

**SITE: Alldays House, Chestnut Avenue, Chandler's Ford,
Eastleigh, SO533HJ**

Ref. O/05/55226 Received: 30/09/2005 (30/12/2005)

APPLICANT: B&Q Properties Ltd

PROPOSAL: **Outline: Construction of 5 storey headquarters office with ancillary conference and other facilities, access with new roundabout and other off site highway works, and part decked car parking following partial demolition of building/change of use from B8 use (warehousing) to B1 use (research and development) prior to redevelopment**

AMENDMENTS: 09/11/2005

RECOMMENDATION:

Subject to:-

- i) the receipt of amended plans showing the proposed highway works, including the extended cycle route on Chestnut Avenue, and other changes to the Asda roundabout, as required by HCC,**
- ii) the receipt of a sustainability statement;**
- iii) the receipt of an Air Quality Assessment;**
- iv) the receipt of an amended Travel Plan Framework document clarifying the extension of the proposed bus link to Eastleigh Station, as well as Parkway Station;**
- v) the completion of negotiations on the level of the "bond" figure, monitoring costs and the inclusion of the proposed Controlled Parking Zone,**
- vi) the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure a Green Transport Plan**

PERMIT

CONDITIONS AND REASONS:

- (1) The development hereby permitted must be begun either before the expiry of three years from the date of the grant of this outline permission, or the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matter or, in the case of an

approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) In the case of any reserved matter, application for approval must be made not later than three years after the date of the grant of this outline permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (3) Plans and particulars showing the detailed proposals for all the following aspects of the development ('the reserved matters') must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced.

Reason: In order that these matters may be considered by the Local Planning Authority.

a: The siting of the buildings.

b: The design of the buildings.

c: The external appearance of the buildings.

d: The landscaping of the site

- (4) Development of the new build element shall not begin until details of any external plant (such as air handling plant) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any external plant designed for use in connection with the sound mitigation measures necessary to ensure existing background noise levels are not exceeded as determined from the nearest noise sensitive premises. Reason: to prevent excessive noise in the interests of the amenities of the area

- (5) Development shall not begin until details of any proposed wind turbine have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No subsequent alterations to any approved wind turbine scheme are to take place unless submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To avoid endangering the safe operation of aircraft through interference with navigational aids. (Wind turbines have the potential to adversely affect aircraft navigation aids, in particular radar and need to be carefully evaluated before any installation can be considered).

- (6) All plans and particulars showing the proposals must include details of the ground floor levels above ordnance datum of all buildings and ground levels in relation to existing levels both within the site and on immediately adjoining land.

Reason: in the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.

- (7) All plans and particulars showing the proposals must include details of the layout of foul sewers and surface water drains and dispersal to the foul drain. Reason: to ensure satisfactory drainage for the site.

- (8) All plans and particulars showing the proposals must include details of lighting for the proposed development. Such schemes shall comply with the attached Advice Note 2 "Lighting near Aerodromes", also available at www.caa.co.uk/srg/aerodromes and shall specify that lighting is of flat glass, full cut off design with horizontal mountings, and ensure that there is no light spill above horizontal. No subsequent alterations to the approved lighting scheme are to take place unless submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. In the interests of amenity and highway and aircraft safety
- (9) The gross floorspace of the proposed development shall be restricted to 28,318 square metres, as specified in the indicative area schedule submitted with the application hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: this is considered to be the maximum floorspace that the site can accommodate.
- (10) The building hereby approved shall not exceed 5 storeys in height. Reason: in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
- (11) Any proposed flat/shallow pitched roofs shall be constructed to allow access to all areas by foot using permanent fixed access stairs, ladders or similar. The owner/occupier shall not allow gulls to nest, roost or loaf on the building. Checks shall be made weekly during the breeding season. Outside of the breeding season gull activity shall be monitored and the roof shall be checked regularly. Any gulls found nesting, roosting or loafing shall be dispersed by the owner/occupier when detected or when requested by BAA Airfield Operations staff. The owner/occupier shall remove any nests of eggs round on the roof. Reason: To avoid endangering the safe operation of aircraft through the attraction of birds. The breeding season for gulls runs from March to June. The owner/occupier shall hold appropriate Defra licences before the removal of nests and eggs.
- (12) Development shall not begin until details of the schemes of lighting required during construction have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such schemes shall comply with the attached Advice Note 2 'Lighting Near Aerodromes' (also available at www.caa.co.uk/srg/aerodrome) and shall specify that lighting is of flat glass, full cut off design with horizontal mountings, and ensure that there is no light spill above horizontal. No subsequent alterations to the approved lighting scheme are to take place unless submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To avoid endangering the safe operation of aircraft.
- (13) Details of Contractor's site hut location and any areas designated for the storage of building materials must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The development must then accord with these approved details. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 site huts and building materials must not be stored elsewhere on the site without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that natural features are not damaged.

- (14) Developments shall not begin until a scheme of works to deal with dust from site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall then be implemented and retained to the satisfaction of the local Planning Authority. Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining properties.
- (15) The burning of materials obtained by site clearance or from any other source must not take place on this site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority. Reason: In the interests of amenity.
- (16) No construction or demolition work must take place except between the hours 0700 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays or 0700 to 1300 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: To protect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby dwellings.
- (17) Impact /driven piling work shall not be carried out except between the hours 0900 to 1600 Monday to Friday and 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: in the interest of residential amenity
- (18) Before the development commences, or by such later date as the Local Planning Authority may determine, a landscape scheme comprising planting, details of hard surfacing and means of enclosure must be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme must include a planting specification and schedule, and shall indicate the position, size, number, planting density and species of shrubs and trees. A seed or turf specification must be provided for areas to be grassed. The planting scheme must include details of phasing, timing and provision for management and maintenance during the first five years from the date of planting. Furthermore the landscaping scheme must comply with the details contained in the Advice Note 3 "potential Bird Hazards from Amenity Landscaping and Building Design " (Also available at www.caa.co.uk/srg/aerodrome) in terms of type and spacing of trees. Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and to avoid endangering the safe operation of aircraft through the attraction of birds.
- (19) The landscape scheme must be completed within 12 months from the completion of the last building shell, or by such later date as the Local Planning Authority may determine. Any trees or plants which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased during the first five years must be replaced during the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation. Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory.
- (20) Before development commences, a plan must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing a line of protective fence around all trees, hedges and other natural features to be retained. Fencing shall be with chestnut pale minimum 1.2 metres high or other fencing approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No excavation shall commence on the site until the fencing has been erected and the fencing must be maintained during the course

of works on the site. No access by vehicles or placement of goods, fuels or chemicals, soil or other materials shall take place inside the fencing area. Note: The card accompanying this notice should be sent to the Development Control Section when the protective fencing is in place and development must not commence until the fencing has been inspected and the card signed by the inspecting officer. Reason: To ensure the natural features are protected from damage throughout the construction period.

(21) No element of the proposed planting shall be permitted to grow above a maximum height of 65m AOD

Reason: To avoid endangering the safe operation of the aircraft.

(22) No building, structure or wind turbine exceeding 65m AOD shall be constructed within the application boundary.

Reason: So that it does not breach the Obstacle Limitation Surfaces details in CAA Publication CAP168 Licensing of Aerodromes

(23) Details of external security lighting, lockable gates and all other crime prevention proposals must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. The development must then accord with these approved details. Reason: In the interests of crime prevention.

(24) Prior to the commencement of the construction of the new-build development hereby approved (or such other date or stage agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority), a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(i). A desk top study identifying:

a) all previous uses

b) potential contaminants associated with those uses

c) a conceptual model of the site including sources, pathways and receptors

d) potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination of the site

(ii) a site investigation scheme based on (i) above, to provide information for an assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off-site.

(iii). The results of the site investigation and risk assessment, (ii), and a method statement based on those results giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they will be undertaken

(iv). A verification report on completion of the works set out in (iii), confirming the remediation measures that have been undertaken in accordance with the method statement and setting out measures for maintenance, further monitoring and reporting

Any changes to the agreed elements require the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

Reason: to ensure the satisfactory remediation of any contamination on the site.

(25) The existing building and the proposed new building hereby approved shall be used solely for the uses specified in the application and for no other purpose (including any other purpose within classes B1a, B1c, D1, and D2 of the Use

Classes (Amendment Order) 2005 or in any provision equivalent to that class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that order with or without modification. Reason: to retain planning control in the interests of ensuring sustainable patterns of landuse and to prevent potential conflict between uses.

- (26) The development of the new HQ building shall not commence until the highway works , as shown in principle on drawing XX , have been approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. No part of the development shall be occupied until the highway works have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans and to the satisfaction of the local planning authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Reason: in the interests of highway safety and to ensure the highway network
- (27) The conferencing, training and restaurant facilities shall remain ancillary to the main use of the buildings. Reason: to retain planning control in the interests of amenity, achieving sustainable patterns of landuse and highway safety.
- (28) Within 12 months of the occupation of the new building, staff training programmes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved programmes shall be fully implemented. Reason: In the interests of the local economy.
- (29) Prior to the commencement of use of the new building, full details of sustainable measures within the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The measures shall be fully implemented in accordance with the agreed specifications. Reason: in the interests of sustainability.
- (30) Work on the new build development hereby approved shall not commence until a Green Transport Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority . The Transport Plan shall accord with the principles set out in the approved Travel Plan Framework document and shall be implemented in accordance with its recommendations. Reason: to ensure the implementation of a satisfactory set of green transport measure to reduce car-borne trips
- (31) The new building hereby approved shall not be occupied until a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) has been implemented in the locality of the application site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Reason: to prevent parking from the development overspilling onto the adjacent highway network and thus to minimise impacts on nearby residential areas.

