



Unit 3 Hedge End Retail Park, Charles Watts Way, Southampton

Planning Statement

On behalf of **23.5 Degrees Ltd**

Project Ref: 33313347600 | Rev: 01 | Date: July 2024

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For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

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Contents

1.0 Introduction.....1

2.0 The Site And Surroundings.....4

3.0 Proposed Development..... 7

4.0 Planning Policy Context.....10

5.0 Planning Assessment.....16

6.0 Conclusions.....23

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Stantec on behalf of 23.5 Degrees Ltd ('the Applicant') in support of a full planning application at Unit 3 Hedge End Retail Park, Southampton ('the Site').
- 1.2 The description of development is as follows:

"External and internal alterations to the existing Class E units, including revised access and a new drive-through lane."

The existing building comprises 2 units; one of which is currently vacant and was last in use as a Carphone Warehouse store, whilst the other is occupied by Starbucks. The proposed development seeks to utilise the building's existing servicing area to provide space for a drive-through lane associated with the Starbucks.

Purpose of this Statement

- 1.3 The purpose of this Statement is to set out the context of the proposed development and to assess its compliance with the adopted development plan and any other material considerations in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).
- 1.4 The development plan relevant to the administrative boundary of Eastleigh Borough Council, ('the Council'), and for the determination of this planning application is the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) (April 2022).
- 1.5 The policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the Council's adopted supplementary planning documents and National Planning Practice Guidance are also material considerations.

Planning Application Submission

- 1.6 This application is accompanied by a comprehensive range of supporting documents and plans which should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement. Table 1.1 below identifies each of the submission documents and their author.

Table 1.1: Submission Documents

Document	Consultant	Ref.
Application Forms and Certificates	Stantec	-
Planning Statement	Stantec	33313347600/A5/LC/VR
Transport Technical Note	SLR	216419, Rev 4, dated 10 th April 2024
Arboricultural Report	SLR	404.064093.00001, dated 24 th April 2024
UKHab Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Note	SLR	404.064098.00001, dated 28 th June 2024
Architectural Plans / Drawings		
Location Plan	Architecture Design Ltd.	Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.01
Existing Block Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.02
Existing Site Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.03
Existing GA Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.04
Existing Elevations		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.05
Existing Elevations		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.06
Demolition Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.07
Proposed Block Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.08
Proposed Site Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.09
Proposed GA Plan		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.10
Proposed Elevations		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.11
Proposed Elevations		Dwg no: 39.03/39.03.12

Structure

1.7 The Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – describes the application site, its immediate surroundings, wider context and planning history.

- **Section 3** – describes the proposed development.
- **Section 4** - sets out relevant Development Plan policies and the material considerations which against which the proposals will be determined.
- **Section 5** - sets out our planning assessment which justifies how the proposed development accords with planning policy.
- **Section 6** - summarises the main findings of the Planning Statement, establishes the planning balance, and concludes on the overall merits of the scheme.

2.0 The Site and its Surroundings

Location

- 2.1 The Site comprises Unit 3 at Hedge End Retail Park on Charles Watts Way in Hedge End, Southampton. The Site lies within the administrative boundary of Eastleigh Borough Council.
- 2.2 The Site is located approximately 650m to the north west of Hedge End Town Centre and approximately 5km to the north east of Southampton City Centre.
- 2.3 Access to the Site is provided via Charles Watts Way (A334), to the north of the Site. The A334 is an arterial route which connects to the M27, located approximately 300m to the east of the Site, and also provides a direct link to Southampton City Centre.
- 2.4 The Site is highly accessible by public transport and Hedge End Retail Park has a dedicated bus stop, located approximately 330m to the north of the Site. From here, hourly buses to Hedge End Town Centre, and half-hourly buses to Southampton City Centre, Eastleigh and Grange Park can be accessed. Pedestrian access to the Site is available via a footbridge over the A334 and dedicated pedestrian footpaths, which connect the residential area surrounding the retail park.

