



JUDITH DOUGLAS TOWN PLANNING LIMITED

Outline planning application site area 0.92 hectares including access, all other matters reserved, for extension to the industrial estate (B1 use) on land to the south of the former Genus site Mitton Road, Whalley BB7 9JY.

## Revised Planning Statement

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## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

**SITE: LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE FORMER GENUS SITE MITTON ROAD WHALLEY BB7 9JYL**

**PROPOSAL: OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION INCLUDING ACCESS, ALL OTHER MATTERS RESERVED FOR AN EXTENSION TO THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany an application for outline planning permission for an extension to the recently approved new industrial site, now under construction at the former Genus site. The uptake of the industrial units has been swift with occupiers committing to rent and purchase before the units have been constructed. Demand has been so great that there is now a waiting list of potential occupiers interested in occupying these proposed units if planning permission is granted.
- 1.2 This application seeks permission in principle to extend the existing site by 0.92h as phase two of the industrial site. It is proposed that the site be used for industrial purposes in class B1
- 1.3 The drawings and information submitted with the application comprise:
  - Drawing reference 4487-04-06
  - Location plan
  - Transport assessment
  - Ecological Appraisal
  - Marketing Information

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The application site is undeveloped land in agricultural use which is between two established industrial sites. To the north is the existing industrial site now under construction on the former Genus Site. To the south of the site is the industrial site of New Garage, the Barnes and Tipping haulage yard and depot. To the west of the site is Mitton Road the main road out of Whalley to Longridge and on the opposite side of the road are residential dwellings.
- 2.2 The site is ½ a mile from the interim settlement boundary of Whalley a principle settlement. It is adjacent to the interim settlement boundary of Calderstones a tier 2 settlement and within the area of the proposed Whalley Neighbourhood Plan. The site is within walking distance 0.7miles of Whalley railway station. Mitton Road has street lighting and footways on both

sides of the road from the town centre to just beyond the entrance to Calderstones Park and a single footway to the site thereafter. Mitton Road carries a bus service number 5 and is a road suitable for cyclists.

2.3 Whalley is a significant centre of population. Whalley, Nethertown and Calderstones together represent a large concentration of residential accommodation with a limited amount of employment sites.

### 3 ASSESSMENT

#### Core strategy

3.1 The following policies of the Core Strategy are relevant to this application are:

- Key Statement EC1: Business and employment development-employment development will be directed towards the main settlements of Clitheroe Longridge and Whalley as preferred locations to accommodate employment growth.
- Key Statement EN4 -Biodiversity and Geodiversity-the Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity.
- Policy DMG1: General Considerations – sets out various criteria to be considered in assessing planning applications, including a high standard of building design, proposed development being sympathetic to existing land uses, highway safety and not adversely affecting the amenities of the area.
- Policy DMG2: Strategic considerations-development should be in accordance with the Core Strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.
- Policy DMG3: Transport and mobility-the availability of public transport, the relationship of the site to the primary road network, the provision for access by pedestrian and cyclists, and the location of the development in relation to its ability to strengthen existing town and village centres which offer a range of employment opportunities will be taken into account in decision making.
- Policy DME1: Protecting trees and woodlands-requires arboriculture assessments where development will affect existing tree cover
- Policy DME2: Landscape and townscape protection- the Council will seek to enhance local landscapes
- Policy DME6: Water management-development will not be permitted where it will it lead to flooding
- Policy DMB1: Supporting business growth and the local economy- proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle.

#### National Policy and Guidance

3.2 The following national documents apply:

- NPPG Noise
- NPPF

Other relevant Council documents

- 3.3 Documents produced by RVBC relevant to the proposal:
- Employment Land Study Refresh Final report 2013
  - Economic Action Plan for Whalley

#### **4 SITE HISTORY**

Recent Planning application history:

- 4.1 We are not aware of any previous planning application on the site.
- 4.2 3/2015/0235P Proposed demolition of existing commercial premises and construction of 4 small industrial buildings to house 21 starter units of approximately 70 sqm per unit, site access improvements and extensive new tree planting at the former Genus Site, Mitton Road Whalley, BB7 9JY.

#### **5 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE**

- 5.1 Pre-application discussions have taken place with Planning and Regeneration Manager Colin Hirst. Mr Hirst indicated that in principle the site is suitable for starter industrial units provided that demand for the units could be demonstrated.

#### **6 EVALUATION**

- 6.1 This section of the statement will justify the acceptability of the proposed development and demonstrate its accordance with the policies of the core strategy. The main issues to be considered are the principle of the development, highway safety/traffic and parking, ecology/tree constraints, effects on visual amenity and the effects upon residential amenity.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 The NPPF states planning policies should support sustainable economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to new development, supporting *“the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings”* paragraph 28. It is a responsibility of local government to support and encourage economic growth. This site is in a sustainable location and is readily capable of development. The grant of planning permission for industrial development on this site will contribute positively to the employment land portfolio of Ribble Valley which needs to include all types of industrial development.

