

App.No: 130967	Decision Due Date: 25 February 2014	Ward: Sovereign Harbour
Officer: Anna Clare	Site visit date: 24 January 2014	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: 10 January 2014		
Neighbour Con Expiry: 10 January 2014		
Weekly list Expiry: 29 January 2014		
Press Notice(s): 4 February 2014		
Over 8/13 week reason: To align with committee schedule.		
Location: Land within Site 6, adjacent to Pevensey Bay Road, Pacific Drive, Eastbourne.		
Proposal: Harbour Innovation Mall - Construction of new building consisting of three storeys totalling 2,323m ² net internal area for use within use classes B1(a) (b) and (c), occupying a site of 0.64ha and incorporating 130 car parking spaces.		
Applicant: Seachange Sussex		
Recommendation: Approve planning permission subject to conditions.		

Executive Summary:

The application proposed the construction of a three storey building providing Use Class B1 business floor space with associated car parking and landscaping. The delivery of employment space within Sovereign Harbour has been a corporate priority for a number of years. The design of the building is modern whilst respecting the surrounding area and will provide a landmark building in this prominent gateway site.

Planning Status:

Constraints:

Bank of TPO trees on the site (TPO 77 Land on the south east side of Pevensey Bay Road).

Former waste disposal site/landfill

Relevant Planning Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

1. Building a strong, competitive economy
7. Requiring good design

Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan Policies 2013

B1 Spatial Development Strategy and Distribution
B2 Sustainable Centre
C14 Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Policy
D1 Sustainable Development
D2 Economy
D8 Sustainable Travel
D10A Design

Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document 2013

Saved Borough Plan Policies 2007

BI4 Retention of employment commitments
HO20 Residential Amenity
NE16 Dev within 250m of former landfill site
NE17 Contaminated Land
UHT1 Design of New Development
UHT 4 Visual amenity
UHT8 Protection of Amenity Space
US5 Tidal Flood Risk
TR11 Car Parking

Site Description:

The site is situated at the corner of Pacific Drive and Pevensey Bay Road opposite the existing Harbour Medical Centre, and forms part of what is known as 'Site 6'. The Martello Roundabout to the north of the site gives access from Pevensey Bay Road onto Pacific Drive and onwards to Harbour Quay. Historic landfilling activities have previously been carried out on land adjacent to Site 6 which is currently used for boat storage.

Relevant Planning History for site 6:

An application for planning permission for the development of the whole of site 6 with the erection of a retail unit with garden centre and builders yard was refused on 20 June 2002 (Ref: 010587). The application was refused as the proposed development involved the unjustified and unacceptable loss of a large, strategically important site in a location identified by the Structure Plan for high quality business development and specifically allocated in both the adopted and revised deposit draft Eastbourne Borough Plan for B1 business purposes.

An application for planning permission for the development of the land for a mixed use development comprising office (class B1) and non-food retail (Class A1) floorspace with associated re-profiling of existing shingle mound, access servicing and car parking. This was refused on 8 November 2005 for among others the above same reason.

Proposed development:

The application proposes the construction of a new building consisting of three storey's totalling 2323m² net internal area for use within use classes B1 (a) (b) and (c), with 130 car parking spaces.

The scheme is designed so the building can be potentially subdivided into spaces from 30m² up to the entire building being let to a single tenant. Shared space is provided to allow integration between tenants and flexibility in that each tenant would not have to provide meeting rooms or breakout areas.

Ground floor spaces are likely to be occupied by start up businesses, and as such they need to be nearer to business support and spaces that allow interaction. Larger spaces are available on upper floors for businesses which are more established or that have outgrown the smaller ground floor units.

Consultations:

Internal Consultees:

Economic Development

The proposal is in line with the vision and objectives detailed in the Sovereign Harbour SPD and the Economic Development Team's viewpoint would be to support this application

Specialist Advisor - Arboriculture

This site contains a group of Pinus, Ulex, Hippophae and Acer along the northern boundary, this group is subject to Tree Preservation Order 77. The group is situated on a raised bund. This bund should be considered an essential rooting area for this group of trees and needs to be treated as the root protection area for this group. Any development of this site requires this information to be taken into consideration. The reason this bund is vitally important, is the surrounding ground conditions outside this mound are not conducive to root growth. The application appears to be outside the root protection area of this group but tree protection measures should still be installed prior to development.

