbanising effect detrimental to:

i. The character of the countryside; or

ii. The separate identity of the adjoining settlements.

d. Hedge End, Botley and Boorley Green;

Policy DM1 seeks to set out general criteria for new development;

Policy DM1, General criteria for new development

1. All new development should (as relevant):

a. not have an unacceptable impact on, and where possible should enhance:

i. residential amenities of both new and existing residents; the character and appearance of urban areas, the countryside and the coast;

ii. biodiversity (avoiding significant adverse impacts);

b. make efficient use of the site, maximise opportunities to increase density and have regard to potential development opportunities on adjoining land;

c. 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 with adjoining uses and be well integrated with these in terms of mass, scale, materials, layout, density, design and siting, both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views. Where adjoining development is poor in urban design terms, new development should contribute to improving the character of the area;

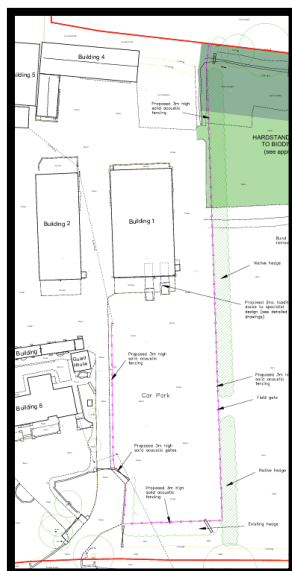
- d. not involve the loss of or damage to trees, woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, priority habitats or other landscape features of value to the character of the area, for appearance or biodiversity unless they can be replaced with features of equivalent or enhanced value, (recognising that some species and habitats may be irreplaceable);*
- e. include a landscape scheme covering the design and layout of external space;...*
- g. provide satisfactory management arrangements for all landscape, green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement;*

Policy DM18 refers to the extension and replacement of non-residential buildings in the countryside

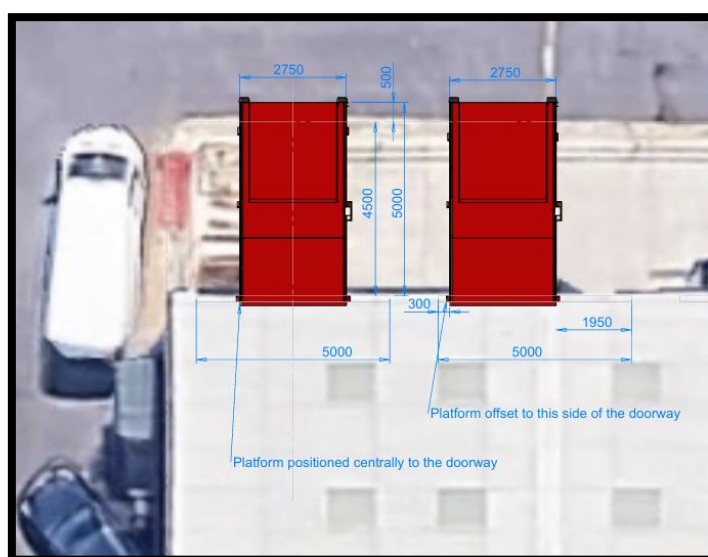
Policy DM18, Extension and replacement of non- residential buildings in the countryside

