

PLANNING STATEMENT INCLUDING MATTERS OF DESIGN AND ACCESS

PROPOSAL : Erection of two warehouse units
ADDRESS : Brooklands Way, Leekbrook, ST13 7QF
APPLICANT : Highfields Stud Properties Ltd
DATE : November 2021 **JOB No.** : 2020-2479

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

The application proposes the erection of two new warehouse units on the site of a redundant concrete plant at Brooklands Way, Leekbrook. The application site extends to some 3,420 sq metres. It is located within an existing and established industrial estate on the northern side of Brooklands Way. Immediately to the north of the application site lies a small watercourse with woodland and open countryside beyond whilst existing industrial units lie to the east, south and west. It is considered that the proposal should be influenced by the nature of development on the site and nearby.

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.”

Planning permission has previously been granted for the erection of two warehouse units in October this year under reference number SMD/2021/0442. A copy of the decision notice is attached as Appendix A to this statement. No changes to the overall size, scale, form and design of the buildings previously approved are proposed as part of this application.

However, the justification for the proposed units was on the basis that the proposed units would provide pallet storage for existing business units already located on the industrial estate. Accordingly no on site parking was provided as part of that scheme and a planning condition, condition 3, of the aforementioned consent restricted the use of the buildings solely for storage purposes ancillary to businesses occupying premises elsewhere within the Basford Lane Industrial Estate. The reason for the condition was cited as the lack of identified staff parking and in the interests of highway safety.

Whilst it is still the intention for the new warehouse units to provide additional storage capacity for existing businesses on the estate concern has been raised by interested parties negotiating lease agreements for the units regarding the restrictive nature of the planning condition.

Discussions with the Highways Authority confirmed that although they did not request a restrictive condition to be attached the adopted parking standards of the Authority would require the provision of 13 spaces for Warehouse A and 6 spaces for Warehouse B. A copy of the email provided by Tracey Lunn at the Highways Authority is also attached as Appendix B to this statement.

This revised application therefore seeks no changes to the previously approved scheme other than the provision of on site parking as noted on drawing number 2020-2479-06F. It is not considered that these changes raise any additional concerns in terms of the visual impact of the development, especially having regard to its location on an existing industrial site not would it be detrimental to any neighbouring land uses or prejudicial to 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.

In conclusion therefore both local and national policy seeks to encourage the use of brownfield sites in sustainable locations. The application site is a brownfield site and it is located in a sustainable location. Furthermore, it is encouraged by Local Plan objectives that seek to focus new and improved employment opportunities. This proposal delivers sustainability objectives by promoting the redevelopment of a redundant concrete processing facility and its redevelopment with two new warehousing units. The proposal is therefore considered to benefit from the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” policy message in the NPPF.

Furthermore, no residential properties are in the immediate vicinity reducing the concern of any adverse impacts with regards to residential amenity. Likewise, the proposal will generate no additional traffic to or from the site.

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. The Local Authority is therefore respectfully requested to endorse this application for the redevelopment of the site and the erection of two warehouse units on an established industrial and therefore grant planning permission accordingly

DESIGN

Use: The application proposes the erection of two warehouse units on an existing established industrial estate.

Amount: The application proposes two separate warehouse buildings. Building A would have a footprint of 48.8m long x 22m wide giving a resultant floor area of 1,073 sq metres whilst the smaller unit, Unit B would measure 30.5m long x 15m wide providing a unit with 457 sq metres of floor area.

Layout: The proposed units would be located on the site of a former concrete batching plant which is now redundant. The proposed units have been laid out across the northern perimeter of the site with parking and turning areas to the front of each of the units. The proposed units would be located as shown on the submitted site plan drawing numbered 2020-2479-06F.

Scale: The proposed new units have been designed to reflect and respect the size, scale, form and massing of the adjacent building and has been designed to minimise its external appearance. The eaves height of both buildings would be 7m whilst building A would have a resultant ridge height of 10m and building B would have a resultant ridge height of 9.3m.

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: Both of the buildings would comprise of portal frame single span buildings which would be clad in profiled powder coated steel side sheeting (Red Brown RAL 8002) and a Albatross Grey (RAL 240 80 05) steel sheeted roof. The proposed warehouse units have been designed to have a 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.