

planning
transport
design
environment
infrastructure

The Pump House, East Farleigh.

Planning and Transport Statement.

February 2023
PR/JH/16835.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of statement

1.1.1 This statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of the Applicant 'Chord Electronics Ltd' (hereafter 'The Applicant'), to accompany a full detailed planning application and listed building consent application for an additional roof level to The Pumhouse, East Farleigh (hereafter 'The Site').

1.1.2 This application follows from pre-application advice with Maidstone Borough Council Planning Officers reference: 22/505516/PAMEET. Planning permission and listed building consent is sought for:

"Roof level addition to the existing building to create additional business space".

1.1.3 Chord Electronics is an established designer and manufacturer of high-end HiFi electronics. The company has operated from the site since 1989. The company is a local success storey and business has grown rapidly.

1.1.4 The proposed roof addition will allow Chord Electronics a specifically designed internal space to host meetings and will provide an area for training. The development will support the company on the East Farleigh site, safeguarding its operations in this location in the medium and long-term.

1.1.5 The proposed development will be within the same E Class usage as the rest of the site (commercial / light industrial).

1.1.6 This statement addresses Planning and Transport matters.

1.2 Document Structure

1.2.1 This statement provides an overview of the site, its context and the relevant planning history, as well as a review of the applicable Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and other relevant guidance. It concludes that the proposal is appropriate in planning terms and accordingly requests that planning permission be granted.

1.3 Application documents

1.3.1 This statement is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Reference	Title	Author
	Application Form	DHA Planning.
PR/JH/16835	Planning and Transport Statement.	DHA Planning.
8826A	Heritage Statement.	Heritage Collective UK.
1/SPH/KC.	Daylight/Sunlight.	Herrington Consulting Ltd.
6870-AEA-ZZ-XX- RP-Z-2500	Flood Risk Assessment.	Ambiental Environmental Assessment.

1.3.2 This application is accompanied by the following proposed plans, drawings and visualisations by Felix Lewis Architects.

Drawing Title	Architect.
Existing Site Plan (Location).	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Site Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed Site Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Ground Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Upper Ground Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing First Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Second Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Roof Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing South Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing East Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing North Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing West Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Existing Section AA	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed Second Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed Third Floor Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed Roof Plan.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed South Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed East Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed North Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed West Elevation.	Felix Lewis Architects.
Proposed Section AA.	Felix Lewis Architects.

2 Site and Surroundings

2.1 Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1.1 The site comprises The Pump House ('The Site'). The site is within commercial / light industrial use as part of Chord's operation on the wider site.
- 2.1.2 Whilst the building is not Listed, the Council considers it to be curtilage listed by virtue of its relationship and proximity to the Water Works, a Grade II Listed 'Neo-Egyptian' style Building which lies some 10m to the south of the application site and is within the same ownership. The East Farleigh Lower Road Conservation Area ('CA') lies to the south of the site across the river. Whilst the site is not a Locally Listed Building, consideration is given to both the Conservation Area and Listed Building throughout the document.
- 2.1.3 The building sits beyond the northern bank of the river Medway near the historic 14th Century East Farleigh Bridge, a Grade I Scheduled Monument.
- 2.1.4 The application site is also noted is falling within the "Maidstone to Watlington: Quarry Wood Valley" Landscape Character Area.
- 2.1.5 Part of the site falls within an Area of Archaeological Potential and falls entirely within Flood Zone 3.
- 2.1.6 To the north of the Medway and to the south of the Medway Valley Line railway, the immediate area has a mixed character with a range of commercial and former industrial buildings (including the site) siting alongside cottages, apartments, and the Riverside Park chalet site. Boats are moored both sides of the river in this location and the Medway Valley Path runs to the south of the site and under the adjacent low arch of Farleigh Bridge.
- 2.1.7 The valley sides rise up to the north and the south relatively steeply giving views down towards the site and the bridge, particularly from Station Hill and the church grounds.

2.2 Site Accessibility

- 2.2.1 East Farleigh is a rural settlement for the purposes of the Maidstone Local Plan, albeit the bridge and the railway provide important connections into and from Maidstone and outlying areas. The site is approximately 1 mile from Barming by road and a convenient cycle or rail journey (c.8 minutes) into the centre of Maidstone.
- 2.2.2 The site lies 60m to the west of East Farleigh Train Station, which provides services to Strood and Paddock Wood. Service along the line is provided to Maidstone West and Maidstone Barracks, which provides access to Maidstone East and other stations beyond.

