SAMMONS Architectural LIMITED

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists

10 Cawdry Buildings
Fountain Street
Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 6JP
Tel / fax 01538 386002
e-mail info@sammonsltd.co.uk

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

3

PROPOSAL : FULL APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A BUSINESS UNIT FOR CLASS B2, B8 AND E USES

ADDRESS : STATION WORKS, STATION STREET, LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST13 8BP

APPLICANT : HIGHFIELD STUD PROPERTIES LTD

DATE : MAY 2022 JOB No. : 2021-2643

CONTENTS:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.0 PROPOSAL

4.0 POLICY

5.0 ASSESSMENT

6.0 CONCLUSION

7.0 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

- **USE**
- **AMOUNT**
- **LAYOUT**
- **SCALE**
- **LANDSCAPING**
- **APPEARANCE**
- **ACCESS**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sammons Architectural Ltd have been appointed by Highfield Stud Properties Ltd to prepare and submit a full planning application for the erection of a business unit for class B2, B8 and E use on land forming part of Station Works, Station Street, Leek. The application is accompanied by drawing numbers 2021-2643-03A, 2021-2643-04B and 2021-2643-05 which should be read in conjunction with this statement.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises of an irregular shaped parcel of land which extends to some 996sq metres. Currently forming part of the wider Station Works site the land, which is currently used as hardstanding/yard area, lies on the south eastern side of Station Street. Commercial units lie either side of the site to the north east and south west3 with residential development to the north west on the opposite side of Station Street and the gardens of properties on Geoffrey Avenue forming the boundary of the site to the south east.

For the purposes of the development plan the application site lies within the built up area boundary where there is a general presumption in favour of development.

3.0 PROPOSAL

This is a full application which seeks consent for the erection of a single business units for class B2, B8 and E uses. The proposed unit which would measure 14.7 m x 7.2 m would be positioned alongside the rear (south eastern) boundary of the application site. It would comprise of a simple rectangular building constructed from a steel portal frame with a monopitched design measuring 4.5m at the eaves and 5.75m at the ridge. Externally the building would comprise of grey painted block cavity walls with a grey composite steel profiled sheeted roof. The north east, south east and south west elevations would all be blank whilst the north west elevation would contain two vehicular door openings and a pedestrian door opening. Internally the building would comprise of a single open space with separate toilet facilities.

Parking would be laid out on the site to provide 23 spaces as shown on the submitted block plan. These would serve the proposed unit and the existing commercial units, of which there are 4, which currently operate from the units to the north east of the application site, which are also under the applicant's control. Access to the proposed unit would be via the existing access off Station Street and no alterations to this arrangement are proposed as part of this application.

4.0 POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy advice with immediate effect. It was revised in July 2021 and it is the Government's clear intention that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and as such carries particular weight where development is not addressed by planning policies in the existing Development Plan, which in this area comprises of the Staffordshire

Moorlands Local Plan. Whilst the recently revised NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making it does provide guidance to LPA's and is a material consideration in determining planning applications The NPPF confirms that at the heart of the guidance is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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. In the interests of brevity these are not discussed in detail here but referred to where appropriate in the assessment section below.

5.0 ASSESSMENT

The key issues for consideration in the determination of this application are considered to be the principle of development, impact upon the character and appearance of the application site and valued characteristics of the wider surrounding area, residential amenity and highway safety.

Principle

The core policies of the Framework are supportive of and seek to actively promote sustainable economic growth to drive and deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.

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 SS5 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":

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 proposes the erection of a new business unit for class B2, B8 and E uses. It is located within an existing industrial site within an area characterised by such development. The proposed unit would allow the existing site to expand and promote sustainable economic growth. The principle of the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable having regard to the aforementioned policies.

Design / Impact on the character and appearance of the area and amenity

The NPPF highlights that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people (paragraph 126). It goes on to state that development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development. It should, amongst other things, respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials whilst reinforcing local distinctiveness and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promotes health and well being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (paragraph 130). This is echoed in Local Plan Policy DC1 which requires that all new development protects the amenity of the area, including creation of healthy active environments and residential amenity, in terms of satisfactory daylight, visual impact, sunlight, outlook, privacy, soft landscaping as well as noise, odour and light pollution.

