

Planning Statement

Minster Court, Courtwick Lane, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 7RN

SHW

September 2019



Introduction

This Planning Statement is in support of a full planning application for the erection of four new commercial units (Use Class B1, B2 or B8), amended access and associated car parking.

This statement provides information on the background to the site, relationship to surrounding buildings, planning policy at a national, and local level and an assessment and justification of the proposal. The statement has been prepared in full accordance with Government guidance, including DCLG Guidance on information requirements and validation for planning applications.



Site and Surroundings

Littlehampton is a town, and the most populous civil parish in the Arun District of West Sussex, England. It lies on the English Channel on the eastern bank of the mouth of the River Arun. It is 50 miles south south-west of London, 19 miles west of Brighton and 10 miles east of the county town of Chichester.

The area is mixed use with residential uses to the north of Courtwick Lane and commercial and retail uses to the south including other B1 industrial estates, office developments, a medical centre and Morrisons supermarket. The site is accessed from Courtwick Lane and has reasonable access to bus routes, pedestrian and cycle access.



Site and Surroundings

Planning History

LU/140/17/PL

Unit 9, Minster Court Business Park, Courtwick Lane

Change of use from light industrial (B1 Business) to van sales (Sui Generis)

Approved - 20th December 2017

Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 38(3) states that the Development Plan includes the Regional Spatial Strategy and other Development Plan Documents. In respect of this proposal, the Development Plan includes the Local Plan 2018.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In July 2018, the new National Planning Policy Framework was published. This set the tone for future Local Plan Policy and is a material consideration in the decision making process.

Paragraph 8 outlines that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles. With regards to economic this includes helping to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

Paragraph 10 confirms that the common theme running through National Planning Policy is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 80 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Paragraph 81 states that planning policies should:

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
- b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances

Paragraph 180 states that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.

Arun District Local Plan 2018

Policy SD SP1 states that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy SD SP2 states that Built-Up Area Boundaries are defined for the main towns and villages in the District and shown on the Policies Maps. Development should be focused within the Built Up Area Boundaries and will be permitted, subject to consideration against other policies of this Local Plan.

Policy EMP SP1 states that the Council, with partners, will promote the sustainable growth of the District's economy to meet the varying needs of different economic sectors and to support regeneration within the two main towns. This will comprise:

- Protecting and enhancing existing and allocated employment sites and premises to meet the needs of business subject to regular review and monitoring
- The provision of appropriately scaled development where such uses compliment, and are compatible with, employment/commercial uses.

Policy EMP DM1 relates to the enhancement of employment premises and sites. It states that the Council will seek to protect and enhance existing employment sites and premises in order to maintain a supply of good quality commercial sites and premises to meet the needs of businesses and the local economy. The Council will promote and support positive measures to upgrade existing employment areas through:

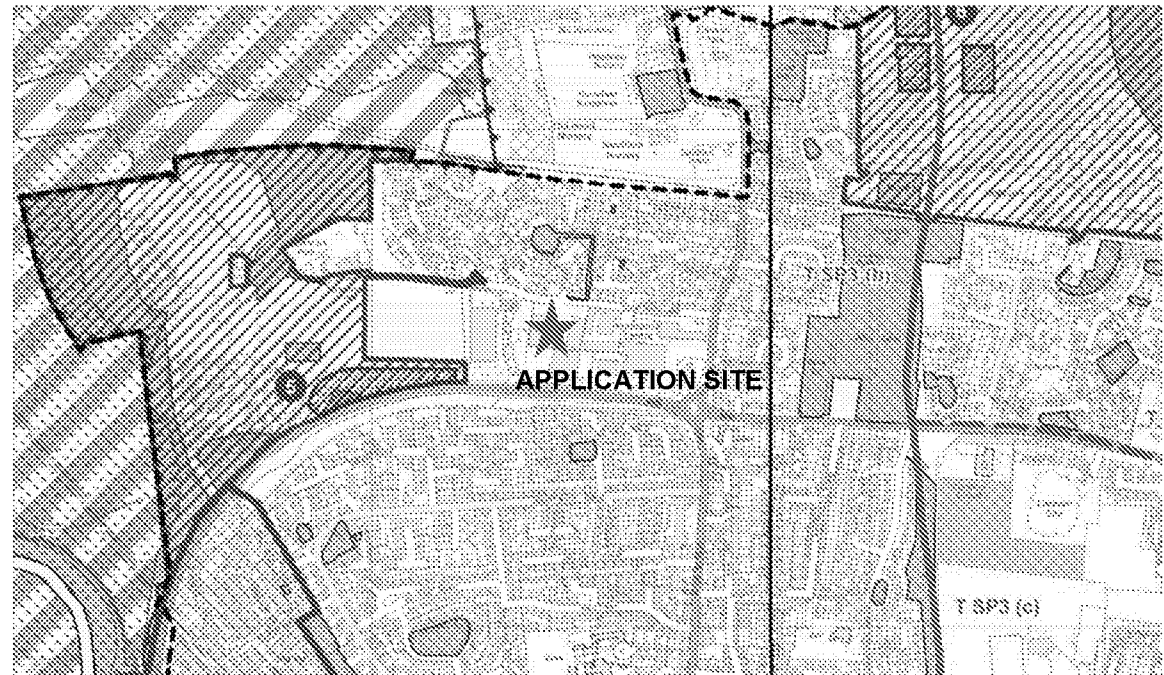
- a) Supporting appropriate proposals for development/re-development of employment floorspace, upgrading or modernisation of existing premises and/or proposals which make more efficient use of under-used employment sites and premises; and
- b) Working with landowners and developers to achieve better management of employment areas, including measures which increase sustainability and reduce crime.

Policy D SP1 states that all development proposals should seek to make efficient use of land but reflect the characteristics of the site and local area in their layout, landscaping, density, mix, scale, massing, character, materials, finish and architectural details. Development proposals should have been derived from: a thorough site analysis and context appraisal; adherence to objectives informing sustainable design (inclusivity, adaptability, security, attractiveness, usability, health and wellbeing, climate change mitigation and habitats); and the influence these objectives have on the form of the development.

Policy D DM1 states that when considering any application for development the Council will have regard to the following aspects:

- Character
- Appearance / Attractiveness
- Impact
- Innovation
- Adaptability
- Trees and Woodland
- Solar Gain
- Public Realm
- Layout - Movement
- Layout - Legibility
- Density
- Scale
- Aspects of Form and Design Quality

Policy T DM1 states that new development must ensure ease of movement, prioritising safe pedestrian and cycle access to the green infrastructure network and access to public transport and community transport services where a need has been identified. Access to alternative modes of transport including public transport services, the public right of way and cycle networks, must be available and accessible to all members of the community



Principle

The site falls within an urban and established commercial area. It is defined as being part of the built up area boundary area and as such the development should be considered as acceptable in principle subject to normal development control criteria such as residential amenity, highway safety and parking. It should also be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the effective and efficient use of land for sites in the built up area and that policy 1 of Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals that do not have any adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits when assessed against the NPPF.

Design - Use

The proposed use is that of B1, B2 or B8 to allow the new units to be marketed to the full spectrum of potential occupiers. The wider industrial estate comprises a mix of B1 workshop, B2 industrial and sui generis uses, and therefore the proposed uses compliment the existing use of the site.

To support the application, a Noise Survey and a Transport Statement has been provided. Both reports conclude that a B2 or B8 use will not result in significant harm to residential amenity either by way of noise or vehicle movements.

The location, in close proximity to connections with the A259, A284 and A27, makes it ideal to meet the demands of a B8 occupier. As highlighted in February 2019¹, there is also a desperate need for B2 industrial space:

"SHW Business Space Partner Duncan Marsh said: "More than ever before there is a dire need for new pipeline space. Other areas of the county have benefitted from speculative development, attracting new business and healthy pre-lets. This needs to start happening to the west of the Adur.""

<https://www.shw.co.uk/news/2019/worthing-industrial-round-up.html>¹

Design - Amount, Layout, Scale and Appearance

The design approach has been to replicate what already exists, to create a uniform estate appearance.