Three other trees which should be considered and retained as part of the development are the Poplars situated in the north eastern corner of the site adjacent to the junction of Pevensy Bay Road and Pacific Drive. These trees were planted as part of the original landscaping plans at the beginning of the North Harbour development and create a mirror image with the three Poplars on the opposite side of the road in Site 7. These trees should be incorporated into any landscape design of both sites.

Specialist Advisor - Planning Policy

The application site is located within the Sovereign Harbour neighbourhood as identified in the Core Strategy. Sovereign Harbour has been identified as a Sustainable Centre, where housing growth will be balanced by significant improvements in the provision of social and employment infrastructure. The delivery of employment space within Sovereign Harbour has been a corporate priority for a number of years.

The application relates to a currently undecided outline application for the development of the remaining sites within Sovereign Harbour. This outline application proposes employment and office uses (B1 up to 15,000 sqm). This proposal is for 2,323 m² of B1 uses within a flexible space that could be occupied by a single occupier or a number of smaller occupiers that would encourage business support and interaction.

The Vision for Sovereign Harbour in the Core Strategy is: 'Sovereign Harbour will increase its levels of sustainability through the delivery of community infrastructure and employment development, ensuring that a holistic view is taken of development across the remaining sites'.

One of the main objectives identified in Core Strategy Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Policy for promoting the vision for Sovereign Harbour is providing extensive employment opportunities through the development of a Business Park (B1a Office). This policy is supported by the Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides additional guidance on the uses considered to be appropriate for each of the remaining development opportunity sites, including details of the size, scale and form of development.

The Sovereign Harbour SPD identifies Site 6 as being appropriate to provide employment through development as an office/business park. It identifies that the development should be of a high quality design with a maximum of three to four storeys and could provide up to 15,000 square metres of B1(a) office floorspace. It also identifies that the employment space should be flexible enough to allow different businesses at different stages of development, including start-up businesses, to occupy the office space. It is considered that this proposal is in conformity with the SPD.

Core Strategy Policy D2: Economy aims to support job growth and economic prosperity by measures including: Supporting the development of B1(a) office use at Sovereign Harbour, and land at Sovereign Harbour is identified for 30,000 sqm of B1(a) office floorspace. In addition, Borough Plan BI4: Retention of Employment Commitments protects Site 6 at Sovereign Harbour for 30,000 sqm of B1 office floorspace.

The emerging Employment Land Local Plan and the evidence from the Employment Land Review (2013) supports the development of B space on Site 6 within Sovereign Harbour, although at a reduced amount compared with current adopted policy. It also opens the site up to other B1 uses, rather than exclusively B1a (office) as identified in the Core Strategy.

In summary, the delivery of employment space at Sovereign Harbour has been a corporate priority for a number of years, and this proposal will help to initiate the development of a Business Park within Sovereign Harbour. It is in general conformity with the Core Strategy and the emerging Employment Land Local Plan, and is supported by evidence contained within the Employment Land Review (2013). Therefore this application is fully supported from a planning policy perspective.

External Consultees:

Health and Safety Executive

Advise of the proximity of pipelines in the wider vicinity of the site.

Sovereign Harbour Residents Association

This development is a very welcome start to the final phase of the Sovereign Harbour project, and the employment opportunities it will bring before, during and after the construction are very welcome, and will be a boost to the economy of the town and neighbourhood. The striking design of the innovation mall will form an impressive

gateway to the harbour and its construction will hopefully be a catalyst for further development on this site and site seven. For these reasons the application has the full support of the Sovereign Harbour Residents Association.

Environment Agency

No flooding objections to the principle of the developing of any of the key sites around Sovereign Harbour. Requested further details to be supplied covering SUDS and specific design issues.

County Ecologist

Given the location, scale and nature of the proposed development, there are unlikely to be any significant impacts on sites, statutory or non-statutory, designated for their nature conservation importance. The site comprises part of the former Crumbles shingle forland which has been subject to historic sand and gravel extraction and subsequent landfilling. Currently the site comprises shingle which has become vegetated with ephemeral and tall reteral vegetation and scrub, hardstanding and some ornamental planting.

The vegetated area includes some species indicative of coastal vegetated shingle. Despite that, given the extent of enrichment and disturbance on the site, overall it is considered to be of relatively low ecological interest with respect to habitats. The landscaping scheme for the proposed development should include areas of bare shingle which should be left undisturbed and allowed to recolonise naturally; some native shingle plants, particularly sea pea which is a rarity in East Sussex, should be translocated to retained shingle areas within the site, and/or seeds of shingle plants should be collected and scattered on retained shingle.