Note to Applicant: It is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions and any obligations attached to this permission, the proposed development is acceptable because it will not materially harm the character of the area, the amenity of neighbours, highway safety, nor compromise sustainable development objectives, and it is in accordance with the policies and proposals of the development plan, as listed below, and after due regard to all other relevant material considerations the local planning authority is of the opinion that permission should be granted.

The following development plan policies are relevant to this decision and the conditions attached to it:

Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 Review: [UB1, UB3, EC1]
Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 1997: [25.BE, 27.BE, 65.T, 68.T, 77.T, 106.E]
Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 Second Deposit - Post Inquiry Modifications [59.BE, 119.E, 136.TC, 103.T, 104.T, 108.E, 33.ES, 34.ES, 37.ES]

Note to applicant: The applicant is advised that desk studies and site investigations should be carried out following the main procedural requirements of the British Standard BS10175:2001 "investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice", and to follow the risk management framework provided in the Defra/Environment Agency Contaminated Land Report, CLR11 "Model procedures for the management of land..."

Report:

This application is referred to committee because it is a major application of considerable significance to the Borough.

INTRODUCTION

1. This application seeks permission for a change of use and a redevelopment of the existing Alldays House to provide a new store support Head Quarters building, with Merchandising and Research and Development facilities plus other ancillary functions. The complex would also contain conferencing and meeting facilities, the B & Q training centre and a staff canteen. The proposals would enable B & Q to consolidate all of its current operations within Chandlers Ford and make provision for the merchandising and R & D laboratories currently located in Southampton.
2. The redevelopment proposals are made in outline, with all matters reserved for subsequent approval except for the means of access which is to be considered with this application.
3. The application is accompanied by illustrative plans providing indicative site layout, elevational treatment and floor plates. The application is also supported by the following documents:-

A Planning Statement which:

- Confirms B & Q's commitment to Eastleigh and the need for the development;
- Examines relevant development plan/national planning policies;
- applies the sequential test for site selection;

- considers issues of accessibility.

A Transport Assessment. This document looks at the following issues:-

- Existing highway conditions and existing accessibility
- Transport policies
- B & Q's existing operations and travel plan
- The proposed development and means of access (eg new roundabout)
- Predicted trip generation
- Proposed improvements to access by non-car modes (cycling, pedestrian access, travel plan and public transport)

A Travel Plan Framework Document which outlines the type of green travel measures that the proposed travel plan will contain (see later details)

[An Air Quality Assessment is currently being undertaken]

BACKGROUND TO B & Q's EXISTING BUSINESS

4. To set the scene, it is important to acknowledge the importance of this major company both in this country but also on the international stage. As set out in the Planning Statement accompanying the application, B & Q's are the UK's leading DIY and garden centre retailer, is the number one home-improvement retailer in Europe and the third largest company of its type in the world. It operates 338 stores in Britain and Ireland alone and has a turnover of over £ 4 billion. The Company employs over 38,000 staff worldwide.
5. The majority of the existing Head Office and administrative functions of B & Q are located within Eastleigh Borough and almost exclusively within the Bournemouth Road area of Chandlers Ford. B & Q currently occupy the following buildings-
 Portswood House
 Hutwood Court
 Cando House
 Link House
 Warrior Park
6. B & Q also runs Merchandising Laboratories, QA labs and other store set up facilities at Nursling Industrial Estate and the Windward Terminal in Southampton. Leases on these premises are due to expire in the near future and thus it is anticipated that their functions will be relocated to Chandlers Ford imminently. [Merchandising labs are used to "mock up" and trial proposed racking systems, display areas (e.g. kitchens etc), lighting etc prior to "roll out" to the stores].
7. Across all of these sites, it is estimated that B & Q employ 1,300 people. Additional employment from indirect sources is estimated at approximately 15% (cleaning, security, catering).

8. The main reasons why B & Q is looking to consolidate its various constituent functions on one site are set out in detail in the Planning Statement but are, fundamentally, to improve commercial and operational efficiency, to provide a central focus for its business which is normal for a company of this size, nature and international standing, to re-locate the merchandising labs and QA functions from their existing sub-standard temporary premises in Southampton and to find a sustainable long term solution to the Head Quarters functions.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

9. The application site extends to 3.9ha and comprises the former Alldays House building with its car parking and ancillary areas. The existing building currently provides approximately 14,700m² of warehousing, office and ancillary floorspace. The site lies between Link House (also occupied by B & Q) and other office accommodation along its southern boundary and Asda on its north western site boundary. The site has access from Chestnut Avenue which forms its eastern boundary whilst the rear (western boundary) is formed by dense woodland on rising ground to the rear of the site.
10. The site is generally flat in the area occupied by Alldays House and slopes gently west to east at the front of the site adjacent to Chestnut Avenue. Gradients are steeper beyond the western boundary of the site.
11. In terms of the existing site layout, Alldays House is set back into the site with parking at the front of the building and extensive yard areas to the side and rear. The site is serviced from the north and western sides of the building. Access to the site is from Chestnut Avenue in the form of an in-out arrangement.
12. The application site lies approximately 3km from Eastleigh Town Centre and 8.5km from Southampton City Centre and is clearly an out-of-centre site. Having said that it is surrounded by other high profile office developments on Stoneycroft Rise and at the Tollgate roundabout and is immediately adjacent to established major shopping facilities (Asda adjacent and the retail park on the opposite side of Chestnut Avenue).
13. The site is classed as a “brownfield site” and is zoned as an “existing employment site” in the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011 (Second Deposit).

PLANNING HISTORY

14. There is a number of permission relevant to this site. The most significant are:

6420/021 – erection of distribution centre with warehousing and offices – permitted 1993. (This effectively permitted the construction of Alldays House, as an HQ for Circle K (UK).
6420/025 – use of 2nd floor void area as offices – permitted 1994
6420/027 – use of mezzanine floor as offices – permitted 1994

APPLICATION PROPOSALS

15. As stated above, the application is made in outline but contains indicative plans which illustrate the following accommodation and facilities:-
 - New Headquarters Offices providing 16,268m² of floorspace (175,113ft²)
 - New merchandising and QA labs providing 8,602m² of floorspace (92,598ft²)
 - New conferencing facilities providing 1,246m² (13,410 ft²)
 - New training facilities of 1,502m² (16,172 ft²)
 - Café /restaurant of 475 m² (5,100 ft²)
16. Together with circulation space, the overall total indicative floorspace is shown as 28, 318m² (304, 825ft²).
17. The indicative site layout plans shows the accommodation split into 2 separate buildings. At the rear of the site the existing rear section of Alldays House would be retained (ie the main structure left in situ and refurbished) to accommodate the re-located merchandising labs with associated QA/offices accommodated on mezzanine floors. The front half of Alldays house would be demolished and replaced by a 5-storey Head Quarters building providing the HQ office accommodation together with the ancillary conferencing, training and catering facilities. It is anticipated that the new building will sit almost exactly (if not exactly) on the existing footprint of Alldays House. Indeed, the applicant hopes to retain the existing floor slab for this building.
18. The illustrative elevation drawings show vertical turbines on the roof of the building. No details of these structures have been submitted.
19. At the rear of the site a multi-storey car park is shown providing parking for 918 cars on 5 levels, including ground floor.
20. The proposed plans show the provision of a new roundabout on Chestnut Avenue (close to where the existing site egress is situated, opposite the Hexagon Centre). This would provide an in-out arrangement. The existing ingress into the site would be retained and used for servicing and also as an additional access to the car park. Amended plans have been received showing a slightly revised position of the roundabout which takes account of new information regarding the site boundary and also the boundary of the highway. Further information has been sought with regard to site lines.
21. As part of the proposed development, transport improvements to mitigate the effects of the development and to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the site are proposed. These works involve the following:-
 - the provision of a cycleway network along Chestnut Avenue and around the northern side of the Asda roundabout.
 - toucan crossings across Bournemouth Road and Templars Way. (Templars Way would be re-aligned to accommodate the crossing).

- the re-alignment and widening of the Chestnut Avenue approach to the Asda roundabout
 - The re-alignment of the Bournemouth Road approach to the Asda roundabout to provide deflection whilst maintaining a 2-lane approach.
 - Improvements to the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout
22. Amendments have been sought to extend the cycleway on the northern side of Chestnut Avenue up to the new toucan crossing, on the basis that this is part of the Strategic Cycle Network. In addition, at the request of the Hampshire County Council, the amended plans will show road markings on the Asda roundabout to minimise potential conflict on the new 3 lane arm. Consideration is also being given to providing a dedicated left-turn lane into the Asda site.
23. Turning to pedestrian facilities, the applicants are keen to improve pedestrian linkages between this site and the adjacent Asda site. An opportunity exists for a private footpath linking the sites to be located midway along the boundary. This would provide access to either the existing car park to the rear of the existing Asda building, or, in the event of the application for the new store being successful, the proposed walkway to the new store. At the moment there is no footpath along Chestnut Avenue between the Alldays House/ Asda frontages, due to the shortage of highway land and the presence of trees along the boundary. B & Q have, however, agreed to dedicate an area of land towards the front of the application site to allow future provision of an adoptable footpath through to Asda.
24. As part of the requirements for “green travel” associated with such development, B & Q have submitted a Travel Plan Framework document which sets out some of the main initiatives that B & Q already carry out together with proposed new initiatives, the most significant of these being a staff bus serving Parkway Station. B & Q have been asked to extend this proposed initiative to Eastleigh Station. The Company has also accepted the need for a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in the vicinity of the site to limit over-spill parking occurring, particularly on nearby residential roads including Falkland Road. (These proposals are set out in more detail in the following sections looking at the travel plan).