### Core Strategy

- 6.3 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy highlights the limited number of employment opportunities available in the Borough, which results in high levels of daily out commuting to access employment. This proposal will support the underlying strategic approach in the Core Strategy expressed in Key Statement DS1 to align jobs with homes in key areas and has the potential to deliver benefits such as reducing the levels of out-commuting and increasing self-containment. The Council's strategy is expressed as encouraging employment development in the main areas of population growth. Underpinning this an approach that aims to link local jobs to meet local labour supply and thus achieve a sustainable balance between land uses.
- 6.4 Clitheroe Longridge and Whalley are the preferred locations for new employment development. Land has not yet been identified and released to meet the identified need for new development sites. Key Statement EC1 states that new sites will be identified in accord with the development strategy where the health of the local economy support such release.

### Economic Action Plan for Whalley

- 6.5 The economic action plan sets out a number of actions to support the economy of Whalley. The aspirations are for the area to be economically vibrant and sustainable and to maintain Whalley's role as a vibrant business and key service centre. However, the study makes no reference to supply or demand for B1/B2/B8 uses.

### Employment Land Study Refresh Final Report 2013

- 6.6 The purpose of this report was to assess the supply, need and demand for employment land and premises (use class B) in the Ribble Valley. It was intended to underpin and inform its Local Plan for the period to 2028. There are five main elements to this study:
- An assessment of the Borough's economy that informs the amount, location and type of employment land and premises required to facilitate its development and growth
  - A review of the current portfolio of employment land and premises
  - Identification and appraisal of additional potential employment land which could be used to meet the Borough's future land needs
  - An assessment of the potential impact of major public and private sector development proposals, notably the Enterprise Zone at Samlesbury
  - Recommendations on the future allocation of employment land and premises to maintain the Borough's economic growth.

- 6.7 The findings of the report which is relevant to this application is that there is demand for industrial units up to 1,000sqm
- 6.8 Section 2 strategic context states in regard to employment land supply at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 there was a supply of 20 ha of available employment land made up of 12 sites. Various figures based on different scenarios suggested that there is an addition requirement for 3.73ha based on long term past take-up rates, which increases to 8.05ha when measured against the worst case scenario. If short-term take-up rates are used, then the land need increases to almost 11 ha. The Council's consultants suggested that the Council should adopt the short term take-up scenario which suggests that the Borough requires another 8 ha of employment land to 2028 (Page 3). In the summary to this section it is noted that *"it is the responsibility of local government to support and encourage economic growth. This includes the provision, initially through planning policy, of sufficient employment land and premises. This must be of the right scale, type and location, be readily available for development and be well related to the strategic or local highway network according to the nature of the site and the function of the settlement. One of the most important issues to consider is that the land must be allocated in sustainable locations and be readily capable of development. The employment land portfolio needs to be balanced and to adequately cater to all sectors of the economy, ie small and large businesses, offices and industrial, high and low quality operations"*. The recommendation to adopt the requirement for another 8 ha was adopted in Core Strategy policy EC1 which aims to allocate and additional 8 ha of land for employment growth. Whilst the amount of land has been decided upon, the location for the new development has not yet been decided and land has yet to be formally allocated.
- 6.9 Section 3 Socio-economic profile indicates that 14% of employment in the Ribble Valley is in skilled trades occupations which is higher than the average regionally or nationally (table 12). It states 83% of businesses in England employ less than 10 people. Table 14 indicates in Ribble Valley 75.8% of businesses employ 1-4 people and 13% of businesses employ 5-9 people. It notes that most of Ribble Valley's local employment premises are focused in the south of the Borough, near the boundary with Burnley and Hyndburn and in North and East Clitheroe
- 6.10 Section 4 Property-Market General comments on 'modern occupier needs'. It states at 4.19 Many end-users companies, especially small ones, looking for accommodation prefer occupying an existing building to either organising the construction of one for themselves or

entering into a design and build agreement with a developer. This is due to then management time involved; while it may also be difficult to rationalise and visualise such an important acquisition off-plan. Commenting on emerging property trends at 4.24 it states that occupiers are generally looking for smaller premises as average company size continues to decrease. In line with rising aspirations and a concertation on higher value added activities. Companies are looking for higher quality accommodation. It notes that industrial floor space is available in Simonstone and Clitheroe. Supply is limited in Longridge and there is no available space in Whalley or most rural settlements paragraph 4.35.

