



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.



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, 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 a further extension to the industrial development (phase 1), now under construction at the former Genus site. The uptake of the industrial units in phase 1 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. Planning permission was recently granted in outline to extend the site (phase 2). The applicant is confident that there is sufficient interest in the expansion of the site to extend the site further (phase 3). Outline permission is now sought for this phase 3 development.
- 1.2 This application seeks permission in principle to extend the existing site, and approved site by a further by 0.92h as phase 3 of the industrial site. The whole site if granted permission will extend between the existing development at the former Genus site and the site currently occupied by Barnes and Tipping. 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 4487-04-08
 - Location plan
 - Transport assessment
 - Ecological Appraisal
 - Drainage Impact Assessment

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 (phase 1) together with the recent outline approval to extend the industrial site (phase 2). To the south of the application 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 is undeveloped land covered in trees between Bridge Terrace and Pendle Drive.

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 DS1-Development Strategy
- 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 EN2 -Landscape. Development will be expected to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style features and building materials.
- Key Statement EN4 -Biodiversity and Geodiversity-the Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity.
- Key Statement DMI2 – transport considerations. New development should be located to minimise the need to travel.
- 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 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

Planning application history:

- 4.1 3/1991/0776/P Change of use of redundant buildings from agriculture to B8 Class X Warehouse, repositories. Approved with conditions.
- 4.2 3/1991/0775P Change of use of redundant buildings from agriculture to B1 (C) class III Light industry, Approved with conditions.
- 4.3 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. Approved with conditions
- 4.4 3/2016/0715 Outline planning consent for the extension to industrial estate 0.92h including access.

5 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 5.1 Pre-application discussions have taken place with Planning Officer Adam Birkett in regard to the form of the application. It was agreed that the submission of the application should take the form on an outline application all matters reserved on phase 3.

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 application of

the policies in the Core Strategy in relation to development at the site have been considered in the determination of the outline planning application for phase 2 of the site. The development of phase 3 will now be considered in the light of the Council's application of policy in relation to phase 2. The main issues to be considered are the principle of the proposed commercial development, visual amenity, residential amenity, tree/ecological consideration, and highway safety.

Core Strategy

- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 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

- 6.4 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

- 6.5 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.

6.6 The findings of the report which is relevant to this application is that there is demand for industrial units up to 1,000sqm

6.7 Section 2 strategic context states in regard to employment land supply at 31st 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.

6.8 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

- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 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 accommodated. 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.

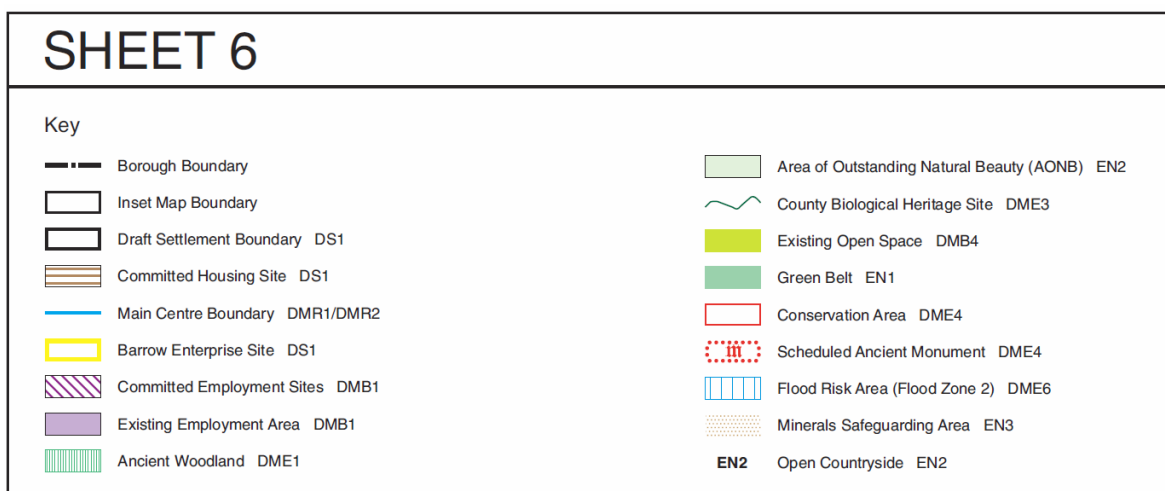
- 6.12 The applicant is progressing well on the construction of phase one of the site. Should planning permission be granted in outline a reserved matters application will be submitted as soon as possible as the applicant intends to expand into phase two and three as soon as possible. The site is available straight away and can be delivered quickly.

