

<b>LOCATION:</b>	Hudson House, Albany Park, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7PL,
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Change of Use from warehousing to light industrial, general industrial and warehousing
<b>TYPE:</b>	Full Planning Application
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Surrey Heath Borough Council
<b>OFFICER:</b>	Duncan Carty

This application is being referred to the Planning Applications Committee because it relates to major development (floor area exceeds 1,000m<sup>2</sup>) and Surrey Heath Borough Council is the applicant.

### **RECOMMENDATION: GRANT, subject to conditions**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This application relates to a change of use of a commercial building within a Core Employment Area within the settlement of Frimley, just south of the Motorway M3. The application site lies on the north side of Albany Park, fronting onto Frimley Road.
- 1.2 The consideration of this application has been delayed by the Covid pandemic. There was interest in the current planning use before the pandemic but this fell away and a more recent enquiry, widening the use of the building, has come forward instead. This relates to a proposed occupier, moving into the Borough, who design and manufacture temperature, pressure and flow control (safety) instrumentation for the commercial and industrial sectors with particular expertise in hazardous environments.
- 1.3 The current proposal relates to a warehouse building, with ancillary offices, and relates to the change of use to light industrial, general industrial or warehouse uses. The application proposal is considered to be acceptable on character, residential amenity and highway safety grounds. It is recommended for approval.

#### **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site lies within a Core Employment Area within the settlement of Frimley, just south of the Motorway M3. It also lies within the Industrial Estate and Infrastructure Character Area as defined within the Western Urban Area Character SPD 2012. The application site lies on the north side of Albany Park, fronting onto Frimley Road, behind a landscaped frontage. To the immediate north is the Matalan retail unit. Commercial properties lie to the rear and south with the nearest residential properties in Gilbert Road. The application building is Council owned.
- 2.2 The application property is a two-storey ancillary office accommodation to the front of the building with a large warehouse to the rear. It provides about 3,600 square metres of accommodation with 68 car parking spaces provided in a car park to the front and a car parking area to the side and rear of the building. The predominantly rectangular building has a depth of about 105 metres and a maximum width of 32 metres, with a general height of 6-8

metres. There are three vehicular access to the site, all accessed from Albany Park, with the main servicing point at the rear access point. Two lorry spaces/servicing are provided to the rear.

### **3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY**

- 3.1 84/0158 Erection of a wholesale distribution warehouse with ancillary accommodation, car parking and service areas together with acc Albany Park.

*Granted in April 1984 and implemented.*

- 3.2 92/0717 Change of use from storage and distribution to general industrial.

*Granted in November 1992 but not implemented.*

### **4.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The current proposal relates to the change of use to light industrial, general industrial or warehouse uses. Light industrial use is defined in the Use Classes Order as an industrial use which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell and/or other pollution. General industrial uses relate to heavier industrial uses, which could cause such harm. Warehouse uses relate to storage and distribution uses. The proposal is to seek the widening of potential uses to include light industrial and general industrial uses. The application proposal has been amended since the submission of the original application which was originally intended to be used for warehousing.

- 4.2 The expected occupier relates to a light industrial use for the design and manufacture of design and manufacture temperature, pressure and flow control (safety) instrumentation for the commercial and industrial sectors with particular expertise in hazardous environments including water treatment, oil and gas and nuclear. The intended occupier is not yet in the public domain due to commercial confidentiality issues. However, it is anticipated that 20% of the building would be used for part storage; 10% goods ready for despatch and space for unloading/loading to vehicles; 60% assembly; and, 10% testing of products.

- 4.3 The existing car parking and servicing arrangements will be retained with the existing 2 level access doors to the yard used. Having regard to waste it is anticipated that this would via the rear yard where there is space for appropriate waste receptacles without interfering with the parking spaces and circulation.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

- 5.1 County Highway Authority No objections (See Annex A).
- 5.2 Senior Environmental Health Officer No objections.

