



Change of use and minor alterations to existing building to a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E (e) and E(g) to facilitate a new headquarters for the HIOWAA and other associated healthcare services including offices, creation of a helipad and associated works

**Unit H, George Curl Way,
Southampton**



PLANNING STATEMENT
April 2024

SPP SOUTHERN
PLANNING
PRACTICE 

Prepared by: Alice Drew BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
Director

Southern Planning Practice Ltd

Registered Office:
Youngs Yard, Churchfields, Twyford,
Winchester SO21 1NN

Tel: 01962 715770
E-mail: info@southernplanning.co.uk
Website: www.southernplanning.co.uk
Registered in England and Wales No. 3862030

Change of use and minor alterations to existing building to a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E (e) and E(g) to facilitate a new headquarters for the HIOWAA and other associated healthcare services including offices, creation of a helipad and associated works

Unit H, George Curl Way, Southampton

PLANNING STATEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This planning application proposes the change of use and minor alterations to an existing commercial building to provide a new headquarters for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance.

The proposals provide many benefits including:

- A new centralised location for the charity which will result in a faster response time to the most populated areas of the county;
- Reduced flying and travel time from the northern area to the southern area which will reduce emissions from both the helicopter and rapid response cars;
- Potentially less flights and more reliance on the rapid response cars to tend to emergencies as the surrounding road network is very close to the major routes including the M27 and M3;
- Provision of onsite Biodiversity Net Gain which exceeds the mandatory requirement of 10%.

CONTENTS PAGE

SECTION ONE INTRODUCTION	5
SECTION TWO THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDS	8
SECTION THREE PLANNING HISTORY	9
SECTION FOUR THE PROPOSALS	11
SECTION FIVE RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY	13
SECTION SIX RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT	16
SECTION SEVEN CONCLUSION	23

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

- I.1 Southern Planning Practice Ltd has been instructed to prepare and submit a full planning application to Eastleigh Borough Council on behalf of our clients, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA), who are seeking to purchase Unit H ('the site') at George Curl Way. The appropriate notice has been served on the current landowners as part of the planning application.
- I.2 Planning permission is sought for the change of use and minor alterations to an existing building to a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E (e) and E(g) to facilitate a new headquarters for the HIOWAA and associated services including offices, creation of a helipad and associated works.
- I.3 The proposals would include very minor external changes to the existing building and the change of use of an existing car parking area to integrate the site with Southampton Airport. A helipad is proposed in the car parking area to the rear of the building.
- I.4 The following plans and documents comprise the planning application:
- Site Location Plan at 1:1250 Dwg No. E-AD-486.01
 - Existing Block Plan at 1:500 Dwg No. E-AD-486.02
 - Proposed Block Plan at 1:500 Dwg No. E-AD-486.03A
 - Existing Elevations at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-SE-247-000001
 - Existing Elevations at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-SE-247-000002
 - Existing Floorplans at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-GA-247-000001
 - Existing Floorplans at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-GA-247-000002
 - Proposed Elevations at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-SE-247-000011
 - Proposed Elevations at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-SE-247-000012
 - Proposed Floorplans at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-GA-247-000010
 - Proposed Floorplans at 1:100 Dwg No. RR24-008-00-GA-247-000011
 - Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Omnia
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and Assessment prepared by Southern Planning Practice

- Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Fairthorn Consultancy
- Energy Statement prepared by Cooperhomewood
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment prepared by SRE

- I.5 The relocation of the HIOWAA headquarters proposed by this application would provide many major benefits to the borough and the wider area encompassing the counties of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The charity would also significantly benefit from having both the administrative and clinical teams in the same location.
- I.6 Firstly, the proposals would enable the creation of a new, central headquarters for the HIOWAA which provides an essential, invaluable public service for the area. The proposed development is essential in this location as it has very good accessibility to the main urban areas of Hampshire via major road links which would reduce response times in this area.
- I.7 The change of use of the building would retain an employment use and enable further local healthcare businesses to operate from the building, thus ensuring no employment space is lost as a result of the proposals. The plans detail the proposed subdivision of the building.
- I.8 Furthermore, the proposed new headquarters would enable the charity to be located and operate from one location. At present the clinical team are based in Thruxton and the operations and administrative team are located near Southampton.
- I.9 The benefits of the proposed new HIOWAA headquarters will be discussed in further detail throughout this statement.
- I.10 A Pre-application was undertaken in November 2023 to gauge the Council's view on the proposals. Section 3 of this statement provides further details on the response.
- I.11 Following the pre-application response, an extensive public consultation was undertaken including a leaflet drop, dedicated website and an in-person consultation event. The Statement of Community Involvement submitted with this application provides full details of the consultation process and presents the findings. It should be noted that the proposals have seen overwhelming support from the public.
- I.12 This supporting statement sets out the site and its context in section 2, the sites planning history including the recent pre-application is set out in Section 3 and the proposals are