The Site

- 2.5 The Site comprises the existing Unit 3 at Hedge End Retail Park. The Unit 3 building is currently sub-divided into two smaller units, known as Unit 3A and 3B. Unit 3A is approximately 397.8sqm Gross Internal Area (GIA) in size, and is currently vacant, having previously been occupied by Carphone Warehouse. Starbucks currently trades from Unit 3B which extends to approximately 197.8sqm GIA. The total GIA of Unit 3 is therefore approximately 595.6sqm GIA.
- 2.6 The service area is currently located to the west of the building and continues through a back-of-house area at the southern extent of the building. This area was formerly used by Carphone Warehouse to fit car phones.
- 2.7 The unit is single-storey and finished in buff brick, with large glazed windows and entrance doors on the northern and western elevations. The roof is constructed using grey roof tiles and architectural features such as Dutch gabling.

- 2.8 Customer car parking is located on the northern and western sides of the building and includes 2no. disabled parking spaces. A servicing area is currently located to the west of the building and continues through a back-of-house internal area at the southern extent of the building. This area was formerly used by Carphone Warehouse to fit car phones.
- 2.9 The Site is bound by the retail park's access road to the north, and additional car parking to the west. A retaining wall bounds the Site on the eastern and southern sides. Beyond the retaining wall to the south is substantial drop in topography, which is occupied by the mature trees and scrub.
- 2.10 Soft landscape verges with sporadic trees are located to the north of the building and across the car park to the west of the Site.
- 2.11 The Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding. There are no heritage assets located on, or within the vicinity of the Site. The Site is not located within a conservation area and there are no other statutory historic, landscape or ecological designations which affect the Site.

Surrounding Area

- 2.12 As noted above, the Site is located within Hedge End Retail Park, and as such, the immediate surrounding area is largely comprised of a retail development. Next department store is located directly to the east of the Site, and a number of furniture stores are located to the south west. Beyond Charles Watts Way, to the north, Hedge End Retail Park extends further with a number of supermarkets and fast-food restaurants.
- 2.13 Residential development is located to the east, south and west and includes some recreational/leisure uses such as Turnpike Way Cricket Ground and Wildern Local Nature Reserve.

Planning History

- 2.14 A search of the Site's planning history has been undertaken using the Council's online planning register, which dates back to 2004. The relevant planning history is set out in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Planning History for the Site from 2004

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
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F/13/73229	Change of use of existing unit from retail (A1) to restaurant/café (A3) and addition of outdoor seating area at front,	Approved	13/12/2013
F/13/73472	Re-spraying of the existing external window and door frames black, and installation of 2no. external air conditioning condenser units to side	Approved	01/01/2014

3.0 Proposed Development

Description of Development

3.1 The proposed development seeks to use the existing servicing area to accommodate a drive-through lane at the Starbucks at Hedge End Retail Park. The proposals also seek the internal reconfiguration, to provide two symmetrical units, with Starbucks better related to the drive-through lane, as well as associated external alterations.

3.2 The description of development is:

“External and internal alterations to the existing Class E units, including revised access and new drive-through lane.”

Access / Servicing

3.1 The existing service yard for the Site is small and cannot easily accommodate service vehicles. As such, it is proposed that the existing servicing yard is removed to accommodate the drive-through lane and 149.7 m² of the existing Unit 3 building. It is proposed the area occupied by 6 parking bays on the western side of the building will be used for servicing instead.

3.2 The drive-through lane would extend clockwise around the eastern side of the building. To collect their order, vehicles would then enter the covered area, to the south of the building, to the collection window.

3.3 The drive-through lane can accommodate 12 full size cars and has been designed to minimise any possibility of vehicles queuing back on to the access road. Swept path analysis contained within the Transport Technical Note produced by SLR confirms that the lane can accommodate a standard vehicle design, as well as a mini-bus.

3.4 Vehicles exiting the drive-through lane will emerge in to the first car parking aisle, which will connect them back to the main car park access road on to the westbound carriageway of Charles Watts Way.

3.5 The proposed loading bay has been tracked using swept-path analysis software. The servicing route and bay has been assessed using a 10m long refuse vehicle as well as an 8m long 7.5t box van. The analysis confirms that the proposed servicing arrangements are appropriate to facilitate the required servicing at the Site.

- 3.6 Waste bins will be wheeled by staff from the storage location on the western side of the building, to the parking bays adjacent to the loading bay, in time for the refuse vehicle to pick up. These parking bays will also be managed for the collection of waste also, however outside of the short servicing windows the six car parking bays can be used as normal.

