

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/99168

Site Address: HCE, VICTORY CLOSE, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 4DG

Case Officer: Dorothy Hei-Tung-Hoh

Description: Retrospective change of use from unusable wasteland to concrete parking/open storage

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Within the Urban Edge • Within Designated Employment Site		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Z/17346/000/00 - Steel portal framed ware housing unit with engine testing facilities - Permit - 11/11/1976 • Z/17346/001/00 - single storey building for use as a petroleum store - Permit - 24/01/1983 • F/04/52227 - Use of premises for B1, B2, B8 (including trade/retail showroom) and new entrance canopy. Alterations to external elevations - Permit - 15/11/2004		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One letter of objection has been received to the proposal, raising the following concerns: • The site is inaccurately described as “wasteland”; the objector states it formed part of the structural landscaping originally required as part of the wider Chandler’s Ford Industrial Estate layout, intended to preserve visual amenity and prevent overdevelopment. • The area previously comprised grass, a large conifer tree, and several shrubs, and was not intended to accommodate a bin store. • The retrospective bin store is positioned adjacent to Unit 8 Victory Close and is considered to result in visual harm and potential odour impacts, adversely affecting the occupiers’ amenity. • The hard surfacing has increased impermeable area without an accompanying SuDS strategy. The objector raises concern that surface water run-off may enter Monks Brook, a nearby watercourse within a designated flood risk zone. • It is argued that the proposal undermines the original landscaping strategy for the estate, potentially setting a precedent for further erosion of such landscaping. • Additional concerns are raised regarding the absence of a dropped kerb, impact on pedestrian safety, and potential conflict with biodiversity net gain requirements.		

	The objector requests that the application be refused on these grounds.
Parish Council:	None were received.

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 9 th April 2025.		

Policy: National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1, S2, S4; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11, DM13, DM14 and DM15. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals.
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Assessment: <u>Site context and surroundings</u> The application site comprises a large industrial unit currently occupied by HCE. The building has a typical industrial appearance, with its principal elevation facing School Lane and a secondary elevation addressing Victory Close. The site is located within a designated employment area, which is characterised predominantly by commercial and industrial uses. The surrounding area includes a range of large-scale warehouse-style buildings and associated areas of hardstanding. <u>Proposal</u> The application seeks retrospective planning permission for the change of use of a portion of land at the rear corner of the site to a concrete-surfaced area for parking and open storage. During the site visit, it was observed that the area had already been laid with concrete hardstanding. According to the submitted drainage plan, the development incorporates a drainage channel and soakaway system designed to manage surface water run-off. The new surface adjoins the existing hardstanding within the site. <u>Policy and Principle</u> The application site falls within the urban edge, whereby alterations, extensions and conversions to buildings can be acceptable in principle. The site also lies within a designated employment areas, the principle of development that supports existing or new employment-generating uses is generally acceptable, provided it accords with other relevant policy criteria. <u>Layout, design, and impact upon the character of the area</u> Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) stipulates that all new development should respect the character and appearance of urban areas, take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character, appearance and land uses of the locality or neighbourhood, and be compatible in terms of mass, scale, layout density, design, and siting.
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- While the works are functional in appearance and have resulted in the loss of a small landscaped area that historically featured trees and soft planting, the visual impact is considered acceptable in the context of the established industrial setting. The area is limited in scale, located to the rear of the building, and situated within a cul-de-sac that is largely screened from public views along School Lane. The development is consistent with the character of the wider area, which is defined by utilitarian buildings and expansive hardstanding.
- Planning history indicates that this space was originally intended to form part of the structural landscaping strategy to soften the visual impact of built form across the estate. However, given its inconspicuous location and minimal contribution to wider public amenity, the loss of planting is not considered to cause significant harm. As such, it does not warrant refusal on design or visual impact grounds.

Impact on residential amenity

- Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) amongst other matters, stipulate that all new development should not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenities of both new and existing residents.
- The site is located within an established industrial estate and is not in close proximity to any residential properties. As such, the proposal does not give rise to any direct impacts on residential amenity in terms of loss of light, outlook, or privacy.
- One objection was received from the neighbouring commercial unit, raising concerns regarding the visual and odour impact of the bin store positioned adjacent to their property. While these concerns are noted, bin storage is a typical and expected feature within industrial estates, and its presence in this location is not considered to materially harm the amenity or operational function of the adjoining unit.

Highways and parking

- Policy DM14 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) requires residential development to provide off-highway parking which is adequate in terms of highway safety/traffic management.
- The area subject to this application is located to the rear of the site. No new or altered vehicular access onto the public highway is proposed as part of the development. While the objector raises concerns regarding pedestrian safety and the absence of a dropped kerb near the bin store, the hardstanding area appears to be used for internal circulation and servicing within the site boundary.
- Given the established industrial use of the premises and the limited pedestrian activity in this location, the proposal is not considered to give rise to any adverse impact on highway or pedestrian safety.

Other Material Considerations

- There will be no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention.
- There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.

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, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change.

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:

Permit subject to conditions.

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☒	REFUSE ☐
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