### **6.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 Thirteen representations letters were sent on 17 January 2020 and, on the basis of the amended description, on 16 February 2022. At the time of preparation of this report no letters of representation in support or raising an objection

### **7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION**

- 7.1 This application site is located within a Core Employment Area within the settlement of Frimley. In considering this proposal regard has been had to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and Policies CP1, CP2, CP8, CP11, DM9 and DM11 of the Surrey

Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 (CSDMP); and advice within the Western Urban Area Character SPD 2012. The main issues are:

- Principle for the development;
- Impact on local character;
- Impact on residential amenity; and
- Impact on highway safety.

## **7.2 Principle for the Development**

7.2.1 Policy CP8 of the CSDMP indicates that in making provision for new jobs in the plan period, there will be a need to promote a more intensive use of existing employment areas through the recycling, refurbishment and regeneration of existing older or vacant stock. The current proposal would provide the re-use of an existing vacant commercial building for employment purposes which supports this policy. Specifically, the intended company will combine their existing workforce of 60-70 employees from two locations into one location at the application site. This is likely to see relocation of existing employees to Camberley and may involve recruitment from the local workforce. It is understood that the previous occupier (Travellex) had similar staffing numbers. As such, it is considered that the principle for the development is acceptable, subject to the assessment below.

## **7.3 Impact on local character**

7.3.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP indicates that development proposals should respect and enhance the local character of the area. Policy CP2 reflects this requirement. The current proposal relates to a change of use only and no external alterations are proposed. The change of use would not, in itself, lead to any significant impact on the character of the area, complying with Policies CP2 and DM9 of the CSDMP and advice in the WUAC.

## **7.4 Impact on residential amenity**

7.4.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP indicates that development proposals should respect the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses. The site is predominantly surrounded by other commercial uses with the nearest residential properties in Gilbert Road set about 100 metres from the existing building. No objections are raised by the Senior Environmental Health Officer. It is noted that there are no limitations on the hours of operation for the existing use and no such controls would be required noting its location. Noting the other commercial uses and proximity to the Motorway M3, resulting in higher background noise levels, as well as the separation distances from residential properties, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable on residential amenity grounds complying with Policy DM9 of the CSDMP.

## **7.5 Impact on highway safety**

7.5.1 Policy DM11 of the CSDMP indicates that development which would adversely impact the safe and efficient flow of traffic movement on the highway network will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that measures to reduce and mitigate any impacts to acceptable levels can be implemented. Policy CP11 of the CSDMP requires development to comply with the parking standards. Paragraph 111 of the NPPF indicates that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residential cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

5.5.2 The current proposal would provide 68 car parking spaces for 3,600 square metres of commercial floorspace, equating to one car space per 53 square metres of floorspace which sits between the maximum standards for industrial and commercial uses (one car space per 30 to 100 square metres). The County Highway Authority has advised that the application site is accessed via Albany Park, which is a private road and does not form a part of the public highway, therefore it falls outside of that Authority's jurisdiction. The County Highway Authority has considered the wider impact of the proposed development and considers that it

would not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the public highway. As such, no objections are raised on highway safety matters with the proposal complying with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the CSDMP and the NPPF.

## **8.0 POSITIVE/PROACTIVE WORKING AND PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY**

8.1 In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive, creative and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 38-41 of the NPPF. This included 1 or more of the following:-

- a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.
- c) Have suggested/accepted/negotiated amendments to the scheme to resolve identified problems with the proposal and to seek to foster sustainable development.
- d) Have proactively communicated with the applicant through the process to advise progress, timescale or recommendation.

8.2 Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of persons by reason of age, disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. This planning application has been processed and assessed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The proposal is not considered to conflict with this duty.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

9.1 The current proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its principle, local character, residential amenity and highway safety. The application is recommended for approval.

## **10.0 RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans: 0344800-LP Rev B; 0344800-A-00 Rev A, 0344800-01 Rev A, 0344800-00-1 Rev A, 0344800-00-2 Rev A and E3751 Rev A, unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the Planning Practice Guidance.

3. The premises shall be used for light industrial, general industrial or storage and distribution (warehousing) uses only; and for no other purpose (including any other purposes in Classes B2, B8 or E; of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order).

Reason: To ensure the provision of on-site parking accommodation and to accord with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

4. The parking spaces shown on the approved plan 0344800-A-00 Rev A shall be made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure the provision of on-site parking accommodation and to accord with Policies CP11 and DM11 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.