Parking

- 3.7 The development will deliver additional footways, pedestrian crossing points, one waiting bay and a new drive-through lane. This will result in a loss of 8 permanent parking spaces.

Design

- 3.8 In addition to the provision of a drive-through lane at the Site, the proposed development seeks to deliver internal and external alterations to the existing commercial units.
- 3.9 The internal layout will be reconfigured, albeit retaining the two units: Unit A comprising 188.8 sqm, and Unit B comprising 257.1 sqm. This equates to a total reduction of 149.7 sqm in floorspace when compared against the existing units.
- 3.10 In addition to the external alterations, the internal layout will be reconfigured to result in more symmetrical units. It is proposed that Starbucks would occupy the unit on the northern side of the building.
- 3.11 Each unit will have a double access door on the northern elevation. Starbucks will occupy the Unit B, on the southern side of the building, and will also have a second double access door on the western elevation.
- 3.12 An outdoor seating area to the west of Unit B will be available for the use of Starbucks customers. Two external bin stores will be located to the east of the building, enabling easy access to the bin collection area detailed above.
- 3.13 The existing retaining wall along the eastern and southern boundaries of the Site will be unaffected. Areas of soft landscaping will be retained to the north of the Site; however they will be reconfigured to accommodate the drive-through lane.

Trees

- 3.14 As detailed in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) produced by SLR, the proposed development will require the removal of two individual trees and one small group. As noted in the UKHab Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain note, one of the individual trees (T6) has already been removed on the advice of the arboriculturist due to its poor structural stability, which posed a safety risk. That tree would have been removed regardless of the proposed development.
- 3.15 The proposed development will require the removal of one further individual tree, T4 classed as category C (low quality and value), and the removal of G1 classed as category C (low quality and value).
- 3.16 The construction of the drive-through and soft landscaping will require an incursion into the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of two trees and one tree group; however, with hand digging and no-dig construction methodologies, damage to the roots can be avoided, it is therefore considered it would have a negligible effect on the long-term health and vitality of the trees affected.
- 3.17 All other individual trees, tree groups and hedgerows are to be retained and protected during the construction phase.

Operational Hours

- 3.18 There is no proposed change to the existing operating hours for the units.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

Legislative Context

- 4.1 For decision-taking Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate strongly otherwise.
- 4.2 The statutory development plan for the purposes of determining this planning application comprises the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (adopted April 2022) and Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted October 2013).
- 4.3 A summary of the relevant policies from the development plan are set out below.

Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2022)

- 4.4 The Council adopted the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 on 25th April 2022. It sets out the policies and plans to guide future development to 2036 and replaces the 'saved' policies in the Local Plan 2001-2011.
- 4.5 The relevant policies to the determination of this planning application are set out in turn below.
- 4.6 **Strategic Policy S1 – Delivering sustainable development** sets out a criteria which new development in the Borough should seek to meet. When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
- 4.7 **Strategic Policy S12 – Transport infrastructure** confirms the Council's commitment to making local improvements to public transport to enhance accessibility and use.
- 4.8 **Policy DM1 – General criteria for new development** sets out criteria which new development should adhere to. This includes new development not involving the loss or damage to trees, woodlands, hedgerows 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.
- 4.9 **Policy DM8 – Pollution** confirms that development will not be permitted if it is likely to cause loss of amenity or impact on public health or other unacceptable environmental impacts through:

- a) *“Air pollution (including odours or particulate emissions);*
- b) *Pollution of surface, underground, coastal waters or other watercourses;*
- c) *Noise or vibration;*
- d) *Light intrusion; or*
- e) *Land contamination.”*

4.10 **Policy DM11 – Nature conservation** seeks to protect, conserve and enhance natural habitats and features, and achieve national, county and local biodiversity targets as set out in Biodiversity Action Plans.

4.11 **Policy DM13 – General development criteria – transport** states that all new development must have safe and convenient access to the highway network and make provision for access to, and by, other transport modes including public transport and cycle and pedestrian routes as appropriate. Access arrangements to the highway network must:

- a) *“meet national and local guidance and standards with all highway improvements meeting the standard required to be adopted by the Highway Authority;*
- b) *not cause or increase danger to road users or have a significant detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the highway network; and*
- c) *be provided without unacceptable environmental impact.”*

4.12 The Policy goes on to state that development proposals that will generate vehicle movements likely to have an adverse impact on traffic conditions beyond the immediate vicinity of the development site must be subject to Transport Assessment and must incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.

