

Raise AP Ltd

6 Crescent House
Yonge Close
Eastleigh
SO50 9SX

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PLANNING SUBMISSION

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Figure 1 - Site Location Plan (site in red)



Figure 2 - Front Elevation to Suite 6, Crescent House

1. Introduction

1.1 The Application

This planning application is for the change of use from offices (Use Class E formerly Use Class B1) to a specialist educational establishment (Use Class F1) at 6 Crescent House, Yonge Close, Eastleigh (Figure 1).

1.2 The Applicant

The applicant, Raise AP Ltd, are tenants on the site, with the owners listed as Diamond Property Holdings Ltd.

1.3 Background

The property is a suite within a purpose built business park which Raise AP, a specialist education provider in Eastleigh, have leased to support young people who have faced challenges in mainstream education.

Raise AP support students who are 11-16 with bespoke alternative education and recognised qualifications, with education pathways designed around each young person. They cater for young people who have struggled in a mainstream setting and may have:

- Autism spectrum disorder (not "severe")
- Emotional and social difficulties
- Educational phobias
- Learning disabilities
- Life traumas
- Severe or complex special educational needs

It is anticipated that the site will host a maximum of 10 students with at least 2 specialist tutors/facilitators present at any one time. At this present moment the organisation has 6 students on a waiting list that facilities are required for.

1.4 Applicants Agent

This application has been produced by RS Studio on behalf of the applicant.

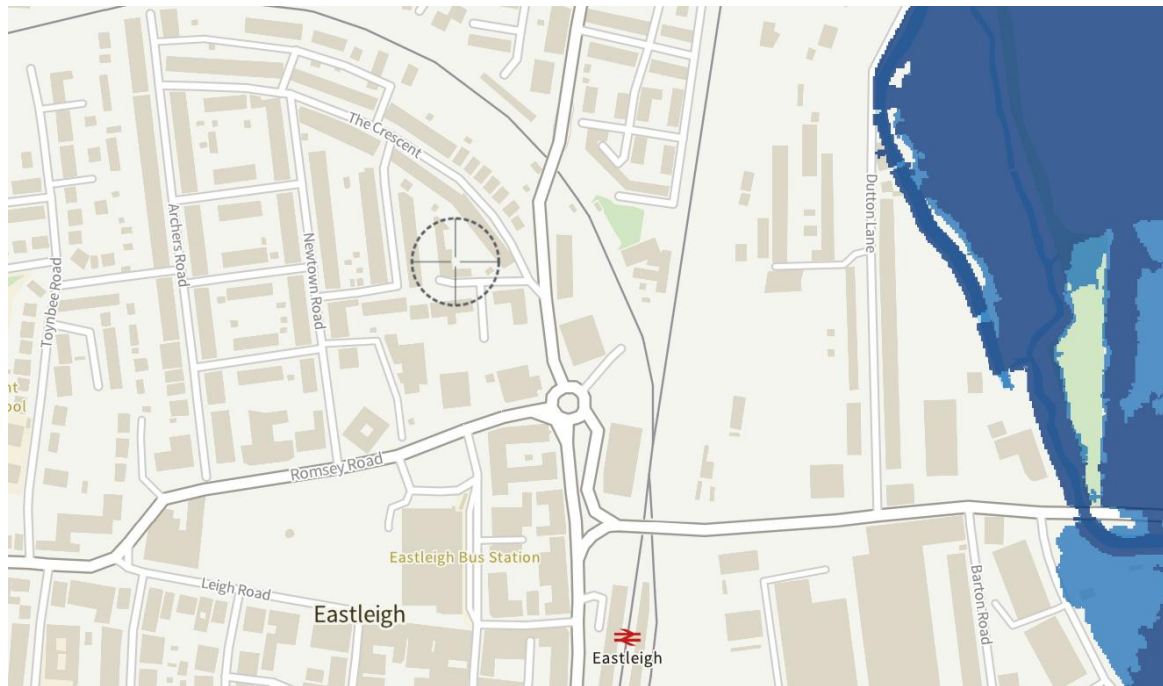


Figure 3 - Flood Risk Map (site notated)

2. Context

2.1 The Requirement

The proposal intends to deliver a two classroom specialist unit suitable for catering for a maximum of 10 students.

2.2 Site Location

The application site is located at Suite 6, Crescent House, Yonge Close, Eastleigh. The site falls within the boundaries of Eastleigh Borough Council. The site postcode is SO50 9SX (Figure 1).

2.3 Site Description

Suite 6, Crescent House is a single storey brick-built building located within the wider business park of Crescent House. It benefits from two designated parking spaces. The suite occupies a GEA of approximately 115m. Bin and cycle facilities are provided within the wider business park area.

2.4 Area Character

The application site lies adjacent to the district centre of Eastleigh. The wider area is characterised by an eclectic mix of residential, commercial, retail, educational and light industrial functions typical of sites in proximity to local centres. Amenities are thus located within the immediate area, and the site is well served by public transport connections, with both Eastleigh Bus and Train Station within a 5-minute walk.

