

Your Ref: **PP-13166674**
Our Ref: HPD/CD/CM/23/150
Date: 20 June 2024

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Town Hall
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Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: UNITS 1 & 2 SEDGLEY PARK TRADING ESTATE, PRESTWICH, M25 9WD

On behalf of our client, Screwfix Direct Limited, we are instructed to submit a planning application for the amalgamation and change of use of the abovementioned premises from Class E(g) (Light Industrial) to Class B8 (Storage or Distribution), together with associated external alterations.

Accordingly, please find enclosed the following documents which comprise in addition to this letter, the application:

- Duly completed Planning Application Form;
- Completed Certificate B and Copy of Notice as served;
- Site Location Plan at scale 1:1,250 with the site edged in red;
- Existing Plans (Dwg no. 10715-103-01);
- Existing Elevations (Dwg no. 10715-103-02);
- Proposed Plans (Dwg no. 10715-103-03);
- Proposed Elevations (Dwg no. 10715-103-04);
- Block Plan (Dwg no. 10715-103-05);
- Vehicle Tracking Plan (Dwg no. 10715-103-07); and
- Screwfix Transport Assessment Form.

The statutory application fee of £578.00 has been paid electronically by card following submission of this application via the Planning Portal.

The following sections of this letter outline the planning history for the site, Screwfix's proposed operation, and an assessment of the proposal against the relevant national and local planning policy.

PLANNING HISTORY

- LPA Ref: 59705 – Re-construction of 4 no. fire damaged industrial units. Approved 14 April 2016.
- LPA Ref: 61592 – Non-material amendment following grant of planning permission 59705 for reconstruction of 4 no. fire damaged industrial units: 1) Amend all approved external facing brickwork

2) Amend approved external roof and wall cladding specification 3) Amend approved external wall cladding colour. Approved July 2017.

There is no later planning history in relation to the site. In light of the above, we understand that the lawful use of the property is for Class E(g) purposes. As such, Screwfix require planning permission in order to occupy the premises for B8 purposes.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LIMITED

Screwfix Direct Limited comprises a B8 trade counter operation aimed at local building companies. Their products are also sold over the internet, via a catalogue, over the telephone as well as over the trade counter, which typically occupies about 5.9% of the floorspace of a unit, with any individual unit servicing its own local area for each of these methods of purchase. Screwfix brands and products are formulated for the trade professional in terms of quantity and type of goods. Whilst the units are advertised, this is predominantly in the trade press and is directed at tradesmen.

In addition to the trade counter, there is a separate customer collection point for registered 'Trade Plus' account holders. This area equates to about 3.0% of floorspace and is only accessible to registered trades people ordering building products on a regular basis in high quantities. The purpose of the customer collection point is to streamline both their product ordering and collection. This area is not open to general trade customers.

THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

This planning application has been submitted for the amalgamation and change of use of Units 1 & 2, Sedgley Park Trading Estate in Prestwich, to Class B8 (Storage or Distribution). In addition, the associated external alterations to the premises include:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Front Elevation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing burglar bars, window frame and low level brickwork to be removed to allow for installation of new aluminium single clear glazed entrance door with side screen (2110mm high x 1800mm wide), finished in RAL 7015 (Colour Grey); - New concrete level platform to be formed running and finishing into the existing concrete floor level of the existing car park area, edges to be painted in RAL 1023 (Colour Traffic Yellow); - 1 no. existing window to be framed out and faced with plywood and Dibond aluminium composite panel, finished in RAL 7016 (Colour Dark Grey); |
| Left Elevation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 no. hooped bollards to be installed to prevent parking along elevation, finished in RAL 3020 (Colour Red); |
| Rear Elevation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing fire exits to be retained; - New gravel soakaway to be installed and 5 no. flagstones paving slabs to be relayed to allow installation of soakaway; |
| Car Parking and Hardstanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delineation of 1 no. disabled parking space in RAL 1023 (Colour Yellow); and - Delineation of 2 no. car parking spaces in RAL 9016 (Colour White). |

The main footprint and bulk of the existing building is to be unaltered by the proposals as outlined above, with the principal changes made in order to refurbish the building in line with the Screwfix corporate branding, and the applicant's business needs.

A new entrance will be created along the front elevation, ensuring the unit will remain accessible for all, in accordance with the latest Screwfix trade counter specifications. The existing burglar bars, window frame and low level brickwork will be removed to allow for installation of a new aluminium single clear glazed

entrance door with side screen (2110mm high x 1800mm wide), finished in RAL 7015 (Colour Grey).

A new concrete level platform will be formed along the front elevation running and finishing into the existing concrete floor level of the existing car park area due to difference in internal and external floor levels, edges of the platform will be painted RAL 1023 (Colour Traffic Yellow), for reasons of safety.

