

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/26/101981

Site Address: UNIT H, GEORGE CURL WAY, EASTLEIGH, SO18 2RX

Case Officer: Rebecca Altman

Description: Change of use of part of unit to a mixed Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) use comprising: indoor golf simulator centre (Class E(d)) with ancillary retail; restaurant (Class E(b)); fitness and wellness centre (Class E(d) and E(e)); and office (Class E(g)(i)), along with external alterations including new first floor feature window and ground floor door to east elevation and kitchen extracts to south elevation.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
- Airport safeguarding area - Existing employment site – Policy DM15 - Southampton Airport policy area – Policy E9 - Urban Edge		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
- F/26/101105 – installation of roof mounted solar PV panels and repainting of exterior elevations (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance) – permission 11/05/2026 - X/25/99432 – Variation of condition 1 of F/24/97188 to amend rear elevation – permission 08/07/2025 - F/24/97188 – creation of headquarters for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance and other healthcare services – mixed use B2, B8, E(e) and E(g) – permission 30/07/2024 - F/05/54259 – installation of emergency generator and erection of fencing – permission 31/08/2005 - Z/07535/045/00 – reserved matters pursuant to outline permission 07535/012 for 2 units for B1 and B8 uses – approved 12/11/1000 - Z/07535/044/00 – reserved matters pursuant to outline permission for erection of 4 units for B1 and B8 use – approved 06/10/1999 - Z/07535/012/00 – Outline: business, industrial and warehouse development (use classes B1, B2 and B8) – outline permission 18/12/1992		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One representation received in support, commenting that the proposal would make a great addition to the local community.		
Eastleigh Town Council:	No objection.		
Environmental Health:	No objection. The site is located adjacent to Southampton Airport and the M27 motorway. The nearest noise sensitive receptor is the Premier Inn Southampton Airport Hotel, approximately 200m away. Given the separation distance, together with the already elevated background noise levels in the area, the proposal presents a low risk of adverse noise impacts.		
Southampton Airport:	No objection. The proposal does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. Recommend informative regarding use of cranes.		

Highway Authority:	No objection. The existing access is acceptable with an adequately sized access point onto George Curl Way. Sustainable transport options including walking, cycling, bus and train are also readily accessible from the site. The internal layout provides parking for up to 115 vehicles and it has been demonstrated through a parking accumulation exercise that a maximum of 63 parking spaces would be needed. The existing Air Ambulance use is confirmed to only require a maximum of 45 spaces, therefore the total number is sufficient for both uses. There would also be no highway related parking concerns as there are parking restrictions in place in the surrounding area to prevent obstructive parking. In addition, given the proposed use of the site when compared to the existing use classification, it would not be anticipated to result in a material change in trip rates to and from the site, certainly not to any severity given the existing background flow levels and having regard to options for linked trips and sustainable travel.
--------------------	--

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details:		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Relevant National Decision Making Policies include: S3 (presumption in favour of sustainable development); S4 (principle of development within settlements), DP3 (key principles for well designed places), E2 (meeting the need for business land and premises), P3 (living conditions and pollution), TR3 (locating development in sustainable locations), TR4 (street design, access and parking), and TR6 (assessing transport impacts). Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u>. The most relevant policies are: S1 (Sustainable development), S2 (Approach to new development), S4 (Employment provision), DM1 (General criteria for new development), DM3 (Climate change), DM13 (General development criteria – transport), DM14 (Parking), DM15 (Safeguarding existing employment sites), and E9 (Southampton Airport).

Assessment:
Site and proposal The application relates to an industrial unit on the north side of George Curl Way, within the employment area to the south of Southampton Airport. Part of the unit is occupied by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA) service, and the rest of the building is currently vacant. The site lies in the urban edge and an existing employment area as defined by Policies S2 and DM15 of the Local Plan. The Southampton Airport runway lies to the east of the site and the rest of the surrounding area is industrial in character. There are no nearby residential properties. The planning permission which allowed for the use of the unit by the HIOWAA (permission ref. F/24/97188), allowed for a mix of uses comprising B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage

and distribution), E(e) (health and medical services), and E(g) (office, research and light industrial processes).

Planning permission is now sought for a change of use of the vacant section of the building to accommodate a business known as Par Club, which comprises the following mix of uses: indoor golf simulator centre (Use Class E(d)) with ancillary retail; restaurant (Class E(b)); fitness and wellness centre (Class E(d) and E(e)); and office (Class E(g)(i)). Some limited external alterations are proposed, comprising the addition of a first floor feature window and ground floor door on the east elevation, and kitchen extracts on the south elevation. An existing external bin store to the rear (east side) of the building is also proposed to be extended. All other alterations would be internal, including the creation of an extended mezzanine floor, new walls and partitions.