2.3 Planning History

2.3.1 The site has extensive planning history, all of which can be found on Maidstone Borough Council's Planning History database website. We consider the key ones to be as listed below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
96/1517	Listed Building Consent application for alterations internally and externally including new fenestration staircases garage doorway and velux rooflights as shown on dwg nos 1903/1 2A 3 and 4 received on 13.11.96. and dwg nos 1903/2B and 4A received 30.01.97.	Approved.
96/1559	Alterations and insertion of additional first floor to existing workshop including insertion of garaging doorway as shown on dwg nos 1903/1 2A 3 and 4 received 13/11/96 and dwg nos 1903/2B & 4A received 30.01.97.	Approved.
96/0788	Change of use and conversion of existing buildings to provide three no. dwellings with associated parking and amenity areas	Approved.
97/0655	Listed Building Consent for the insertion of 3 rooflights as shown on drawing no.1903/8 received on 6 May 1997.	Approved.
97/3438	Listed Building Consent application for alterations internally and externally including new fenestration staircases garage doorway and velux rooflights - Submission of details pursuant to condition 02 of MA/96/1517S being details of the revised front entrance doors.	Approved.
97/1135	Advertisement consent application to install a wall mounted sign to east elevation as shown on drawing nos. 1903/4B and 5 1903/17 received on 08.08.97.	Approved.

2.4 Pre-Application Advice

2.4.1 Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') is clear that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community. Paragraph 41 continues on the above point, and highlights that the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits.

2.4.2 A pre-application meeting was held with a Senior Officer of Maidstone Borough Council. The pre-application concluded that the principle of the proposed development was acceptable, subject to some amendments to fenestration, a reduced level of glazing and the incorporation of louvres.



Figure 1: Pre-application Elevation with glazed extension.

2.4.3 An updated and revised scheme was submitted to officers in January 2023 for comment which incorporated the requested changes and it was met from general support by the planning and conservation officers.



Figure 2: Amended pre-application extension.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 Summary of the Proposal

- 3.1.1 The proposal involves an addition to the top floor of the existing building, creating an extra storey for additional business space.
- 3.1.2 The amended design has taken pre-application advice into consideration and has proposed an extension which reduces the level of glazing in comparison with the initial proposals for the site. The amended design proposes brick gable ends instead of glazed gable ends, with some glazing under eave levels to be surrounded by brise soleil, which will help reduce the amount of glazing visible. This will also help reduce the amount of glare reflected of the glazing.
- 3.1.3 Solar panels are proposed on the west elevation of the roof. We note that officers did not raised issue with this during the pre-application meetings.

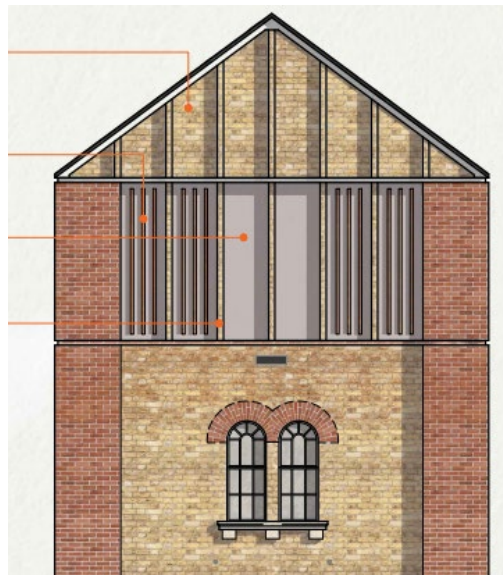


Figure 3: Proposed North Elevation.



Figure 4: Proposed West Elevation.

4 Planning Policy Framework

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 Under the provisions of Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 This section sets out the relevant policies of the statutory development plan and refers to any other material considerations that should be taken into account in determining this application.
- 4.1.3 In this case, the following documents are relevant to the application:
- Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan 2017;
 - National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”, “The Framework”);
- 4.1.4 Maidstone Borough Council’s Supplementary Planning Documents may be considered in the determination of the application as material considerations.
- 4.1.5 The emerging Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan will also be considered, albeit not afforded full weight due to the fact that it has yet to be heard at Examination in Public (‘EIP’).

4.2 Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan 2017

- Policy SS1: Maidstone Borough Spatial Strategy;
- Policy SP17: Countryside;
- Policy SP18: Historic Environment;
- Policy SP21: Economic Development;
- Policy SP22: Retention Of Employment Sites;
- Policy DM1: Principle Of Good Design;
- Policy DM2: Sustainable Design;
- Policy DM3: Natural Environment;
- Policy DM4: Development Affecting A Designated Or Non-Designated Heritage Asset;
- Policy DM5: Development On Brownfield Land;
- Policy DM21: Assessing The Transport Impact Of Development;
- Policy DM30: Design Principles in The Countryside;
- Policy DM37: Expansion of Existing Business in Rural Areas.