discussed in section 4. Section 5 looks at the planning policy context for the proposals whilst the main planning considerations and the rationale for development is set out in Section 6. Conclusions are drawn in Section 7. Further details on the applicant are set out below to provide further background.

The Applicant

- I.13 The applicant, the HLOWAA, is an independent charity that delivers an advanced Critical Care Team to sick and injured people in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight when they need it most. The charity operates both day and night, 365 days a year. The Air Ambulance Critical Care Team is called out many times a day to attend road traffic collisions, sporting accidents, collapses and many other incidents.
- I.14 Using both a helicopter and emergency response vehicles, the charity brings a team of highly skilled pre-hospital emergency medicine doctors and specialist paramedics to the scene of an incident, effectively bringing the hospital to the patient when time is critical. Called out to an average of five incidents every day, including cardiac arrests, road traffic collisions, falls and assaults. Their life-saving service is operational 19 hours a day, 365 days a year. From its current airbase in Thruxton, Andover, the helicopter can be anywhere within Hampshire within 15 minutes and the Isle of Wight within 20 minutes.
- I.15 The current HLOWAA headquarters are located in Thruxton which is in the north western corner of Hampshire. Whilst the charity has been operating from this location successfully for several years, the shift in the business model to using more emergency response vehicles to get into the urban centres of the county requires a change in location. The applicant has undertaken extensive land searches to find a suitable site which has very good access to the main roads in the county to enable the emergency response vehicles quick access to critical care emergencies. Further, the change in location will enable the critical care team to be available more frequently due to the reduction in flying time.
- I.16 Alongside this planning application the applicant is engaging with Southampton Airport and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on aviation related matters.

SECTION 2

THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDS

- 2.1 The site is located in the Southampton International Business Park to the north east of George Curl Way. The business park is accessed via Wide Lane and is approximately half a mile from Junction 5 of the M27. This provides direct access to Southampton and Portsmouth and also links to the M3, which provides access to the wider Hampshire area.
- 2.2 To the north and south of the site are additional buildings in commercial use which comprise part of the business park. To the east is Southampton Airport and to the west beyond George Curl Way is the M27. The site comprises an existing two storey commercial building and a large yard area for parking. The building currently has three loading doors as well as pedestrian doors for access. The building is currently configured for use as offices.
- 2.3 There are no landscape or environmental designations known to apply to the site.
- 2.4 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency and therefore there is a very low risk of flooding.
- 2.5 The following extract of the site location plan details the location and extent of the site.



SECTION 3

PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 A pre-application advice request was submitted to the Council in November 2023 and was considered under reference number Q/23/96487. A written response to the pre-application was received on 20 December 2023. The response confirmed that the proposal retains an employment use on the site which is in broad accordance with policy DM15 of the Local Plan. The response highlighted that the Class E (c) is an included restricted use class within an existing employment site and as such would not be in accordance with policy. This use has therefore been removed from the proposed uses of the building presented by this planning application.
- 3.2 The pre-application response confirmed that the proposed physical changes to the unit are relatively minor in nature and are not considered to be controversial. The proposed changes to the building subject of this planning application remain the same as those proposed by the pre-application.
- 3.3 The response recommended that an extensive public consultation was undertaken prior to the submission of the application. A robust and thorough public consultation was therefore undertaken by the applicant including a leaflet drop, website, drop in event and extensive media coverage on both television and radio. The consultation process and results are presented in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted with this application. The feedback received in response to the extensive public consultation was overwhelmingly positive with 93% of respondents agreeing that the right location for the new HIOWAA headquarters had been identified.
- 3.4 The proposed helipad was noted as being a potential noise concern and therefore it was requested that a Noise Impact Assessment was undertaken and this is submitted together with this planning application.
- 3.5 Southampton Airport, being an immediately adjacent neighbour, were consulted by the Council on the pre-application proposals and confirmed that from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective, it does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. There is no objection to the change

of use and minor alterations to the building from Southampton Airport. The change of use from an existing car parking area to a helipad will be dependent on the Civil Aviation Authority and Southampton International Airport Ltd. approval. Conversations with the Civil Aviation Authority and Southampton International Airport Ltd. are ongoing alongside this planning application.

