

Planning, Design and Access Statement

2CL Communications Ltd, 34C Woodside Trade Centre, Parham Drive, SO50 4NU

Site Description and Location

The application site is Unit 34C of the Woodside Trade Centre, Parham Drive on the wider Boyatt Wood Industrial Estate, Eastleigh. The building forms one of seven units towards the entrance to the Industrial Estate from Woodside Avenue, and is used for a mix of use classes B1c (light industry), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution).

The Woodside Trade Centre is bounded by Parham Drive to the north and east, Woodside Avenue to the west and internal access road, parking and service area to the south. The L-shaped Trade Centre building has a modern appearance with units characterised by profiled metal cladding in blue / light grey / silver, metal up and over service doors, aluminium framed windows and metal framed glass canopies.

Unit 34C has a current Gross Internal Area of 564 sqm. A total of 14 car parking spaces are allocated to the unit.

The site is located within an existing employment area as defined by the Local Plan Review 2001-2011 and emerging Local Plan 2016-2036.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figures 2 & 3: Unit C (2CL Communications) South elevation and the wider Woodside Trade Centre



Figures 4 & 5: Existing well screened West elevation of the unit



Figure 6: Existing North elevation of the unit

Planning Policy Context

National Policy

Revised NPPF (2018)

The recently Revised NPPF has the economy as one of its key objectives for achieving sustainable development. Development that helps to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy is encouraged, supporting growth, innovation and improved productivity (para 2a).

Chapter 6 addresses building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 80 states “Planning policies and decisions should 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.”

The development proposals are in full accordance with the objectives of the NPPF with a local business seeking to expand and innovate within their existing premises at Eastleigh.

Local Policy

The Local Development Plan relevant to the development proposed comprises the following:

- Saved Policies of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011)
- Emerging Local Plan 2016-2036

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001 - 2011 (2006)

Adopted in 2006, Policy 117.E is of most relevance to the application site. The policy states that “Proposals for new development or redevelopment for employment purposes (use classes B1, B2 or B8) within the existing employment sites identified on the proposals map will be permitted, provided they do not conflict with policy on the location of office development.”

Policy 100.T deals with transport and new development and 104.T with off-highway parking. The withdrawn Hampshire Parking Strategy and Standards are being applied by Eastleigh for commercial development.

Eastleigh Local Plan 2016-2036

Eastleigh has started work on a replacement Local Plan. The Pre-Submission version identifies the site as being within an existing employment area.

Policy DM15 seeks to safeguard existing employment areas. These sites should remain predominantly in employment use classes B1, B2 and B8. The Borough Council will permit the following subject to the general development criteria (DM1) and transport policies (DM13, DM14) of the Local Plan:

- i. the redevelopment and intensification of use of sites for Use Class B1(b), B1(c), B2 or B8 employment uses;
- ii. changes of use between use classes B1(b), B1(c), B2 and B8; and
- iii. workforce training opportunities as defined in policy DM16.

On the more detailed design and quality of new development, the Borough Council has the adopted Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document.

As part of the evidence base informing the emerging Local Plan, the Economic and Employment Land Evidence Base Paper (May 2016) identifies an overall need for 46,534sqm mixed B-class employment space to cater for projected demand over the period 2011-2036.

Site History

The site was redeveloped to its current form under the planning application F/06/57277 – 'Erection of 7 No. (B1c-light industry, B2-general and B8-warehousing) units with associated parking and landscaping following demolition of existing unit'. This was permitted in July 2006.

A number of applications have been approved leading to changes in the external elevations of a number of the units within the Woodside Trade Centre since its construction. These include:

- F/08/63731 - Unit C (application site) - Insertion of 5 no. windows at ground floor to north-west elevation and installation of 6 no. air conditioning condensers – permitted 05/11/2008
- F/08/62268 - Unit 6 - Addition of 3 no windows at first floor level at rear elevation
- F/07/60705 – Units 1 & 2 - Installation of additional first floor windows to units 1 and 2 on west and south elevations
- F/18/83972- Creation of first floor and 6 new windows.