4.3 National Planning Policy Framework

- Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development;
- Section 4: Decision Making;
- Section 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy;
- Section 11: Making Effective Use of Land;
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places;
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

4.4 Maidstone Draft Local Plan

- Policy LPRS7: Larger villages;
- Policy LPRSP7(A): East Farleigh;
- Policy LPRSP11: Economic development;
- Policy LPRSP11(A): Safeguarding existing employment sites and premises;
- Policy LPRSP11(B): Creating new employment opportunities;
- Policy LPRSP12: Sustainable transport;
- Policy LPRSP14: Environment;
- Policy LPRSP14(A): Natural environment;
- Policy LPRSP14(B): Historic environment;
- Policy LPRSP14(C): Climate change;
- Policy LPRSP15: Design;
- Policy LPRSS1: Spatial strategy;
- Policy LPRTRA2: Assessing transport impacts;
- Policy LPRTRA4: Parking;
- Policy LPRENV1: Historic environment;
- Policy LPRQ&D1: Sustainable design; and
- Policy LPRQ&D2: External lighting.

5 Planning Assessment

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section of the statement provides an assessment of the proposals against the relevant policies of the development plan, along with any material considerations.
- 5.1.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permissions to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.3 This report concludes with a 'balancing' of the planning issues, concluding that the development is entirely in accordance with the development plan and national policies.
- 5.1.4 The following matters are considered to be relevant to this planning application:
- Principle of Development (Economic Benefits).
 - Heritage Matters.
 - Residential Amenity.

5.2 Principle of Development

- 5.2.1 Chapter 2 of the NPPF makes clear that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8a highlights that there is an economic objective, which requires the planning system to support and help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- 5.2.2 Section 6 of the Framework expands on the above, stating that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 81 makes clear that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local businesses needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, with the paragraph noting that this is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation.
- 5.2.3 Local Plan Policy DM37 sets out that 'planning permission will be granted for the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses in the rural area where buildings are of an appropriate scale, not result in 'unacceptable traffic levels' or increased use of a substandard access, where they are acceptable in amenity terms and do not relate to open storage. In addition, Policy SS1 of the Local Plan supports appropriate small scale employment opportunities in rural areas, as well as the preservation of the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 5.2.4 Chord Electronics are an established designer and manufacturer of high-end HiFi products, having been established in 1989. Chord Electronics is a key generator of high skilled manufacturing jobs.

- 5.2.5 Chord Electronics have experienced exponentially growth over the last decade or so, and whilst expanding operations into 'The Works' provided much needed additional space, custom built space with high acoustic qualities is required to showcase products, provide quality meeting space and an area for training. With this additional space, Chord's operation on the site (and the job opportunities available in the company) are safeguarded in the medium and long-term.
- 5.2.6 The additional floor space will not result in more employees being present on the site at any one time *but* will improve the existing function of the Chord Electronics site. Policy SP21 is clear that the Council is committed to supporting and improving the economy of the borough and providing for the needs of business. This will be achieved by allowing the expansion of existing economic development premises in the countryside, providing that the scale and impact of the development is appropriate for its countryside location.
- 5.2.7 Mindful that the principle of development was supported within the written pre-application advice, this statement now turns attention to other matters.

5.3 Heritage

- 5.3.1 A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) produced by Heritage Collective UK accompanies this planning application.
- 5.3.2 The HIA notes that the former pumping house is of interest as a result of its architectural and historical significance as an early Victorian pumping house. Whilst the building is not nationally or locally listed, its relationship with The Works does mean that it possesses some architectural merit.
- 5.3.3 The HIA makes clear that the roof extension will restore the building to its original height. Its pitched roof form will replicate the original roof form.
- 5.3.4 The HIA concludes that the development will not result in harm to the heritage significance of the Grade II Listed Building (The Works) or to the curtilage building (The Old Pump House) due to the quality of materials proposed, the fact that the development restores the building to its previous height and due to the architectural quality of the design.
- 5.3.5 The HIA concludes that the proposal will not result in harm to the significance of the Old Pump House or The Works and therefore paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF are not engaged. There is complete compliance with Policy DM4 of the Maidstone Local Plan.
- 5.3.6 The assessment concludes that the development will cause no harm to the significance of other heritage considerations nearby, including East Farleigh Bridge, Bridge House, East Farleigh Lower Road Conservation Area and Church of St Mary.