Principle of Development

- 6.13 The principle planning policy considerations in this case are based around the Ribble Valley Core Strategy adopted in December 2014. The Ribble Valley Core Strategy highlights the limited number of employment opportunities available in the Borough, which results in a high level of daily out commuting to access employment opportunities. The Phase 2 proposal was considered to support the underlying strategic approach to align jobs with homes in key areas. The phase 3 development now under consideration would also support this strategic approach.
- 6.14 This is the case because Key Statement EC1 “Business and Employment Development” directs employment development to the main settlements including Whalley as preferred locations and supports development in locations well related to the A59 corridor. Like Phase 2, phase 3 is located approximately 0.5 miles from the settlement of Whalley and is adjacent to the interim settlement boundary of Calderstones within close proximity of the A59. The Delegated Item File Report to 3/2016/0715 notes that the Core Strategy seeks to make provision for an additional 8 ha of land for employment purposes for the plan period (2008 to 2028) “in appropriate and sustainable locations during the lifetime of the plan” (Key Statement EC1). It noted that since the Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014, planning applications have been granted for employment use which will contribute 5.59 ha of land. The residual amount of land to be allocated to meet the strategic requirement in the remainder of the plan period was 2.41 ha. The Council having approved the phase 2 development means that there is still a requirement for 1.49 ha so the phase 3 development now proposed does not conflict with the recognised need for additional employment land. The provision of 8 ha is a target not a ceiling and additional land above 8 ha would allow flexibility and choice of location for economic developments.
- 6.15 The outline permission granted for phase 2 confirmed that development to be an extension of the existing commercial use and compliant with policy DMB1 in the respect. The further expansion now proposed is similarly compliant. In this regard, the further

expansion of the Genus site will make an important contribution to the local employment opportunities in the area.

- 6.16 Evidence underpinning the Core Strategy indicates that the Sidings Industrial Estate in Whalley is at or very near capacity, and there is a need for some employment land in the Whalley area. This is in addition to the nearby Barrow Enterprise site which is consider a Borough-wide Strategic Site. The phase 3 site is a greenfield location adjacent to a tier 2 settlement and in the open countryside. It is also closely located to Whalley Principle Settlement and the concentration of population both in Whalley and Calderstones. As such it is appropriate to consider locations in the wider area around Whalley in order meet the requirement for additional economic development land.
- 6.17 Outline permission granted for the phase 2 development was considered in the delegated report to “provide an essential contribution to the local and wider economy and would comply with Key Statement EC1 and policies DMB1 and DMG2 of the Core Strategy”. The principle of employment development in this location has been firmly established and so the additional land now applied for as phase three to the development is similarly acceptable. The Phase 1 development has been identified as an existing employment area DMB1 in the draft proposals map sheet 6 of the recent Housing and Economic Development Plan Document Consultation. See figure 1.