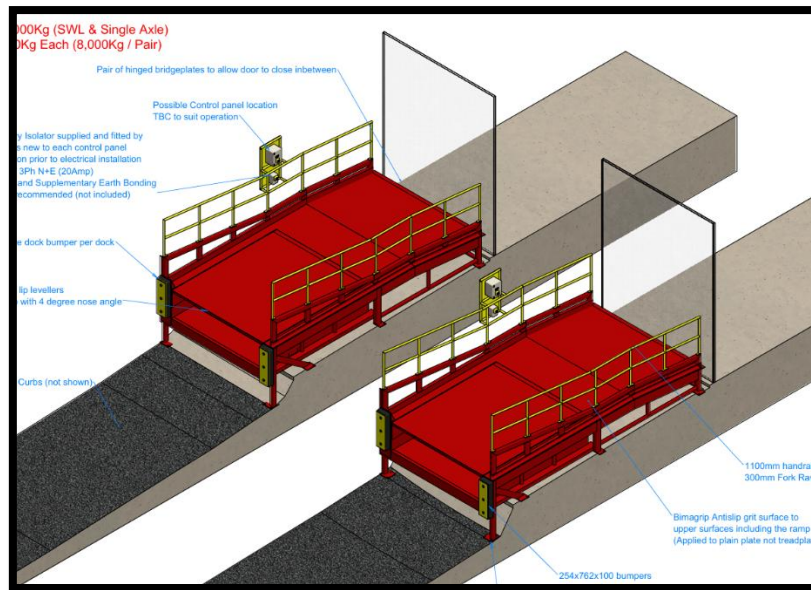
- 1. The extension or replacement of non-residential buildings in the countryside will be permitted, subject to the general development criteria and transport policies of this Local Plan and provided that:*
 - a. the existing building is in lawful use and is not subject to a temporary permission;*
 - b. the extension or replacement building is for a non-residential use;*
 - c. the extension or replacement building would not have an urbanising effect on the countryside in terms of its density, scale, massing, layout and height;*
 - d. access, car parking, landscaping and services can be provided without having a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside;*
 - e. so far as possible the property is sustainably located in terms of accessibility by means of transport other than the private car;*
 - f. the extended building or its replacement would be located within the existing curtilage unless its relocation or extension would contribute to improving the character and quality of the local area;*
 - g. in the case of a replacement building, the proposal also includes the demolition of the building to be replaced; and*
 - h. the development would not by itself or cumulatively with other recently permitted schemes undermine the Council's strategy for the development of employment-related floorspace (see strategic policy S4).*

The proposed development seeks to provide enhanced docking facilities within Building One and the provision of a 3m acoustic fence and associated landscaping, as per the following extract:



A key feature of the docking platforms is that their height can be specifically adjusted so as to meet the needs of individual HGVs and their loads. Specific details relating to the docking platforms are as per the following extracts:





The provision of the acoustic fencing serves two purposes, namely to help contain noise generated by on-site activity and to provide additional security. The fencing will be provided to contain the majority of the southern car park and the boundary with the eastern paddock.

At the present time it is anticipated that application no. F/25/99762 implemented, hence the provision of an acoustic fence to the existing access to hardsurfaced area in the north-western corner of the site.

The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment which focusses on the potential impact of the overnight use of the southern car park for loading and unloading and manoeuvring of HGV's

The report confirms that the impact on neighbouring residential properties will not create a noise nuisance quietest time of the evening. The proposed development will have a low impact on the wider area.

Planning balance

The proposed development will help facilitate the efficient use of the site, which will improve efficiency. This will make the site more attractive to clients, thus helping improve the viability of the existing business.

As such the proposed development is compliant both the NPPF and the local plan.

The proposals comprise sustainable development in that the proposals comply with the economic (i.e. helping to build a competitive economy), social (contribution to a healthy economy) and environmental (effective use of land) threads of paragraph 8 of

the NPPF. Paragraph 85 requires the planning process to support the appropriate conditions to support business growth.

The local plan seeks to encourage sustainable development (as set out in policy S1), encourage employment provision (S4), ensure that the Settlement Gap is not compromised in respect of having an urbanising impact (S6). The proposals clearly meet these policy objectives not least as they are relatively low key and contained within the existing operational element of the application site (DM18).

The proposals are also compliant with policy DM18 in that that neighbouring residential amenities are protected.

Thus, the benefits of the proposed development are clear in terms of supporting a vital and important local business and increasing employment opportunities. In addition, a new native species hedgerow will be planted on-site. There is no demonstrable harm in respect of local residential amenities or the character of the area. The proposals are therefore policy compliant and should be supported.