- 3.6 The pre-application confirmed that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal would not be required due to the sites existing low ecological value. However, the need for biodiversity net gain was indeed highlighted and confirmed that a biodiversity net gain of at least 10% would be required.
- 3.7 Sustainability was raised as a consideration in the pre-application and reference to Policy DM2, Environmentally sustainable development, which requires all other development that is above 500 sq.m of floor space measured externally (including extensions and conversions to existing buildings) to achieve BREEAM 'excellent' (or equivalent) or BREEAM 'very good' plus 'passivhaus' certification including a 15% improvement in predicted carbon emissions, compared with the building regulations current at the time, through low or zero carbon energy generation on site or in a Borough location agreed by the Council.
- 3.8 The pre-application response concluded that the proposal is retaining an employment use and has a use generally expected within an industrial and aerodrome setting. Matters such as specific use classes, noise, ecology and sustainability are key factors that require further details to be examined in accordance with the advice set out in this letter. A full public consultation/engagement exercise is also recommended prior to the submission of the planning application in line with the Council's SCI.

SECTION 4

THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 This planning application seeks permission for the change of use and minor alterations to an existing building at George Curl Way to a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E (e) and E(g) to facilitate a new headquarters for the HIOWWA and other healthcare services including offices, creation of a helipad and associated works. The existing building is currently used as offices (Class E g (i)). The proposed uses are considered to be appropriate at the site and this was confirmed in the pre-application response.
- 4.2 The description of development is as follows:
- Change of use and minor alterations to existing building to a mixed use comprising B2, B8, E (e) and E(g) to facilitate a new headquarters for the HIOWWA and other healthcare services including offices, creation of a helipad, secondary helipad and associated works.
- 4.3 The proposed plans submitted with this application detail the proposals. The proposals include the following minor alterations:
- Replacement of two existing loading doors with a large sliding door (approximately 13m by 6m) on the eastern elevation to provide access to the helicopter hangar;
 - Insertion of one/two roller loading doors on southern section of east elevation;
 - Relocation of existing gate to new position to facilitate access to rear unit;
 - Installation of new fencing in eastern section of the site;
 - Removal of line markings, painting of 'H' and provision of lighting to create a helipad;
 - External lighting associated with the helipad.
- 4.4 The proposals would allow the creation of a helicopter hangar, office space, meeting room and sleeping quarters for the HIOWAA. This would enable the charity to be based in one central location. In addition, the remainder of the building will be available to let for other healthcare/office/industrial uses.
- 4.5 As detailed on the submitted plans, all proposed changes are very minor in nature and are only on the eastern elevation and in the eastern section of the site.

- 4.6 The proposed block plan shows a 'H' indicating a helipad within the existing yard area of the building.
- 4.7 With regards to the operation of the proposed HIOWAA headquarters, the office hours are likely to be in line with normal office hours i.e. 08:00 – 18:00, however the use of the helipad, rapid response vehicles and sleeping quarters will be as required in emergency situations and therefore must be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The nature of the use means that hours of operation cannot be predicted and therefore such hours cannot be restricted. The hours of operation were confirmed to be acceptable in the pre-application due to the nature of the charity.
- 4.8 The following indicative image shows how the HIOWAA new headquarters is envisaged to look.



SECTION 5

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the planning policy framework relevant to the determination of the application comprises the adopted Development Plan and relevant material considerations. Where the Development Plan contains relevant policies, applications for development which are in accordance with the plans should be allowed, unless material considerations state otherwise.

5.2 The site is located in the administrative boundary of Eastleigh Borough Council. As such, the Development Plan comprises:

- Adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036; and
- Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013).

5.3 The “other material considerations” relevant as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, include the National Planning Policy Framework, the Planning Practice Guidance, Supplementary Planning Documents, and other local guidance.

National Planning Policy

5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and forms the Government’s Planning Policy at national level. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The revised NPPF was published in July 2018, updated in February 2019, updated again in July 2021 and most recently updated in December 2023.