4.13 **Policy DM14 – Parking** states that, for out-of-centre development proposals, parking needs will be assessed based on the impacts of the development on neighbouring town, district or local centre, or a neighbourhood parade.

4.14 **Policy DM21 – New retail development** states that planning permissions for retail development may have attached conditions that restrict the range of goods sold, the sub-division of units or internal alterations that would increase floor space.

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013)

4.15 The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan was adopted in October 2013 and covers Hampshire Authorities (Hampshire County Council and its partner authorities – Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, New Forest National Park Authority and the South Downs National Park Authority).

- 4.16 It is currently in the process of being partially updated with a Regulation 18 consultation undertaken on the Draft Plan for 12 weeks between 8 November 2022 and 31 January 2023. Whilst Eastleigh Borough Council is a consultee in the process of preparing the Draft Plan, it does not have any statutory duties for preparing minerals and waste plans.

Material Considerations

- 4.17 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, it is necessary to consider any other material considerations which are relevant to the application.
- 4.18 The following documents are considered relevant to the determination of this application:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
 - National Planning Practice Guidance (2014, as amended)
 - National Design Guide (2021)
 - Trees and Development SPD (2022)
- 4.19 A summary of each document is set out below.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 4.20 The NPPF was revised in December 2023. It reaffirms the importance of the development plan in the determination of planning applications (Paragraphs 2 and 47 of the NPPF).
- 4.21 The Policies in the NPPF are material considerations which should be considered when determining applications. The following sections of the NPPF are, therefore, most relevant to the consideration and determination of this Application.

Sustainable Development

- 4.22 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10). As set out within paragraph 11 of the NPPF, for decision-taking, this means:
- d) “approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - e) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the Application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- 4.23 The NPPF stipulates at paragraph 92 that, when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 4.24 Paragraph 96 of the NPPF seeks to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction are safe and accessible; and enable and support healthy lifestyles.
- 4.25 The NPPF states at paragraph 97 that planning policies and decision should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces and community facilities to enhance to sustainability of communities.

Promoting sustainable transport

- 4.26 Paragraph 114 states that applications should have appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable modes of transport and provide safe and suitable access to the site for all users. Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be mitigated.
- 4.27 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF confirms that development should only be prevent or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 4.28 Paragraph 116 seeks to encourage sustainable modes of travel such as pedestrian and cycle movements and access to public transport. It goes on to state that development should address the needs of people with disabilities, allow for efficient delivery of goods, and access for emergency vehicles.

Achieving well-designed places

- 4.29 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work and helping to make development acceptable to communities. Planning decisions should ensure that new developments will add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, create places that are safe, and establish a strong sense of place (paragraphs 135 and 139).
- 4.30 Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change (paragraph 136).

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 4.31 Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside including the benefits of trees and woodland. Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity also needs to be considered (paragraph 180).
- 4.32 Paragraph 186 of the NPPF states that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Ground conditions and pollution

- 4.33 Paragraph 191 of the NPPF stresses that development should be appropriate for its location and take into account likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment. In doing so, development should:
- a) “mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
 - b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

- 4.34 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource that was first published in March 2014. It is regularly updated to provide guidance on the application of policies contained in the NPPF. The NPPG has been taken into consideration as part of this application as it provides best practice guidance for the technical considerations.

National Design Guide (2021)

- 4.35 The National Design Guide was published by the Government in January 2021. It provides guidance on how we achieve well designed places in practice by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics. These are context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

Trees and Development SPD (2022)

- 4.36 This supplementary Planning Document was adopted by the Council in April 2022 and ensures that trees are fully considered as part of the planning process. It sets out the detailed requirements for trees within development sites, which should be retained wherever possible. Where this is not possible, it provides guidance on the suitable mitigation required.

5.0 Planning Assessment

5.1 This Section assesses the proposal against the relevant policy considerations contained within the Development Plan and other material considerations relevant to the application, as highlighted in the previous section.