CONSULTATIONS/PUBLICITY

25. The application has been widely publicised with 240 individual letters sent to residential properties and businesses in the vicinity of the site. Site notices have been posted and the application has also been advertised in the press.
26. A petition from 37 residents of Falkland Road has been submitted objecting to the application on the basis of problems of overspill parking from the existing B & Q offices and asking for residents/visitors only signage to be installed.
27. 3 further letters of objection/comment have been received on the basis of the need for energy-saving measures to be incorporated into the building, and existing and proposed traffic problems/parking problems.

28. The following consultation responses have been received.

INTERNAL CONSULTEES

29. Economic Development Officer – B&Q is a major business within the Eastleigh Borough, it is a large employer and significant contributor to the local supply chain, delivers corporate and social responsibility through its support of local events and groups and brings the recognition and reputation to the Borough of being home to a nationally, indeed internationally known brand.
30. The consolidation of B&Q operation into one site assists them with their business competitiveness, reduces transport between sites and creates a scale of economy that will encourage collaboration over shared business issues with the neighbouring businesses. The Council's Prosperity Strategy 2005-2010 clearly states that local business should be supported through periods of change and restructure, and that increased business competitiveness should be promoted.
31. Therefore the Economic Development Unit strongly supports this application to secure the retention of one of the largest businesses within the Borough
32. Head of Planning Policy and Design (POLICY) (comments summarised) – there are compelling economic and social reasons to support this proposal. B & Q is a major HQ and employer in the area. This proposal will consolidate and improve the business efficiency and competitiveness of their operation which will have wider benefits for the city region's economy. This supports the wider sub-regional policy agenda to enhance South Hampshire's economy. A training agreement can capitalise on B&Q's good practice in this area to target some of these economic benefits on disadvantaged communities, particularly in Southampton, so further supporting the regional policy agenda. The proposal re-uses brown field land. In economic terms there is a need for office development at 3 levels: the level of the city region; Eastleigh town; and the needs of this particular business.
33. In environmental terms the most appropriate location for office development, at least in principle, is in Southampton city centre. Indeed, had this proposal been on a speculative basis to attract new investment, and not linked to an existing operation in the vicinity, the balance of the arguments would have been substantially different. However, PPS6 requires us to apply the principle of the sequential approach by taking into account the economic needs and the particular needs of the business that this proposal meets, and requires us to be flexible and reasonable. Given the circumstances of this particular case, there are compelling environmental, transportation and economic reasons why the proposal to consolidate B & Q's operation in one location should be supported. Southampton City Centre sites should be left available to attract new investment in high density mixed use schemes which capitalise on the economic and environmental advantages of such a location in a way that this proposal would not. None of the possible alternative sites in Eastleigh Town

Centre meet the tests set out in the sequential approach and it would seem unlikely that any of the sites in Southampton City Centre would do so (subject to detailed assessment). In short, in my view, this proposal complies with the proper application of the sequential approach and supports wider economic policy objectives.

34. There is a need for further employment development in the area. The long term projection in the growth of the labour force is fuelled by the strategic policy aim to enhance the economic performance of South Hampshire. There has been a long term trend for a decline in manufacturing employment, as has been demonstrated by recent industrial job losses in Eastleigh town. This makes the need to promote employment development in growing service/office based sectors even more important, or else the needs of the growing labour force and the S. Hampshire economy will not be met.
35. With regard to training, B & Q have a track record of promoting good quality training and focusing this to some degree on disadvantaged groups. Local Plan policy 118.E requires where appropriate, employment development to contribute to training measures. I recommend a condition to require B & Q to prepare and agree a training programme with the Council.
36. Head of Planning Policy and Design (DESIGN) – In terms of visual impact from this vantage point the proposal seems acceptable. Because of the existing line of trees and the proposed setback of the building, views approaching the site from the north will be far less significant and I do think we need a visual analysis from this direction at this stage. The setting of the buildings in the landscape is an important consideration and the site benefits from maturing vegetation around the frontage of the existing car park, together with an established line of trees between the application site and the adjoining Asda store. As much of this vegetation as possible should be kept and reinforced. The proposals push the site to its capacity in terms of car parking, built footprint and building height, so it is important for the applicant to demonstrate that there are opportunities to improve the quality of the external environment for the users in terms of space for new planting (which appears to be available within the surface car park and on the boundary of the site adjoining the Link 414 office development in particular). Opportunities to strengthen tree cover on the steep bank at the rear of the site should also be illustrated in principle. We had expressed some reservations about the quality of the pedestrian space between the HQ offices and the new lab offices and I had understood that some more work was to be done on how this would work, but this does not seem to have been progressed yet. I support the principle of wind turbines being located on the buildings in a prominent location.
37. Head of Engineering Services (Policy) – the parking proposed is within the maximum permissible under the standards and considering the high density of staff to be employed on the site, is acceptable. Secure storage will be required to cater for 190 long term cycle storage and 60 short term cycle storage. B&Q is aware of the need to review their existing travel plan in the light of their proposed relocation and have started this process. The revised travel plan will need to be approved by HCC. Similarly, HCC will need to consider the TA and

any associated off site works and discussions are on-going. Revisions to the position of the roundabout requested. Requirement for a link between Asda and Alldays House. Some parts of the Falkland Road area experience overspill parking from local firms. This proposed development, even with a robust workplace travel plan in place, is very likely to aggravate this & create new problems. It is therefore essential that a contribution is made to be able to cover the costs of any TROs or CPZs that are required, prior to the occupation of the new building. In this respect, £40,000 should be secured to cover these costs.

38. Head of Engineering Services (Development Control)

- 1) The scheme should provide safe pedestrian/cycle access from Chestnut Avenue to the buildings and that there should be convenient covered cycle parking.
- 2) Disabled access should be provided with reasonably graded access paths. A main concern I have is with the lack of link paths on south west side of Chestnut Avenue to the north linking to Asda and Hampshire corporate Park. This development would further generate walking trips to the north.
- 3) Prior to redevelopment, connections are needed and provision should be made to enable connections with Asda frontage and across the spiller islands at the proposed roundabout.
- 4) The design of the roundabout needs careful consideration, the exit lane northbound forward visibility envelope appears to affect the corner of the Asda site affecting land not under B & Q control.
- 5) The east side of the roundabout also extends on to what is currently verge/footway area, this would be likely to affect services and may affect the mature trees in that area. I suggest the carriageway element of roundabout is maintained on the existing carriageway surface areas and not shifted eastwards as indicated where it would reduce the ability to construct the Chestnut Avenue footway /cycleway and probably affect services.
- 6) No pedestrian/cycle routes are shown around the west side of the roundabout.
- 7) Splitter islands at roundabout need to be sufficiently large to accommodate pedestrians /cyclists, bollards, signing etc. They are inadequate as indicated.
- 8) No indication of levels is given, but the excavation needed to construct the roundabout in the location shown could have an impact on the tree belt between the site and Asda and also need more space for banking to be formed between the southwest side of car park and roundabout.
- 9) As indicated there does not appear enough distance between the roundabout and car park to create a satisfactory layout with adequate visibility of approaching northbound traffic on Chestnut Avenue approaching the new roundabout. The roundabout design should identify all footway/cycle routes and inter-visibility requirements between arms and forward vision requirements.

39. Head of Environmental Health – I have concerns about the amount of parking applied for on this site. This is likely to increase congestion on the already busy Asda roundabout, although I haven't had sight of the TA. This area of Chandlers Ford is well served by public transport and this should be taken

advantage of by B & Q. I would therefore recommend that an air quality assessment is carried out to establish the impact of the B & Q development on air quality in the vicinity of Bournemouth Road, Chestnut Avenue and the existing Air Quality Management Area on the A335, Leigh Road. [The scope of the assessment has since been reduced to Chestnut Avenue/Chestnut Close as this is where air quality is particularly poor]. An assessment has recently been carried out for the redevelopment of Asda and this should be taken into consideration when carrying out an assessment for the B & Q proposal. Other matters can be dealt with by conditions namely, restrictions on impact/piling work, hours of construction work, burning of materials and details of external plant and the submission of a contamination assessment.

40. Town Centre Manager – no response received.
41. Head of Countryside and Recreation – no objections subject to the retention of trees around the site.
42. Sustainability Officer – The major concern with the proposal would be the Travel implications, although they do make the case that by consolidating on one site, some travel movements will be reduced. With regard to the sustainability aspects of building design, the redevelopment of the building and site give B&Q the opportunity to incorporate such things as wind turbines, solar thermal, ground source heat pumps/exchange and photo voltaic cells (perhaps as building façade material). I would be happy to be involved in any discussions about those aspects in the future if thought useful.

STATUTORY CONSULTEES/EXTERNAL BODIES

43. South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) (comments summarised) –
 - Insufficient evidence has been provided to assess whether the proposal is in line with Regional Policy Q5. The Borough Council should be satisfied that the Sequential Assessment is sufficiently detailed and robust to support the intensification of this site.
 - Subject to the Borough Council's acceptance of the findings of the Sequential Assessment, the Borough Council should ensure that the applicant addresses the following (using where applicable, appropriately worded conditions and/or legal agreements):
 - A significant package of transport infrastructure improvements to promote alternatives to the car, encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport and the review of the existing Travel Plan , in line with policies in the Regional Transport Strategy; and
 - The incorporation of energy efficiency measures and the promotion of renewable energy through the consideration of subsequent detailed applications on the site, in line with Policy INF4 of the RSS.
44. Hampshire County Council (Director of Environment) – Off site highway improvements are proposed on the ASDA and Tollgate roundabouts to help accommodate additional development traffic. With a development of this scale in this location the highway authority has some concerns about additional peak hour delays in the area and in part these may arise due to the additional

pedestrians and cycle crossing facilities on the exits from the ASDA roundabout. Following the submission of the Transport Assessment further traffic forecasts and assessments have been submitted which have now been agreed. This agreement is based on a combination of highway improvements, car parking levels and requirements to help deliver the Travel Plan targets which notably includes additional bus services to the site.

