

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

19th February 2026

Unit 5, Imperial Park - Proposed External Fire Escape Staircase from First Floor

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for Unit 5, Imperial Park, relating to the installation of a new external fire escape staircase from the first floor of the existing building.

The purpose of the proposal is to provide a safe and compliant secondary means of escape from the first floor in the event of an emergency, improving life safety and supporting the continued lawful use of the building.

This statement explains the design rationale for the proposal and demonstrates that access and safety have been carefully considered.

2. Site Location & Context

Unit 5 is located within Imperial Park, an established commercial / industrial estate setting characterised by:

- Warehouse / light industrial units
- Service yards and access roads
- Parking areas
- Office Space
- Datacenters
- Hardstanding and boundary treatments

The site is surrounded by similar commercial premises, and the character of the area is predominantly utilitarian, functional, and operational in nature.

3. Existing Building

The existing building comprises an office / light industrial unit with two stories.

The building is currently served by internal access arrangements and has an existing means of escape provision; however, a secondary escape route from the first floor is required in order to meet fire safety and/or building regulation expectations.

4. Proposed Development

4.1 Description of Works

The application seeks permission for:

- Installation of a new external metal fire escape staircase
- Staircase to serve the first-floor level
- Stair to discharge at ground level into the external yard / circulation area
- Associated works including minor fixings to the building elevation, handrails and guarding, landing, and protective finish to prevent corrosion

The staircase is intended solely as a fire escape route and will not alter the primary access arrangements or operational use of the site.

5. Design Principles and Rationale

5.1 Use

The proposed staircase supports the ongoing lawful use of the building by improving safety and ensuring suitable emergency egress from the first floor.

The staircase will not intensify the use of the premises and does not create additional floorspace.

5.2 Amount

The works represent a small-scale addition to the existing building and are limited to what is necessary to provide compliant emergency access.

No additional extensions or operational areas are proposed.

5.3 Layout

The staircase is positioned externally to:

- Avoid loss of internal floorspace
- Reduce disruption to internal layouts
- Provide a direct and efficient escape route
- Allow discharge to a safe external area

The layout has been selected to work within the constraints of the existing building and surrounding site arrangements.

5.4 Scale

The staircase is appropriately scaled to serve the first floor only and is designed to remain subordinate to the host building.

The structure is consistent with typical fire escape installations found within industrial estates and commercial settings with neighboring buildings on the site having already installed staircases similar to this as part of their fire strategy.

5.5 Appearance

The staircase will be a functional and robust structure, typically constructed from galvanised steel (or equivalent), open tread steps (where appropriate), and standard industrial guardrails.

Its appearance will reflect the industrial character of Imperial Park and will not appear visually incongruous within the wider estate setting.

Where possible, the staircase will be finished in a neutral colour (black) or galvanised finish to reduce visual prominence.

5.6 Landscaping

No changes to landscaping are proposed.

The works are confined to the small grass area adjacent to the building and should not require removal of trees, shrubs, or soft landscaping.

6. Access Statement

6.1 Inclusive Access

The proposed staircase is intended solely for emergency use and does not form part of the building's primary accessible entrance arrangements.

No changes are proposed to the existing pedestrian or vehicular access arrangements serving Unit 5.

The existing building access provisions will remain as currently arranged.

6.2 Emergency Egress

The proposal provides an improved emergency escape route from the first floor and supports safe evacuation in the event of fire.

The staircase will be designed to comply with relevant safety standards and will include suitable width, guarding and handrails, non-slip treads, and safe landing arrangement (where required).

Final detailed compliance will be secured through the Building Regulations process and fire safety requirements.

6.3 Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The fire escape will discharge at ground level into an area that forms part of the existing yard / circulation space.

The discharge point has been selected to avoid obstruction to service yard movements, delivery operations, pedestrian routes, parking and access.

7. Planning Considerations

The proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms for the following reasons:

- It is a minor and necessary addition for fire safety
- It is appropriate to the industrial estate character
- It does not create additional floorspace or intensify use
- It does not adversely affect neighbouring amenity
- It has minimal impact on the visual appearance of the building
- It maintains existing access arrangements

8. Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed external fire escape staircase at Unit 5, Imperial Park has been carefully designed to provide a safe, functional and proportionate solution.

The proposal respects the character of the existing building and the wider industrial estate setting and does not result in unacceptable impacts in planning terms.

The works are therefore considered appropriate for approval.