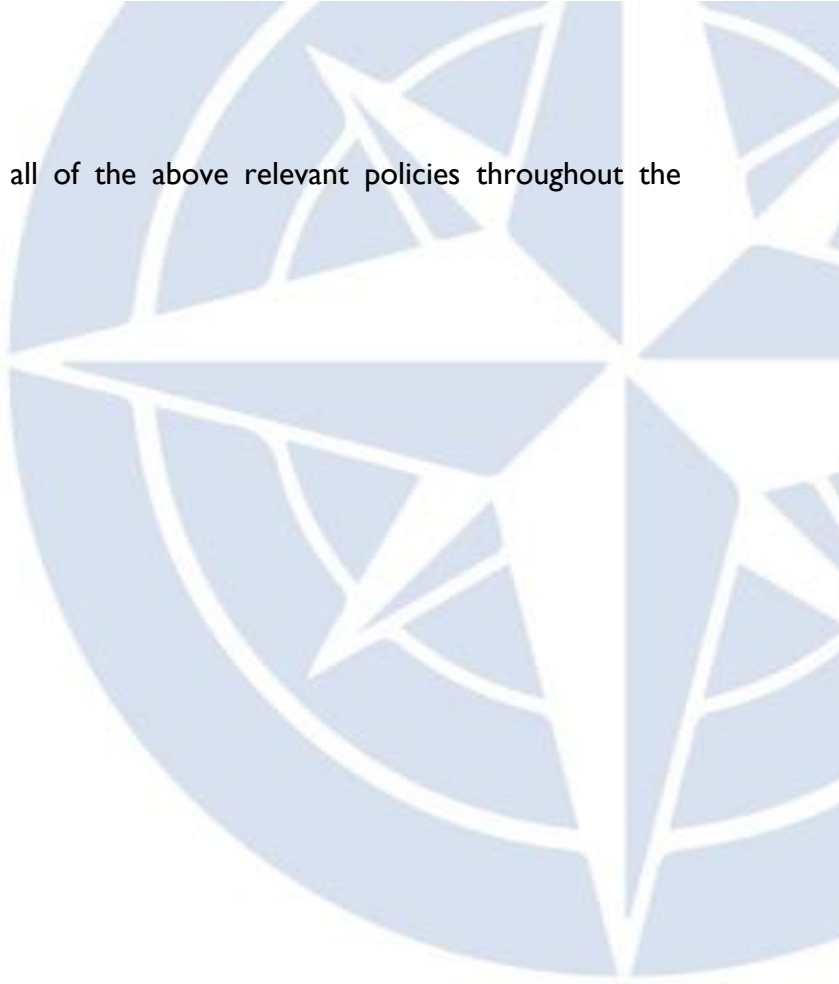
5.5 The NPPF sets out the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental.

- 5.6 Paragraph 8 b) of the NPPF sets out the social objective of the NPPF as the following: 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** (our emphasis).
- 5.7 Chapter 2 of the Framework focuses on achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 5.8 Chapter 4 of the NPPF refers to decision-making and promotes the use of pre-application discussions for early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development would be acceptable in principle and to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.
- 5.9 Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to make effective use of land whilst Chapter 12 seeks to achieve well designed places.

Development Plan

- 5.10 The most relevant policies for the proposed development subject of this application are within the Adopted Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan and are as follows:
- Strategic policy S1 - Delivering sustainable development
 - Strategic policy S4 - Employment provision
 - Policy DM1 - General Criteria for New Development
 - Policy DM2 - Environmentally Sustainable Development
 - Policy DM8 - Pollution
 - Policy DM11 - Nature Conservation
 - Policy DM13 - General development criteria – transport
 - Policy DM14 - Parking
 - Policy DM15 - Safeguarding existing employment sites

