

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/100572

Site Address: 3 ST JOHNS ROAD, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4AA

Case Officer: Katie Lasham

Description: Subdivision of existing retail unit (Use Class E) into two separate units and associated works including new entrance door through existing bay window as well as replacement windows.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Within urban edge Within Hedge End town centre Within EA Surface Water Flooding 1000-year event Within 8m buffer of river		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
The site has extensive site history with the most relevant listed as follows: Z/15220/010/00: First floor office extension. Approved August 1985. Z/15220/009/00: First floor extension to office. Refused October 1984. Z/15220/007/00: Extension of existing offices. Refused June 1983. Z/15220/006/00: Ground floor office extension. Refused March 1983. Z/15220/005/00: Ground floor front office extension. Refused December 1982. Z/15220/004/00: Ground floor side and rear extension to No. 3 and additional car parking. Approved April 1982. Z/15220/001/00: Use of first floor of No. 1 for offices, and use of land to the rear of No. 1 and No.3, for car parking. Approved November 1977. Z/15220/000/00 Erection of three storey office block, shop and flat and ancillary parking. Approved January 1975. <u>Neighbouring unit at No.5 St Johns Road:</u> PN/20/88482: Conversion of first and second floors from offices to residential accommodation. Prior approval required and approved December 2020.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☐	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None		
Hedge End Town Council:	No Objection		
Hampshire Highways:	No Objection		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 14 January 2026		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> : The relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11, DM14, DM21. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:

Summary of site and proposal

The application site is a mid-terrace two-storey existing retail unit (Use Class E) located within Hedge End village centre which was in use as a former solicitor and has been vacant since 2022. As existing the building at both ground and first floor is a single unit which is accessed via the entrance door to the front elevation, with a rear entrance door also provided.

The applicant seeks to subdivide the existing Class E unit into a separate ground floor and first floor unit which are to benefit from their own separate entrance by creating a second entrance to the front elevation, removing the existing bay window and replacing this with a door to allow independent access for the first-floor unit. Permission is also sought for the existing timber windows across the building to be replaced with double glazed u-PVC windows.

The neighbouring unit at no.5 St Johns Road received prior approval in 2020 for the conversion of the first and second floor from commercial floorspace to 8 no 1-bedroom units which appear to have been converted.

Principle of development

The development is within the urban edge where the principle of development is acceptable in accordance with Policy S2 of the Local Plan. The provision of an additional retail unit (Use Class E), albeit no increase in floorspace, in a designated town centre location is also supported by Policy DM21 of the Local Plan, as it is a compatible use with the role and retail character of the centre and is a betterment as it will allow a vacant building to come back into use.

Subdivision

The subdivision of a retail unit where both elements stay within the same use class (Class E) with no increase in floor space is not a material change of use and therefore not classed as development under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Therefore, only the alterations to allow for the subdivision require planning permission.

Impact on character and appearance of the area

Policy DM1 of the Local Plan requires all development to respect and where possible enhance the character and appearance of the area, taking full account of mass, scale, materials, layout, density, design and siting both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views.

This application proposes minor alterations to the external building including alterations of the existing bay window to be replaced with a new door serving the first-floor retail unit. Additionally, the window frames are to change from timber to uPVC and will be double glazed.

The angled bay window comprises one single pane of glass with the remainder of the bay window comprising bricks. It is only the glazing element of the bay window that is to be replaced with a door, with the remaining bay structure to be retained as existing, retaining the balance of the two bay windows at ground floor within the terraced row. Further minimising its impact on the wider street scene, the front elevation is set down from the street scene of St Johns Road and the surrounding public footpath due to the land levels, with the frontage set behind a brick wall and ramp leading down from the footpath to the site. The proposed alteration to replace the bay window with a door is therefore an acceptable alteration to preserve the character of the building site.

The proposed removal of the existing timber windows to be replaced with uPVC windows is acceptable as the building and the surrounding area do not have any heritage significance, accordingly the replacement thicker frames of the uPVC windows across the building are an acceptable alteration to preserve the character and appearance of the building.

Overall, the scheme is considered in accordance with the aims of Policy DM1 of the Local Plan and the aims of the Quality Places SPD.

Impact on amenity and future occupiers

Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF and Policy DM1 of the Local Plan requires all development to preserve the amenity of neighbouring residents and where possible enhance it to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers. Policy DM8 requires any noise pollution to by a proposed use to be suitably mitigated.

The building has an existing lawful use as Use Class E at both ground and first floor levels which does not change with the proposal and as such there is no material change of use with no increase in floorspace proposed. There are neighbouring occupiers of the 8no. 1-bedroom flats immediately adjacent the application site at no.5 St Johns which received prior approval in 2020. Whilst habitable rooms of these units are adjacent no.3 on the terraced row, these dwellings would have been converted with the appropriate mitigation to protect their amenity from the associated impacts of this Class E use which was existing at the time these were converted. With no change of use or intensification of the application site, there is no requirement to mitigate any noise or impacts of the proposal by way of condition. Building Control regulations will suitably control any associated noise impacts between the proposed separation of the ground and first floor units.

Overall, with no material intensification of the use, the proposal will preserve the amenity of surrounding occupiers of neighbouring building and the amenity between the segregated ground and first floor unit in accordance with Policy DM1 and DM8 of the Local Plan.

Impact on highway safety and parking

Policy DM14 of the Local Plan requires all proposals to provide adequate parking to ensure highway safety/traffic management. Provision will take account of the adopted Eastleigh Borough Council's Parking Standards SPD which sets out minimum requirements for parking provisions.

Hampshire Highways raised no objection to the proposal as the alterations do not increase the floor space and only propose modest external alterations to the buildings and any parking requirements can be met as there were for the single unit. The scheme therefore meets the aims of Policy DM14 of the Local Plan.

Impact on ecology

Policy DM11 of the Local Plan requires the protection, conservation and enhancement of all international, national and local nature conservation and designations and networks of habitats and features. It also requires all proposals to seek a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites.

There are no changes to the development's footprint under these proposals and there are no alterations that will impact on existing protected species, in accordance with the aims of Policy DM11 of the Local Plan. The proposal is also exempt from the mandatory BNG legislation under the de minimis exemption. 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; (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 aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. 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 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 ☐

Comments ...