Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0395/25 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: Former Edf Car Park Southdownview Road Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Change of use from a car park to a car storage yard (Use Class B8) including reconfiguration to provide additional car parking (part retrospective)

Date of site visit: 20 June 2024 (for pre-app)

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The site is located off Southdownview Road. It comprises the rear car park formerly associated with two-storey building on the front of the plot. This building, which was formerly occupied by EDF, has been converted into residential units under prior approval. The car park has access to Southdownview Road along the Southern boundary. Other than the residential units to the west, the site is surrounded by industrial uses, including the under-construction Worthing Business Park to the north. There is a stream to the north and east of the site.

The site is subject to the following designations:

- East Worthing Industrial Estate and Broadwater Business Park

Proposal

The development proposes to use the car park for storage for vehicles as part of a car auction business. The proposal consists of retrospective change of use to open storage (Use Class B8). The proposal also includes a reconfiguration of the car park to provide additional car parking spaces to allow more vehicles to be stored securely. Shoreham Vehicle Auctions, who have an existing site in Lancing Business Park, are using the site and need the additional spaces as part of their business expansion. The number of car parks would increase from 241 to 333 spaces.

Relevant Planning History:
AWDM/0056/22: Construction of 3no. buildings providing 11no. light industrial units (Class E(g)) with associated car parking, landscaping and acoustic fence to north side of access road. Permitted 9 Feb 2023

AWDM/1008/19: Construction of 5 no. buildings providing 22no. light industrial units (Class B1c) with associated car parking and landscaping. Permitted 27 April 2020

Consultations:

WSP (as drainage consultant):

Following a review of the submitted information, we have no objection on surface water grounds. Due to the site, size, location, and type of development we would recommend the approval of the application.

Environmental health officer:
As the car auctions are using the facility to valet cars we will need to know what drainage they have in place for the runoff from the car washing. There is nothing on the application.

The run-off from vehicle washing and cleaning activities can damage the environment and pollute water courses if released into surface water drains. It's the dirt, brake dust, traffic film residue and oil that is washed off that causes the pollution. Furthermore some cleaning agents can be poisonous to river life. This trade effluent needs to be disposed of via a sewer with Southern Waters permission. See the Government's guidance. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pollution-preventionfor-businesses There are no other adverse EH comments for this application.

Officer's response: The applicant has confirmed there will be no valeting services on site and the noise impact assessment has been updated accordingly.

West Sussex County Council (Local Highway Authority)
West Sussex County Council (WSCC), in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on the above full application AWDM/0395/25. The development proposals are for change of use of the former EDF car park to car storage (Class B8) and reconfiguration of car park to provide an uplift from 241 spaces to 333 spaces. The application is supported by way of a Transport Statement (TS), cover and associated plans.

The site is located on Southdownview Road, in a well-established industrial estate. A comparison of trip attraction is made for the existing site use as a car park and the proposed use as a car storage facility. It is estimated that an additional 8 trips in the morning peak, one trip in the evening peak and an average of 61 additional trips are generated for the whole day.

The Highway Authority do not consider the small increase in additional trips resulting from the change of use would be detrimental to the operation of the local highway network. Therefore, no highway objection is raised.

Representations:

None received

Policies

Any forthcoming planning application would be considered on its merits in relation to the policies and standards forming the local development plan as well as the NPPF/PPG

In this case it is considered the following policies are relevant:

- Worthing Local Plan (2023): SP1, SP2, SP3, DM5, DM10, DM11, DM15, DM16, DM17, DM20, DM22
- Sustainable Economy SPD 2012
- National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Planning Practice Guidance

Planning assessment

Principle of development

Paragraph 81 of the NPPF requires that significant weight be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Policy DM11 in the Local Plan sets out that existing premises, sites or floorspace which are used for, or last used for, employment uses, located within the following Key Employment Areas will be protected against loss to other uses. The development site is located within the designated East Worthing Industrial Estate.

The proposal is to change the use to B8 to cover open air car storage. The two previous permissions on site have both granted the change of use of the site to industrial uses. The use of the site as B8 is considered to be compliant with the aims of policy DM11 to keep this site within the industrial estate in industrial use. The development is therefore acceptable in principle subject to the assessment of other material considerations, as set out below.

Design and impact on the character and appearance of the area

The development at this stage does not propose any buildings or other structures. The changes are limited to the redesign of the car park. The visual amenity of the area is considered to result in minimal change from the existing area.

Impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties

The main concerns relate to the impact of the vehicle movements on the adjoining residents in the EDF building. These could result in noise and disturbance and air quality impacts.

The application has been reviewed by the Council's environmental health officer who has raised no concerns in relation to noise or air quality. Overall, the proposal would have similar impacts due to the current use as a car park.

It is considered appropriate to limit the hours of operation to normal working hours to reduce any impacts on neighbours. Hours are limited to 7am to 7pm Mondays to Fridays and 8am to 2pm on Saturdays, with no work on Sundays or Bank holidays.

It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse impact on residential amenity.

Transport and highways

The site is located on Southdownview Road, in a well-established industrial estate. A comparison of trip attraction is made for the existing site use as a car park and the proposed use as a car storage facility. It is estimated that an additional 8 trips in the morning peak, one trip in the evening peak and an average of 61 additional trips are generated for the whole day.

It is not considered that the small increase in additional trips resulting from the change of use would be detrimental to the operation of the local highway network. Therefore, no highway objection is raised.

Biodiversity and green infrastructure

Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity net gain is mandatory for major residential developments from February 2024. Policy DM18 requires new developments to provide a minimum of 10% net gain for biodiversity. It is noted that the site is surrounded by trees and vegetation. Small areas of vegetation have also grown between the car parks within the main car parking area.

The proposal is not considered to affect the existing greenery surrounding the site or between the car parks. There will be no earthworks proposed with just the repainting of lines to reconfigure the car park. The trees are therefore not considered to be affected and the site is exempt from BNG.

Water and flooding

The site is located in an area which is at very low risk from flooding from surface water and groundwater. The proposal has been reviewed by the Council's drainage consultant who has not raised an objection on flooding grounds.

Pollution

An air quality assessment has been provided which concluded that "From the evidence presented, and by following the guidance provided herein, the Proposed Development will comply with all relevant air quality policy. As such, air quality should not pose any significant obstacles to the planning process"

The site is considered potentially contaminated and the previous permission had a range of requirements related to testing and remediation of the land. However, it is noted that the proposal does not result in ground disturbance so these conditions are not considered necessary.

The environmental health officer requested further information on valeting to see whether run off was adequately dealt with. The applicant has confirmed that no valeting or vehicle cleaning will take place on site. This will be secured by condition.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Hours of work
4. No car valeting or vehicle cleaning is allowed on site.

Informative

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.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Louise Prew Date: 11/08/2025

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 12 August 2025