

WINCHESTER & EASTLEIGH DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting: 09/09/2025

Site: 32-34 Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, SO53 3ZL

Proposal: Re-development of site including demolition of existing office building and replacement with a three-storey headquarters office building, together with associated supporting infrastructure, including car parking and hard and soft landscaping.

Planning reference: F/25/99876

Design Review Panel Members sitting on the Panel: Jonathan Moore (Chair) & Paul Bulkeley

Council Officers in attendance: Andy Amery & Gary Osmond

Item presented by: Andrew Catherall (Portakabin)
Steve Magson (Portakabin)
Kacper Semak (Portakabin)
Steve Smith (Boyle and Summers)

Declarations of Interest declared: None. Andrew Hoare left the room and did not take part in discussions as he works for Boyle and Summers.

Comments:

This is a prominent corner site at an important local road junction with clear views available from the east, north and west. It also acts as something of a gateway site into the industrial area to the west. Presently the existing office building does little to enhance the street scene or character of the immediate locality, appearing very harsh and industrial with nothing in the way of trees or landscaping to soften its appearance. In principle therefore there is no objection to its replacement. However, it needs to be demonstrated that the increased three storey scale and longer elevations onto Bournemouth Road and School Lane will work within the site's surrounding context. This is particularly important for views from the south and west due to the elevated position of the building at the top of a relatively steep slope and atop a storey high retaining wall, giving the scale of a four storey building to the rear. Site section drawings showing this in relation to the workshops to the rear and more importantly the relationship with the neighbouring block of flats to the south would be helpful.

In terms of the building's footprint, no real concerns were raised other than the proximity of the southern flank wall to the boundary with the neighbouring

flats. The use of a green wall to the end of the elevation to soften any impact was noted. However, this is an expensive and maintenance intensive feature which should be made more of and may be better located in a more publically visible position.

Internally the layout of each floor appeared to be well considered and logical. The feature staircases and atrium would be a particularly impressive internal feature which is strongly expressed on the Bournemouth Road elevation by a framed full height glazed feature. Why then has the main entrance and reception been placed to the side of this where it seems somewhat lost and hidden away?

It was also queried why the entrance and atrium had not been positioned at the corner of the 'L' where urban design logic would suggest is the most appropriate location given the building turns a corner. Although it was acknowledged that this would upset the logic of the internal accommodation. Notwithstanding, this conflict between function and urban design/street scape does need to be resolved, as does the dominance of the Bournemouth Road elevation in comparison to those onto School Lane and the main workshops to the west, which are equally important in linking the development with its surroundings.

Elevationally there is a lot going on – pattern, colour, texture, lighting, framing – resulting in a very stylised façade which could date quickly. It may be better therefore to go with one bold feature which makes a statement, perhaps linked to the company brand, and calm/simplify the remainder of the elevations.

Around the building, the introduction of tree planting and soft landscaping was welcomed and would greatly enhance both the Bournemouth Road and School Lane frontages. It was also highlighted that this is an opportunity to provide an interesting landscaped transition from the lower more industrial part of the site up to the offices on the higher ground. If well designed, it could act as more than just a physical route between the two halves of the site but also as an area which could be used by all staff whether they work in the offices or on the shop floor.