2.5 Planning Policy

The Eastleigh Borough Council Development Plan comprises:

Eastleigh Borough Council Local Plan (2016-2036)

Policy S2 (Approach to New Development)

Policy S4 (Employment Provision)

Policy S10 (Community Facilities)

Policy S11 (Transport Infrastructure)

Policy DM13 (General Development Criteria - Transport)

Policy DM14 (Parking)

Policy DM15 (Safeguarding Existing Employment Sites)

Other relevant guidance / SPD's:

Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (September 2011)

National Planning Policy Framework

3. Survey / Investigation

3.1 Flood Risk

The Environment Agency flood risk maps were reviewed and it was identified that the site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1. As no significant building works are proposed, no further flood risk assessment work has been undertaken (see figure 3).

3.2 Ecology

As the site is located in a developed area, where the building envelope covers the site extents, with the exception of parking spaces, it is not anticipated that there are any protected species on site. As such no further assessment work has been undertaken.

3.3 Arboriculture

There are no trees within the site extents or trees within falling distance of the site. As such no further assessment work has been undertaken.

3.4 Transport

The existing use as offices, catered for a team of 10-15 persons for Environmental Consultants ACD Environmental, who it is understood utilised a mixture of on-site parking provisions, public car parks and public transport to attend their place of employment.

As the demographic will change to children, between the ages of 11-16, supervised by a maximum of 2no members of staff at any one time, the provision of 2no parking spaces is deemed sufficient to meet the required use.

3.5 Noise Impact

The specialist education facility will be open between the hours of 9am to 5pm (for teaching) and 8am to 6pm overall, and thus commensurate with typical office hours. With respect to the pattern of comings and goings, students, based on their specific needs are unlikely to be present on site for more than 3-4 hours at a time. As such no additional measures with respect to noise are expected to be required.

3.6 Utilities

No utilities related issues are anticipated as the site area has ready access to water, drainage and electric.

3.7 Biodiversity Net Gain

The development is subject to the De Minimis Exemption as no extension works are proposed to the property, and the site comprises hardstanding and building area only.

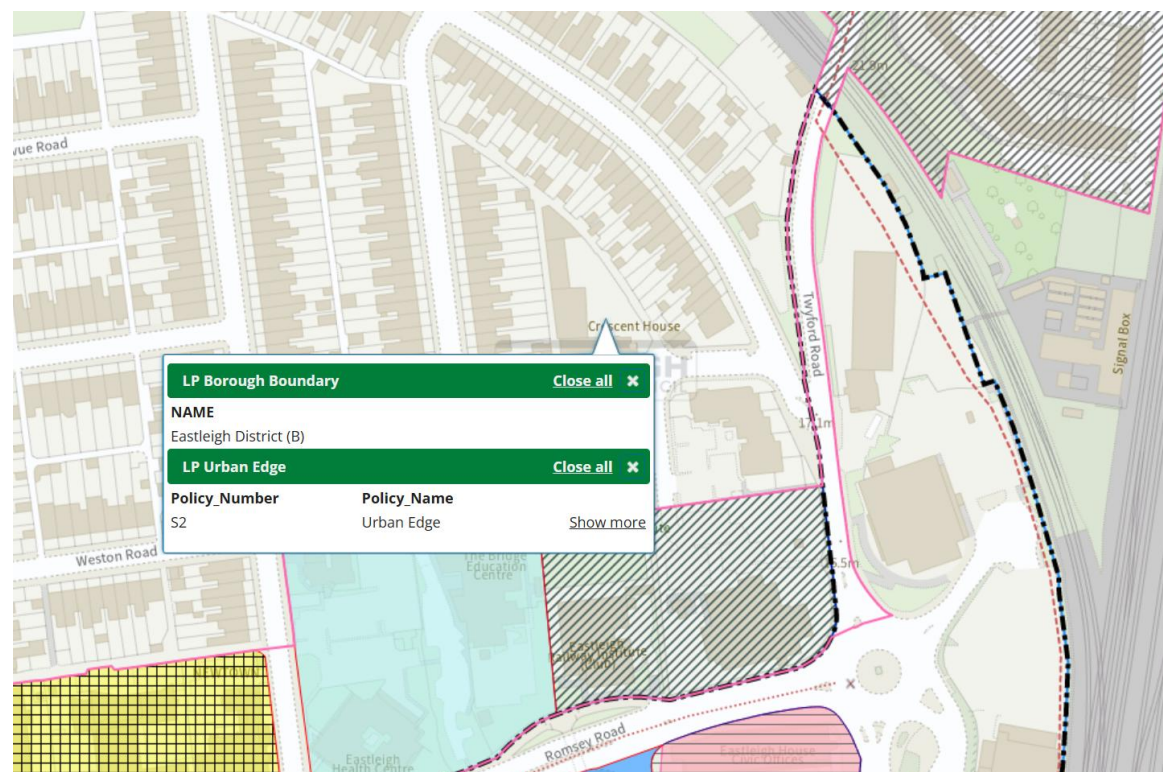


Figure 4 - Planning Policy extract (with site notated)

4. Proposals

4.1 Amount

The proposals require a change of use from office (Use Class B1/Use Class E) to education facility (Use Class F1). No extensions or alterations are proposed.

