

## Robertsbridge Works

### Proposed building for the storage of mechanical spares



## Supporting Statement

Robertsbridge Works

Mountfield

TN32 5LA

January 2018

## 1. British Gypsum

British Gypsum is the trading name of Saint Gobain Construction Products United Kingdom Limited. In the UK, British Gypsum employs over 1,100 people.

British Gypsum is a major operator in the UK construction industry and the country's leading manufacturer and supplier of gypsum-based plastering and drylining solutions. With its headquarters at East Leake in Leicestershire, the company currently has five manufacturing plants in the UK.

Since circa 2006, British Gypsum has been a wholly owned subsidiary of Saint Gobain. Saint Gobain, who is based in France and has operations in 64 countries and employ 190,000 people, is the world's largest plaster and plasterboard manufacturer.

British Gypsum's Robertsbridge Works and the associated Brightling Mine employ over 100 people and is one of the largest employers in the local area.

## 2. Proposed Development

Planning permission is sought for alterations to an existing building located at the north-eastern end of the works.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of existing building

The existing building is constructed from concrete and measures approximately 22m (l) x 8.7m (w) x 3.4m (h). It previously contained an oil fuel tank and associated equipment. The fuel tank visible in the images below has been removed, as the use of oil has been replaced with gas, which has left the building redundant.



Figure 2: Existing concrete walled building (looking west)



Figure 3: Existing concrete walled building (looking east)

It is proposed to erect a steel framed structure within the existing concrete walls to support a new roof and cladding (see Drawing No. GSA07). The existing building has been assessed as being structurally safe to accommodate the proposed works. A roller shutter door and pedestrian access would also be created on both the east and west elevations.

The building would be used for the storage of mechanical equipment spares, which would help improve the reliability of the site manufacturing process.

The colour of the roof and cladding would be the same as the existing adjoining building (Goosewing grey). The height of the proposed building would be approximately 7.9m to the apex and 7m to the eaves. It would not exceed the height of the adjoining building. Previously the oil tank was approximately 2-3m higher than the surrounding concrete walls.

### **3. Planning Policy**

The Development Plan for the area within which the Robertsbridge Works is situated has been reviewed and comprises the:

- East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan (adopted February 2013);
- Rother District Local Plan (adopted July 2006); and
- Rother Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted September 2014).

Of these plans, the Waste and Minerals Local Plan is the main consideration in the context of this planning application, the relevant policies of which are discussed below.

#### East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan

Policy WMP 25 – the proposed building has been designed to ensure its height and external materials of construction complement the existing buildings on site.

Policy WMP 27 – the proposed development would be constructed on previously developed land using the structure of an existing building. It is not considered that the proposal would have a significant adverse impact on the local character and environment of the surrounding area.

#### **4. Assessment of Proposed Development**

The proposed development would be constructed on previously developed land and would utilise the foundations of the existing building in place. The proposed building would be marginally higher than the previous fuel tank: approximately 1.5m at the highest point. However it is considered that this would not result in an unacceptable visual impact given the site's context surrounded by taller industrial buildings and established vegetation.

The proposed building would provide operational benefits to the site by providing a facility where mechanical equipment spares can be stored, in the event of break-downs.

It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and that there are no material considerations that would warrant a negative decision. As such, it is considered that the proposed development should be allowed and planning permission granted.

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British Gypsum