This statement supports the change of use at the above named property from B1 offices to a shared use of B1 Offices and D1 Education and Training.

The property was used by Northampton Borough Council as the Housing Office for Weston Favell and offered a customer service desk and offices to the ground floor and further offices to the first floor. The County Council has agreed to purchase the property to replace facilities that will be lost as a result of closing Shire Lodge and the Nene Centre, and secure services supporting people with profound and multiple disabilities. We are seeking a change of use to allow the ground floor of the building to be used for the provision of educational and training services. The overall gross floor area is approximately 612 square metres, and we are seeking to change the use of 306 square metres on the ground floor to D1 educational and training in accordance with Northampton Borough Council’s saved planning policy E20.

Our proposal is to use the ground floor of the building as a Community Resource Centre for adults who have learning disabilities, and offices providing direct services to the first floor. The ground floor will be configured to create a main reception area to deal with enquiries from members of the public and to direct customers to the main group/activity rooms. We expect that 30 to 40 customers will use the activity rooms and will be supported by 10 to 15 members of staff, although the numbers will vary daily as courses and activities will be run in the local community. The offices to the first floor will provide the main base for the senior management team and directors of the direct services for adults and carers, and will include the business support team. The first floor will support up to 40 members of staff, although the daily numbers will vary with the use of ‘hot desks’ and mobile working. The first floor will also include a training suite/meeting room. It is envisaged that the property will operate 7 days per week between the hours of 6.00am and 11.30pm, and because of its location in a non residential area, we do not believe that the proposed use will cause any nuisance in accordance with Northampton Borough Council’s saved planning policy E20: The quality of the environment particularly in built-up areas may be harmed by inappropriate new development or changes of use. These may result in emissions including noise, air or water pollutants, all or any of which may be potentially dangerous and may have a detrimental effect upon the environment.

The property has its own car park for up to 24 cars and we propose that a barrier will be erected on the entrance to control access to mainly staff. Additional car parking for visitors is available at the Weston Favell Shopping Centre which is located on the opposite side of Great Billing Road, and can be accessed via a pedestrian crossing. The property also benefits from excellent public transport links and has a bus stop within 50 metres of the entrance.