These applications demonstrate the evolving nature of the trade/employment estate to deal with the demands of existing and new occupiers and their business requirements.

Proposed Development

This application seeks approval for the creation of a first floor within the existing building, including the insertion of 6 new windows on the western and northern elevations (elevations Proposed B & C – drawing no: 2901-OF&1F-101). These windows largely mirror the existing windows which are already present on the ground floor. As such, the proposals are entirely in keeping with the existing character of the Woodside Trade Centre.

This application also seeks permission to add a non-illuminated sign to the north side of the building as shown in proposed elevation C. There are many signs on nearly all surrounding buildings.

2CL Communications Ltd are the owner occupiers of the building. They specialise in two-way radio solutions. Radios are assembled on site and dispatched to clients, and as the business has grown, so the need for increased workshop and stockroom storage has increased. The amount of radios and associated equipment owned by the business has doubled in the past 10 years. There is often a seasonal element to the hire of two-way radios (festivals, summer events etc. which create high demand), and as such when the hired radios are returned there is a need for storage space which the current building is severely lacking (see photographs below at Figure 7).

Internally, the new floor will create 543sqm of new floorspace. The existing ground floor has a Gross Internal Area of 564sqm, giving an overall floor space of 1107 sqm. The additional floorspace proposed is to accommodate:

- Increased stock room space
- Relocation of existing ancillary office suite to first floor
- Increased workshop area on the ground floor

Detailed internal layouts can be seen on the submitted plan – drawing no 2901 -OF&1F-100 Rev E. The overall use of the building will not change with this application.

Access to the building remains unchanged due to the application relating largely to internal changes to the building only. Traffic movements will be identical to the previous site operations.

The alterations to provide additional windows would be in keeping with the character of the existing building and its industrial character, and as a consequence of the location of the building and surrounding uses would not result in harm to any neighbouring occupiers.

The proposed expansion is to provide much needed additional storage capacity to sustain the viability of the existing business. Without this additional space to allow the occupier to provide a service and compete in the marketplace, the business will struggle and may need to relocate to alternative premises with sufficient space to accommodate their requirements, potentially outside of the Borough.

The additional space proposed is to accommodate the needs of the existing business and a particular requirement for additional storage space due to seasonal fluctuations and a requirement to provide capacity to cope with peaks in demand. However, staffing levels are to remain as existing, and as such there will be no increase in parking demand, and no impact on the surrounding area. Many of the staff currently take advantage of sustainable transport links to the site. These include Woodside Avenue being a designated Sustrans National Cycle Route 23 which provides a traffic free and on-road cycle route. The proposals include provision of a cycle store internally within the ground floor to encourage staff commuting by bicycle. There are a number of bus services with stops in close proximity to the site (Bluestar 5, E1, E2, X8 and X9) at Shakespeare Road which is only a five-minute walk to the Woodside Trade Centre providing a range of frequent services to destinations including Winchester, Eastleigh, Gosport, Fareham and Romsey with links to rail services.



Figure 6: Sustrans Cycle Network serving the site



Figure 7: A selection of Photographs showing the storage problems with the existing floorspace

Summary

This application seeks approval for the creation of a first floor within Unit C of the Woodside Trade Centre (an existing industrial building), together with the insertion of 6 new windows on the western and northern elevations. The proposals would support this existing business unit within a designated industrial area and are in accordance with both National and Local policies which encourage a strong, responsive and competitive economy, supporting growth, innovation and improved productivity. The business requires more floor space to ensure its continued viability and maintain local employment and would very much like to remain committed to its existing premises. The proposals will not change access or generate any additional traffic or parking requirements. Furthermore, there would be no adverse impacts on the character of the building or local area, and no impact on surrounding occupiers. As such this application which will allow a local business to continue to invest, expand and innovate within the Borough should be permitted without delay.