4.2 Layout

No amendments, other than the erection of some internal partitions to create 2-3 educational spaces, will be required.

4.3 Scale

There are no extensions or alterations to the façades proposed.

4.4 Appearance

The appearance of the unit will remain as existing.

4.5 Landscaping

The landscaping measures will remain as existing.

4.6 Access & Inclusion

Site access will remain as existing.

4.7 Sustainability

No measures over and above those currently in place are proposed.

4.8 Foul and Surface Water Drainage

No measures over and above those currently in place are required.

5.0 Planning Statement

5.1 Policy

Core Strategy

Policy S2 - Approach to New Development

Supports development within the defined urban area where proposals are sustainable, make effective use of existing buildings, and do not result in unacceptable impacts on amenity, infrastructure or the environment.

Policy S4 – Employment Provision

Seeks to retain and provide employment land and floorspace but allows flexibility where the loss is small-scale, the site is not strategically important, and the proposal delivers wider social or economic benefits.

Policy S10 – Community Facilities

Encourages the provision and retention of community facilities, including education uses, particularly where they meet an identified local need and are compatible with surrounding uses.

Policy S11 – Transport Infrastructure

Requires development to be supported by appropriate transport infrastructure and to ensure safe, efficient access for all users without causing undue pressure on the highway network.

Policy DM13 – General Development Criteria (Transport)

Ensures that development proposals provide safe access, do not result in unacceptable traffic impacts, and promote sustainable travel patterns where reasonably practicable.

Policy DM14 – Parking

Requires development to provide appropriate levels of parking in accordance with adopted standards, or to justify any deviation where impacts on highway safety and amenity are acceptable.

Policy DM15 – Safeguarding Existing Employment Sites

Protects existing employment sites from inappropriate loss unless it can be demonstrated that the site is not key to employment provision and that alternative uses are justified and acceptable.

5.2 Development Rationale

Principle

The proposed change of use from office (Class E) to specialist education (Class F1) is acceptable in principle given the limited scale, specialist nature, and community benefit of the proposal. The facility will serve a maximum of 10 children, specifically those unable to access mainstream education with Eastleigh Borough due to social, emotional or learning needs. As such, it represents a low-intensity educational use that is materially different from a conventional school.

Local plan policies do not preclude Class F1 uses in established built-up areas, provided that the development does not result in unacceptable impacts in terms of amenity, highways, parking or character. The proposal satisfies these criteria.

Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of approximately 100 sqm of office floorspace, this is modest in scale and does not represent the loss of a strategically important employment site. The building is not a designated key employment site, and the use would remain staffed, active and employment-generating, albeit in a different sector (education rather than office-based employment) in compliance with Policy DM15.

In this regard the specialist education use will:

- continue to provide on-going local employment (teaching and support staff);
- maintain an active daytime use, comparable to office hours;
- not introduce a use that would undermine the economic function of the area.

Accordingly, the proposal can be justified as a flexible re-use of floorspace, consistent with the Local Plan's objective of supporting viable uses of existing buildings where no material harm arises (Policy DM15).

Importantly, the proposed specialist education facility delivers a clear and demonstrable social benefit by providing education for children who cannot be accommodated in mainstream settings in compliance with Policy S10. This directly supports wider planning objectives of:

- Inclusive communities;
- Supporting vulnerable groups; and
- Making effective use of existing buildings for socially beneficial purposes.

When considered in the planning balance, the public and community benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the limited and non-strategic loss of office floorspace.

Character & Amenity

The proposed use is intentionally small-scale and tightly managed, with:

- A maximum of 10 pupils at any one time;
- Limited staff numbers;
- Controlled arrival and departure times;
- No assemblies, playground activity or outdoor sports use typical of mainstream schools.

In operational terms, the intensity of use is lower than a conventional office use, particularly when considering:

- Reduced footfall;
- Minimal visitor traffic;
- Absence of noisy outdoor activity.

The use therefore aligns with Policy DM1 and Policy S2 in respecting the character of the area and ensuring compatibility with surrounding uses.

Given the specialist nature of the facility and its low pupil numbers, the proposal will not result in unacceptable impacts in respect of:

- Noise;
- Disturbance;
- Overlooking; or
- Loss of privacy.

Teaching will take place entirely indoors, with structured supervision and safeguarding procedures in place. This approach ensures continued compliance with the Local Plan requirement to protect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Parking & Highways

The proposal is unlikely to give rise to material highways impacts. Compared to office use, the change will not increase peak-hour traffic and may reduce it, given the:

- Staggered start/finish times;
- Limited pupil numbers;
- Lower Staff numbers

Arrival and departure arrangements are to be bespoke to each pupil, depending on their specific needs and hours required at the establishment. These will be managed through operational policies where students will be dropped off by parents, taxi, public transport or the Local Authority and met at the gate of the wider site before being escorted into the facility. This will ensure safe and orderly access without undue pressure on local parking provision, thereby aligning with Policies DM13 and DM14, and as such, the proposal is not considered to adversely affect highway safety.