

175 LONDON ROAD, COWPLAIN, PO7 7RJ

Employment justification

A thorough pre-application response was received on 20 June 2019 (LPA Ref: GEN/19/00321). There was absolutely no mention of the loss of the employment use or the relevant policies. It does seem unreasonable to raise this issue now that a formal application has been submitted. The first thing to say is that despite the frontage appearance the premises are predominantly contained within a dilapidated shed that is beyond repair and that is one of the reasons for the decision to relocate the business. It would not be economically viable to rebuild the premises on this site when there are many purpose built commercial premises in the borough with much better access, parking and related infrastructure.

Policy DM3 in the Adopted Local Plan and the marketing requirements set out are not considered reasonable in this particular situation where the premises are clearly not suitable for continued commercial use due to poor condition and location. See photographs on following page. In terms of location this is primarily a residential location with housing on all three sides. The existing use could be regarded as a non-conforming use in a mainly residential area.

It should also be noted it is not correct to regard the existing use as B class. It is in fact a builder's store/yard and showroom, which is a sui generis use for planning purposes. Policy DM3 refers to B class uses and is therefore not relevant to the application proposals. It is assumed this is why there was no mention of Policy DM3 in the pre-application response.

Policy C1 in the Emerging Havant Borough Local Plan 2036 also has some relevance. The premises are still in use and not on an industrial estate. As such the following part of the policy could apply.

a. There are available and suitable alternative premises within a reasonable distance of the employment site which enable the occupier(s) to relocate; and b. There would be no overall net loss in the number of jobs when compared.

The applicant is in the process of relocating to larger commercial premises located within the Cowplain Town Centre. This would allow the business to expand and increase employment from 2, on the existing site, to 6 on the new site. Consequently the proposed development would be in compliance with this emerging planning policy.

Conclusion

Policy DM3 is not considered relevant to the application proposals and this was acknowledged in the pre-application response from the Council. In respect of the Emerging Local Plan the proposals would comply with Policy C1 and result in the expansion of the existing business on a more appropriate site.



Application premises (175 London Road) behind brick frontage.