expires 3/3

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0596/08 **Recommendation - Application Permitted**

Site: **Units 2 and 3 Malthouse Trading Estate Brighton Road Shoreham-by-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Change of use from Class B1 (c) (light industrial) to B8 (storage) (units 2 and 3)**

The Application

The Malthouse Trading Estate lies between the Brighton Road and the railway line in Shoreham, opposite the scrap yard. The site contains four light industrial (B1) units served by two vehicular accesses onto Brighton Road. It is proposed to change the use of the two central units to Class B8 storage.

The applicant, Edwards, is an engineering manufacturer. It has been manufacturing in Shoreham for over 25 years and currently employs 500 staff across nine locations split between Dolphin Road and the Malthouse Trading Estate.

In order to remain competitive the company has moved selected parts of its manufacturing operations 'offshore'. To maintain this competitive edge they are also continuing to invest in UK manufacturing in Shoreham and have spent over £10 million on new machine tools in recent years.

Edwards is now proposing to redirect activity at two of their nine sites. The current application will enable them to relocate their distribution activity from Crawley to Shoreham. To that end, they wish to establish a small warehousing activity in the two of the Malthouse units to distribute the products manufactured at their other Shoreham units.

They currently manufacture and transport these products from Shoreham to Crawley but are now proposing to store finished products in Shoreham itself.

The applicant has stated that the number of trucks and lorries accessing the units in the Malthouse Trading Estate will only increase from around 12 to 15 vehicles per day. This is because their current manufacturing operation has many frequent deliveries from suppliers as well as deliveries to their Crawley warehouse. The proposal would see many of the supplier deliveries replaced by additional deliveries to the UK and overseas customers. In the proposed new operation the main activities will be storing, packing and distribution.

Consultations and Representations

Consultations/Comments

West Sussex County Council – The County Transport Planning Officer has no objection to this proposal subject to a condition regarding lorry parking.

Adur District Council – The Environmental Health Officer has no objection, subject to any existing hours of operation.

Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan Team - Draft Interim Planning Guidance for Shoreham Harbour January 2009 states at Paragraph 7.7(iii) 'B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) not requiring a port-side location will not normally be supported, unless for such temporary period as may not prejudice the regeneration objectives for the area, or the emerging AAP.' This application, which is proposed within a location on the north side of the A259 Brighton Road, does not appear to support the general objective to introduce high-value employment to the Shoreham Harbour regeneration area. The JAAP team initially concludes, therefore, that it does not meet these wider objectives but that further information is needed before a final view can be reached.

Third Parties

No comments received

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, NE5, DEV4-5
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies) AG1, AE2, AE4
Draft Interim Planning Guidance for Shoreham Harbour (ADC 2009)
PPG4 'Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms' (DoE 1992) & Consultation Paper PPS4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Development (DCLG 2007)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Policy NE5 of the WSSP permits development for business, industry or warehousing and seeks to safeguard land or premises currently in employment use from alternative development where they make an important contribution to the supply of premises and jobs. DEV4-5 requires safe and convenient access to development and an adequate level of car parking to prevent environmental or safety problems which does not exceed maximum standards.

The site is allocated in the ADLP for business and industrial purposes falling within Use Classes B1 and B2. Policy AE2 permits changes of use within the allocated area to these uses, while Policy AE4 also supports mixed use developments within Classes B1, B2 and B8 on the site.

The Draft Interim Planning Guidance for Shoreham Harbour seeks to prevent development which does not accord with the regeneration objectives for the harbour. It states, however, that in many cases changes of use will not carry long term consequences and so may be acceptable. It suggests that temporary 5 year permissions may be appropriate in order to not prejudice emerging objectives.

The PPS4 Consultation Draft highlights the need to retain and develop facilities for economic growth, productivity and employment.

Principle

The site falls within an area allocated for business purposes and, as such, the use would appear to be acceptable in principle. The JAAP team comments that it does not meet these wider objectives for the Harbour regeneration are noted but it is not considered that a refusal of the application, or even a temporary permission, would be reasonable in this case.

The change of use to storage would not prejudice redevelopment of the site as no building work is involved and, being of no greater land value, it would not increase costs of compulsory acquisition.

Also, the applicants are one of the main employers in the District. There has been previous talk of relocation out of Shoreham (or even closure as a result of take-over) and, to reduce risk of this, the Council needs to show support for their business rather than putting unnecessary obstacles in their way.

There is no objection, therefore, to the principle of the change of use of two of these units to B8 storage.

Access and parking

Access to the site is from two accesses off Brighton Road. The submitted drawings show 5 lorry parking spaces in a central area between Units 1 and 2 with car parking along the northern boundary with the railway line. The County Transport Planning Officer is satisfied with the number of spaces and the turning area available for the lorries but requires a condition to ensure that such space is made available prior to the use commencing.

The increase in lorry movements associated with this change of use is not considered to be significant, rising by around 12 to 15 vehicles per day. The applicant has stated that their current manufacturing operation has many frequent deliveries from suppliers as well as deliveries to their Crawley warehouse which would be stopped. The proposal would see many of the

supplier deliveries replaced by additional deliveries to the UK and overseas customers.

It is not considered that the proposal will result in any adverse affect on highway safety.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :-

2PPii (amended)

Subject to

1. C1Ci
2. The use hereby permitted shall not be carried on until space has been laid out within the site for the parking and turning of HGV's in accordance with drawing no. 08141-002-Rev.A date stamped 21 January 2009. Such spaces shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose than for parking and turning of HGV's.
   Reason - In the interests of highway safety and to comply with policy DEV4 of the West Sussex Structure Plan.

Case Officer..... Date 5/2/09