

Planning, Development Services  
Howden House  
1 Union Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2HH

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
**Our ref:** 50709/JG/PH/13591121v2  
**Your ref:**

Dear Sir / Madam

## **Change of Use from Office (Use Class B1) to Eye Clinic (Use Class D1) at 6 Smithy Wood Drive, Chapeltown, Sheffield, S35 1QN**

On behalf of our client, SpaMedica Ltd, Lichfields is pleased to submit a full planning application for the change of use of Unit 6 Smithy Wood Drive, Chapeltown from Office use (Class B1) to an Eye Clinic (Class D1).

### **Application Submission**

The application was submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP-05941294) on 7th April 2017 and in addition to this covering letter, is accompanied by the following:

- 1 Completed application forms including land ownership certificate;
- 2 Location Plan; and,
- 3 Floor Plans.

A cheque made payable to Sheffield City Council for the requisite application fee of £385 has been enclosed with this covering letter.

### **Background**

SpaMedica provide medical and surgical eye patient services in their premises in Manchester, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Newton-le-Willows, Bolton and Wakefield. SpaMedica are a partner of choice for the NHS and hundreds of opticians throughout the north of England. They offer a range of treatments that help improve vision and ocular health, including cataract surgery and refractive lens exchange.

### **The Site**

The application site is located approximately 7.5 km to the north east of Sheffield city centre. The site lies within the Smithy Wood Business Park, situated on the edge of the urban area of Chapeltown, to the south of Smithy Wood Drive and to the east of Nether Lane. Smithy Wood Business Park is a 50 acre business park which comprises a mix of B Class uses. The business park is characterised by modern, two storey

employment units. Unit 6 was previously occupied by Kier for office purposes. The area of the proposed development site extends to approximately 960 sqm of floorspace.

The Sheffield Proposals map identifies the site as being within an Industrial Area. The site is not included within a Conservation Area nor is it in the vicinity of any listed buildings. The Environment Agency Flood Map identifies the site as being located within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding.

## **Planning History**

A desktop review of the site's planning history has identified the key planning permissions being for the redevelopment of the former Smithy Wood Colliery site as a business park and a number of minor variations thereafter. None have particular relevance to the current application.

## **Development Proposals**

The site in respect of which permission for change of use is proposed is currently in B1a use (Office) and accommodates 743 (net) sqm of office floorspace which is split over two floors. The ground floor accommodates a large entrance lobby, cleaning room, a stairway and lift; bathrooms are provided both on the ground and first floors. The proposal seeks permission for the change of use of the building to D1 use (Eye Clinic). The change of use will not result in any external alterations to the building, nor will it amend the internal arrangement of the building.

The proposed changer of use will allow the property to accommodate an operation that will provide valuable eye care facility for local people and will assist in creating approximately 20 skilled jobs, in line with the employment creating aspirations of the site's allocation. The facility will serve both NHS and private customers and will tend to minor eye conditions. It is envisaged that the clinic will tend to between 25-30 pre booked patients a day. The clinic will be used to treat day cases only and will not be used on an overnight basis nor will it be used as a walk in facility or for emergency care. The hours of operation will be 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday.

## **Planning Policy**

### **National Planning Policy**

The National Planning Policy Framework [Framework] was published on 27 March 2012 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The overarching aim of the Framework is to proactively deliver sustainable development to support the Government's economic growth objectives.

The Framework [§7 & 8] identified three dimensions to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. It indicates that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The Framework [§14] establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision making this means:

- *“Approving proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and,*
- *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
- *Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”*

The Framework §19 states that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. To help achieve growth, local planning authorities should plan to proactively meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Development Plan**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan comprises the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan [UDP] adopted March 1998 (saved policies) and the Sheffield Core Strategy adopted March 2009. The UDP Proposals Map identifies the site as being included within an Industrial Area.

The relevant saved policies from the UDP are as follows:

- Policy IB5 Development in General Industry Areas; and,
- Policy IB8 Industrial and Business Sites.

The pertinent policies from the Core Strategy are as follows:

- Policy CS5 Locations for Manufacturing, Distribution / Warehousing and other Non-Office Businesses; and,
- Policy CS32 Jobs and Housing in Chapelton / Ecclesfield.

## **Main Planning Considerations**

### *Principle of Development*

The site is identified as being included within an Industrial Area and is subject to UDP Policy IB5 which provides advice on 'preferred', 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' uses for General Industry areas. Community facilities (D1) are included in the list of 'acceptable' uses, whereas preferred uses are restricted to General Industry (B2 Use) and Warehousing (B8 Use).

Policy IB8 makes specific reference to the wider Smithy Wood site, stating that only 'preferred' uses will be acceptable in this locality. The site which is the subject of this application falls within the Smithy Wood Business Park which is characterised by a mix of industrial and office units. The Business Park forms part of the wider Smithy Wood site and therefore it is clear that the range of uses considered appropriate in this location includes those deemed to be both 'preferred' and 'acceptable'. Not only is this demonstrated through the original planning permission which sought consent for both industrial and office units but also, permission has recently been granted (ref. 17/00264/CHU) for the change of use of the ground floor of 8 Smithy Wood Drive to D1 (training facility) use. As a result, it is concluded that the Council are amenable to D1 uses on the Business Park.

The Core Strategy, Policy CS5 states that *"manufacturing, distribution/warehousing and non-office businesses will be located in..... locations within each of the more outlying areas of .....Chapelton / Ecclesfield"*. The Smithy Wood Business Park is located on the edge of the urban area of Chapelton, and, given the nature of the proposed D1 (Eye Clinic) use, it is considered that this constitute as a 'non-office business'. On the basis of this, it is considered that the principle of D1 development in this location is acceptable and, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS5.

This flexible approach towards economic development within this locality is reflected in the emerging City Policies and Sites document. The wider site remains allocated for B2 and B8 uses under site ref P00287. The site assessment contained within the 2013 Pre-Submission document acknowledges the existence of planning permission for limited office development.

It is therefore considered that D1 uses are acceptable within this location on the basis that; a) 'acceptable' uses in accordance with the wording of policy IB5 have been allowed on this site, which itself is an established 'acceptable' B1 use; b) permission has recently been granted for D1 use for Unit 8; and, c) 'non-office businesses' are encouraged in this locality.

## **Other Considerations**

### **Design**

The application does not propose any external alternations to the existing building. The design of the building will therefore remain unaltered and appropriate for this business location in accordance with CS74 (Design Principles).

### **Parking**

The building is served by 26 car parking spaces including 2 disabled spaces. The parking that serves the building will remain unaltered as part of the proposal and is appropriate for the use proposed in accordance with UDP Policy T21 (Car Parking).

### **Waste**

Clinical waste will be stored in secure clinical waste bins that are stored in secure areas on the ground floor at the rear/side of the building. The bins will be collected regularly by Cannon; a clinical waste collector.

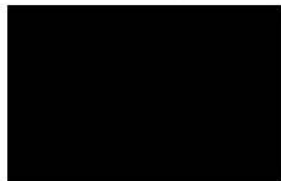
## **Conclusion**

The proposed development performs a positive economic, social and environmental role and comprises sustainable development in accordance with the provisions of the Framework. As a result, there is a presumption in favour of granting the application proposals.

The proposed use would be an appropriate addition to the Business Park and represent a continuation of the further diversification of employment uses across the Park and wider area.

We trust that the application can be validated and positively determined at the earliest opportunity, however, should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on 0161 837 6130.

Yours faithfully



**Poppy Hilton**  
Planner

