

<u>No:</u>	BH2016/01414	<u>Ward:</u>	HOLLINGDEAN & STANMER
<u>App Type:</u>	Full Planning		
<u>Address:</u>	Unit 4 Home Farm Business Centre Home Farm Road Brighton		
<u>Proposal:</u>	Change of use from light/general industrial (B1c/B2) to Class B1 use.		
<u>Officer:</u>	Stewart Glassar Tel 292153	<u>Valid Date:</u>	06/06/2016
<u>Con Area:</u>	N/A	<u>Expiry Date:</u>	05 September 2016
<u>Listed Building Grade:</u>	N/A		
Agent:	Planit Consulting, PO Box 721 Godalming GU7 9BR		
Applicant:	Novus Interiors, Mr V Blake C/o Planit Consulting PO Box 721 Godalming GU7 9BR		

1 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 11 and the policies and guidance in section 7 and resolves to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the Conditions and Informatives set out in section 11.

2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located to the north of Lewes Road and to the east of Moulsecombe station. It is accessed via Home Farm Road which is a turning off Lewes Road (A270). The Home Farm Business Centre is at the western end of Home Farm Road and comprises five production, distribution and office units.
- 2.2 The application relates to an existing detached industrial building towards the western end of Home Farm Road. The building is arranged across two floors although the central part of the building is a void at first floor level. Externally it is clad in profiled metal sheeting which matches the neighbouring units. The front elevation faces onto Home Farm Road, with a tarmacked forecourt to the front and western side of the building.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

BH2015/04569 - External alterations including removal of roller shutters and canopies and installation of structural glazing to South and East elevations, new canopies and new entrance to East elevation. Approved 08/04/2016.

4 THE APPLICATION

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the building from light and general industrial uses (Classes B1(c) and B2) to use as an office (Class B1(a)).
- 4.2 The applicants design and manufacture door and building entry systems and access control systems. These systems are generally high tech and are designed to provide security and monitoring for a building and will integrate with other parts of a buildings infrastructure such as lighting and energy efficiency. The manufacturing takes place in Eastbourne and their headquarters are located at Unit 3 Home Farm. Their headquarters building houses all the main support functions such as sales, personnel, finance as well as the design and research of products, technical support and training for clients. As part of their expansion they need additional floorspace and the availability of Unit 4 provides an obvious solution for the applicants.
- 4.3 The intention is therefore to use the application building for the applicant's main research and development activities as well as testing and training facilities for staff and clients. The more central, core activities of the business such as personnel, finance, sales/marketing will remain within the existing building.
- 4.4 Given the nature of the operations, it is considered that the activities being undertaken would be more than just a Class B1(a) office use. Having spoken to the applicant's agents it has been agreed that the nature of the use being sought is a more general Class B1 use which would encompass both office and research and development uses as well as the existing light industrial use.

5 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS

External

- 5.1 **Neighbours:** None received.
- 5.2 **County Archaeologist:** No objection as unlikely that there will be a significant archaeological impact.
- 5.3 **Sussex Police:** No objection.
- 5.4 **Southern Water:** No objection.

Internal:

- 5.5 **Sustainability Officer:** No Object subject to conditions.

6 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."
- 6.2 The development plan is:

- Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One (adopted March 2016);
- Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 (retained policies March 2016);
- East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (Adopted February 2013);
- East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Waste Local Plan (February 2006); Saved Policies WLP 7 and WLP8 only – site allocations at Sackville Coalyard and Hangleton Bottom and Hollingdean Depot.

- 6.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration.
- 6.4 Due weight should be given to the relevant retained policies in the Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.
- 6.5 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

7 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One

- SS1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CP2 Sustainable economic development
CP3 Employment land
CP8 Sustainable buildings
CP9 Sustainable transport

Brighton and Hove Local Plan (retained policies March 2016):

- TR4 Travel plans
TR7 Safe Development
TR14 Cycle access and parking
SU9 Pollution and nuisance control
QD27 Protection of amenity

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

- SPGBH4 Parking Standards

8 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The main consideration in the determination of this application is whether the change of use accords with planning policy and whether the change of use could have a detrimental impact upon amenity. Sustainability and Highways issues also need to be considered.
- 8.2 **Planning Policy:**
Home Farm Industrial area is a purpose-built estate and comprises a series of five units occupied by a range of Class B1a/ B1c/ B2/ B8 uses.
- 8.3 Unit 4 is an industrial style unit that provides 3,600sq m of floorspace for light or general industrial uses (Use Class B1(c) and B2). It was most recently used by Forfars bakery but following its closure the unit was marketed and purchased by

Paxton, who currently own and occupy Unit 3 to the east of the application site. External changes to the building were recently granted planning permission reference (BH2015/04569).