45. I therefore raise no highways objections subject to the following conditions;
 - 1) No development shall take place until the off site highway works as shown in principle on drawing (*to be agreed*) have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
 - 2) No part of the new building shall be occupied until the off site highway works as shown in principle on drawing (*to be agreed*) have been completed in accordance with the approved details and to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
 - 3) No part of the new building shall be occupied until a Controlled Parking Area (CPZ) has been implemented in accordance with the approved plans and to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
46. It will be necessary for the applicant to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the County Council prior to planning permission being issued to secure a bond related to the Travel Plan, the payment of fees to enable the Travel Plan to be monitored and a contribution of £40,000 towards the implementation of the CPZ.
47. The Section 106 Agreement should state that no development shall take place until the Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and that no part of the new building shall be occupied until the approved Travel Plan has been implemented to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority.
48. Environment Agency – no objections subject to conditions requiring foul drainage to be connected into the public mains foul sewer.
49. Southern Water Services – no objections subject to standard conditions regarding drainage details to be submitted.
50. BAA – the proposed development could conflict with safeguarding criteria unless any planning permission is subject to conditions requiring details of the wind turbine, proposed lighting, and landscaping; a restriction on the height of the building and wind turbine to no higher than 65m AOD; and measures to prevent gulls from nesting/roosting/loafing on the roof of the proposed building.
51. Test Valley Borough Council – no objections
52. Southampton City Council (comments summarised) – raises concerns with the principle of the development for the following 4 reasons:-

53. 1) The development would result in a relocation of jobs from what we believe to be more sustainable locations within the city and (albeit to a lesser degree) also at Nursling; 2) the development proposes over 16,000 m² of office space in an unsustainable out-of-centre location when there are options within Southampton for the allocation of such space which should be given greater consideration before these are discounted; 3) there may also be options at four sites within the city boundaries to accommodate a larger proportion of B & Q's proposals; 4) the development is car orientated resulting from an unsustainable intensification of an existing employment site granted permission in a previous planning context.
54. The core issues above outweigh the arguments for concentrating B & Q's operations on the site and would advise that further more detailed analysis be forwarded before taking the option of development on the site as a last choice. We would prefer B & Q to consider locating 16,000 m² of office space in Central Southampton and also for the jobs presently within the city to remain.
55. The fact that offices presently exist in the area and on the site is a legacy of previous planning decisions made within a vastly different planning policy context. LPAs are obliged to enforce the contemporary policy that seeks sustainable development that considers holistically broader business location needs. Given the fact that this proposal acts as a major development and in many respects a departure from national and regional guidance we would recommend that the views of the Gov Office, SEERA and other Urban South Hampshire Planning Authorities be sought so that a collective and proactive approach is found. This significant development should be seen within the sub-regional context, the need to enhance the centres should be an overriding consideration.
56. Having emphasised caution and concern within a planning context we must state that the City Council would wish for a proactive solution that did not harm the economic benefits brought by B & Q. Overall it is recommended that the proposal only be considered following further more detailed analysis, particularly exploring the potential of key sites in the city. The City Council hopes for an outcome that benefits sound and robust planning, the city and the sub-region.
57. Winchester with Eastleigh Architects Panel (comments made at pre-application stage without supporting statements) – would it be possible to re-use existing building in interests of sustainability? splitting into blocks leaves gaps – not a good space in between. The image created in accompanying statement is not carried through in built form resulting in a fairly innocuous office building. There is no logical connection between the blocks – a more coherent approach and office building is preferred. The proposed elevations would be very dominant in terms of height. The site offers a good opportunity for redevelopment but something offering a more positive contribution is needed. The design and nature of the building is disappointing as there is an opportunity and intention to create a feature university-type campus. This would be a good opportunity, by a major player in the local area/economy to

make a positive contribution with a landmark building . The need for a roundabout is contested.

58. Department of Trade and Industry – no response received.
59. Southampton Chamber of Commerce – no response received.
60. Solent Blue Line – no response received.
61. Eastleigh and District Disability Forum (comments summarised) – concerns about existing accessibility, including bus facilities (difficulties in negotiating routes from the site to bus stops, lack of shelters, seating, lighting, timetables, poor surfacing, raised kerbs), poor footpaths (uneven, at times steep, lack of pedestrian crossings around Asda roundabout, lack of lighting, lack of footpath between Asda and Alldays, poorly maintained dropped kerbs, personal security issues under the flyover, cars obstructing dropped kerbs on Tollgate roundabout. Good opportunity to ensure that whole area is disabled-user friendly and to the highest possible standard to disabled movement. Concerns about existing access within the site to the entrance being very steep. No signage in car park for disabled parking etc. Disabled parking for new conference facility should be at same level.

POLICY FRAMEWORK (TO BE COMPLETED)

62. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless there are material considerations.

63. The Development Plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review, and the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, the latter which is in the latter stages of a review. Other documents, such as draft emerging plans can also be material considerations. Government Policy is also a very important consideration. The following section sets out the main policies that are relevant to this application.

64. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

PPS1 – “Delivering Sustainable Development” (2005).

Planning policy statement 1 (PPS1) sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The main message in PPS for planning authorities is that “planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:-

1. making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people’s quality of life;
2. contributing to sustainable economic development
3. ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and

4. ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community”

65. PPS 1 also contains more specific advice on design issues.

PPG4 – “Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms” (1992). This guidance supports new development that contributes to the local economy and the creation of jobs.

66. PPS6 – “Planning and Town Centres” this extends the sequential test to office development to focus such development into city and town centres which are more accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and where office development can support the vitality of these centres. The sequential approach is designed to establish the need for office development; and then to steer this development need towards city/town centre sites, if such need can be realistically accommodated on such sites. PPS6 sets some general principles for the application of the sequential approach and considering whether sites are suitable:-

- the local need for office development should be informed by a regional assessment of employment needs (para 2.39)
- Flexibility and realism is required from both the planning authority and developers in the assessment of sites (para 2.45)
- Planning authorities should only consider sites which are likely to be come available in a reasonable period of time (para 2.45)
- Planning authorities should only consider sites which are realistically suitable, viable, and available (paras 3.16, 3.19)
- Planning authorities should only consider sites which can accommodate the identified need and the genuine needs of the applicant in terms of their business model; although developers are expected to be flexible on the scale, format, and car parking provision, together with the scope for disaggregation (para 2.45, para 3.15 and para 3.16)

PPG13 – planning and transport

67. PPG13 seeks to ensure that development is located to reduce the need to travel. Furthermore, it encourages further provision and use of public transport, improvements to cycling and walking provision and promotes measures reducing car travel.

- PPS22 – planning and renewable resources
- Government guidance in PPS22 supports renewable energy developments, and states that the wider environmental and economic benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects, not matter how small should be given significant weight in determining planning applications. Thus planning authorities and developers should consider the opportunity for such projects in all

new developments (eg solar panels, biomassheating, small scale wind turbinesetc)

- PPS23 – the statement advises that any consideration of the quality of land, air or water and potential impacts arising from developmentis capable of being a material planning consideration. The planning system plays a key role in determining the location of development that might give rise to pollution and ensuring other uses/developments are not adversely affected, as far as possible. Furthermore it advises that the controls under the planning and pollution control regimes should complement, rather than duplicate each other. Annex 1G deals specifically with air quality as a material planning consideration in development control matters.

68. REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- Relevant documents include:- RPG9 – Regional Planning Guidance for South East England (2001); the draft RSS – The South East Plan (2005); the draft PUSH South Hampshire strategy (2005) and SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy (2002)

Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East

69. The current Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East comprises the previously adopted Regional Policy Guidance (RPG9) issued in January 2001 but given RSS status in September 2004. RPG9 supports additional economic activity and emphasises the importance of promoting the economic regeneration of the South Hampshire area (and in particular the main cities of Portsmouth and Southampton) by designating South Hampshire as a "Priority Area of Economic Regeneration. It also encourages a modal shift towards non-car modes of transport, improving public transport and encouraging development in accessible and sustainable locations.