5.11 Due consideration has been given to all of the above relevant policies throughout the preparation of the proposals.



SECTION 6

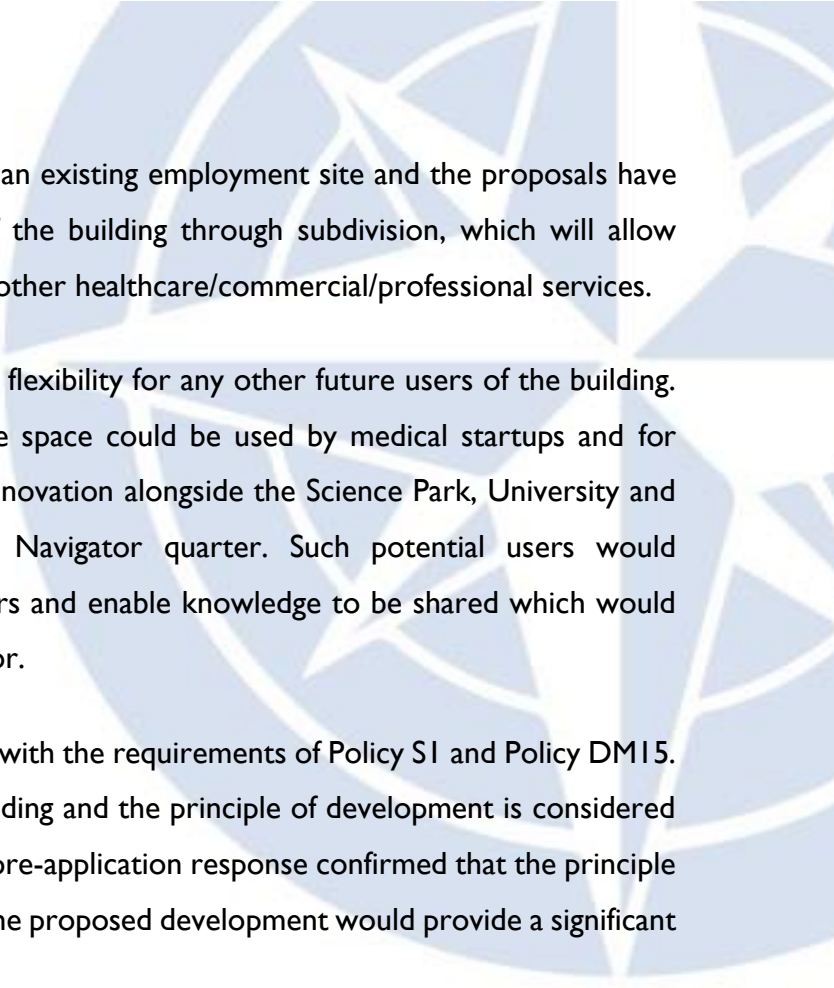
RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

Planning Considerations

- 6.1 The main planning considerations in this instance are the principle of development, the impact on the surrounding neighbouring amenity particularly with regard to noise and the impact on the surrounding local highway network. Due consideration has also been given to sustainability to ensure the proposals can be as sustainable as practically possible. Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain is also a consideration which has been duly considered and is discussed below. Sustainability is a key consideration in the proposals and a Sustainability Assessment has been undertaken and accompanies this application.
- 6.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is emphasised in paragraphs 2, 12 and 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).
- 6.3 The following assesses the proposed development against the key planning considerations.

Principle of Development

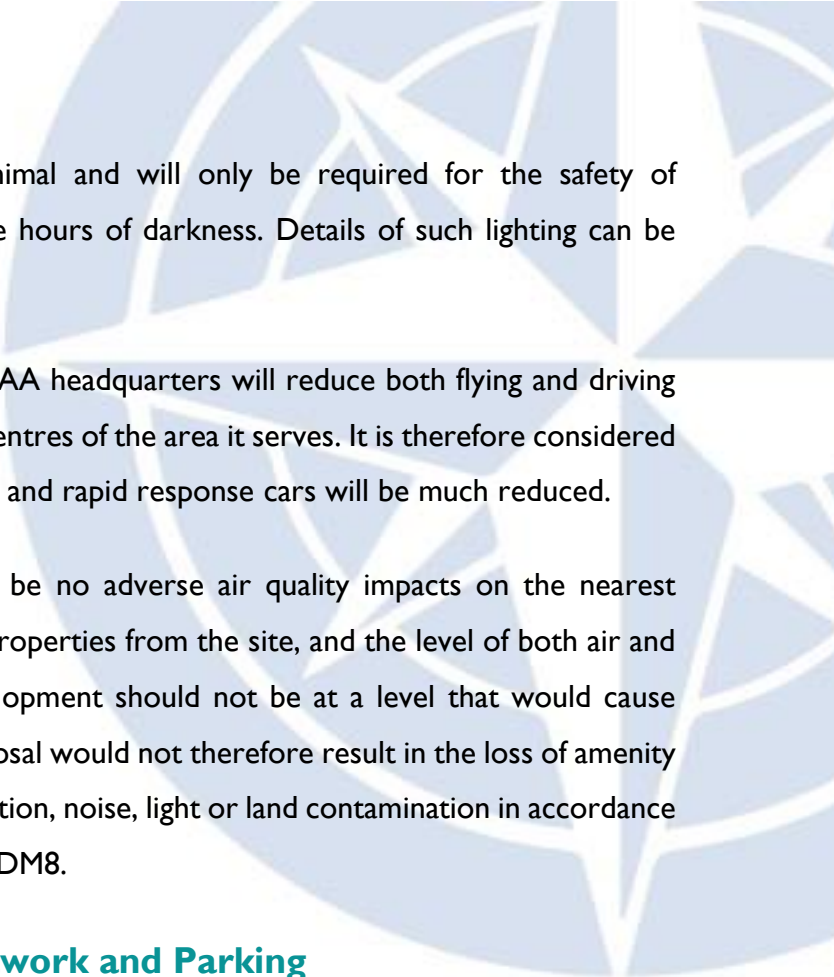
- 6.4 The site is located within a defined settlement boundary and on an existing business park where the principle of development and redevelopment is acceptable when an employment use is being retained. This was confirmed in the pre-application response.
- 6.5 As set out in the proposals section of this statement, the application is simply for the change of use of an existing building and very minor alterations to make the building suitable for the use by the HIOWAA, no new built form is proposed on the site. The proposed changes were confirmed to be relatively minor in nature and were not considered to be controversial in the pre-application response. It is pertinent to note that the only changes to the building are proposed on the eastern elevation.