- 8.4 The application initially sought to use the building for Class B1(a) office use purposes as part of the business expansion plans for Paxton. However, during the course of assessing the application it became clear that the nature of the works undertaken by Paxton and in particular the work that is proposed to be undertaken in Unit 4 includes research and development use, Class B1(b) use and potentially some light industrial use, Class B1(c). Given that government advice is generally not to split permissions for Class B1 use into its constituent parts as any Class B1 use should be capable of being undertaken in a residential area and that the unit is already capable of being used for light industrial purposes (Class B1(c)) it is not considered that amending the application to an unfettered Class B1 use would prejudice consideration of the application, neighbouring units or the wider area.
- 8.5 Policy CP3 of the City Plan seeks to protect a number of existing industrial estates and business parks, including the Home Farm Industrial Area, for Class B1, B2 and B8 uses. The policy provides a positive and flexible approach allowing owners to respond to changing business needs in accordance with the NPPF and the findings of the Employment Land Study (2012). The Policy is clear that the council will support proposals for the upgrade and refurbishment of estates and premises such as Home Farm so that they meet modern standards required by business.
- 8.6 Given that the proposal would enable a local business to expand their operation in response to their changing business requirements and the use of the Unit 4 is not proposed to move outside of the Class B1-B8 range of uses, the change of use would not be contrary to Policy CP3 of the City Plan.
- 8.7 **Impact on Amenity**
The existing building has planning permission for both light industrial and general industrial use and was previously occupied by Forfars Bakery. The current application will in effect retain the light industrial use and enable office and research and development activities to be undertaken alongside the light industrial use but the general industrial use will cease.
- 8.8 In order to be considered a Class B1 use (office, research and development, light industrial uses) the activities should be capable of being undertaken in a residential area. In this case, the building has commercial uses on either side (offices and industrial buildings). There are no neighbours to the rear and Homewood College is nearly 100m to the north west of the site and separated by a dense, wooden copse. To the south are a series of three storey blocks of flats in Highbrook Close, which is set down at a much lower level below that of Home Farm Road. These buildings are separated by the Brighton-Lewes railway line which itself is shielded on either side by mature tree planting.
- 8.9 Given its context, the site has previously been considered suitable for a range of industrial uses and the City Plan continues to support its use for general

industrial and storage/warehousing uses. Accordingly, a Class B1 use would not see a diminution to the amenity of the area in terms of noise, vibration, fumes, smells etc. and there may be some slight improvement in the immediate vicinity of the site from the cessation of a general industrial use. Accordingly, the proposal would not be contrary to Policy QD27 of the Local Plan.

8.10 Sustainability:

Policy CP8 requires that all developments incorporate sustainable design features to avoid expansion of the city's ecological footprint, radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate against and adapt to climate change. Under Policy CP8 all major non-residential development is expected to achieve BREEAM 'excellent'.

8.11 The applicant's agent has confirmed that the refurbishment works being undertaken include the recladding and re-roofing of the building and that this will considerably improve the energy efficiency of the building, as required by Policy CP8.

8.12 Some information has been provided with regard to the construction of windows and doors (which have been previously approved) but a reduction to the BREEAM standard required by Policy CP8 has not been specifically sought. The Council's Sustainability Officer has therefore recommended that the standard condition be applied to secure submission of a Final pre occupation certificate showing that BREEAM (Refurb) 'excellent' has been achieved. It is considered that given the nature of the change of use and the previous approval of the external changes, this would be sufficient and that the submission of a Design Stage certificate pre commencement would not be necessary.

8.13 Sustainable Transport:

The Highway Authority has assessed the proposed change of use and has concluded that there is likely to be only a limited change (1-2 vehicles) in trip generation during the morning and evening peak periods whilst it is likely that there is the potential for trips by heavy goods vehicles to be reduced. There is also reasonable provision for pedestrians on routes between the site and Moulsecomb Station/ Lewes Road which provide good public transport accessibility.

8.14 Whilst overspill parking is a potential issue this would be expected to be contained to Home Farm Road where there is on-street capacity. It is also noted that Lewes Road to the north and Queensdown School Road/ Bates Estate to the south are beyond the area where a parking survey would typically be expected to cover. Details of the car parking layout and the provision of suitable disabled parking spaces can be secured by condition.

8.15 It is nevertheless considered that in order to provide appropriate mitigation for the increase in vehicle trips and potential increase in on-street parking demand that the applicant should commit to introducing a Travel Plan combining both their current and existing sites in accordance with Brighton & Hove Local Plan policy TR4. It is recommended that this include a package of measures, including a public transport taster ticket for all staff and the provision of a real

time public transport information screen within the site. These measures can be secured by condition.

