

# SMART Dojos Headquarters

## PLANNING STATEMENT

Rev. v1

Date: 09 May 2021

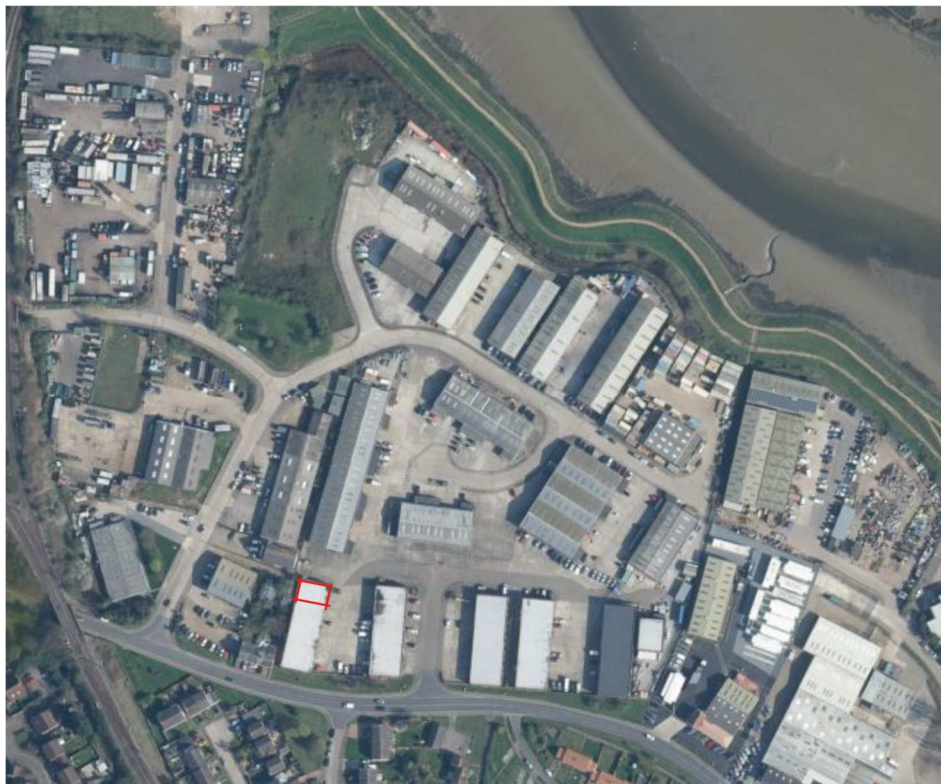
### The Application Description

This Application is for change of use of the existing light industrial/storage unit (B1(c), B2 & B8 uses) to mixed use B1 (office), B8 (storage), D2 (leisure) use to provide a Headquarters office, storage, and a small training area for a martial arts club SMART Dojos.

### The existing site/building location

Site address: Unit 6, Jubilee End, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex, CO11 1UR.

The Unit is part of an existing larger light industrial units' estate. This popular industrial development is situated approximately ½ mile to the West of Manningtree in an established industrial area with direct access onto the B1352 which links to the A137 leading to Colchester and Ipswich. The development provides a variety of units mainly of steel portal frame construction with brick and profile steel elevations.



The unit concerned sits on the end of a block of six with ample parking around it and on the approach. The existing layout has an open floor area with a reception and an office area, a male/female toilet, and a kitchenette with all mains services. It is accessed by two pedestrian doors, one front, one back, and a loading door from the forecourt at the front.

Of the neighbouring Units, No 1 & 2 belongs to the site owners, No 3 & 4 are Dunninghams Tool Hire and Sales with No 5 & 6 currently vacant.

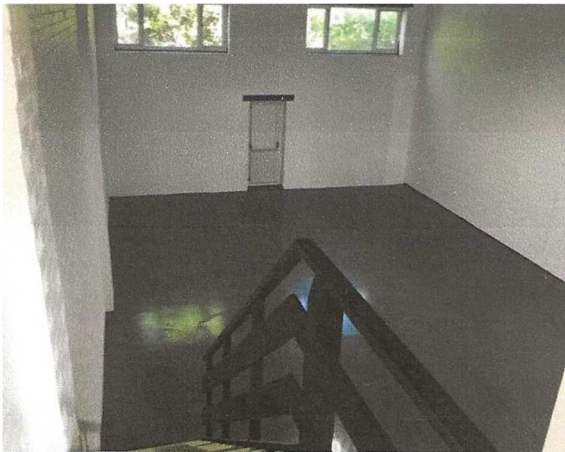
Out of the units opposite (No 7-12), three are empty and three occupied by a Carpet, Tile & Flooring salesroom; a plastics vacuum forming company and a sculptures studio.