The units will comprise of a reception/office and toilet, together with a separate commercial area for the B1, B2 or B8 use.

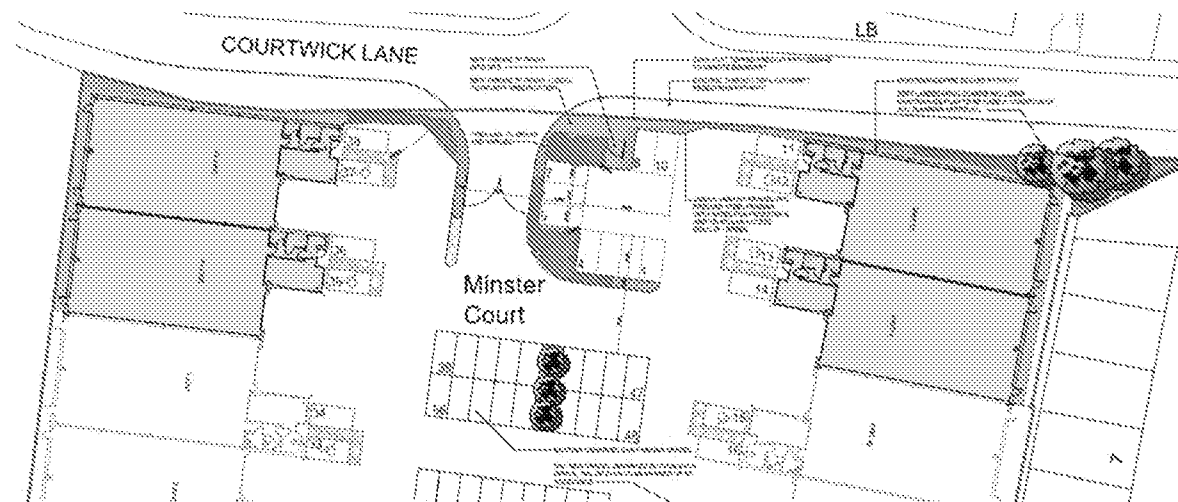
Access is gained via the front elevation of each unit, with a roller shutter providing direct access to the commercial area and a separate pedestrian access for Health and Safety purposes. Each unit also includes two pedestrian fire exits.

The layout of each unit exactly corresponds with the existing and are 300sqm each.

The units are single storey only, albeit that the roof level would be equivalent to a storey building to provide sufficient height for access by vehicles and for the storage of goods.

Lastly, considering appearance, again the units replicate that which already exists. Therefore, the new development will comprise of a grey steel cladding roof, aluminium door/window frames and brick facing walls.

It is therefore considered that the amount, layout, scale and appearance is entirely appropriate for the site and within the locality as a whole.



Design - Landscaping

The proposals provide for the opportunity to introduce landscaping within the site, which will enhance the industrial estate as a whole. As shown on the submitted Block Plan, this includes the planting of trees within the site and landscaping around the new entrance to the site.

These enhancements soften the overall appearance of the site and are seen as a further benefit.

Transport & Access

In support of the application, a Transport Statement was undertaken in August 2019. The assessment confirmed that the site is well placed to support sustainable development with local and national cycle routes within close proximity of the site, good pedestrian networks towards the local centre, residential areas and Littlehampton Town Centre and close proximity to local bus stops.

In addition, a TRICS generation assessment has been completed to estimate the likely number of vehicle trips generated by the proposals. This assessment identified that the proposals are likely to result in an increase of 20 vehicle trips in the AM peak, 13 vehicle trips in the PM peak and 203 vehicle trips over a 12-hour period. As a worst case this could therefore result in an additional vehicle onto the local road network every 3 minutes during the AM peak and would therefore not cause a severe impact on the operation of the local road network.

Lastly, parking provision for the site as a whole (due to re configuring the parking arrangements) has been reviewed against West Sussex County Council's adopted and emerging guidance. The guidance suggests that when compared against B2 standards the site should provide a total of 105 spaces. The layout demonstrates a provision of 107 spaces which meets the existing demand for spaces on site which equates to 2.4 spaces per 100sqm. A provision of 107 spaces with 2 allocated spaces for each unit is therefore considered sufficient to cover the expected level of demand.

