

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

---

This Design and Access Statement is submitted in support of an application for planning permission for the erection of an additional floor at Media House, Sopers Road, Cuffley for use as offices in association with the use of the whole building for offices. The intention being that the building can be utilised by Everest Double Glazing who have to vacate their current premises Everest House which is the building opposite which has been granted consent for residential development.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site known as Media House, comprises a two-storey building used as the main offices for the Titchfield Group along with their poster printing business (B1). The building is located on the west side of Sopers Road and is part of Sopers Road Industrial Estate, a mixed use business estate. To the rear of the site is the railway line leading to Cuffley station.

There is ample car parking and servicing around the front, side and rear of the building, and the train station of Cuffley and shopping and service uses, cafes and restaurants etc of the town are within walking distance.

### **SITE DESIGNATION**

The site lies within the Sopers Road Employment Area, Cuffley (EA9) designated in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005).

### **THE PROPOSAL**

The background to the proposal is that Everest Double Glazing Ltd who are currently located in Everest House a building opposite the site must leave their premises which have been granted consent for residential development. They and their workforce are happy to stay in the area. At the same time the applicants are restructuring their business and looking for alternative premises. A modernised office building with an additional floor would be big enough to suit the needs of Everest and ensure they could retain continuity of location and work force by effectively moving to the premises opposite.

The additional floor would add some 1719m<sup>2</sup> of floor space to the existing floor space although including the associated demolition of some buildings the net increase in floorspace would be 1378m<sup>2</sup> overall.

There is substantial car parking space available within the site (92 spaces) for workers and visitors, including disabled space allocation and cycle parking.

The existing vehicular access on to Sopers Road will not need to be changed.

### **ASSESSMENT**

In terms of local physical impact, the additional floor would have minimal local impact on the townscape. The Sopers Road Industrial Estate generally comprises a variety of buildings of functional design. However, the proposal would see the general appearance of the whole building façade improved within this proposal to ensure uniform cladding of the exterior. The cluttered appearance

of the exterior surrounding the building would also be removed and a more structured car parking layout installed.

On the basis that the proposal would involve the relocation of a current user whose premises are to be converted to residential use from 2017, this would enable that use and its employees to be retained in Sopers Road.

Sufficient car parking is available within the site to meet their requirements and standards required by your council.