Emerging South East Plan 2005 (Draft RSS9)

70. The draft South East Plan (RSS9), when adopted, will replace the RSS (formed by the ascended RPG9). The plan seeks to provide a framework for economic and social growth in the South East to 2026. It looks at a number of interlinked themes including sustainable development, global competition, and the prudent use of resources, by concentrating significant new development on previously used land at locations which seek to minimise the use of unsustainable modes of transport.
71. The Plan requires Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) to ensure an adequate supply and quality of employment land to meet future needs. Policy RE3 sets out criteria against which Local Planning Authorities should assess employment needs, including:- locations accessible to the labour market; the efficient use of existing and underused sites; intensification of existing sites; land within the urban area; promotion of mixed uses; and the use of public transport. Transport policies in the draft RSS9 seek to promote improved and

integrated public transport services, and to encourage development in locations which reduces car-borne journeys. Policy T8 suggests maximum parking levels within a range of 1 space per 30m² to 1 space per 100m² for B1 office uses.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN (1996-2011) REVIEW

72. The Structure Plan provides the strategic planning framework for the Borough. Its vision seeks to promote Hampshire as:-
- “A prosperous and attractive area where social and commercial needs are met in ways that, while minimising the need for travel, improve the quality of life and sense of community for present and future generations”.**
73. Paragraph 24 suggests that that “emphasis on the regeneration of Portsmouth and Southampton **and redevelopment in other urban areas will ensure that the maximum opportunities are created for homes and jobs to be easily accessible**” whereas paragraph 25 points out that “**urban regeneration and redevelopment is an efficient and effective way of attracting investment and enhancing the environment.... Maximising the potential of urban areas to accommodate future development needs will conserve resources of land and energy, provide opportunities to limit travel demands and facilitate the provision of public transport**”.
74. Paragraphs 1.40 – 1.62 recognises the importance of maintaining the County’s healthy economy is fundamental to enhancing the overall quality of life in Hampshire. It acknowledges that planning policies can only provide a framework to stimulate and encourage economic growth and that “**A strong economy can only be achieved if local firms are competitive**”.
75. Policy UB1 requires local plan policies to give priority to policies and proposals which achieve urban regeneration by the redevelopment of derelict, outworn or underused land or buildings, improving air quality and reducing the consumption of energy and water and reducing the conflict between people and traffic and environmental disturbance from vehicles. Paragraph 48 goes on to say that “in determining the appropriate use for such underused land, it will be important to review the relationship between home and work.....to reduce the local incidence of commuting”.
76. Policy EC1 states that planning permission will normally be granted for the development of land for industrial, commercial and business uses either where such land is allocated or is already in lawful use for such purpose unless the local planning authority considers proposals would result in an overheating of the local labour market resulting in (inter alia) additional housing or congestion or other such interests of acknowledged importance.
77. Transport policy T4 seeks to ensure that development sites are served, or capable of being served by walking, cycling and public transport and that development likely to attract large numbers of trips are located where there is

a choice of transport mode, including public transport. Paragraph 188 goes on to say that “development should be sited where it can contribute to minimising travel demand and where the potential for walking and cycling is optimised or where public transport systems can serve it effectively”, in line with the principles of PPG13. Policy T5 deals with traffic and transport impacts and states that planning permission will only be granted where the transportation requirements of the development can be accommodated. Policy T12 requires the provision of facilities for walking and cycling and the special needs of people with mobility impairments.

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 1997

78. The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan was adopted in 1997 and whilst it is still the statutory local plan until the Review Plan is adopted, it is increasingly becoming out-of-date. For example, whilst its policies support the redevelopment of existing employment sites and the principle of additional employment, its policies on new office development do not reflect Government policy set out in PPS6. In view of the above Members are advised that the adopted plan should be given limited weight in the decision-making process.
79. Notwithstanding the above, it is of interest that the 5 strategic aims set out in paragraph 1.15 includes:
80. **c) “to maintain and encourage local employment, whilst ensuring that additional demand for further housing... is not generated; and d) to minimise travel demand, especially related to the use of the private motor car, to promote public transport and to promote the enhancement and attractiveness of Eastleigh town centre as a focus for retail activity and other activities appropriate to a town centre”.**
81. Furthermore, the following policies are still considered to be of relevance to the application:
82. Policy 27.BE supports urban regeneration through the recycling of underused land and buildings. The adopted plan proposals map identifies the application site as “an existing employment site” where policy 106.E allows proposals for redevelopment for employment purposes within use classes B1, B2 and B8.
83. Transport policy 65.T only supports development if it does not have detrimental consequences for the existing transport infrastructure which cannot be overcome. Policy 68.T requires developments to provide adequate parking, highway safety, access and internal layout whilst Policy 77.T supports proposals for improvements to the highway, cycle and footpath networks provided they do not impact on the environment/natural features/landscape.

84. Policy 25.BE deals with general design criteria.

EASTLEIGH BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2001-2011 SECOND DEPOSIT DRAFT (PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS)

85. The Draft Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001-2011) has been considered at an Inquiry and the Inspector's report was received in July 2005. The Council has since considered the Inspector's report and published proposed modifications. (The policies below thus reflect the proposed modifications).
86. Chapter 7 deals with issues relating to the local economy, and sets out the broad objectives of avoiding too little or too much economic growth, improving economic competitiveness, protecting the environment, reducing the need to travel, prioritising redevelopment of urban sites and locating office developments in town centres.
87. Policy 119.E of the review plan allows redevelopment of existing employment sites for employment purposes provided that they do not conflict with policy 136.TC on the location of office development. Policy 136.TC itself reflects government guidance in PPS6 and the extension of the need/sequential tests to major office development, stating that " out-of-centre development for retail, leisure, office, or other town centre uses will only be permitted if it meets all the following criteria: **(i) there is a demonstrable need for the development; (ii) there are no suitable, viable and available sites or premises for the proposed use within an existing centre or edge-of-centre location (in that order of preference), having demonstrated realistic flexibility on format, design and car parking; (iii) it will not by itself or cumulatively with other recently completed or permitted schemes undermine any Council's strategy to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing town centres and the roles of other centres; (iv) is genuinely accessible by a choice of means of transport and will reduce reliance on the car; it will not increase the need to travel overall.**"
88. Policy 103.T requires green travel plans for all developments over the County's threshold whereas policy 104.T will only permit developments which provide adequate off-site parking up to the maximum standards, bearing in mind the accessibility of the site. Economic policy 108.E requires new employment development, where appropriate, to provide or contribute towards start-up businesses and training provision.
89. Relevant environmental policies include: policy 33.ES which deals with air quality; policies 34.ES deals with reducing green house gases (through use of sustainable construction methods/materials/minimising energy demands/maximising energy generated from renewable sources whereas policy 37.ES considers the need to maximise energy efficiency, reduce water consumption, and minimise waste during construction as well as looking for opportunities for linking the development to renewable energy schemes.

90. Design criteria are set out in policy 59.BE and require proposals to take account of the context of the site and be appropriate in mass, scale, materials, layout, density, design, and siting both in themselves and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views, natural features and trees; also to make the most efficient use of the land; provide a high standard of landscaping, have satisfactory access and layout for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists including appropriate links, are an appropriate use of the area and avoid interfering, disturbing or conflicting with adjacent uses.

CONSIDERATIONS

91. Given that this application is in outline with only the details of the means of access to be considered at this stage, the main consideration is whether this site is deemed an acceptable location for the proposed 5-storey HQ office with its ancillary training/conference facilities, together with the re-use of the existing building as a merchandising laboratory.
92. With this in mind, and in line with Government advice in PPS6, and local plan policy 136.TC, the application must primarily be assessed against the following criteria/tests:-
- whether there is a demonstrable need for the development
 - whether the sequential approach study shows that there are no available, viable sites in more sustainable locations in Eastleigh or Southampton Centres)
 - whether the site is genuinely accessible (or can be made accessible) by other modes of transport other than the car
93. In addition, other more detailed issues that need to be considered at this stage are:-
- economic considerations
 - sustainability measures (in addition to green travel)
 - air quality
 - design/visual impact issues
 - residential amenity issues
 - whether the change of use of the warehouse building to the merchandising lab/QA facility is acceptable.

Need test

94. Until recently the need test has applied only to major retail developments, however recent government advice in PPS6 (and re-iterated in this Council's own policy 136.TC of the review local plan) extends this requirement to new office developments. The applicant's Planning Statement sets out the applicant's "need" argument. In summary, 3 main aspects are identified:-
95. The need for commercial and operational efficiency – particularly in the time spent and lost in the various journeys between the various disparate office functions and the merchandising/QA labs in Southampton. These buildings do

not function independently of each other, but interact to varying degrees. Having these remote facilities which interact with each other leads to inefficiencies in terms of “down time” for staff having to travel on a regular basis between the buildings. Survey data cited in the Planning Statement and the TA suggests that there are c 61 journeys made per week between Portswood House and Link House; 33 journeys per week between Nursling lab and Portswood House (round trip of 12km/7 miles and taking at least 20 minutes), plus other movements between Link House and Hutwood Court and between Link House and Portswood House. These are often taken by car due to poor pedestrian links between the sites. This results in a substantial loss of man-hours. Indeed, it has been calculated that the trips between the Nursling lab and the Chandlers Ford sites alone are likely to amount to approximately to equivalent of 5 members of staff in lost time and 69,800 miles travelled on the highway network per year. Linked to this is the sustainability argument that consolidating the different functions onto one site must be more sustainable than having the many different functions split between different sites. Also there is a need for an HQ building to reflect B & Q’s status in the retailing world and its international standing

96. The need to re-locate merchandising and Quality Assurance functions. Currently the QA and merchandising functions are split over the 2 Southampton sites (Windward Terminal and Nursling). Both these sites have similar functions. Furthermore these are also split from the rest of the commercial department at Portswood House and the main B & Q administrative functions in Chandlers Ford. The Nursling and Windward sites are on temporary leases/licences and thus uses of these buildings are to stop imminently and moved to Alldays House. The application proposals will allow greater floorspace for the merchandising function, allowing adequate space for the display of product areas ahead of rollout to stores and will allow the associated QA and office functions to be wholly integrated within the B & Q store support operations.
97. The need for enhanced sustainability, tied in with operational efficiency, given the number of car journeys made by car between the different offices and warehouses in Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh and Southampton.
98. The applicant has agreed to provide additional information to show that the need for co-location is essential rather than simply desirable, however, it is considered that that a strong argument for the need to consolidate the various functions of the business has been made. The next test is therefore whether this site passes the sequential test in terms of its location.
99. Need must also be assessed in more strategic terms. The Head of Planning Policy and Design’s response sets out the need for further employment in South Hampshire to meet the needs of the growing labour force and the needs of the South Hampshire economy. This feeds into the economic considerations set out later in this report.

