Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0841/25 Recommendation: Approve

Site: Unit 1 Rectory Farm Road, Sompting

Proposal: Change of use from use from Use Class E (Commercial, business and service)/B8 (storage or distribution) to a flexible consent for use class B8 (storage or distribution/use class B2 (general industrial) to be used for MOT testing, servicing, diagnostics and repairs (no bodywork or paint spraying)

Date of Site Visit: 16th December 2024

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

The application relates to a large warehouse building on the Rectory Farm Road industrial estate. It sits at the eastern end of the site close to the entrance. There is a block of flats (Millfield) 30m to the east and dwellings in Rectory Farm Road 28m to the south.

The property is vacant but was previous occupied by a company whose operations (the supply of hygiene and catering products) consisted of a use falling within Class E/ B8.

This application proposes to change the use of the unit to a flexible Class B8/B2 use for MOT testing, servicing, diagnostics and repairs of cars, but with no bodywork or paint spraying. No internal or external changes to the building are proposed. The proposed operating hours are 8am-6pm Monday-Friday and 8am-1pm on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or Public Holidays.

This follows permission granted under AWDM/1575/24 for Use Class B2 to be used for MOT testing, etc. The landowner wishes to retain the existing lawful B8 use and associated operating hours established under existing consents, to retain flexibility should the proposed occupiers (Cedar Garage) vacate the site in the future.

Planning History:

S/40/97 - Change Of Use Of Warehouse (Class B8) To Business (Class B1) And/Or Warehouse (Class B8) (Amendments To S/14/97)

AWDM/0225/12 - Permanent relaxation of Condition 3 of S/103/71 to extend working hours to 5.30am-7.30pm Monday-Friday (instead of 8am-6pm) with Saturday working remaining at 8am-1pm

AWDM/1575/24 - Change of use from Use Class E (Commercial, business and service)/B8 (Storage or Distribution) to Use Class B2 (General Industrial) to be used for MOT testing, servicing, diagnostics and repairs (No bodywork or paint spraying)

Consultations:

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Authority has no objection. No alterations are proposed to the existing vehicular access arrangement. The proposed change of use to Class B2 would not be anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of movements, when compared with the existing Use Class E/B8. 24 existing car parking spaces are to be retained and would be considered suitable provision for the proposed use.

Adur and Worthing Councils: Public Health: There are no EH objections to this application. I would recommend the proposed hours of use contained in the planning statement be applied to any new permission

Sompting Parish Council: Support the application. Councillors welcomed the fact that no bodywork or paint spraying will be taking place

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15, 25, 28, 34
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Principle

The unit is within an established industrial site where such uses are acceptable. The relevant issue in this case is predominantly the effect on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers.

Visual amenity

The proposal does not involve any external alterations to the building.

Residential amenity

The site is about 29m from the houses in Rectory Farm Road to the south and 34m from the flats at Millfield to the east. While a MOT testing use within Class B2 has the potential to create noise, the proposal in this case does not include body repairs or paint spraying. Working hours are stated as being limited to daytime hours Monday-Friday and between 8am and 1pm on Saturdays. There are no objection to these hours as they are consistent with the usual working hours on the estate.

No objections have been received from neighbouring residents and it is considered that with suitable controls in place, the proposal should not result in harm to amenity.

Parking and Access

The proposal will not affect the existing parking and access arrangements at the site. 24 spaces are available for this unit which is considered to be more than sufficient.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the premises shall be used only for purposes within Use Class B8 and for MOT testing, servicing, diagnostics and repairs of vehicles, with no bodywork or paint spraying, and for no other purpose within Class B2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or in any provision equivalent to that class in any Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).
4. No loading, unloading or manoeuvring (including arrival/departure) of vehicles shall take place on the site outside the hours of 8am-6pm Monday-Friday inclusive and 8am-1pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Public Holidays.
5. No working shall take place on the premises except between the hours of 8am-6pm Monday-Friday inclusive and 8am-1pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Public Holidays.
6. No external working

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation N

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 11 August 2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 11/08/2025