

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/23/96524

Site Address: UNIT 4 TO 4A, BARTON PARK, CHICKENHALL LANE, EASTLEIGH,
SO50 6RR

Case Officer: David Huckfield

**Description
(Updated for
clarity following
receipt of
amended plans):** Elevational alterations including removal of existing paint and exposure of original brickwork to northern elevation, and changes to fenestration, installation of cladding and alterations to roller shutter and external doors to north, south and west elevations. Internal alterations including part removal of mezzanine floor.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within the Urban Edge Existing Employment Site Within Eastleigh River Side (Local Plan Designation)		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
A/00552/000 – The display of advertisements – CONSENTED (1974) Z/13073/001 – Alterations to windows and doors on north and part west elevations and construction of pedestrian access in Bishopstoke Road – PERMIT (1977) Z/13073/004 – Alterations (mainly internal) to form paint and body shop for upkeep of bus vehicles – PERMIT (1977) Z/13073/009 – Alterations to workshop to provide office accommodation with new entrance – PERMIT (1979) Z/13073/010 – Erection of security gates and wall on front elevation – PERMIT (1981) Z/13073/011 – Erection of a lesser officer building and covered motor cycle park – PERMIT (1982) Z/13073/012 – Removal of portion of existing boundary wall and replacing with boarded fence – PERMIT (1983) A/13073/013 – Two wall mounted painted signs – CONSENTED (1984) Z/13073/015 – Outline: Erection of retail warehouse and garden centre with associated parking and access from Bishopstoke Road – REFUSED (1986) Z/13073/016 – Outline: Retail warehouse and associated car parking – REFUSED (1987) Z/13073/017 – Outline: Erection of retail warehouse and associated parking – REFUSED (1987) Z/13073/021 – Installation of spray booth with inlet and extract flues above roof – PERMIT (1996) Z/38556/000 – Change of use to indoor football centre and children's play area with associated facilities – PERMIT (2002) F/18/82336 – Erection of external vents to service new internal spray booths – PERMIT (2018)		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations	None		
Eastleigh Town Council	No Objection		
Urban Design	<i>Comments on scheme as originally submitted:</i> The proposal is for cladding and changes to fenestration on north, south and part of the west elevation. To the northern elevation of the building, on the approach to Eastleigh Town Centre along Bishopstoke Road, it is proposed to block up the majority of the existing windows looking as if it is a rear elevation. The northern elevation should be carefully considered due to its visual prominence from the surrounding neighbourhood.		

	It is acknowledged that industrial buildings need to be functional and that there are practical considerations that might drive elements of the façade design. However, all buildings will still be expected to contribute positively to the character area. To this end, the choice of material palette, façade design, organisation of utilities, and their relationship to fenestration layout, should all be considered on the design process. Design proposals should minimise large expanses of blank walls or homogeneous material. Long frontages that are highly visible from the public view without any variety, visual interest, or physical breaks, such as windows, should be avoided. The proposal should maximise opportunities for enhancing the setting and not the other way around. Blocking the existing windows is not supported and amendments to the proposal are expected to overcome the concern above. It would be encouraged to break up massing through vertical breaks in the building line or by incorporating distinctive, high-quality elements into the design, such as greening, circulation cores, fenestration and vents and careful use of materials and colour. Also, the architectural expression and choice of materials should explore opportunities to add varying degrees of depth in the façade, i.e. recessed windows, where the cladding meets brickwork. The use of deep reveals in parts of the building might be appropriate to help mark features and reinforce the sense of place. Furthermore, to ensure that the external appearance of the building is of high-quality standards, a sample should be required by condition as part of the planning approval.
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Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: A site visit was undertaken by the Case Officer to assess the proposals in context.		

Policy:
The Development Plan: Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises the Policies of the adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036. The relevant policies to this application are: S1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), S2 (Approach to New Development), S4 (Employment Provision), DM1 (General Criteria for New Development), DM2 (Environmentally Sustainable Development), DM3 (Adaption to Climate Change), DM11 (Nature Conservation), DM13 (General Development Criteria – Transport), DM14 (Parking), DM15 (Safeguarding Existing Employment Sites), E6 (Eastleigh River Side). National Planning Policy and Guidance: The latest iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF or Framework) was published in December 2023 and as set out within paragraph 224, the policies contained within it are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication.

The Planning Practice Guidance provides additional guidance in support of the policies within the Framework and is also a material consideration in the determination of the application.