- 
- 6.6 The proposed change of use will retain an existing employment site and the proposals have been designed to maximise the use of the building through subdivision, which will allow sections of the building to be leased by other healthcare/commercial/professional services.
- 6.7 The proposed range of uses will ensure flexibility for any other future users of the building. It is envisaged that the additional office space could be used by medical startups and for medical research as part of a hub for innovation alongside the Science Park, University and possible future developments in the Navigator quarter. Such potential users would complement the HIOWAA headquarters and enable knowledge to be shared which would be hugely beneficial to the medical sector.
- 6.8 In light of the above, the proposals align with the requirements of Policy S1 and Policy DM15. Therefore, the change of use of the building and the principle of development is considered to be acceptable. As set out above, the pre-application response confirmed that the principle of development is acceptable. Further, the proposed development would provide a significant public benefit.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity and Noise

- 6.9 The site is located within an existing business park and therefore the neighbouring uses are commercial/industrial uses. There is no residential development in close proximity to the site. The nearest residential development to the site is to the south beyond the M27 and to the north beyond the airport and Lakeside Country Park. Therefore, the proposals are very unlikely to have an adverse impact on any residential properties.
- 6.10 Southampton Airport is located to the east of the site and the M27 is located to the west. It is therefore considered that there are already several noise generating uses within close proximity to the site. The relationship with the airport and the aviation use is considered to be beneficial to the proposed use.
- 6.11 Given the nature of the operations undertaken by the HIOWAA, the frequency of use of both emergency response vehicles and helicopter cannot be predicted. Such use will need to be allowed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. On average, the crew are called out to approximately five emergencies within a 19 hour period. In 2022, the charity responded to 1,814 emergency call-outs: 982 by air and 705 by road; 1,267 (70%) in daylight (0700 – 1800) and 547 (30%) at night (1900 – 0200).