Other units on site include a bespoke lighting design and sales company, a T-shirt printing company, a kebab shop and fast food eat in/takeaway shop; an office furniture outlet and a Prestige Car company.



**SITE LOCATION PLAN**  
Scale 1:1250





## **Proposed change of Use**

The primary use for the premises is for it to become the Head Office/Headquarters (HQ) for SMART Dojos Martial Arts Academy. This is in preparation for the post Covid 19 re-opening of existing Holbrook and East Bergholt Sports Centre Academies and with the intended, planned new opening of SMART Academies at Brightlingsea and Manningtree Sports Centres.

It is also intended, in the event of any Sports Centre closing, to keep the business going (as happened for COVID 19 lockdown), to be able to deliver (behind closed doors) online training from the premises via a video app for business continuity.

As HQ, it will hold a store area to accommodate all the students kit, equipment and uniforms for distribution at the afore mentioned locations.

The HQ would hold the monthly staff training sessions (at a weekend) and any other business meetings.

The intention is also to be able to conduct pre-booked, private one to one lessons to facilitate enhanced training for those students wishing to accelerate their skills in their chosen Martial Art.

Occasionally the HQ would hold educational and training courses (Ladies self-defence and Adult Knife awareness courses) approximately six times a year, of usually only a few hours and at the weekends with no more than 10-16 people attending.

## **Proposed Opening Hours**

Our hours of work will predominately be outside the normal working day of the other tenants, namely evenings 5:00pm - 8:30pm and weekends (usually AM) for Staff training and any educational courses. There is no requirement to use the premises as a full-time location as most of our students have full time employment and are only able to train evenings or weekends and do so in the classes, we run at the Sports Centres mentioned above.

The intention is not to be a walk-in centre for the public. All staff, students and visitors will attend SMART HQ having been booked in, in advance, onto a planned staff meeting, a private session or training/educational course. Much like the standards and ethos engrained into the business owner during his 25year military service in the Royal Marines, it will be a relaxed but controlled and disciplined business environment to help grow the Academy.

There will be no music or unsociable behaviour at any time to upset or annoy the other tenants.

## **Planning History**

20/30106/PREAPP Proposed Change of use from B1@, B2 and current B8 to Mixed Use.

## **Relevant Policies**

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework Feb 2019

Flooding Risk - The application site falls within Flood Zone 3a of high probability of flooring, but it is currently being protected by a raised embarkment.

The water-compatible and less vulnerable uses of land (table 2) are appropriate in this zone. The highly vulnerable uses should not be permitted in this zone.



The more vulnerable uses and essential infrastructure should only be permitted in this zone if the Exception Test is passed. Essential infrastructure permitted in this zone should be designed and constructed to remain operational and safe for users in times of flood.

**Table 3: Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone ‘compatibility’**

Flood risk vulnerability classification (see table 2)		Essential infrastructure	Water compatible	Highly vulnerable	More vulnerable	Less vulnerable
Flood zone (see table 1)	Zone 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Zone 2	✓	✓	Exception Test required	✓	✓
	Zone 3a	Exception Test required	✓	x	Exception Test required	✓
	Zone 3b functional floodplain	Exception Test required	✓	x	x	x

**Table 2: Flood risk vulnerability classification**

<p><b>Essential infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential transport infrastructure (including mass evacuation routes) which has to cross the area at risk.</li> <li>• Essential utility infrastructure which has to be located in a flood risk area for operational reasons, including electricity generating power stations and grid and primary substations; and water treatment works that need to remain operational in times of flood.</li> <li>• Wind turbines.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Highly vulnerable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police stations, ambulance stations and fire stations and command centres and telecommunications installations required to be operational during flooding.</li> <li>• Emergency dispersal points.</li> <li>• Basement dwellings.</li> <li>• Caravans, mobile homes and park homes intended for permanent residential use<sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>• Installations requiring hazardous substances consent<sup>4</sup>. (Where there is a demonstrable need to locate such installations for bulk storage of materials with port or other similar facilities, or such installations with energy infrastructure or carbon capture and storage installations, that require coastal or water-side locations, or need to be located in other high flood risk areas, in these instances the facilities should be classified as “essential infrastructure”<sup>5</sup>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>More vulnerable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitals.</li> <li>• Residential institutions such as residential care homes, children’s homes, social services homes, prisons and hostels.</li> <li>• Buildings used for dwelling houses, student halls of residence, drinking establishments, nightclubs and hotels.</li> <li>• Non-residential uses for health services, nurseries and educational establishments.</li> <li>• Landfill and sites used for waste management facilities for hazardous waste<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>• Sites used for holiday or short-let caravans and camping, <i>subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan</i>.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Less vulnerable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police, ambulance and fire stations which are <i>not</i> required to be operational during flooding.</li> <li>• Buildings used for shops, financial, professional and other services,</li> </ul>

restaurants and cafes, hot food takeaways, offices, general industry, storage and distribution, non-residential institutions not included in "more vulnerable", and assembly and leisure.

- Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry.
- Waste treatment (except landfill and hazardous waste facilities).
- Minerals working and processing (except for sand and gravel working).
- Water treatment works which do *not* need to remain operational during times of flood.
- Sewage treatment works (if adequate measures to control pollution and manage sewage during flooding events are in place).

**Water-compatible development**

- Flood control infrastructure.
- Water transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sewage transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sand and gravel working.
- Docks, marinas and wharves.
- Navigation facilities.
- Ministry of Defence defence installations.
- Ship building, repairing and dismantling, dockside fish processing and refrigeration and compatible activities requiring a waterside location.
- Water-based recreation (excluding sleeping accommodation).
- Lifeguard and coastguard stations.
- Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms.
- Essential ancillary sleeping or residential accommodation for staff required by uses in this category, *subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan.*

National Planning Policy Framework also advises that 'planning policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices, and to enable a rapid response to changing economic circumstances', which is relevant to this application.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Tendering District Local Plan

- QL1 Spatial Strategy
- QL3 Minimizing and Managing Flood Risk
- QL9 Design of New Development
- QL11 Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses
- ER2 Principal Business and Industrial Areas

The commercial units at Jubilee End are designated for employment use (use classes B1, B2 and B8) under Policy ER1 and 'Principal Business and Industrial Area' under policy ER2 of the adopted Tendering District Local Plan 2007.

In respect of the merits of the proposal, the policies contained in Chapter 3 of the adopted local plan aim to strengthen the economy and to promote regeneration for Tendering District.

Residential Amenities – The unit is set deep into the site and is surrounded by other existing industrial units. The nearest residential properties are located to the South, on the opposite side of the Station Road B1352, therefore the proposal to change the use of the unit would not adversely impact on the amenity of these residential properties.

Tendering District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft (June 2017)

- SP1 Presumption in Favor of Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Design

- Development and Flood Risk

The site is protected by Policy PP6 'Employment Sites' in the draft Tendering District Local Plan 2013-2033 (2017), although with recognition also given to the appropriateness of the employment generating other uses. The policy states that the Council 'will seek to protect existing employment sites, as set out in the Council's current Employment Land Review'. These will be safeguarded for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage or Distribution) purposes and uses that are classified as sui generis if they are akin to employment type uses and also where appropriate A1 (Retail).

#### Local Planning Guidance

- Essex County Council Car Parking Standards – Design and Good Practice

The site has existing parking to its forecourt and side to cater for the movements associated with the uses proposed. Due to the nature of the business, the unit will be used mostly in the evening or at the weekend, when other units are closed therefore more parking spaces available.

The business operates as not a walk-in centre for the public. All staff, students and visitors that will attend SMART HQ will be booked in in advance. On day-to-day operational basis there will be 2 members of staff. Additional movement will occur for pre-planned meetings or small private lessons of approx. 4 to maximum 8 students. The HQ would hold the monthly Staff training sessions (at a weekend) and any other business meetings. Occasionally the HQ would hold educational and training courses (Ladies self-defence and Adult Knife awareness courses) approximately six times a year, of usually only a few hours and at the weekends with no more than 10-16 people attending.

#### **Summary**

The proposed application use for the site falls under the 'Less Vulnerable' category in accordance with the Table 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the proposed development change in use is deemed as appropriate in accordance with Table 3 (as included above).

With regards to the Tendering District Local Plan and policies above, while those recognise the valuable role of locally important existing employment areas and seek to protect them from loss to alternative uses, it is important to note that many of the units are currently vacant, thus at present they are not generating any employment or bringing in revenues into the District and therefore not contributing to Council's objective regarding strengthening of the local economy.

The proposed multi-use for the unit is to accommodate a local employment generating business, which will positively contribute to the Tendering District economy. The unit would retain the large office use (B1) areas and storage (B8) with conjunction with D2 leisure use, required due to the nature of the business.