Principle of the proposal

The site lies within an employment area where Policy DM15 of the Local Plan applies. This seeks to protect employment sites by preventing changes of use or development that would not support the employment function of the area. The policy supports development within use classes B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage and distribution) and E(g)(ii)/(iii) (research and light industrial). In exceptional circumstances, it can also support other uses provided that they would not have a significant impact on the continued primary use of the site, although the policy specifically states that food and drink establishments (e.g. a restaurant, which forms part of the current proposal) will not be permitted.

The site also lies within the Southampton Airport policy area, as defined under Policy E9 of the Local Plan. This policy relates to proposals for the expansion of the airport's operations and related development, which does not apply to the proposals subject to this application. Policy DM15 is therefore considered to be the most relevant Local Plan policy under which to assess the proposals. National Decision Making Policy (NDMP) E2 also provides support for business uses, stating that substantial weight should be given to the economic benefits of proposals for commercial development which allow businesses to invest, expand and/or adapt.

In addition, policy DM36 of the Local Plan applies to proposals for new leisure facilities, which the golf simulator centre and fitness elements would be categorised as. It seeks to direct such uses to town or local centres and for proposals outside these areas (such as this proposal), the policy requires it to be demonstrated that the use is accessible to the community, that it would not adversely impact on an existing centre, and that there are no suitable alternative sites within or on the edge of a centre.

The key determining factors are whether the proposal, which includes uses that would not normally be supported within an industrial area, would bring about sufficient benefits to outweigh the partial policy conflicts with policy DM15 and DM36 identified above, and could be accommodated without harming the primary use of the employment site.

The unit is currently only partially occupied and the submitted marketing information indicates that there have been difficulties in securing an occupant for the remainder of the building within the permitted use classes. In particular, industrial operators have failed to express an interest due to a lack of loading facilities or yard area, and concerns about how the building is laid out and how space would be divided. The current proposal would have the ability to occupy all of the remaining space and would bring this part of the building into a viable use. The proposal would also bring additional employment generation, albeit not of the same type as would be generated by traditional industrial uses. The submitted information states that there would be a maximum of 15 members of staff on site at any one time. These benefits weigh in favour of the proposal. A letter has also been submitted from the HIOWAA, confirming full support for the proposal, noting that it would operate well alongside their use and would offer benefits through the provision of wellness facilities that could be used by their staff and a venue that could potentially be used for charity events.

In relation to Policy DM36, the leisure elements of this proposal are part of a wider mix of uses designed to complement each other, and large industrial units tend to suit this type of facility. It is unlikely that a unit of sufficient size would be available within the nearest town centre (being Eastleigh Town Centre), and it is not considered that the viability of the town centre would be impacted by the proposal. The site is also well connected to a variety of means of transport including train and bus and is considered to meet the accessibility element of policy DM36.

In summary, whilst the proposal includes uses that would not ordinarily be supported in an industrial area, the proposal is considered to be suitable for this specific unit and location and would not harm the primary use of the employment area, or adversely impact on the nearby town centre. Other relevant considerations including amenity impacts, access and parking are addressed within this report.

Visual impacts

DP3 and Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan require new development to be appropriate for their context, in respect of matters such as scale, layout and use of materials.

The site lies within an industrial/employment area and the majority of the proposed works would be internal. The most significant alteration would be the installation of a large window at first floor level on the east elevation. The size and style of the window is considered appropriate for the building and it would only be readily visible from within the industrial estate and the adjacent airport runway, therefore having minimal impact on the appearance of the wider area. A bin store to the rear of the building is also proposed to be replaced with a larger metal clad store to accommodate the additional refuse requirements for the new uses. Due to its location and modest size in relation to the main building, this extended bin store would have limited visual impact on the appearance of the site or wider area. The kitchen extract units on the south elevation and the new entrance door on the east elevation would be modest in size and would have no adverse impact on the appearance of the building. The proposed alterations are therefore considered acceptable, in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Local Plan and NDMP DM3.

Access and parking

Policy DM13 of the Local Plan requires new development to have safe and convenient access to the highway network and make provision for access by alternative means of transport to the private car. NDMP's TR3 and TR4 also emphasise the need for new development to be sustainably located and provide sufficient levels of parking.

Vehicle access to the site is to remain as existing, via George Curl Way. The access point leads into a large car park to the west of the building, which would accommodate parking for both the Air Ambulance use and the proposed new use. There is a separate vehicle access to the rear (east side) of the building, which is used by emergency vehicles for the Air Ambulance. This operates independently to the main car park and would not be impacted by the proposals. The Highway Authority has confirmed that existing access arrangements are acceptable.

Pedestrian access to the site is also via George Curl Way, with footway links to the nearby Southampton Airport Parkway train station and bus stops on Wide Lane.