The reptile surveys found that the site supports a good population of common lizards; mitigation will be required to avoid any harm. A reptile mitigation strategy specific to the current application (the one submitted relates to the whole of site 6) will need to be submitted; with further information included as to where the reptiles will be relocated to and how those areas will be enhanced and protected in the long term.

The site has the potential to support breeding birds; to avoid disturbance to nesting birds, any removal of scrub/trees that could provide nesting habitat should be carried out outside the breeding season (generally March to August) unless site survey confirms absence of nesting birds.

There are opportunities to be sought for biodiversity enhancements to help the Council address its duties and responsibilities which include the provision of log/brush piles around the boundaries of the site, the use of boardwalks in shingle areas rather than tarmac and the landscaping scheme should use appropriate species for the local conditions, or value to wildlife.

Minerals and Waste Unit Local Highway Manager

Natural England

No objections raised and no specific comments made in relation to the site.

Southern Water

No objections raised, suggested conditions in relation to soakaways for surface water drainage and an informative in relation to connection to the public sewer.

Neighbour Representations:

1 letter of comment has been received from a resident of North Harbour regarding access to the site should be safe for traffic and pedestrians, and that every effort is made to ensure the safety of nearby residents regarding disturbance to the contaminated land.

Applicant's Submissions

- This application provides a detailed application within the scope of the outline planning application by Sovereign Harbour Limited.
- The application will achieve delivery of the long-sought employment uses for Sovereign Harbour.
- The overarching design objectives are to create a building that is a safe, attractive and healthy building fitting sympathetically into the surrounding landscape.
- The site presents the opportunity to provide a 'gateway' feature as part of the building design. The wider site and the constraints placed upon it have informed the orientation of the building.
- Three storeys with a central atrium sits well in the wider context particularly given the distance across Langney Sewer to low rise housing and the height of existing development on the harbour.

Appraisal:

Principle of the development

Sovereign harbour is one of the newest areas of Eastbourne, having been developed from a shingle landscape to an important leisure attraction and residential area over the last 20 years. The development consists of four separate harbours, a retail park and a variety of different housing development. The Sovereign Harbour SPD recognises that the completion of the Sovereign Harbour development is long overdue and that the area is missing the social and economic infrastructure that is required for it to become a sustainable community.

Sovereign Harbour has been identified in the Core Strategy Local Plan as a Sustainable Centre, where housing growth will be balanced by significant improvements in the provision of social and employment infrastructure. This will improve the sustainability of the Sovereign Harbour neighbourhood by addressing issues such as site access, linkages and contributions to additional community infrastructure. The delivery of employment space within Sovereign Harbour has been a corporate priority for a number of years.

The application relates to a currently undecided outline application for the development of the remaining sites within Sovereign Harbour. This outline application proposes employment and office uses (B1 up to 15,000 sqm).

One of the main objectives identified in Core Strategy Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Policy for promoting the vision for Sovereign Harbour is providing extensive employment opportunities through the development of a Business Park (B1a Office). The proposal the subject of this report is for 2,323m² of B1 uses within a flexible

space that could be occupied by a single occupier or a number of smaller occupiers that would encourage business support and interaction. This proposal will help to establish Site 6 as a location for future employment development to create a Business Park, and will assist in delivering the identified amount of business floorspace within Sovereign Harbour.

Core Strategy Policy C14: Sovereign Harbour Neighbourhood Policy is supported by the Sovereign Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides additional guidance on the uses considered to be appropriate for each of the remaining development opportunity sites, including details of the size, scale and form of development. This SPD identifies that the development on site 6 should be of a high quality design with a maximum of three to four storeys and could provide up to 15,000 square metres of B1(a) office floorspace. It also identifies that the employment space should be flexible enough to allow different businesses at different stages of development, including start-up businesses, to occupy the office space. It is considered that this proposal is in conformity with the SPD.

Design

Site 6 forms part of the northern edge of Sovereign Harbour adjacent to the A259 Pevensy Bay Road, and is a significant part of an important public frontage and entrance to the Harbour. The site provides an opportunity to improve the presence and access to the Harbour, and has a role to play in creating a gateway to Eastbourne.