The proposed unit would be located towards the rear of the application site, contiguous with the south eastern boundary of the site with its ridge running parallel with the highway. The proposed unit which is modest in size and scale would measure 14.7m x 7.2m with an eaves height of 4.5m and an overall ridge height of 5.75m. It would comprise of a simple rectangular building with a mono pitched design constructed from blockwork walls under a steel profiled sheet roof. The proposed building has taken its cue from the adjacent industrial buildings. They are utilitarian in terms of their design and specifically designed for the purpose for which they are intended. The siting, size, scale, design and materials of the proposed development are considered to be in keeping with the character of the adjacent development and industrial estate and as such the proposed development accords with Local Plan policy DC1 along with national guidance contained within the Framework.

In terms of amenity the application site is located in an area of mixed development where industrial and commercial uses are nestled between and alongside residential development. Having regard to the established use of the site and the relatively minor nature of the proposal it is not considered that it would be prejudicial to the reasonable enjoyment of any of the occupiers of the surrounding residential

properties. In this respect the proposal is considered to be compliant with policy DC1 of the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF which seek to provide good standards of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings.

Highways

The NPPF promotes sustainable transport and recommends that local planning authorities should seek to encourage and facilitate where possible sustainable patterns of transport using practical alternatives to private motor vehicles so that people have a real choice about how they travel. Adopted Local Plan Policy T1 seeks to ensure that new development can be accessed safely, provides access to a range of transport modes and minimises the need to travel by unsustainable modes. As noted above the application site lies within the built up area boundary with vehicular and pedestrian access to/from the site and public transport (buses/railway) easily accessible.

In terms of highway safety and the proposed use of the site the site is located within an existing commercial yard with commercial development to either side and as such the proposed use is appropriate. The proposed development would utilise and share the existing access to the site off Station Street and no amendments to this arrangement are proposed as part of this application. The proposed building would be located on an existing hardstanding area with the remaining area laid out to provide 23 parking spaces as shown on the submitted block plan.

On this basis it is not considered that the proposed development will be detrimental to highway safety and as such the proposals comply with adopted Local Plan Policy T1 and the provisions of section 9 of the NPPF.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This application should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development as confirmed by paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Given the location of the application site on an established industrial yard within the town's development boundary it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable in principle. The proposed development is considered to be of a size, scale, form and design which is in keeping with the area and which would have no detrimental impact upon residential amenity or adjoining land uses nor would it impact adversely upon highway safety. In addition the economic and social benefits which would be provided by the proposal in terms of additional employment opportunities and businesses rates should also be noted. The proposal represents sustainable economic development of a type that is encouraged by the NPPF and the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan. It will support jobs and strengthen resilience to the economic base of the District. As such the proposed development is considered to accord with policies SS1, SS2, SS5, E1, DC1 and T1 of the adopted local plan as well as wider guidance contained within the NPPF. The council is therefore respectfully requested to approve the application without delay.

7.0 DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

USE

The application proposes the development of the site to create one additional business unit for class B2, B8 and E use. This form of development is considered to reflect the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site given its allocation within the town development boundary and its location on an established commercial site.

AMOUNT

The application proposes one additional business units which would measure 14.7m long x 7.2m wide and have a footprint of 105 sq metres. This is considered to be in keeping with the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site and ensures that adopted development plan policies could be satisfactorily achieved.

LAYOUT

The layout of the proposed development is as shown on the submitted site plan.

SCALE

The proposed unit would be single storey and comprise of a modest monopitched unit measuring 14.7m x 7.2m with an eaves height of 4.5m and an overall ridge height of 5.75m. It is considered that this scale of development would be in keeping with the nature and character of existing development which surrounds the site.

LANDSCAPING

The application site is located on an established commercial yard with commercial development to either side and as such the area is characterised by large industrial buildings and associated parking areas. No additional landscaping will be provided as part of this application.

APPEARANCE

The proposed development would be constructed from concrete blockwork walls under a steel profiled sheet roof.

ACCESS

Access to the site would be provided via the existing arrangement off Station Street. The site is located within a sustainable location with good access links from the local road network. It is also accessible by public transport being easily accessible on foot and close to dedicated bus routes and in walking distance of the town's bus station.