With regard to parking, the car park to the front of the site provides 105 parking spaces, and currently only 15-20 of these spaces are used on a daily basis by the HIOWAA. For the proposed uses, the applicants have submitted a Transport Statement, which sets out a bespoke parking calculation taking account of the mix of uses, potential for combined trips, and parking demands at different times of the day. The assessment concludes that up to 63 parking spaces would be required, but this is based on all uses being fully occupied at the same time, which is unlikely. It also assumes all trips being taken by car, whereas the sustainable location would allow for some trips to be taken by alternative

means of transport. Taking these factors into account, the parking calculation has concluded that up to 60 spaces would meet the demand for Par Club, and this is the amount that is proposed to be allocated specifically for the club within the front car park. This would leave 45 spaces available for the HIOWAA, which the applicants have confirmed is sufficient to meet their needs during larger charity events. The applicants have further noted that whilst the spaces would be marked out for either the HIOWAA or Par Club, there would still be flexibility for the spaces to be shared if one use generated a higher demand at a particular point in time.

Cycle parking would be accommodated within an existing cycle store to the rear of the site, and this would help further encourage the use of alternative means of transport to the private car.

The Highway Authority has reviewed the parking assessment and has raised no objection, noting that the level of parking on site is sufficient and that the presence of parking restrictions on surrounding roads further minimises the risks of obstructive parking outside of the site. The Highway Authority has also raised no concerns in relation to impacts of the development on the local highway network. The proposal is considered to meet the objectives of both local and national policy in respect of access and parking.

Amenity impacts

NDMP P3 of the NPPF (2026) and Policy DM1 of the Local Plan requires all development to preserve the amenity of neighbouring residents and where possible enhance it to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

Due to the type of uses proposed and the location within an employment site with no nearby residential properties, there would be no significant amenity concerns with respect to matters such as noise or air quality. As no groundworks are proposed, there are also no concerns regarding ground contamination. In addition, Southampton Airport has raised no safeguarding concerns in relation to the proximity to the airport.

Provision would be made for refuse storage for the new uses by extending the existing refuse store to the rear of the building, with collection taking place from the adjacent road. There are no concerns with this arrangement.

Climate change and energy efficiency

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 by 2030; (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, 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. This application is for the re-use of part of an existing building, which in itself supports sustainability

objectives by reducing impacts associated with new construction. The application is supported by an Energy and Sustainability Strategy and a BREEAM pre-assessment. These documents set out the energy saving measures and sustainable design principles to be adopted, which includes use of locally sourced and recycled materials where possible, use of high efficiency LED lighting, and provision of mechanical ventilation and appropriate heating and cooling mechanisms suited to the proposed uses. The development is targeting a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating, which accords with the specific requirements of Local Plan policy DM2. The development is therefore considered to meet climate change policy objectives.

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: Although proposal incorporates uses that would not ordinarily be supported in an employment area, the development would bring a vacant part of the building into a viable use and would not harm the primary function of the employment area. The proposal meets relevant policy objectives in relation to design, access and parking, amenity and sustainability and is therefore considered acceptable.

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☒	REFUSE ☐
-----------------	---	--

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall start no later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans numbered:
 - 472-00-001 Rev. A – Existing site location plan
 - 472-10-011 Rev. C – Proposed site plan
 - 472-20-503 Rev. A – DDA proposed site plan
 - 472-10-012 Rev. B – Proposed ground floor site plan
 - 472-10-100A Rev. D – Proposed ground floor block plan Option A
 - 472-20-101 Rev. E – Proposed first floor block plan
 - 472-10-300 Rev. D – Proposed north and south elevations
 - 472-10-301 Rev. E – Proposed west and east elevations
 - 472-47-100 Rev. A – Proposed ground floor drainage layout plan
 - 472-10-103 Rev. C – Proposed roof and site plan
 - 472-20-500A Rev. A – DDA proposed ground floor block plan
 - 472-80-012 Rev. A – Proposed external lighting plan
 - 472-10-400 Rev. B – Proposed bin store layout
 - 472-10-401 – Proposed bin store elevations sheet 1

- 472-10-401 – Proposed bin store elevations sheet 2

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No development shall start on site until a final version of the draft Construction Management Plan (Southern Planning Practice, September 2026), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Preparation and construction work shall thereafter only take place in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To limit the impact of the development on the amenity of the locality, in accordance with policies DM1 and DM8 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or any Order, Act or other statutory provision revoking, re-enacting, replacing or modifying those provisions, the premises shall be used only for the mix of recreation, fitness, wellness, office and restaurant with ancillary retail uses as shown on the approved plans, and for no other purpose, including any other use falling within Class E of the Order or any equivalent use class subsequently introduced.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity in accordance with policies DM8 and DM13 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

5. Within 3 months following occupation of the development hereby permitted, a report demonstrating how the development meets the relevant BREEAM requirements including a New Construction Post Construction certificate at 'Excellent' standard, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development meets required sustainability standards in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

6. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the refuse and recycling facilities shall be provided in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter retained and made available for their intended purpose.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory waste storage arrangements in the interest of amenity, in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036).

Informative:

Note to applicant: If a crane is to be used during construction, there is a requirement to consult the aerodrome. Please refer to the following information: [Crane notification | UK Civil Aviation Authority](#)