Prepared by Phillips Planning and Development
Chartered Town Planning and Development Consultants

Office Premises, Station Approach, Melksham, SN12 8DB

Planning Statement

1. Introduction

This statement is produced in support of an application for change of use of the existing building from Class E - Commercial Business and Service (Class Eg Offices, R&D and Light Industry, to Class F1 - Learning and Non- Residential Institutions. There will be no external changes to the building nor any internal changes proposed to the existing floor layout. There are as existing floor plans and no elevation plans accompanying the application as there are no changes envisaged.

2. Background

The building is owned by Wiltshire Council. The applicant previously leased the building for approximately 6 years until the lease ended in February 2026. In February, the applicant reinstated the original layout of the building. Due to new demand and growth following discussion with Wiltshire Council officers, the applicant seeks to renew its lease with the Council. It was considered appropriate that the application should enable the building to have consent for both offices and educational use.

The site will be used as a mentoring hub so there will be mentors visiting and using the facilities for activities with SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs of children and young adults) learners aged 5 to 25. These activities may be focused around lego, art, cooking with a small degree of academic work. The applicant's learners are referred to them by Wiltshire schools and Wiltshire Council. The building will also be used as an office space for the senior leadership team.

The mentors collect the learners from their home / carer /school and won`t all be in the building at the same time. There tends to be approximately 4 to 8 in the building at any one time.

There are 6 parking spaces available on site which belong to the property. There is also a PAYG Wiltshire Council car park immediately north of the site which the applicant has subsidised in the past.

It should be noted that the site will not have parents or taxis attending or dropping off/ picking up children / young adults as noted above.

2. Site Location and Surrounding Character

The site is located towards the southern end of Station Approach being triangular in shape with a northern spur providing up to 6 car parking spaces. The building is a single storey 1960`s block which as noted is owned by Wiltshire Council. Access to the site is via Station Approach. The area immediately surrounding the site is mixed with a depot to the north and the station buildings to the west. The eastern site boundary is adjacent to existing housing.

3. Relevant Planning History

There is no specific planning history attached to the site albeit owned and used by Wiltshire Council as offices for a period of time. More recently the applicant Project SEMH Ltd have used the premises under a lease from the Council for educational purposes.

4. The Proposal

The proposal as stated is for the change of use of the existing offices to offices and educational use under Class E and F1. There will be no changes to either the external or internal layout nor to the external elevations. It was considered appropriate to include and formalise both uses within a single application, as the Council may at a future time take back the building for office uses should the applicant wish to cease their use of the building at some point in the future.

The accompanying floor plan (Fire Evacuation Plan) shows the existing and proposed layout for which there are no changes proposed. The plan shows the reception entrance area at the southern end of the building with an emergency access at the northern end of the building both adjacent to Station Approach.

The various rooms within the building comprise office and staff resource room, sensory room, breakout room, reading room with a larger play room at the north end of the building and a main classroom along the western frontage. Additional rooms include store, medical room, kitchen, and boiler room. together with two separate w.c.`s.

The proposal simply is to enable the applicants to commence a new lease of the building with Wiltshire Council in the full knowledge that there is permission in place for both educational and office use.

5. Access and Car Parking

As stated, the building will be used as a mentoring hub for children and young adults. It is intended that the mentors will bring the learners to the building either from their home, carer, or school with numbers limited from between four to eight persons at any one time.

There is adequate on-site car parking provided with up to 6 parking spaces, and if the need arises, a Pay as You Go council car park immediately north of the site with substantial parking accommodation.

Planning Issues / Justification

The building has been leased by the applicant for the last 6 years up until February 2026 at which time the Council lease expired. Prior to this, we understand the Council used the premises for offices. Following interim discussions with the Council since February this year it has been agreed that the applicant applies for the two uses stated being the subject of this application which will cover both potential uses in the future.

The proposed change of use of this building is acceptable under national and local planning policy directives and the amount of onsite parking provision is acceptable under the Councils adopted parking standard, with the proviso that should additional car parking be required at peak times than the nearby council car park is readily available.

Conclusion

We therefore ask the Council to support this much needed facility which will provide additional specialist provision for leaners aged 5 – 25 with SEMH needs.