5.2 From the above background information, in terms of the Site's specific location, the proposed development and the planning policy context, we can ascertain that the following are key considerations that must be addressed by the application submission:

- **Principle of development** –whether it is acceptable in principle to provide a new drive-through facility for the existing coffee shop use, and other external and internal alterations proposed.
- **Highways considerations** – to determine the impact that the proposed development at the Site will have on the local highway network in addition to consideration of the implications for access, egress, parking and servicing.
- **Environmental considerations** – an examination of the potential impact of the development on the environment and biodiversity of the Site and the loss of trees.
- **Design considerations** – to determine whether the design of the proposals is appropriate within the local context, as well as Site layout considerations.
- **Achieving sustainable development** – consideration of the Site and the proposed development's sustainability credentials is required, including economic, social and environmental benefits.

Principle of development

5.3 The Application seeks to utilise the external and internal servicing area to the east and south of the existing building to accommodate a drive-through lane to serve the Starbucks coffee shop. The proposals also seek the internal reconfiguration of the building, to provide two units, as well as external alterations.

5.4 The principle of a Starbucks coffee-shop, and Class E use, is already established at the Site, having been located there since 2014. Notwithstanding this, the Site is located within the Hedge End settlement boundary. Hedge End, alongside Chandler's Ford, is identified at the second level of Eastleigh's settlement hierarchy and should, therefore, accommodate a substantial amount of new development in the Borough.

5.5 Paragraph 97(d) of the NPPF states that, to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services communities need, planning policies and decisions should ensure that established

shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community. Drive-through facilities at coffee shops are becoming increasingly common, and it is necessary for the existing coffee-shop to modernise in order to meet increasing customer demands.

- 5.6 The proposals at the Site will enable the on-going trade of the Starbucks in line with modern business needs and will also make the second unit more attractive to potential occupiers. The proposals will, therefore, offer on-going and additional jobs for local people, and will provide a valuable contribution in meeting the Borough's economic objectives.
- 5.7 Furthermore, the existing servicing area was formally used by Carphone Warehouse to fit car phones within vehicles. The vehicles would drive through the servicing area and to the south of the building, as per the proposed drive-through layout. As such, it is considered that the proposed layout of the drive-through lane is logical and has been formerly established to a significant extent. The entrance to the drive-through lane has been carefully considered having regard to the need to avoid vehicle queueing and minimise landscape losses.
- 5.8 Whilst the precise future split of trade between eat/drink-in and drive-through custom is not known at this stage, it is anticipated that, due to the Site's location adjacent to the A334 and within close proximity of the M27, the drive-through facilities will account for a healthy proportion of the custom. Therefore, the Site will predominantly attract passing motorists and pedestrians and users of the surrounding retail park, as opposed to drawing in customers from a wider catchment and the town centre. The facility will also be used by customers who already frequent the Starbucks, as an alternative to parking up to purchase drinks and other items for take away.
- 5.9 As such, we consider the proposals to be appropriate in this location because the uses will principally serve passing trade from the local area and vehicles travelling along the main arterial route of the A334, as well as existing frequent customers. The proposals are, therefore, in accordance with Policy S1 the Local Plan, as well as paragraph 97 of the NPPF.
- 5.10 The Site is located in a sustainable and accessible location, well served by existing public transport, cycle ways and pedestrian footpaths. The proximity of these public transport facilities such as bus services, as detailed in Section 2 of this Statement, enable sustainable accessibility to the Site, as well as into Hedge End town centre and the wider area.
- 5.11 As detailed in Section 3 of this Statement, the proposed development includes internal and external alterations to the buildings, in line with the need to modernise and improve the existing unit to meet modern business needs. The principle of such changes is supported at paragraph 97 of the NPPF (2023).

- 5.12 The sustainable nature of the development as set out above accords with Policy S1 of the Local Plan and national policy.