Noise

A Noise Survey was undertaken in July 2019. The assessment concluded that the Rating Level at the nearest NSR is below the existing L90 Background Sound Level if Roller Shutter Doors are closed. In addition, the assessment has shown that the Rating Level at the nearest NSR is 5dB above the existing L90 Background Sound Level if Roller Shutter Doors are opened. Lastly, the assessment has shown that the Rating Level at the nearest NSR is 1dB above the existing L90 Background Sound Level if a fork lift truck is operating in the area nearest to the nearest NSR.

However, measures were recommended as to how to mitigate against the above Rating Levels and bring them to a level below the existing L90 Background Sound Level, which the proposals have endorsed and implemented as per the assessment.



Trees

In support of the application, a Tree Survey and subsequent Impact Assessment was prepared in August 2019. The Impact Assessment confirmed that Group G1 needs to be removed to enable construction of the new site entrance. G1 has been awarded category B2 due to its collective landscape value on Courtwick Lane. Soft landscaping areas on the northern boundary, adjacent to the new site entrance and within the site are included on the proposed layout, however it is intended that the detailed soft landscaping scheme is conditioned with any planning approval.

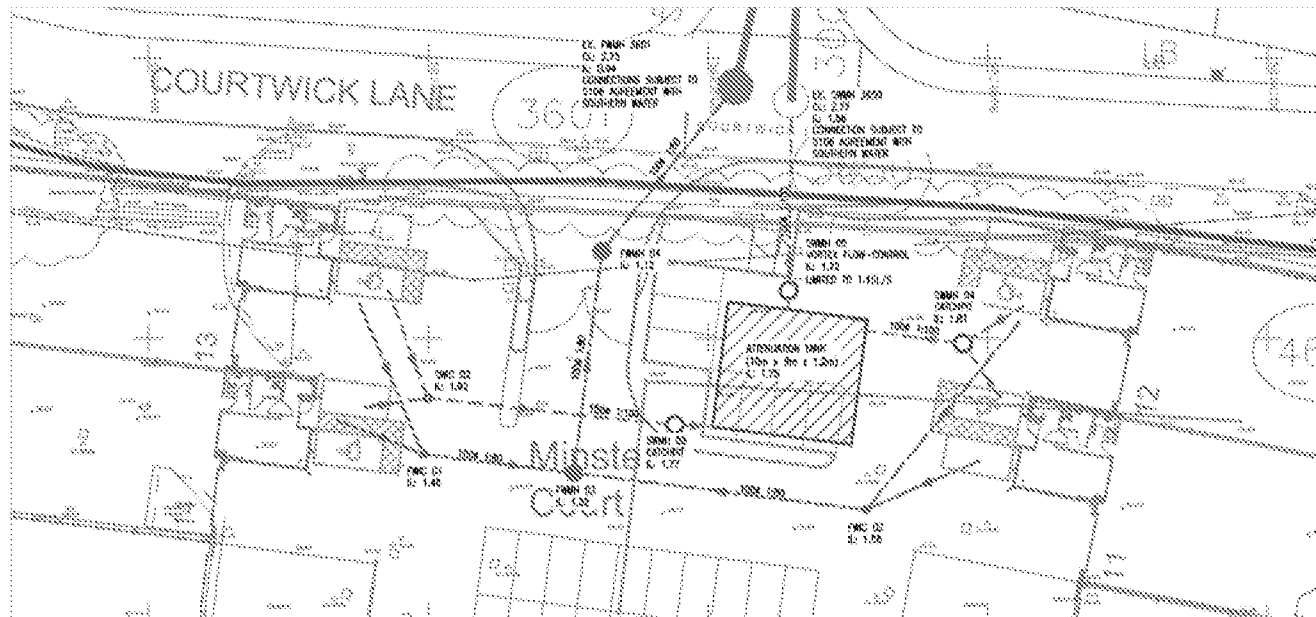
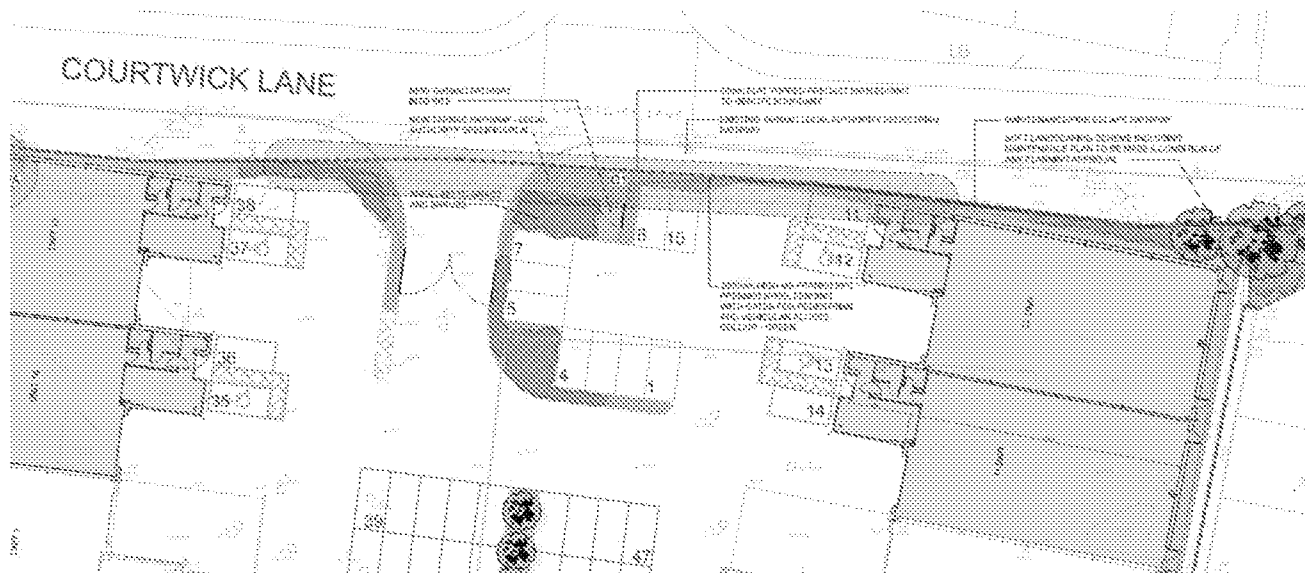
In addition, all proposed buildings and areas of new hard standing will be located outside the root protection areas of retained trees. Based on the assessment, trees recommended for retention in this report can be protected during the construction period and successfully integrated into the site post development.