5.4 Residential Amenity

- 5.4.1 The pre-application advice notes that there are residential properties in proximity of the proposed building, including Riverside Park to the west of the site and a pair of semi-detached cottages that front onto Farleigh Lane. Whilst the pre-app is

clear that Officer's consider that given the existing scale of the building, as well as the separation distances between the site and the surrounding residential development, that there is unlikely to be any unacceptable loss of light and outlook, this is a matter which still required demonstrating.

- 5.4.2 As such, a daylight/sunlight report has been commissioned by the applicant and accompanies this full planning application.
- 5.4.3 The report notes that four properties had been identified as sensitive receptors for the proposed development, and therefore the habitable rooms and the windows serving the rooms within these properties had been tested.
- 5.4.4 The impact of development is within the acceptable limits as set out within the BRE Guidelines and therefore it is possible to conclude that any changes to the daylight received by the nearby habitable rooms of the neighbouring buildings will not be significant and is unlikely to be noticeable by the occupants.
- 5.4.5 The report also considers that the proposed design will not result in unacceptable glare to neighbouring properties.
- 5.4.6 In summary, the development will not result in a notable reduction in the amount of daylight or sunlight enjoyed by the neighbouring properties, and we therefore consider that the development should not be refused based on daylight/sunlight impacts.
- 5.4.7 Because of the position of the building and the elevation of the proposed additions, as well as the use of louvres, the development will not result in any additional unacceptable overlooking of neighbouring residential properties. There is reduced sensitivity in any case on account of the proposed use of the building as commercial (rather than residential); there will not be anybody on the site after business hours, for example.
- 5.4.8 The operations carried out on the site by Chord will change and, as such, these proposals would have no additional effects in terms of noise and other general amenity impacts.

5.5 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 5.5.1 The proposals are for non-residential and non-retail floorspace and as such are not liable for a Community Infrastructure Levy charge according to the Council's adopted charging schedule.

6 Transport Statement

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Officers requested that a Transport Statement should be submitted with any planning application to address the access and parking situation, demonstrating that the proposal will not have an adverse impact in terms highway safety.

6.1.2 In this regard, Paragraph 111 of the Framework is clear that:

"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe".

We conclude below that the proposals would not have severe cumulative impacts upon the road network (and, in fact, it would have no material impact upon highway).

Accessibility of the Site

6.1.3 Whilst it is located in a 'rural settlement' for the purposes of the Local Plan, the site well connected by sustainable transport means to Maidstone and other major towns by way of the nearby railway station, providing connections to Maidstone town centre, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge and the Medway Towns.

6.1.4 The footpath which passes in front of the site provides a pedestrian and cycle connection to Maidstone.

Trip Generation

6.1.5 The application will not increase the amount of people employed on the site. The development is to allow for additional internal space for meetings and training and will not result in additional staffing numbers.

6.1.6 It is not considered that the development will result in additional visitors coming to the site either. Visitors currently come to the site to view and listen to audio products, albeit, at present, there is not a designated room to host visitors. The proposed developments will not make visitor trips more frequent but will provide a dedicate space to showcase products.

6.1.7 As made clear from the existing and proposed site plans, the development currently provides and will provide 8 parking spaces in the same location (additional to spaces within the ownership and control of Chord to the south of the Works building). Nothing within the grounds of the building will change as part of the development.

6.1.8 The access/egress will remain unchanged.

6.1.9 Given the above, it is not considered that the development will result in any harm or significant change to the surrounding highway.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Summary

- 7.1.1 The proposal provides the opportunity to support an expanding and well established rural business in line with Paragraph 84 of the Framework and the policies of the development plan.
- 7.1.2 The application has been subject to detailed pre-application advice and has been amended to respond to officer's helpful comments on design, including the reduction in the extent of glazing proposed at roof level.
- 7.1.3 This scheme shows both gable ends matching existing brickwork. Brise-soleil has also been included, covering some of the proposed windows. This will help reduce that amount of glazing that is visible as well as reduce any likelihood of glare.
- 7.1.4 The proposal will result in direct economic benefits for East Farleigh and the wider Borough through the managed and sustainable expansion of an existing company, allowing it to continue and support its growing development.
- 7.1.5 Given the above, it is formally requested that Planning Permission be granted.
- 7.1.6 If clarity is needed regarding any of the information provided, or indeed if I can be of further assistance, please do contact Patrick.reedman@dhaplanning.co.uk and jack.harley@dhaplanning.co.uk