Highways Considerations

Impact on highways

- 5.13 As discussed earlier within this Statement, given the Site's location within Hedge End Retail Park, and adjacent to the main arterial highway corridor between Southampton and Hedge End, it is expected that the new facility will serve passing trade of road users and people visiting the out-of-centre retail park. It is not expected that the Site will generate additional vehicle trips from designated centres as a result of the new facility and, as such, it is not expected that the development will generate unacceptable levels of traffic on the surrounding highway network.
- 5.14 The development will include two new electric vehicle charging points in order to act as an additional incentive to increase the numbers of electric vehicles in Eastleigh and meet the Borough's sustainability objectives by accommodating the needs of electric vehicle users.
- 5.15 Vehicles leaving the Site from the egress point to the west of the building will be able to re-join the A334 travelling westwards. The A334 is a substantial highway which can comfortably accommodate existing traffic exiting the retail park, and it is not expected that the proposal would result in additional levels of traffic congestion or queuing on the highway.
- 5.16 The drive-through lane has been designed to maximise the stacking distance and can accommodate 12 large cars queuing off the highway. This quantum of stacking capacity is more than sufficient to accommodate the anticipated demand.
- 5.17 A Transport Technical Note has been prepared by SLR in support of the planning application. The Note considers the traffic and parking effect of the proposed reduction in retail floorspace and additional drive-through lane and confirms that the development will result in the loss of eight standard car parking spaces, which is not expected to have a harmful impact upon the operation of the Retail Park. The likelihood is that the introduction of a drive-through lane and the ability to order a coffee without having to park will result in reduced customer dwell times and some customers not parking at all.
- 5.18 The Note therefore concludes that the development proposals will have a positive effect upon parking demand at the retail park.

Access

- 5.19 The existing access point to the Site from Charles Watts Way will be retained. With regards to the Site layout, the drive-through lane will be accessed from the north east of the Site and will wrap clockwise around the building.
- 5.20 As detailed in Section 3 of this Statement, a dedicated service yard is not required, and the area occupied by parking bays on the western site of the building will be used for servicing instead. Deliveries are likely to take place outside of peak hours to minimise the impact on parking and the surrounding highway network, and at these times the car parking will be managed accordingly to ensure that the delivery area is available.
- 5.21 In terms of refuse collection, this will also be undertaken from the loading area to the west of the building. The Technical Note prepared by SLR in support of the planning application confirms that this is an appropriate approach to servicing in accordance with policy DM1 which states that development should incorporate provision for on-site waste management.

Parking

- 5.22 In terms of parking provision, the local plan states that in determining the level of parking appropriate for a retail or leisure development in or on the edge of a centre, the Council will consider parking provision on a case by case basis where it can be clearly demonstrated there will be no impact on the vitality and economic viability of nearby centres.
- 5.23 The development will deliver additional footways, pedestrian crossing points, one waiting bay and a new drive-through lane. This will result in a loss of 8 permanent parking spaces. The Hedge End Retail Park provides 404 car parking spaces, of which there are currently 14 car parking bays directly adjacent to Units 3A & 3B, two of which are disabled-only bays.
- 5.24 The submitted Transport note confirms that this small reduction in parking provision is not considered to be significant loss to the car parking provision at the retail park and is highly unlikely to have any negative effect on parking demand.
- 5.25 Overall, the proposed level of car parking is considered appropriate given the scale of development proposed and the sustainable location of the Site.
- 5.26 It is, therefore, clear that the proposed access, car parking and servicing arrangements and highways impacts will not result in conflicts with Local Plan Policies DM13 and DM14 and national policy and guidance.

Environmental Considerations

- 5.27 The Local Plan sets out at Policy DM1 that new development should not involve the loss of or damage to trees, woodlands or hedgerows of value to the character of the area, for appearance or biodiversity unless they can be replaced with features of equivalent or enhanced value. Policy DM11 goes on to state that the Council will seek to protect, conserve all trees and hedgerows important to biodiversity and local characters.
- 5.28 Every effort has been made to retain as many trees as possible. However, in order to facilitate the construction of the proposed development, there is a conflict with some existing trees which is considered unavoidable.
- 5.29 The proposed scheme will result in the removal of two individual trees (one category C and another category U, with the latter being recommended for removal regardless of the proposed development taking place) and small one tree group (category C). All other individual trees, tree groups and hedgerows are to be retained and protected during the construction phase.
- 5.30 The UK Hab Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain note prepared by SLR (dated 28th June) also confirms that biodiversity net gain is not required at the Site under the *de minimis* exemption rules because it does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres of non-priority habitat.
- 5.31 It is therefore considered that in relation to arboriculture and ecology the proposed development is in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM11, NPPG paragraphs 180 and 186, and is not required to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Design Considerations

- 5.32 The design rationale which has informed the proposed development is summarised below against the relevant planning policy requirements.

