

PLANNING STATEMENT INCLUDING MATTERS OF DESIGN AND ACCESS

PROPOSAL : Proposed storage building
ADDRESS : Brooklands Way, Leekbrook, ST13 7QF
APPLICANT : Esterchem Ltd
DATE : June 2021 **JOB No.** : 2021-2600

DESIGN **ASSESSMENT** **Assessment Area**

The application proposes the erection of a proposed storage building at Brooklands Way, Leekbrook. The application site extends to some 1150 sq metres. It is located within an existing and established industrial estate and adjoins the council's designated employment site off Basford Lane. Given the nature of the proposal it is considered that the proposal should be influenced by the nature of development on the site and nearby.

Physical

The application site represents the curtilage of an existing industrial business operating on an established industrial estate at Leekbrook. Buildings in the area are generally functional industrial buildings and comprise, usually, brick or concrete plinths with coloured sheeted walls and roofs.

PLANNING POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for the area comprises Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September, 2020) and the following policies are considered relevant:-

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (September 2020)

S01 Spatial Objectives

SS1 Development Principles

SS5 Leek Area Strategy

DC1 Design Considerations

E1 New Development

T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

For the purposes of brevity these are not reproduced in full here but referred to where relevant below.

National Planning Policy Framework places a strong emphasis on promoting economic growth and sets out policies for the control of development. The Development Plan represents the starting point for the determination of this application, which in this instance is the Core Spatial Strategy. The guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework is also relevant, in particular the following Chapters: Paragraphs 80-84 of Chapter 6. Building a strong, competitive economy Within the NPPF it is also worth noting the following relevant paragraphs:

- Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (para 2).
- At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. LPA's should approve proposals which accord with the development plan without delay (para 10).
- Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, (para 11).

EVALUATION

There is considerable planning policy and guidance relevant to the planning application proposal at both local and national levels. The NPPF is significant as it sets out the Government's commitment for a positive response to planning proposals that would deliver sustainable development in order to assist growth to the economy. It has been made clear that the planning system has a key role in facilitating growth and development should be supported with a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. This change of emphasis provides an important background to the application proposal.

Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity in the UK and confirms that planning policies should help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

This guidance is carried forward in the recently adopted Local Plan (September 2020) with policy SS1 confirming that the council will expect development to increase economic prosperity and provide opportunities for employment and greater local capacity, with an educated skilled and flexible workforce.

Policy SS6 further confirms that the council will seek to create employment growth and increase the diversity of employment opportunities by supporting the retention and growth of the existing businesses within the town and providing opportunities for new enterprises and businesses by promoting further development. These provisions are further reinforced by Local Plan Policy E1 which deals with directly with new employment development is also relevant. It states that "New employment development will be assessed according to the extent to which it supports and improves the local economy in terms of providing for the needs and skills of the existing and future local resident workforce and meeting identified business needs, having regard to the Spatial Strategy Policies in SS2, SS3, area strategy policies, and general employment land requirements set out in Policy SS4. In general, the Council will endeavour to support the expansion of existing businesses and new businesses in the District, subject to the provisions below", including (inter alia)

All proposals should help maintain or enhance an appropriate range of employment premises and sites across the District in terms of their scale, location and type.

Other types of employment uses (including B use class developments (B1b, B1c, B2 and B8), commercial sui generis uses etc) should be located in existing or proposed employment areas. Such development outside of existing or proposed employment areas but within the settlement boundary may also be acceptable when it would not create undue harm to the character, appearance or amenity of the area.

Newbuild developments not on existing or proposed employment sites and outside of the settlement boundary may be supported where a rural location can be justified.

The sustainable redevelopment, intensification or improvement of existing employment sites for new business and industrial developments will be supported provided it would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities, character or appearance of the area.”

The application site lies within a settlement boundary and is within the confines of an established employment site. The applicant's business consists of the production of esters which comprise a group of fatty acids that are produced through a series of chemical reactors involving purification, distilling and mixing. The end product is stored on site in either drums or tanks which are collected by either lorries or tankers. The current business has operated at the site for many years and there have been many changes in the industry since it originally started its operation. Whilst the site area is currently used for outside storage for products the proposed building will allow these to be stored under cover to prevent them from deterioration by the weather. The proposed development is considered essential in safeguarding the long term future of Esterchem.

The proposal will not conflict with the aims and objectives of the council's adopted Local Plan and this proposal represents a sustainable form of development that will ensure its continued future in the Moorlands for several years to come.

The application building does not detract from the industrial nature of the site. The proposal will be contained within the site and is located close to other buildings of a similar use and similar design.

Having regard to the modest size of the development, its location on an existing and established industrial unit and proposed use it is not considered that the scheme would be detrimental to any neighbouring land uses or the amenity of any of the surrounding residential dwellings.

The site is located to the east of the A520 Cheadle Road and approximately 2.5km to the south of Leek. The entrance to the application site is via Basford Lane which connects directly to the A520, which is part of the moorlands primary road network. Local bus routes are served by bus stops on Cheadle Road and are sufficiently frequent to provide the opportunity for staff to travel by this mode to and from Leek, Leekbrook, Cheddleton and Stoke on Trent.

No alterations are proposed to the site access. The application site has adequate car parking available for the current uses and this proposed use will not create any additional traffic to give rise to any issues in terms of highway or pedestrian safety. This is because the building is only going to store existing products that currently stored on site that requires no additional staff or vehicle movements.

CONCLUSION

The Government has a strong commitment to growth and provides a strong presumption in favour of development and is committed to increasing levels of growth. The NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The proposal is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development and therefore the application is considered to accord with the

Development Plan Policies and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. It is not considered that the proposal would be detrimental to the residential amenity of any of the surrounding residential properties nor adversely affect adjacent land uses. Nor would it be detrimental to highway safety. The Local Authority is therefore respectfully requested to endorse this application and grant planning permission accordingly

DESIGN

Use: The application proposes the erection of a storage building on the existing Esterchem site at Brooklands Way, Leekbrook. The proposed building will be sited on an area of existing hard standing currently used for storage purposes next to an existing building and associated plant in an area where the products that are required to be stored are currently stored on the site.

Amount: The proposed storage building would add a further 432 sq metres of covered floor area.

Layout: The proposed storage building would be located on an existing area of hard standing adjacent to existing buildings and plant as shown on submitted drawing numbered 2021-2600-02A.

Scale: The proposed storage building has been designed to reflect and respect the size, scale, form and massing of the adjacent buildings and has been designed to minimise its external appearance. The eaves height of the storage building would be 6.3m with a resultant ridge height of 7m.

Landscaping: The proposed is not considered to generate additional landscaping due to the limited scope within the area of the application building and its setting.

Appearance: The proposed storage building would comprise of a single span portal frame building which would be clad in profiled powder coated vertical steel side sheeting and a steel sheeted roof. The proposed storage building has a utilitarian and functional design approach and uses a simple palette of materials which reflects and respects that of the adjacent buildings. .

ACCESS

VEHICULAR AND TRANSPORT LINKS

The proposal will use the existing spine road serving the industrial estate off Basford Way which links to the main A520. No alterations to the proposed access are proposed.

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The proposed development makes provision for access by less abled people.