Drainage

In support of the application, a Drainage Strategy was prepared in August 2019. The strategy concluded that, in the context of existing ground conditions, as long as the overall developed area red-line boundaries are outside of the flood zones and long-term flood risk areas, the development is suitable without the need for the Sequential or Exception tests.

In addition, the drainage solutions are likely to consist of the following:

- Underground piped network
- Attenuated storage and limited discharge to the existing surface water network located in Goldcrest Avenue.



Summary

This Planning Statement is in support of a full planning application for the erection of four new commercial units (Use Class B1, B2 or B8), amended access and associated car parking.

The area is mixed use with residential uses to the north of Courtwick Lane and commercial and retail uses to the south including other B1 industrial estates, office developments, a medical centre and Morrisons supermarket.

Policy EMP DM1 states that the Council will seek to enhance existing employment sites and premises in order to maintain a supply of good quality commercial sites and premises to meet the needs of businesses and the local economy. The proposals therefore fully embrace these principles.

The application has also been submitted with a collection of supportive documents including a Transport Statement, Drainage Strategy, Noise Assessment and Tree Survey.

The Transport Statement concludes that the proposals would not cause a severe impact on the operation of the local road network. In addition, the Noise Survey concluded that with the revised layout now subject to the application, the noise level will be below the existing L90 Background Sound Level.

The proposals are therefore fully compliant with national and local plan policy.