Layout

- 5.33 As discussed above, the layout of the Site has been designed to minimise congestion and enhance the flow of vehicles passing through the Site. The existing entrance point to the north west of the Site will allow vehicles to enter the Site, visit the respective drive-through facility in a clockwise manner and exit, without interfering with the vehicles and pedestrians utilising the car parking spaces.

- 5.34 As illustrated on the submitted Proposed Site Plan, the proposed development will utilise the existing building on the Site. The building will, however, be reconfigured to provide the same two units in a better layout. The Starbucks store will be located in the southern unit. The northern unit will be available for another Class E occupier, yet to be confirmed.
- 5.35 Two external bin stores are located to the east of the building and a servicing area will be located to the west, in the existing car park.

Appearance, Scale and Massing

- 5.36 The proposed development will utilise the existing single storey building. The building elevations will, however, be updated and modernised to provide each unit with a double entrance door on the northern elevation. The Starbucks unit will also be provided with an entrance door on the western elevation.
- 5.37 As shown on the elevational drawings submitted in support of the planning application, the existing appearance of the building, in terms of materials, will be largely retained. This includes the existing buff brick, glazed windows and grey roof tiles as well as architectural features such as Dutch gabling.
- 5.38 The overall design of the buildings and the Site layout has been carefully considered to accord with Policy DM1 and paragraphs 135 and 139 of the NPPF.

Achieving Sustainable Development

Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability

- 5.39 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through economic, social and environmental objectives. The Applicant has clearly demonstrated that the proposal achieves the economic, social and environmental principles of sustainable development.
- 5.40 The Site's location within Hedge End Retail Park and within close proximity to the existing arterial routes and motorway demonstrate that the location is suitable for this type of development. The proposals will re-use and modernise the existing building on the Site; the re-use of the building should be supported in accordance with national and local policy, particularly in light of the Council's approach to regenerating the urban area.

- 5.41 The location of the Site adjacent to the main highway corridor between Southampton and Hedge End, as well as its sustainable location close to public transport services makes it a highly accessible location and promotes alternative modes of transport to the car. Additionally, it is expected to bring in passing trade from the A334 without generating a material increase in vehicle trips during peak hours.
- 5.42 The development will retain existing jobs at the Starbucks and will generate new job opportunities associated with the refurbished second unit. Direct and indirect jobs will also be created during the construction and fit-out phase of the development, resulting in economic further benefits.
- 5.43 The proposed development includes internal and external works to the building, which will be in accordance with modern building regulations and result in improvements to the energy performance of the building. Furthermore, the provision of 2no. new EV charging points at the Site will ensure that electric vehicles are catered for, meeting modern demands and encouraging the use of electric vehicles.
- 5.44 The above demonstrates that the proposal achieves the economic, social and environmental objectives of the NPPF and the adopted and emerging Local Plan. It adheres to the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Summary

- 5.45 An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken and this demonstrates that the proposal is sustainable and compliant with the relevant development plan policies, the NPPF and any other relevant material considerations. There are no material considerations that would weigh against the granting of planning permission for the proposed development.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for development at Unit 3, Hedge End Retail Park, in Hedge End.

6.2 The description of development is:

“External and internal alterations to the existing Class E units, including revised access and new drive-through lane.”

6.3 This Planning Statement has assessed the proposed development against relevant local and national planning policy and it has been clearly demonstrated that the development is in accordance with those policies (Section 5).

6.4 One half of the Unit is already in use as a Starbucks coffee-shop and whilst the other half is currently vacant; it was last in retail use. The Site is also located in a predominantly commercial area and, therefore, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

6.5 The proposed development will be of a high quality, modern design, and will use a complementary palette of materials.

6.6 The Site is in a highly accessible location. It is well served by public transport, including frequent bus services to and from Hedge End Retail Park with a bus stop located within a 330m walk of the Site. There is a shared pedestrian and cycle path from the A334. The Site also benefits from excellent highways connections and pedestrian access and traffic levels generated by the development will not materially impact on the capacity of the local road network.

6.7 In applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development as directed by the NPPF, assessing the proposed development against the development plan and other material considerations, there is a strong support for the proposed development.

6.8 For the reasons set out above, we conclude that the proposed development comprises sustainable development that is in accordance with the development plan when read as a whole, and the NPPF. In applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development, planning permission should be granted accordingly.