Assessment:

The development is considered to be acceptable and complies with the relevant local and national planning policy provisions for the following reasons:

Principle of development and economic sustainability:

The site is within the urban edge, is part of an existing employment site and also falls within the Eastleigh River Side designation in the Council's adopted Local Plan. Policy DM15 seeks to retain employment sites within employment uses, whilst Policy E6 promotes the regeneration of Eastleigh River Side. Policy S4 sets out a strategic vision for the provision of additional employment floorspace within the borough and seeks the intensification of uses on existing employment sites in order to contribute to meeting existing and future employment needs.

The scheme includes the partial removal of the existing mezzanine floor within the application building thereby reducing its overall level of floorspace. It could be argued that the proposals in this respect are, as a result, in conflict with the desire of Policy S4 to intensify the use of existing employment sites within the borough. In this case, however, it is considered that this modest loss of floorspace can be balanced and indeed outweighed by the positive effect that the works will have on the appearance of the building, which are likely to make it notably more appealing to future tenants and increase the potential for its longer-term occupation for employment purposes. It is also a material consideration in this regard, that as the works to the mezzanine floor are wholly internal within the building, they could in themselves be undertaken without the need for planning permission.

Taking account of these factors and despite the reduction in floorspace, it is considered that the proposals still substantively align with the overarching aims of the relevant local plan policies to meet the employment needs of the borough and promote regeneration and, as such, the development will therefore be economically sustainable.

Design and impact on the character of the area:

The extensive scale of the building and its proximity to the public highway give it a notable prominence along Bishopstoke Road on what is one of the main routes into Eastleigh Town Centre. Alterations to the building and particularly its northern elevation, therefore, have the potential to have a notable impact on this part of the street scene and the site's immediate surroundings.

As originally submitted, the proposals had sought to remove all windows from the northern elevation and to fully cover this side of the building with vertical profiled cladding in a goosewing grey colour. As noted in the comments of the Council's Urban Designer, however, whilst acknowledging that industrial buildings need to be functional, it is considered that all buildings should contribute positively to the character of the area and that unbroken expanses of blank walls should be avoided where these are highly visible from the public realm, as is the case in this instance.

In addition, whilst the building is not statutorily or locally listed and is evidently currently somewhat tired in terms of its appearance, it nonetheless is considered to form part of the industrial heritage of Eastleigh and the loss of some of the original architectural features that are still evident on its northern side including its recessed archways and curved brick detailing in the upper section of each gable, would have detracted from its prevailing character and aesthetic value.

As such and following the consideration of a range of alternative options, the plans have been amended with the proposal being to now remove the existing paint from this elevation and reinstate its original red brick façade, with the associated brick detailing and

aforementioned recessed archways to be retained, thereby restoring the building's original industrial character as seen from its most prominent public vista. The lower section of the brickwork or brick 'skirt' is to be painted black which will assist in hiding dirt build up that may occur from the adjoining highway.

The upper storey windows, along with a small number of those on the ground floor, are to be replaced with aluminium units in anthracite grey, with the remainder to be covered with infill cladding in a corresponding colour. This will allow an appropriate balance to be achieved between respecting the character of the building and maintaining visual interest with the applicant's required practical function of providing improved security for future tenants.

The remaining works to the exterior of the building, which include the replacement of windows and the addition of cladding to the building's western and southern sides as well as the recessed section of its northern elevation, along with the replacement of flashing, corner trims and external and roller shutter doors (including the blocking up of some), are considered to be acceptable and appropriate for their setting. The part removal of the internal mezzanine will have no visual impact on the exterior of the building and as such raises no concerns in design terms.

Overall and following the amendments made to the scheme, it is considered that the works will result in a notable uplift in the visual appearance of the building and will appropriately respect its function, heritage and character, as well as that of its immediate surroundings.

Highway considerations:

As the works do not result in an increase in the external footprint of the building, there will be no impact on existing access arrangements to the site or the current levels of parking provision and, indeed, the reduction in overall floor space due to the removal of the mezzanine has the potential to reduce demand in the latter respect. The works to the northern elevation will also not impinge upon the adjoining public footway or compromise its safe use by pedestrians.

Residential amenity:

The proposals, due to their nature and siting relative to the nearest residential properties, will not unacceptably impact upon the amenity of their residents in terms of loss of light, privacy or outlook, nor will the proposals be unduly overbearing.

Nature conservation:

As the proposals consist only of elevational changes and internal alterations to an existing industrial building, there are considered to be no likely significant impacts on either local or European designated sites for nature conservation.

Climate Change:

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 2025; (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 supports economic growth and productivity with the aim of building a strong competitive economy, and Policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 103,500sqm of new employment development to be provided within the borough over the plan period. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and the Council's adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

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:

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