- 8.16 SPG4 requires 19 cycle parking spaces to be provided for 3,600sqm office floor space; however, the submitted documents do not appear to show any cycle parking on the site. There is ample space within the site to accommodate cycle parking, and as such, the Highway Authority recommends that details of cycle parking be secured by condition.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The change of use is considered to be acceptable in principle as a Class B1 use would be in accordance with Policy CP3 of the City Plan. The external changes to the building to enable this use to take place have previously been agreed and as the building is already capable of being used for light and general industrial purposes allowing office/research and development/light industrial uses would not prejudice the amenity of any of the adjoining sites or wider area.
- 9.2 The Highway Authority has indicated that there is no objection in principle to the use of the building and that measures such as the layout of car parking and provision of a Travel Plan can be controlled by condition.
- 9.3 Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval.

10 EQUALITIES

- 10.1 None identified.

11 PLANNING OBLIGATION / CONDITIONS / INFORMATIVES

Regulatory Conditions:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains the right to review unimplemented permissions.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings listed below.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Location Plan	3027-00-009	Rev P	22/04/16

- 3) In accordance with 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, the premises shall be used for Class B1 purpose only.

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Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no change of use shall occur without planning permission being obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the retention of employment floorspace in accordance with Policy CP3 of the City Plan.

- 4) No development shall commence until a drainage strategy, detailing the proposed means of foul and surface water sewerage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the approved strategy.

Reason: To ensure the development does not pose a flood risk or have any potential adverse effects on people or property in accordance with Policy CP11 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan.

- 5) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the development hereby approved shall not be occupied until a BREEAM Building Research Establishment issued Post Construction Review Certificate confirming that the development has achieved a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development is sustainable and makes efficient use of energy, water and materials and to comply with policy CP8 of the City Plan Part One.

- 6) Within three months of the date of first occupation of the building, a Travel Plan for the development shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The approved Travel Plan shall thereafter be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the promotion of safe, active and sustainable forms of travel and comply with policies TR4 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and CP9 of the City Plan Part One.

- 7) Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a car park layout plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should include details of loading areas and the provision of disabled parking. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the development provides for the needs of disabled staff and visitors to the site, to ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for pedestrians and to comply with policies CP9 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One and TR18 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan.

- 8) Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, details of secure cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully

implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory facilities for the parking of cycles are provided and to encourage travel by means other than private motor vehicles and to comply with policy TR14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan.

Informatives:

1. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy SS1 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One the approach to making a decision on this planning application has been to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Local Planning Authority seeks to approve planning applications which are for sustainable development where possible.
2. This decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken:
 - (i) having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan, including Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents:
(Please see section 7 of the report for the full list); and
 - (ii) for the following reasons:-
The proposed development will be in accordance with development plan policies for the site and the change of use will not raise concerns with regard to impacts upon neighbours, the wider area or sustainable transport issues.
3. The applicant is advised that details of the BREEAM assessment tools and a list of approved assessors can be obtained from the BREEAM websites (www.breeam.org).
4. Formal applications for connection to the public sewerage system and water supply will be required to service this development. Southern Water can be contacted at: Southern Water, Sparrowgate House, Sparrowgate, Otterbourne, Hampshire, SO21 2SW. (Tel: 0330 303 0119) or at www.southerwater.co.uk
5. The Travel Plan shall include such measures and commitments as are considered necessary to mitigate the expected travel impacts of the development and should include as a minimum the following initiatives and commitments:
 - a) Promote and enable increased use walking, cycling, public transport use, car sharing, and car clubs as alternatives to sole occupancy car use. Measures may include, but not be limited to:
 - Induction packs containing details of walking, cycling and public transport routes and timetable information for new employees;
 - a Real Time Public Transport Information screen
 - Public transport 'taster' voucher for employees.

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- b) Increase awareness of and improve road safety and personal security;
- c) Undertake dialogue and consultation with adjacent/neighbouring tenants/businesses;
- d) Identify targets focussed on reductions in the level of business and commuter car use;
- e) Identify a monitoring framework, which shall include a commitment to undertake an annual staff travel survey utilising iTrace Travel Plan monitoring software, for at least five years, or until such time as the targets identified in section (v) above are met, to enable the Travel Plan to be reviewed and updated as appropriate;
- f) Following the annual staff survey, an annual review will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to update on progress towards meeting targets;
- g) Identify a nominated member of staff to act as Travel Plan Co-ordinator, and to become the individual contact for the Local Planning Authority relating to the Travel Plan.