SEQUENTIAL TEST

100. The need to adopt a sequential search for sites for major office development is again set out in PPS6 and reiterated in policy 125.E of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review. This states that the first preference is to locate major office development within town/city centres. Where no suitable town centres can be identified, developers should look towards “edge of centre” locations, defined for office purposes as within 500m of the town centre or railway/bus stations). Out-of-centre locations should only be considered if town centres or edge of centre sites have been discounted. In terms of the scope of the search for alternative sites, the applicant was advised at pre-application stage to look at sites within the principal centres of Eastleigh and Southampton.
101. The sequential search undertaken by the applicant is on the basis that the site should be capable of accommodating a consolidated B & Q headquarters campus encompassing the administrative and commercial functions. In line with advice in PPS6 it examines the suitability, viability and availability of the potential sites, and concludes that there are no other sites within Eastleigh or Southampton centres that could accommodate the combined floorspace of the proposed HQ offices and the Merchandising/QA labs.
102. In considering the sequential test, it is important to take account of the advice from the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) which advises this Authority to look very carefully at the sequential approach to make sure that there are no better sites in the sub-region.
103. It is also important to note that Southampton City Council have raised concerns about the sequential test, on the basis that there are a number of sites within the Southampton City Council’s area that could accommodate the B1(a) offices. Southampton City Council’s view is based on a different interpretation of government advice in that they feel it is reasonable to require B & Q to “disaggregate” the different components of the proposal and accommodate them on different sites within the city. On that basis, there are a number of sequentially better sites than Alldays House to accommodate the B1 office use and potentially one other site capable of accommodating the entire floorspace required.
104. Until recently, Government policy in Planning Policy Guidance 6 (PPG6) has required developers and occupiers to be much more flexible in their proposed formats, in effect requiring them to disaggregate their businesses into separate elements so that these elements can be accommodated on sustainable sites preferably within town centres. The recently published Planning Policy Statement 6 still requires developers to demonstrate flexibility by considering: “**in terms of scale: reducing the floorspace of the development; in terms of the format of the development: more innovative site layouts and store configurations (eg multi-storey developments with smaller footprints); and in terms of car parking: reduced or reconfigured car parking areas**”.
105. Importantly, however, PPS6 goes on to states that “**local planning authorities should be realistic in considering whether sites are suitable, viable and**

available...Local planning authorities should take into account any genuine difficulties , which the applicant can demonstrate are likely to occur in operating the applicants business model from the sequentially preferable site in terms of scale, format, car parking provision and the scope for disaggregation..."

106. In this particular case, B & Q have a clear business model which is based on a need to consolidate all the different functions onto one site. Their justification sets out clearly why "disaggregation" causes difficulties with their existing business and thus why the majority of the sites identified by Southampton City Council would present exactly the same difficulties as they currently experience, with the separation of the merchandising/QA functions from the other commercial functions. Indeed, it could be argued that their problems would be exactly reversed on the basis that the merchandising labs would be located in Chandlers Ford in any event.
107. Following discussions with Southampton City Council, Eastleigh Borough Council Officers and the applicant's agent, B & Q have agreed to submit a more detailed justification of their business model, including practical examples of why co-location of the different functions are fundamentally important, rather than merely being preferable. Southampton City Council have agreed that a number of the alternative/preferred sites referred to in their response should be discounted. This in effect leaves 4 possible sites: Charlotte Place, Mayflower Plaza, Pirelli site and land near Dock Gate 10.
108. Charlotte Place is not considered suitable as it would not be possible to accommodate all of the proposed development on a single site. Land available adjacent to the Jury's Inn development could provide an element of general office accommodation but could not accommodate the proposed HQ accommodation with its ancillary training, conference and catering facilities. It would also not be possible to accommodate the merchandising labs on the same site, due to design and functional constraints (ie the merchandising labs have to be warehouse-type buildings, due to their specific functions). This then goes back to the heart of the proposed business model which requires co-location of all the functions.
109. Mayflower Plaza benefits from planning permission for a mixed use development including housing. The suggestion from Southampton City Council that the site is perfect for a sole-use for office development seems questionable as this would mean setting aside policies at local and national level which seek mixed use schemes. It is also questionable whether, given the residential permission and the resultant higher land values, that this site would be viable. Finally and again fundamentally, the site could not accommodate all of the proposed accommodation.
110. The Pirelli site was deleted as an allocation following the Inspector's report. It is understood that the Inspector could not accept the allocation without satisfactory alternative accommodation being found for the existing use of the site. Further information has been sought from Southampton City Council.

Notwithstanding the above, the same arguments run, in that the site could only accommodate some of the proposed floorspace.

111. Land near Dock Gate 10 is considered to be an edge-of-centre site by Southampton City Council. Notwithstanding the fact that it lies within 500m of the Central Station, it is considered that the linkages between the site and the city centre are wholly unsuitable, unsafe and unattractive and that realistically, the site must be considered as an out-of-centre. Again this site could not accommodate all of the proposed accommodation.
112. Notwithstanding their concerns, it should be noted that Southampton City Council have indicated that they are prepared to re-assess the application proposals on receipt of the additional information from the applicant justifying the co-location argument. [The additional information/justification and any amended consultation response will be reported separately at Committee].
113. With regard to sites within Eastleigh, Barton Park has been discounted as it will not be available within a reasonable time scale (as it is dependent upon the proposed Chickenhall Link Road) and Pirelli as it is not suitable for the entire development.

ACCESSIBILITY & GREEN TRAVEL

114. The remaining test set out in PPS6 is that sites for proposed office developments must be accessible to other modes of transport other than the car. (Policy 136.TC of the Local Plan Review adds, "or capable of becoming more accessible").

Existing accessibility

115. In terms of buses, Chestnut Avenue itself is served by 4 different buses. Blue Star no.1 route runs between Southampton and Winchester via Chandler Ford Station, whilst no. 2 route runs between Southampton and Fair Oak via Eastleigh. These services stop in Robin Square/Nightingale Avenue. Services 44/44a is a ½ hourly service running between Eastleigh and Southampton via Chandler's Ford and Valley Park. From the Eastleigh direction, however it takes a 40 minute loop before reaching the Bournemouth Road stop. Service 65 is an hourly service running between Eastleigh and Salisbury via Romsey. This is the only service to stop immediately outside the application site on Chestnut Avenue.
116. In terms of trains, Parkway Station runs direct services to London Waterloo, the Midlands, Manchester, Woking, Winchester, Basingstoke, as well as to Weymouth and Bournemouth. Eastleigh Station serves more local destinations such as Romsey and Totton, as well as Brighton, Portsmouth, Reading and Woking and London Waterloo. The application site, however is not well-connected to these stations.
117. Pedestrian access in the vicinity of the application site is made difficult by the presence of the Asda roundabout which is difficult to negotiate during busy

times. On Chestnut Avenue, there is no footpath linking Alldays House with Asda so that pedestrians from Alldays House wishing to walk to Asda, or the bus stops on Bournemouth Road for example, have to cross over Chestnut Avenue (using the new pelican crossing) to the footpath on the opposite side of the road, then cross back again at the Red Lodge crossing point. This is considered wholly unsatisfactory.

118. With regard to cycle routes, at present there is no cycle route on Chestnut Avenue, except for a limited route across the front of the Templars Way arm of the Asda roundabout. The roundabout is considered neither safe, nor convenient for cyclists. On the positive side, Chestnut Avenue lies on the Strategic Cycle Network and thus has potential for improvement.
119. Significant improvements to pedestrian and cycle access, however, are proposed as part of the application through the provision of a new cycle route along Chestnut Avenue and also around the northern side of the Asda roundabout, together with the provision of toucan crossings across Templars Way and Bournemouth Road. The other improvements works to the roundabout will also help cycle and pedestrian safety in this area and thus should encourage more people to walk or cycle.

Green travel

120. B & Q has operated a travel plan for their existing buildings in Chandlers Ford since 2003, although only Link House and Hutwood Court are formally committed to green travel through the planning process. For the remainder of the campus, therefore the existing travel plan measures are voluntary.
121. Government guidance in PPG13 and reiterated in the Council's own policies on green travel, all new developments of a certain size are required to make provision for "green/sustainable transport". In this particular case there is a need for a very strong set of sustainable transport measures, to mitigate the impact of additional car-borne traffic to this out-of-centre location. Normally green travel plans are required by condition or Section 106 agreement but are worked up after permission has been granted. In this case, the applicants have been urged to identify, at this stage, a clear set of sustainable transport measures to ensure that the strongest possible travel plan can be secured. To this end, the applicants have submitted a "travel framework plan" to be considered with the application.
122. The framework document sets out how B & Q's existing travel plan would be updated and extended for the proposed development. The suggested measures are based on analyses of staff surveys carried out in 2003, which revealed that the majority of existing staff live some considerable distance from their place of work. For instance, 46% of staff live over 10 miles of their place of work and a further 30% of staff live more than 20 miles from their place of work. Furthermore 85% of staff in the 2003 survey travelled by car, of which 74% travelled alone. Only 0.2 % of staff travelled by train. [More recent information reveals that 18% of staff currently live in Eastleigh, as opposed to

22% in Southampton. The majority, however, live further afield, beyond the “sub-region”].