- 6.12 A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been undertaken by Omnia and is submitted with this planning application. The NIA provides a comprehensive noise risk assessment of the proposed development. The assessment undertook an ambient noise survey completed in a location considered to be representative of the background sound climate at the nearest receptors to the development over a full weekday and weekend period. The assessment also utilised noise measurements completed at the HIOWAA's existing site in Thruxton. The NIA was undertaken to identify and assess any noise-generating activities which may have the potential to adversely impact the existing noise-sensitive receptors. Accordingly, this Assessment has been completed with due regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and its associated National Planning Policy Guidance. In addition, various British Standard and guidance documents exist which are applicable to the assessment of noise impacts.
- 6.13 The NIA confirmed that the change in ambient noise level as a result of the proposals, in particular the helicopter movements, is below the noise level of +2.9dB and so there is no requirement to consider noise mitigation measures. It is therefore concluded in the NIA that the predicted level of noise from the Development, is sufficiently low enough at the closest residential dwellings to accord with the 'No Observed Adverse Effect Level' as detailed in the PPG and The Air Navigation Guidance 2017 and as such noise should not be deemed to be a determining factor in the granting of planning permission for this Site.
- 6.14 Whilst it is accepted that there will be some noise generated by the proposals, the modelling shows it will not impact the nearest residential development. Furthermore, it is highlighted that the use of helicopters and other forms of aviation in the area at all hours is not uncommon. Southampton General Hospital has a helipad which is frequently used in emergency scenarios, sometimes by the HIOWAA, and there are also several army bases in the local vicinity which fly various aircraft at all hours. It is also pertinent to note the context of the site and the noise generated by the aircraft at Southampton Airport which is more regular than the use arising from the proposed HIOWAA headquarters.
- 6.15 No new built form is proposed and therefore there is no potential for any overlooking or any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. Whilst additional openings on the eastern elevation are proposed, these will not result in any overlooking of neighbouring commercial buildings.

- 
- 6.16 The proposed external lighting is minimal and will only be required for the safety of helicopters taking off and landing in the hours of darkness. Details of such lighting can be secured by condition.
- 6.17 The proposed relocation of the HIOWAA headquarters will reduce both flying and driving times as it is much closer to the major centres of the area it serves. It is therefore considered that emissions from both the helicopter and rapid response cars will be much reduced.
- 6.18 Further, it is envisaged that there will be no adverse air quality impacts on the nearest residents due to the distance of these properties from the site, and the level of both air and vehicular traffic generated by the development should not be at a level that would cause concern regarding air quality. The proposal would not therefore result in the loss of amenity or impact on public health from air pollution, noise, light or land contamination in accordance with local plan policy policies DM1 and DM8.

Impact on Local Highway Network and Parking

- 6.19 The site is accessed via an existing safe and suitable access which provides direct links to the M27 and other major roads in the county.
- 6.20 The proposed relocation of the HIOWAA headquarters from Thruxton to the site at Southampton International Business Park will significantly reduce the travel distances for the emergency response vehicles to the main urban areas of Hampshire which is encouraged by Policies S1, S11, DM2 and DM13. The reduction in travel distances and proximity to both the M27 and M3 will enable response times to be reduced and also reduce the reliance on the helicopter for situations where an emergency response vehicle may be best suited. This is considered to be a significant benefit for both live saving and sustainability.
- 6.21 The frequency of vehicular trips to and from the site could potentially increase however this would only result in a very minimal increase and is considered to be de minimis. However, it should be noted that the number of employees on site is proposed to reduce from 90 to approximately 80 and therefore overall, the trip movements to and from the site are likely to be reduced.
- 6.22 In light of the above it is therefore considered that the proposed development will have no adverse impact on the local highway network, in fact it may have a positive impact as travel

distances will be reduced and therefore response times to the major urban areas are likely to be faster particularly when using the emergency response vehicles.

- 6.23** The building has a large yard area which has sufficient parking for the users of the HIOWAA and other offices. Whilst the helipad will result in the loss of some parking, there is adequate parking within the site to ensure that the loss of parking will have no adverse impact on parking provision. The proposals are therefore also in accordance with Policy DM14 of the Local Plan.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.24** Policy DM11 states that the Council will work to protect, conserve and enhance all nature designations and networks of natural habitats/features; assist in achieving national, county and local biodiversity targets as set out in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs); and seek a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing and provision of new habitats and features of nature conservation interest compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough.
- 6.25** As no new built form is being proposed and the site has a very low ecological value, it is not considered that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is required. This was confirmed in the pre-application response from the Council.
- 6.26** Whilst the site has a very low ecological value, the importance of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has been duly noted and the proposals have sought to incorporate BNG on the site. A Biodiversity Condition Assessment, a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment have been prepared and are submitted with this planning application. The BNG Assessment confirms that the development can demonstrate a 13.97% (habitat units) and 139.47% (hedgerow units) biodiversity net gain using the BNG Statutory Metric. Figure 9 in the report details the required habitat changes to achieve this improvement. The two main changes include the improvement of the condition of the existing urban planting in the western section of the site and also the creation of a habitat on the southern side of the site through the planting of new native hedgerow.
- 6.27** The assessment sets out guidance on how the existing planting on site should be managed and maintained as well as how the new hedgerow should be planted. Given the mandatory requirement for BNG is 10%, the proposed development well exceeds this requirement as

it provides meaningful BNG. The proposals are therefore in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) and Policy DM11 of the Local Plan.

