

21 June 2023

Attention: David Eaves
Havant Borough Council

By email only

SLR Project No.: 402.064821.00001

Dear David,

RE: Submission of amendments pack to application APP/21/00601 – Land north of Solent Road, Havant

I am writing to formally amend the above planning application. The current development proposal included commercial units in addition to the new Headquarters building for Portsmouth Water. Several factors have resulted in the commercial units no longer being something that Portsmouth Water wish to pursue. This includes listening to the feedback from local residents, the Bosmere Medical Practise, the Council and other consultees, which all expressed concerns about the visual impact of these units and the additional traffic movements.

This coincided with additional work being required to demonstrate flood risk could be addressed and a change in the commercial market means the additional work and cost meant the units were no longer commercially viable, given the issues and concerns to address.

As a result, Portsmouth Water have taken the view that it is best to focus on their new Headquarters building as it is such an important project for them as their current building is no longer suitable for use as a modern office building. We trust this reduction in built form and associated traffic movements will be welcomed by local residents and the medical centre and that the new Headquarters building is seen as a positive development that retains jobs within the Borough.

The removal of the four industrial/warehouse units (use class B2/B8/E(g)(iii)), alongside their associated parking and landscaping bund means the planning application should be much more straightforward. The new proposed description is:

'Proposed Portsmouth Water Headquarters building (Use Class E(g)(i) use); widened access onto Solent Road; and associated access, car parking, landscaping and works; including the felling of 7No. trees the subject of TPO No.1801 in order to improve the access and allow for the development.'

The application will be revised to reflect the applicant is now Portsmouth Water, as Chancerygate are no longer the applicant, and this is done with their agreement. New forms will be submitted to reflect this and I can confirm there is no change to the application red line. This amendments pack is accompanied by the following documents which have been revised to address the reduction in quantum of development:

Reports

New application forms – SLR consulting
Revised Certificate B Notice – SLR Consulting
Design & Access Statement – Cornish Architects
Air Quality Assessment – TRC
Noise Impact Assessment – TRC
Transport Assessment & addendum – Mode Transport
Travel Plan – Mode Transport
Arboricultural Impact Assessment including Tree Impact Assessment – TALA
External Lighting Assessment – Cudd Bentley Consulting
Energy & Sustainability statement – Cudd Bentley Consulting
BREEAM report – Cudd Bentley Consulting
Ecological Assessment – Ecology Solutions
HRA report and BNG Assessment – Ecology Solutions

Plans

- Site location plan (23002 - TP – 001 Rev A)
- Site plan as existing (23002 - TP – 002 Rev A)
- Site plan as proposed (23002 - TP – 003 Rev M)
- Office floor plans (23002 - TP – 006 Rev A)
- Office roof plan (23002 - TP – 007 Rev A)
- Office elevations (23002 - TP – 008 Rev A)
- Site sections (23002 - TP – 009 Rev A)
- Office building finishes (23002 - TP – 011 Rev A)
- Landscape layout (892.10.01)
- Planting layout West (892.29.01)
- Planting layout East (892.39.01)
- Planting layout South (892.19.01)

The previous reports relating to the proposed commercial units are no longer applicable to this application and can therefore be removed from the application. We have listed these below for your convenience:

Right of Light report (March '22)
Block A Building finishes (TP 010A)
Block A Building Plans (19003-TP-004)
Block A Building Elevations and sections (19003-TP-005)
BREEAM report – industrial
Employment & Skills Plan



Employment

The proposals will have a positive economic impact, which can result in training and future jobs for locals. The development, which includes a purpose-built office building ensures that Portsmouth Water keeps its head office in Havant, and adjacent to the local springs. We believe this is a strong economic benefit for the planning application to retain their offices in the Borough as they are proud of their local connections.

Over 250 people are currently employed by Portsmouth Water, including 41 part-time employees and 214 full-time employees and these jobs cover a wide range of occupations including customer services, engineers, finance, HR, and this gives a good range of job opportunities for local people. The head office in Havant is home to the majority of their 120 office-based employees and around 95% of the workforce live less than 10 miles from the current headquarters. Therefore, retaining the offices in this location will decrease commuting outside of the area, which is crucial for sustainability within the borough.

Portsmouth Water is open to collaborating with the Havant Economic Development Team to help the community's residents learn about job prospects. In terms of new employees between the ages of 16 and 24, who have recently finished their education or have never worked before, make up 8% of the present workforce. Portsmouth Water's recruitment procedure is assisted by their memorandum of cooperation with Portsmouth University and their strong connections with PETA. Additionally, they provide a variety of apprenticeships within the company, including in operations (investments, M&E, production), IT, Finance, and Customer Services. Additional jobs will be created by the proposed development during both the construction and operation stages.

Utilising the Employment Densities Guide (3rd Edition) 2015, published by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the potential number of employees that could be accommodated if this were occupied by another company has been considered when reviewing the proposed floorspace for the offices, which is approximately 1,858 sqm in total. This amounts to 125 staff predicted using offices of this size and this is similar to the Portsmouth Water data, giving an independent check.

The proposals provide the following planning benefits:

- Purpose built, modern HQ building for Portsmouth Water to help a valued employer of local and regional importance remain based in Havant;

- Retention of at least 120 staff in the office building in the Borough;

- Location assists in reducing out-commuting;

- Potential new employment opportunities for local businesses and people;

- Allows the redevelopment of existing poor quality office building on what will be a brownfield redevelopment (as supported in the current Local Plan);



Summary

We believe that the current application met planning policy requirements and would have been supported but the reduction in development should mean the planning balance is relatively straightforward, in our opinion. The new Headquarters building has been talked about for some time and the design will result in a high-quality development that retains jobs in the Borough. We believe all of the technical issues relating to the Headquarters building had been resolved but we are obviously happy to discuss the proposals further.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Chris Lyons

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