123. Existing travel plan measures that would be continued include the following:-
- Continued employment of full time travel plan manager, travel plan advisor, and part-time administrative support dealing with promotional campaigns, providing new staff with travel plan information, co-ordinating car sharing scheme, arranging and co-ordinating travel surveys and acting as a point of contact for transport operators/officers
 - Lunchtime bus service from C. Ford sites to Eastleigh Town Centre
 - Carmates (car sharing scheme)
 - Guaranteed free transport home service in emergencies
 - Flexible working policy
 - Travel plan info centre in each office
 - Travel plan packs for all new employees
 - Public transport measures including, display of bus information, liaison with bus/rail operators on travel info/new routes and feedback of travel survey information to bus/rail operators
 - Walking measures – provision of showers, changing facilities, safe routes within sites, info on pedestrian network.
 - Cycle measures – pool cycles, covered cycle parking, showers/changing facilities, cycle route information.
 - Teleconferencing from Hutwood court, Portswood House and Link House
 - Car park management (uses car registration plate recognition technology to prevent access by non-authorized personnel)
 - Incentives - personal alarms, umbrellas. Considering a staff draw for staff that signup to car sharing database
 - Car club being considered – available to B & Q employees but also other businesses, residents – pool cars needed for work purposes.
 - On-site facilities e.g. restaurants to reduce travel at lunch times
 - Travel plan steering group meets monthly to discuss travel plan issues
124. The framework plan lists a number of amendments and additional measures over-and-above the existing green travel plan provisions which would be included in the new travel plan. Of most significance are the following:-
- proposed targets to reduce the percentage of staff travelling to work by car from 85% (2004 survey) to between 65-70% (i.e. around a 20% reduction). This would reflect the balance between staff and availability of car parking, allowing for visitor parking and parking for the conference facility.
 - staff transport (direct bus link) between Southampton Parkway station and Alldays House to be trialed.
 - working with other local businesses to seek improvements to non-car access and increase opportunities for car sharing.

- provision of other physical measures, as appropriate, eg parking controls, improvements to bus waiting facilities, provision of real time public transport information, pedestrian/cycle improvements
 - others: continued use of incentives to reduce car travel, identifying health/environmental benefits of reducing car usage to staff, annual travel surveys to be carried out to establish travel patterns, Travel Manager to compile review reports outlining the results.
 - Staff travel survey to be carried out (between 6 months to 1 year after the occupation of the new building) to establish first year travel patterns and potential improvement measures.
125. B & Q have been asked to amend the framework plan to further clarify the nature and extent of the proposed staff transport initiatives (ie bus services from Parkway Station and Eastleigh station), to make it clear that monitoring and review of the benefits/success of the initiatives should be a collaborative process involving this Council and Hampshire County Council and also to make clear that there is a need for flexibility to ensure that the best possible set of measures are used to achieve the targets.
126. The target reductions in car borne traffic to the application site from 85% to 65-70% seem to be ambitious but necessary, particularly given that the number of car parking spaces proposed in the indicative plans (981) is well below the anticipated number of employees (1,300). Guidance from the Dept of Transport entitled "Guidance on the assessment of travel plans (1992)" suggests that this level of target (ie 15-20%) will be difficult but not unachievable. The guidance suggests that a plan containing only marketing and promotion will not achieve any modal shift, a plan with marketing, promotion, car sharing and cycle measures may achieve 3-5% in drive alone commuting, a plan also including large (30% discounts +) on public transport plus works buses/additional public transport links will achieve around a 10% reduction; and a combination of all of the above plus disincentives to car use can achieve a larger (15-30%) reduction in drive alone commuting.
127. In essence, the targets are only considered to be realistic and attainable because of the proposed staff bus links to Parkway and Eastleigh stations (and the fact that they will be free or heavily subsidised). The introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone would also assist in meeting this target.
128. In terms of timescale, the travel plan itself would need to be agreed between the 3 main parties (B &Q, EBC and HCC) before construction could start on the new building. The green travel plan initiatives would then need to be implemented on occupation of the new building. In order to ensure the green travel plan measures are implemented, the applicants have agreed to provide a "bond" or "travel plan fund". The monies would be held by the County Council (as Highway Authority) and would be effectively "ring-fenced" for the various measures. Once B & Q have implemented certain measures they could then draw on the relevant proportion of the "bond" / "travel plan fund" to fund it. In the (unlikely) event that B & Q do not implement the measures in the travel plan, the fund could be used by the County Council to implement the measures themselves. Detailed negotiations are on-going at the time of

writing regarding the level of the bond, specifics of the Framework Plan and monitoring fees for the travel plan. These should be resolved in time for the Meeting.

ECONOMIC/SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

129. The economic benefits from this proposal can be viewed on different levels: both at the local Eastleigh level, and also at the Sub-Regional level.
130. As set out in the consultation comments above, B & Q is the leading DIY retailer in this country and has significant standing on the international stage. It is clear that this proposal will create significant business efficiencies and therefore competitive benefits to B & Q by co-locating its disparate functions in one location. Furthermore a high quality purpose-built Headquarters building will provide a focus for commerce and a business image that would normally be expected for a company of this nature and size.
131. The retention and consolidation of B & Q's presence in Chandlers Ford will affect economic prosperity both for Eastleigh Town but also for the wider Southampton City Region where regional policy seeks to promote an improvement in economic performance.
132. B & Q directly employ some 1,500 (1,300 post re-structuring) people in this part of Chandlers Ford. In addition, the Head Quarters operation adds considerable extra wealth into the city region's economy and the presence of a major national and international firm's headquarters creates a positive business image for the area as a whole. It is clear that this proposal will create significant business efficiencies and therefore competitive benefits to B & Q by co-locating its disparate functions in one location. These benefits will again be seen at both a local and sub-regional level.
133. In Eastleigh itself, Members will be aware that the town is currently experiencing considerable job losses in its traditional industries, for example jobs at Caustons, 700 jobs in total at Pirelli, 650 jobs at Manor Bakeries and 500 jobs at the Alstom Works. **These losses amount to 12.7% of Eastleigh's (ELAC) 2001 employment base**, within a short period of time. Resultant unemployment rates are lower than they should be due to forced early retirements. It is considered important that job opportunities are recreated and retained in growing service sectors so that people entering the job market can be offered a range of job opportunities.
134. Eastleigh Town's long-term strategic economic opportunities lie in the area east of the railway. Development of these sites, however, is dependent upon the completion of the Chickenhall Link Road. Whilst some positive progress is being made on this scheme, its completion is still some way off.
135. Against this background, it is considered very important to retain B & Q's competitive contribution to the local economy. Conversely if B & Q are unable to maintain a competitive advantage in this location, this would lead to significant disruption in the local economy.

136. Policy 108.E requires new employment-generating development to contribute either to accommodation for start-up businesses or for training. B & Q is already committed to training, as outlined in the Planning Statement submitted with the application. Its existing training strategy is aimed at tackling disadvantage in local communities and helping to improve the social capital of the communities where B & Q are based. Initiatives provide participants opportunities to learn in non-threatening friendly environments and currently take place in the Hedge End store and at the B & Q training centre at Link House. The proposed condition will allow this training initiative to be formalised and developed to help social inclusion.

HIGHWAY IMPACT/WHETHER THE PROPOSED MEANS OF ACCESS IS ACCEPTABLE

137. The Transport Assessment submitted with the application suggests that the network would operate better with the proposed development and associated highway improvement works than would otherwise be the case. This is due to the fact that the existing traffic flows would be re-distributed. For example in the case of Portswood House the current situation is that 5% of traffic travelling SE along Templars Way turns into Portswood House. The re-location of staff to Alldays House would mean that these 5% would no longer turn into Portswood House but would travel across the Asda roundabout thereby increasing traffic flows at this roundabout by 5%. On the other hand 40% of traffic travelling from Chestnut Avenue would still travel through the Tollgate roundabout ,but would turn into Alldays House and thus no longer travel through the Asda roundabout, resulting in a 40% reduction in traffic on that arm of the roundabout.
138. Even taking into account predicted additional traffic from the infill uses which would replace the existing B & Q sites at Portswood House, Hutwood Court, Cando House and Link House, other committed developments in the area, traffic growth, the assessment concludes that overall traffic flows will be (CHECK)
139. Whilst the County Council has asked for further assessments and modelling to be undertaken to clarify certain aspects of the assessment, in general terms it has accepted the results of the TA (albeit verbally).

AIR QUALITY

140. Existing air quality in the vicinity of the site is of concern, particularly at Chestnut Close. Indeed, it is at levels close to requiring an Air Quality Management Zone to be established.
141. Policy 33.ES of the Review Local Plan requires that **“where new development appears likely to have a significant impact on air quality in the locality, or future occupiers of the development may be subject to unacceptable air quality, the Council will require a suitable air quality assessment to be carried out prior to consideration of the application”**.

In view of this, the applicants have been requested to undertake an Air Quality Assessment. The results of the assessment have yet to be received. The Head of Environmental Health has indicated, however, that it is likely that mitigation for any additional NO₂ emissions will be through the provision of travel plan initiatives aimed at reducing car useage. The provision of a staff bus link is thought to be of particular significance in this regard.

ON-SITE SUSTAINABILITY MEASURES

142. The need to incorporate sustainability measures within major developments is fully recognised, and is emphasised in the consultation response made by SEERA.
143. This application is in outline only and thus there are no more details about proposed sustainable measures than that provided in the indicative information/drawings. Notwithstanding that fact, it has been made clear during discussions that B & Q are very keen to include wind turbines as part of the new development. Indeed it is understood that B & Q has recently developed a site at New Malden (Surrey) with such facilities. The indicative drawings show 2 vertical turbines which, it is understood, are together capable of producing approximately 20kws of energy. Further information has been sought from the applicant to set this figure in context, for example to express it as a percentage of the total energy requirement for the proposed building. (It is known, however, that the wind turbine installed at the Country Park generates approximately 8kws of energy). It is considered necessary to impose a condition requiring sustainable measures to be incorporated into the proposed building.
144. It must also be remembered that part of the existing building would remain in situ (the rear element) and that the applicant is hoping to re-use the existing floor slab of the building, rather than having to break-out and remove the existing slab. This will reduce the amount of new materials required, will reduce the amount of waste materials to be removed/disposed of and will, in overall terms, reduce the environmental costs (pollution, noise, general disturbance) associated with those activities. The “green travel” initiatives will provide further sustainability benefits.
145. A sustainability statement from the applicant is awaited.

CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING WAREHOUSE

146. Whilst the main focus of this application is the construction of the new build HQ building, the application also seeks the change of use of the existing B8 warehouse to the merchandising labs and QA facilities. It is anticipated that this will be needed in the near future as the existing temporary accommodation in Southampton Docks and Nursling will soon be unavailable. The building is a large warehouse and is considered to be completely suitable for the proposed use in that it provides the floorspace and height that is required to “mock up” a normal store and trial new racking and displays etc. Given the existing use of the building and the zoning in the Review Local Plan as an existing

employment site there are no objections to the proposed re-use. The existing lawful use of the site has in the past, and could potentially again give rise to much greater levels of traffic, (particularly HGVs) than the use as a research and development facility. There are therefore no objections on highway grounds.

147. Bearing in mind that this change of use, if approved, is likely to be implemented in the short term and before the new build proposals, it is necessary to carefully consider wording of proposed conditions so to avoid irrelevant information having to be submitted before the merchandising labs can be moved to this location.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ASDA APPLICATION

148. Members will be very aware of the application relating to the adjacent Asda site, which is still being considered. Whilst each application must stand on its own merits, consideration has been given to how these two developments could potentially impact upon each other and the locality. Discussions, for instance have taken place between B & Q and Asda with regard to potential pedestrian linkages between the two sites and also the highway improvement works to the Asda roundabout.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

149. The concerns of local residents with regard to traffic generation and parking problems are acknowledged. As stated above, the County Council as Highway Authority has accepted the Transport Assessment evidence provided by the application that the general “net” impact on the network will be small and that the proposed off-site works will help mitigate this additional impact. Over-spill parking from B & Q’s existing buildings, however, is a real issue in this area. Whilst it is hoped that the travel plan initiatives will reduce the amount of car trips to the site, it is inevitable that unless restrictions are put-in-place, staff who cannot access the car park will choose to park on nearby streets rather than use public transport. The Council’s Head of Engineering considers that the provision of a Controlled Parking Zone is essential.
150. Potential noise and disturbance during construction of the building can be controlled by conditions restricting the hours of work.

VISUAL AMENITY ISSUES

151. Whilst this is only an outline application, the indicative plans show the type and size of building that B & Q would hope to build on the site. The building is of a considerable size and height, however, bearing in mind its existing context, it is not considered that a building of this size and bulk will appear out-of-keeping with its locality. The applicant has supplied additional information in the form of further elevation drawings and an over-head perspective of the proposed building. The Head of Planning Policy and Design has yet to comment on this.

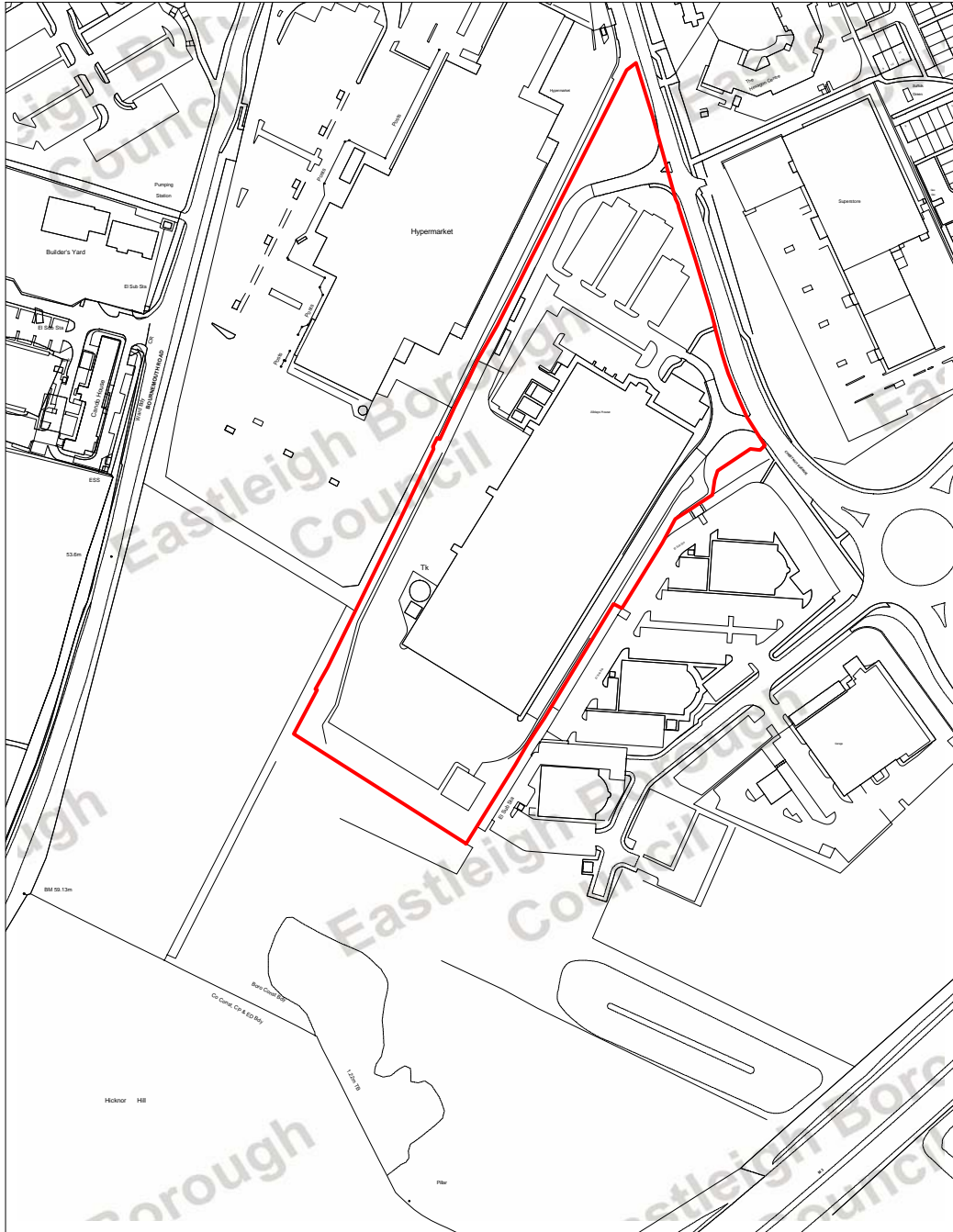
152. The Architects Panel has reservations about the design and layout, however, it is evident that the panel misunderstood some of the content of the application and thus some of the comments are inaccurate. However, notwithstanding that, the main message to draw out of the comments is that this building needs to be of the highest design, bearing in mind its prominent location, the type of building (ie HQ) proposed and the Government's requirement for good design set out in PPS1.

CONCLUSIONS

153. The importance of retaining B & Q in Eastleigh cannot be over-stated. The approval of this scheme will ensure the continued presence of a major firm of national and international standing which provides a great number of jobs and supports many other businesses in the supply chain. These benefits would extend beyond the Borough Council's boundary to the wider sub-region, including Southampton. It is also imperative, however, that the proposals comply with the requirements of national, regional and local planning policies, particularly with regard to the location of major office development.
154. Whilst the application site is a brownfield site and zoned for employment uses in the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review, it would not, in normal circumstances be considered a suitable site for a speculative office development. Major office developments should normally be located in more sustainable and accessible locations, as required by government policy in PPS6, emerging regional planning policies such as the draft RSS – (the South East Plan), structure plan policy EC1 and Local plan Review policies (Policy 125.E).
155. In this particular case, B & Q have put a strong case for the need to consolidate their current disparate functions into a single new HQ office building at Alldays House, rather than in various sites within Southampton City Centre or Eastleigh Town Centre. These "co-location" arguments are fundamental to B & Q's application of the sequential approach.
156. At officer level, it is considered that the application complies with the requirements of PPS 6 for the following reasons: firstly a "need" for the development has been adequately demonstrated; secondly in terms of the Sequential Approach the applicant has shown flexibility in terms of scale and car parking by proposing a reasonably high density scheme (5-storey development), with a multi-storey car park. It has further shown that considerable difficulties already occur and would occur again if the functions of the business were to be disaggregated again, thus also complying with paragraph 3.16 of PPS6. No site within Southampton City Centre or Eastleigh Town Centre meets the PPS6 tests of being suitable, viable or available.
157. Recognising that this location is not ideal in terms of accessibility and in order to again comply with government policy in PPS6, PPG13 and regional and local/structure plan policies, the applicants have offered a significant package of green travel initiatives. Many of these initiatives are already in-place, however, the most significant measure that should help to meet the proposed

targets for reducing car trips are the proposed bus links to Parkway Station and Eastleigh Station. In addition a CPZ is proposed to help prevent off-site parking in the vicinity of the site. Other off-site physical measures that are proposed including significant improvements to pedestrian and cycle facilities (including the provision of a cycleway along Chestnut Avenue) and pedestrian links through to Asda.

158. With all this in mind, the application is considered to be acceptable, subject to the provisos set out at the beginning of the report and the recommended conditions thereafter.



EASTLEIGH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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