- 6.11 Section 5 Property- Market Analysis suggests at 5.6 that high occupancy rates of industrial schemes occur in the main centre of Clitheroe and across the Borough occupancy rates in rural schemes are as high and often higher as those in Clitheroe. Table 26 shows that most of the existing industrial estates including The Sidings at Whalley have a 100% occupancy rate.
- 6.12 This detailed analysis of employment land demonstrates that there will be a demand for the new small industrial units proposed by this scheme and that it can positively contribute to the supply of land for economic development identified in the study and required by the Core Strategy. The socio-economic profile of the Ribble Valley suggests that there are high numbers of people skilled trades people and that a high proportion of all business employ 1-4 people. It is these types of businesses that have been expressing interest in the units already built on phase 1 of the site. The level of interest has been higher than the site can accommodate. It is highly likely that the units supplied by the expansion of the site will be fully occupied. The study suggests that there is a lack of this type of industrial unit in the Whalley area. This development will help meet this unmet demand. It also will supply the type of accommodation that the market requires. The study suggests that potential occupiers prefer to buy or rent and existing building rather than commission their own building. The applicant has found this to be the case. Potential occupiers having seen the units that are now nearing completion have expressed interest in purchasing or letting similar units.
- 6.13 The applicant is progressing well on the construction of phase one of the site. Should planning permission be granted in outline as reserved matters application will be submitted as soon as possible as the applicant intends to expand into phase two as soon as possible. The site is available straight away and can be delivered quickly.

### Demand

- 6.14 Evidence to support the level of demand for the units currently under construction has been provided by AC Surveyors and Valuers Blackburn<sup>1</sup>. This demonstrates that even with low level marketing the demand has been high, and take-up swift. This demonstrates that there is high demand for the units that are under construction which is unlikely to be satisfied and this justifies the expansion of the site onto the adjacent land as now proposed. The proposal meets the requirements of policies EC1, DMG2, and DMB1

### Effects on visual amenity

- 6.15 There is sufficient space within the development site for units with parking turning and a belt of tree planting alongside Mitton Road and the western boundary of the site. The proposal is compliant with the requirements of DME2.

### Effects on residential amenity

- 6.16 Should planning permission be granted for this development is it intended that the main site access to the phase one and phase two developments should be from the site entrance to phase two. This will enable the site entrance to phase one to be used principally as the vehicle access to the two cottages to the north of the phase one development and as an emergency access to phase one. This will improve the residential amenity for the occupiers of these cottages. The relationship between the phase one development and the houses on the opposite side of Mitton Road was considered to be acceptable planning permission was granted. There are no houses directly opposite the phase two site on Mitton Road. The expansion of the industrial site is not likely to have any significantly greater impact on the amenity of the existing houses than the development approved as phase one.
- 6.17 It is expected that conditions would be attached to the permission if granted similar to the conditions imposed on the development of phase one. This includes conditions which would protect the residents on Mitton Road from potential noise from the industrial site once occupied and include restrictions on the hours of operation, noise insulation to the buildings, ventilation and extraction equipment and the like. The proposal is compliant with policy DMG1

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix Letter from AC Surveyors and Valuers dated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016  
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### Access and Transport

- 6.18 The proposed extension to the existing industrial site provides a new access point which can potentially serve both existing phase 1 and the proposed phase 2 development. This means that the whole site will have one access point which preserves highway safety. The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the site is accessible by means other than the private car being on a public transport route and within a 15 to 20-minute walk of Whalley railway station. The amount of traffic that the site will generate will not significantly increase the traffic levels in the area.

### Ecology

- 6.19 An Ecological Appraisal of the site was carried out by Envirotech. Their report concluded that there was no conclusive evidence of any protected species regularly occurring on the site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by site development following the mitigation proposed in the report. The vegetation to be cleared has a low ecological significance and the trees close to the site but outside the development area are of generally low quality.
- 6.20 There is the potential if planning permission is granted and conditions imposed to secure a landscaping scheme that the development could result in a net gain in biodiversity through the enhancement of the site for protected species and through the use of native plant species. The proposal can meet the requirements of Key Statement EN4.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The proposal for the new employment development at the former genus site was supported by the Council's Regeneration Officer who considered that the proposals would make a significant contribution to the provision of local employment opportunities for the area, and would support the economic aims for Ribble Valley Borough Council towards promoting local employment opportunities. In pre-application discussion the same Officer was supportive of the proposal to expand the site for further starter units.
- 7.2 It was also acknowledged in the previous planning application that the former Genus site has good accessibility being on Mitton Road less than a mile from the centre of Whalley

and with a bus stop in close proximity. The proposed extension to the site is geographically closer to Whalley centre and so is no less accessible.

- 7.3 The site is in close proximity to a principle settlement and a tier 2 settlement significant centres of population. The proposal represents the potential for economic development close to these centres of population and in a location where people could travel to work without the need for a private car. The site is in walking and cycling distance of these centres of population and is next to a road which carries a bus service.
- 7.4 The applicant is building the industrial units on the former Genus site. Up take of the units has been good and there is significant demand. The applicant is confident that if the current site is allowed to expand the units its supplies will meet currently unmet demand for this type of development.

Appendix Letter from AC Surveyors and Valuers dated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016