Sustainability

- 6.28** Policy DM2, Environmentally sustainable development, requires all other development that is above 500 sq.m of floor space measured externally (including extensions and conversions to existing buildings) to achieve BREEAM 'excellent' (or equivalent) or BREEAM 'very good' plus 'passivhaus' certification including a 15% improvement in predicted carbon emissions, compared with the building regulations current at the time, through low or zero carbon energy generation on site or in a Borough location agreed by the Council.
- 6.29** Whilst the requirements of this policy are duly noted, one must consider the very minor nature of the proposals subject of this application. The physical changes to the building are very limited and only affect the eastern elevation of the building. Therefore, it is considered that it would both unreasonable and unjustified to require the proposals to demonstrate BREEAM excellent.
- 6.30** An Energy Statement and BREEAM Pre-assessment has been prepared and submitted in support of this application. It is confirmed that the conversion of the building can achieve BREEAM very good. Whilst Policy DM2 of the Local Plan seeks BREEAM excellent, in this instance, due to the very small scale nature of the proposed changes to the building, it is not considered that such a rating should be sought. Given the small scale nature of the proposals, it is considered to be unreasonable to require the applicant to demonstrate BREEAM 'excellent'. In the planning balance, the additional costs for the charity would not be considered to be money well spent and the achievement of the 'Very Good' rating would still constitute a significant improvement to the energy efficiency and sustainability of the building. This rating has been considered to be appropriate by both the BREEAM Assessor and Sustainability Consultant who have been involved throughout the preparation of the proposals.
- 6.31** In addition, an Energy Statement has been prepared and is submitted with this application. The statement outlines the buildings overall performance with regards to energy use and emissions and aims to demonstrate that the measures taken on site meet and exceed the

required performance standards as outlined within Building Regulations Part L, Local Planning Policy, and BREEAM standards.

- 6.32 Further, it should be noted that many of the clinical team are based/live in Southampton and the surrounding area as the University Hospital Southampton is their employer. Therefore, the commutes of the charity as a whole are likely to be reduced which is considered to be an environmental benefit.
- 6.33 In addition to the above, the HIOWAA have aspirations to seek to explore sustainable energy options including the provision of solar panels on the roof of the building as highlighted in the Energy Statement. The provision of solar panels is currently being explored further and a further planning application may be submitted if it is confirmed that the existing structure can support solar panels.
- 6.34 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposals constitute a sustainable development and are therefore in accordance with Policy DM2 and the requirements of the NPPF.

SECTION 7

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposals would provide a vital public service in an accessible location which would enable the HIOWAA to continue providing emergency medical care and life saving treatment.
- 7.2 The change in the way the HIOWAA operates, with the increasing use of the emergency response vehicles, requires the need for the charity to be located close to the main urban areas of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to maximise the patient reach. The site is very well connected to the major routes within the area which is hugely beneficial and will save up to 10 minutes on flight times and reduce road response times.
- 7.3 As demonstrated throughout the above statement, the principle of the change of use and minor alterations to create the new HIOWAA headquarters is supported by the relevant policies of the Development Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework also provides support for the proposals which is a key material consideration in this instance.
- 7.4 The extensive public consultation undertaken, prior to the submission of the application, demonstrated significant public support for the proposals. The Statement of Community Involvement submitted with this application sets out the number of, and a summary of the responses received and confirms the significant support for the new HIOWAA headquarters adjacent to Southampton Airport.
- 7.5 In summary, the proposals would provide the following benefits:
- A centrally located new headquarters, which will reduce response times to the main urban areas served by the HIOWAA;
 - Reduced emissions from both the helicopter and cars due to reduced travel distances;
 - A new headquarters for both the administrative and clinical teams to collaborate;
 - Significant BNG, over and above the mandatory 10% requirement;
 - No Observed Adverse Effect Noise Level to the nearest residential development;
 - BREEAM Very Good rating; and

- Additional space for other users to thrive.

7.6 In light of the above, the provision of the proposed new HIOWAA headquarters through the change of use and minor alterations to an existing building are considered to be in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies and the objectives of the NPPF. The proposals will provide a new premises for the relocation of the critical lifesaving charity which is a substantial public benefit. As such, the proposed development should be approved in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.