By virtue of the proposals, 1 no. existing window along the front elevation will be framed out and faced with plywood and Dibond aluminium composite panel, finished in RAL 7016 (Colour Dark Grey). It is not considered that obscuring the existing window will have a detrimental impact on the visual appearance of the building and given the nature of the Class B8 Storage or Distribution use, will ensure that the security of the premises is afforded.

Along the left elevation 5 no. hooped bollards will be installed to prevent parking. Whilst along the rear elevation, the existing fire exits will be retained, and a new gravel soakaway will be installed and 5 no. flagstones paving slabs will be relayed to allow the installation of soakaway.

It is also proposed to delineate 1 no. disabled parking bay by applying thermoplastic yellow paint (RAL 1023), as well 2 no. car parking spaces with thermoplastic white paint (RAL 9016).

The proposed external alterations will not have a detrimental impact on the visual appearance of the building, neighbouring properties or indeed the surrounding area.

The building's main activity will be the supply of building materials to local builders and related services e.g. plumbers, electricians, facilities departments to large organisations such as offices, hospitals, hotels, school and prisons.

Opening hours will be between 7.00am – 8.00pm Monday to Friday (including bank holidays), 7.00am – 6.00pm on Saturdays and 9.00am – 4.00pm on Sundays. The early/late opening is required to serve tradesmen.

The business will employ 12 members of staff on the premises, 4 of which will be full time employed, and an average of three urban trailers will visit the site in a normal working week.

NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2023, aims to strengthen local decision making and to reinforce the importance of up to date plans.

Paragraph 11 states that:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”

For decision-taking this means (**Paragraph 11**):

“Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay”.

Paragraph 38 confirms that Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 87 of the Framework also confirms that planning decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales, and in suitably accessible locations.

For the purposes of this guidance, Class B8 uses are not identified as main ‘town centre’ uses which are subject to the sequential and impact assessments.

The purpose of the Screwfix operation at Sedgley Park Trading Estate will be to serve the jobbing builder providing building materials that would not be appropriate to stock in a town centre location.

As such, a location such as Sedgley Park Trading Estate is the best location for such a distribution use to occur as it is of appropriate and sufficient size and provides appropriate parking/collection points for builder's vehicles.

The proposed storage and distribution use is entirely appropriate to a settlement the size and function of Prestwich and will make use of the existing premises on site such that there will be no impact on the character of the area by reasons of scale or design.

In addition to the inherent sustainability benefits of occupying an existing building within a sustainable location, by virtue of the proposed change of use, Screwfix Direct Limited will employ 12 members of staff on the premises, 4 of which will be full time employed. It will also help minimise commercial vehicle journey miles and congestion by providing building products in an easily accessible location.

Given the above, the proposals will provide benefits to the local economy whilst meeting sustainability objectives and will not be to the detriment of the environment or amenities of the area.

Accordingly, the Council are required to look favourably on this application, which seeks to secure sustainable economic growth on a site that is situated within the wider urban area.

COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL PLAN POLICY

The Local Development Plan for Bury comprises the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1997) and its accompanying Policies Map.

On the Policies Map accompanying the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1997), the site falls within an Employment Generating Area, and in accordance with Policy EC2 'Existing Industrial Areas and Premises' proposals for employment generating uses will be supported.

Access and egress to the site is achieved via Sedgley Park Trading Estate, which provides access to Geroge Street, the A56 and beyond. There are also bus stops within 0.2 mile (4 minutes' walk), serving local destinations. Pedestrian infrastructure is well established with all surrounding footways lit.

The proposed number of vehicle movements to the site (including an average of urban trailer vehicle movements per week) is entirely appropriate for a B8 use in a normal working day. The premises will also be served by 3 no. dedicated car parking spaces, to the front of the unit. Accordingly, we do not consider Screwfix's operation of the unit would contribute to traffic congestion and parking problems either in the immediate vicinity of the site or on the wider highway network.

Given that the immediate surrounding area is primarily characterised by a mix of uses including industrial, commercial and residential, it is not considered that the proposal will detract from the environment or amenities of the area. The external alterations associated with the refurbishment are sympathetic to the form and character of the building and are entirely suitable for a location such as Sedgley Park Trading Estate.

Within this context, it is our view that the amalgamation and change of use to Class B8 is acceptable within this location, and subsequently that the proposals are in accordance with the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1997).

CONCLUSION

Screwfix Direct Limited would make a positive contribution to the commercial and community life of the area providing essential trade counter services to local businesses including plumbers, electricians, builders and facilities departments to large organisations.

The proposal is wholly in compliance with National Planning Policy and in accordance with the provisions of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1997). As such, we conclude that the amalgamation and change of use with minor external alterations are entirely appropriate in planning policy terms.

We trust that you have sufficient information to determine this application, but should you have any questions or queries in the meantime or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlotte Mills', written over a thin yellow vertical line.

Charlotte Mills
SENIOR PLANNER

Encs.