The application presents the opportunity to provide a 'gateway' feature as part of the building design; the design is modern in external appearance and proposes the use of limited range of materials to minimise the massing of the building.

The design of the building with a central atrium actively encourages tenants to use the space for circulation, breakout, meetings and socialising and interaction. The provided office space is intended to be as open and uninhabited as possible. This gives ultimate flexibility within the building, which can more easily follow market forces and react as each tenants show an interest in taking space. Cores containing frequently used facilities such as washrooms and breakout areas are accessed from the central atrium, while the fire escape a less frequently used facility are enclosed and accessed via either end of the main core.

The intention is to reinforce the simple massing arrangement by using a limited range of materials. The office block is proposed to be clad in a dark coloured horizontal format rainscreen cladding, above a masonry base. Each feature 'core' at the ends of the atrium will be clad in a horizontal format metal cladding. All external materials will be controlled via planning consideration.

A Brise Soleil will be added to the south-western façade to provide shelter and interest. Louvred cladding is proposed to the external fire escape staircases, the blades are proposed to be angled so from some angles they appear as solid structures.

The design is considered appropriate for the setting, providing a modern design with interesting elevational detailing which enhances the character and appearance of the locality and provides a landmark feature and a gateway into the town.

The scheme is intended to be naturally ventilated as far as possible, and natural daylight is maximised by large windows set high in the façade at each level and a large glazed atrium central to the building. This allows deep penetration of daylight and allows borrowing of light across the building, reducing the requirement for artificial lighting. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Paragraphs 56- 58 of the NPPF state good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; and that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area and will establish a strong sense of place.

Highways impacts

The site is located just off the Martello Roundabout which links Pevensey Bay Road and the main access to the north harbour, Pacific Drive. Given the location it is considered there will be little impact on the surrounding road network within the Harbour in terms of additional traffic.

The parking provision is considered to be sufficient for the space created and it is unlikely given the location of the site that there would be any additional impacts on parking in the surrounding residential areas.

Although a large car park of 130 spaces is to be provided there must be ongoing consideration for green travel methods. The site is close to several bus stops, and secure cycle parking is to be provided on site.

The proposed parking layout incorporates the potential to access other parts of the site 6 if needed.

Trees/landscaping

The trees the subject of the Tree Preservation Order are retained by this scheme.

The submission of a detailed landscaping scheme for the site will be required by condition.

Other matters

There is considered to be limited impact on the amenity of residential properties in the surrounding area given the location of the building and the context of the site.

The reptile survey has identified a good population of common lizards at the site, whilst the County Ecologist has raised some concerns in relation to the reptile mitigation survey any concerns can be dealt with by condition and the requirement for a mitigation strategy specific to this proposal.

Contamination

The land adjacent to site 6 has been used for historic landfill purposes. The remaining shingle mound falls outside of the application site, and is used informally as open space.

It is possible that contamination may be present either as impacted soils or groundwater or unidentified landfilling. Unidentified contamination can be dealt with by condition.

Human Rights Implications:

The impact of the application has been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken as part of the application process and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

Conclusion:

In conclusion the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle, the design is modern and respects the character of the area whilst providing an attractive gateway development to the Harbour and to the Town and therefore it is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.

Recommendation: Grant planning permission subject to conditions.

Conditions:

- 1) Time limit for commencement.
- 2) In accordance with drawings.
- 3) Materials
- 4) Parking to be laid out prior to occupation.
- 5) Details of cycle parking and refuse storage to be submitted for approval and provided out prior to occupation.
- 6) T4 Tree and natural feature protection fencing.
- 7) T5 Tree Protection: No burning.
- 8) T6 Tree Protection: Excavations regarding the bund associated with TPO 77.
- 9) T8 Tree Surgery.
- 10) T10 Landscape design Proposals relating to species and size of hedging and trees
- 11) T15 Landscape maintenance
- 12) Submission of reptile mitigation strategy.
- 13) Removal of scrub outside bird breeding season (March-August) unless demonstrated absence of breeding bird species
- 14) Submission of detailed landscaping plan
- 15) Details of means of foul and surface water sewage disposal.
- 16) Standard hours of construction conditions
- 17) Construction method statement
- 18) Provision of wheel-washing facilities
- 19) Submission of layout plan which shows provision of a footpath/cycle path linkage through the site
- 20) Contaminated land

Informatives

Proposed advertisements may require advertisement consent.
Southern water informative on connection to sewer.