Key to figure 1

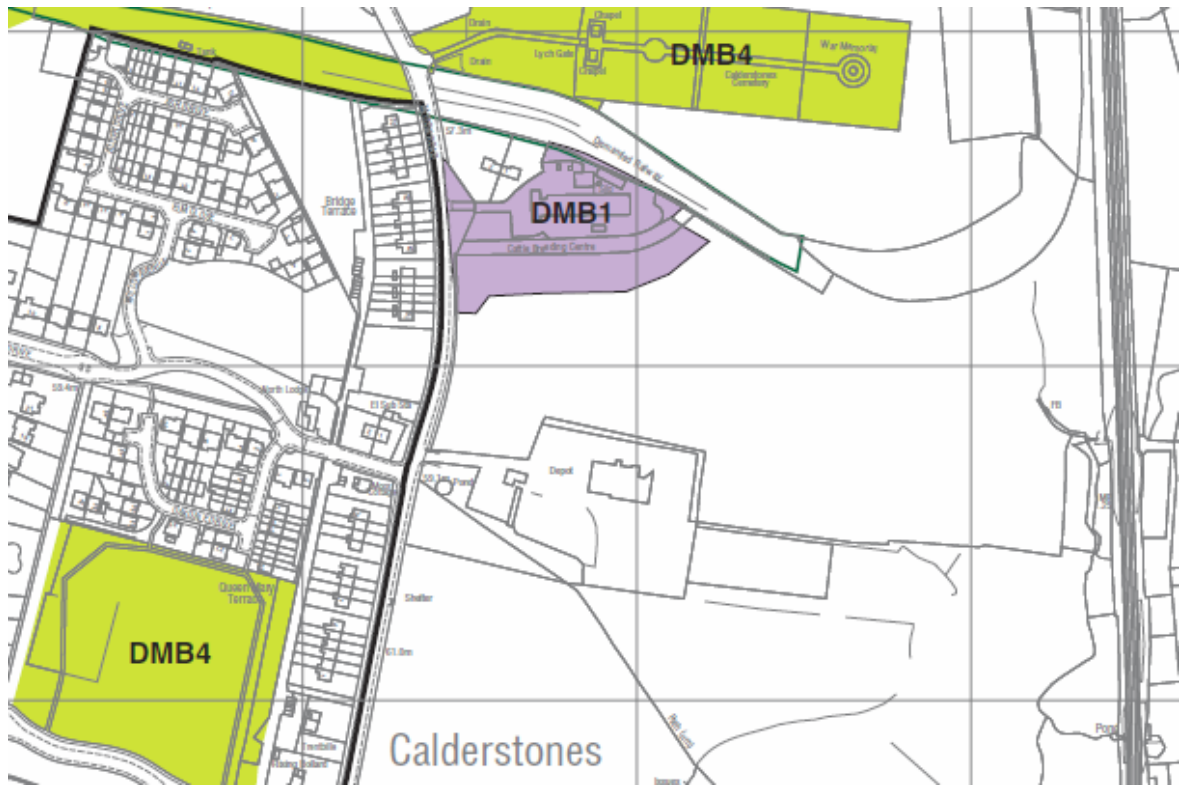


Fig 1 Extract for Sheet 6 of the draft proposals map showing phase 1 of the development as “existing employment area”.

Visual Impact

- 6.18 The development of phases 1 and 2 have been found to be compliant with Key Statement EC2 and Policy DME2 which aim to protect and conserve the landscape character of the open countryside. The extension of the site to phase 3 is similarly acceptable. There is sufficient land within the development site to provide new tree planting and screening to protect and conserve the landscape character. In regard to phase 2, the Planning Officer commented that the development would not be inappropriate in this location. It would “extend an existing industrial site and is an area characterised by mixed land use including commercial and residential development”.

Residential amenity

- 6.19 The phase three development is located further away from residential development than either phase 1 or phase 2. Phase 1 is close to the “The Cottages” located to the north-west of the former Genus site. Phase 2 is opposite terraced properties on the west side of Mitton Road. The land opposite phase 3 on Mitton Road is a gap between 1 Pendle

Drive and 15 Mitton Road and is undeveloped and covered in trees. The gable of 1 Pendle Drive faces the entrance to the Barnes and Tipping depot and the south west corner of the application site. Phase 3 is not likely to have any greater effect on nearby residents than the existing approved development. In order to protect residential amenity, planning conditions similar to those imposed of the phase 2 development could be attached to any permission granted for phase 3 restricting hours of use, soundproofing of buildings restrictions of potential noise sources. The proposal is compliant with policy DMG1.

Trees and ecological considerations

- 6.20 An ecological appraisal of the site was carried out in July 2016 and is submitted with this application. The site included all the land within phase 2 and 3 (see fig 5 page 20). The executive summary to the report notes “A data search and desk study of the site and an area within 2km of the site were undertaken to establish the presence of protected species and notable habitats”. “A full botanical survey of the site was initially undertaken and this was followed by surveys to establish the presence of bats, amphibians, nesting birds, brown hares, and badgers at the site or in proximity such that they may be affected by the propose development. The plants species assemblages recorded at the site are all common in the area and of considered of low ecological value. None of the hedgerows around the site perimeter were considered important under the hedgerow regulations (1997). Low numbers of common bat species were recorded foraging over the site. No bats were recorded roosting on or near the site. Birds may use the hedgerow on the western boundary of the site for nesting. Any vegetation clearance should therefore be undertaken of this period. No other notable or protected species were recorded on the site.”
- 6.21 This application is in outline with all matters reserved. Any site access off Mitton Road would require the removal of part of the hedgerow. There is scope within the site to transplant the hedge or plant new hedges as compensation. The same applies to the loss of any other hedgerow or trees. Indeed, it is anticipated that the development would include a substantial landscape belt on the southern edge of the site which is currently without any hedgerow being divided from the access to the depot by a post and rail fence. In addition, it is anticipated that there would be an increase in planting along the boundary of the site with Mitton Road. These together would provide a greater increase in potential biodiversity than the present hedgerows and trees and would contribute positively to the

character of the area. The proposal is compliant with policies EN2, EN4, DME1, and DME2.



View of the site from the entrance to Barnes and Tipping showing existing hedge and post and rail fencing.

Highways

- 6.22 Mitton Road is a classified road the B6246. It has street lighting, and a continuous footway on the western side of the road. The road also carries a bus service. The Council's Highway Engineer raised no objection to the previous applications subject to appropriate planning conditions. A transport assessment describing the accessibility of the site is submitted with the application. 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.

Surface water drainage

- 6.23 A drainage impact assessment has been submitted with this application. The site is within an area categorised by the Environment Agency as Flood Zone 1 which is defined as land with a very low probability of flooding. The assessment concludes that the proposed development would be able to manage surface water generated as a result of the development, and would not increase flood risk at the development site or downstream of the site.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Phase 1 of the industrial development at the former Genus site is under construction. It has been allocated as an existing employment area on the draft proposals map of the Housing and Economic Development Plan Document Consultation. Phase 2 is considered by the Council to “provide an essential contribution to the local and wider economy and would comply with Key Statement EC1 and Policies DMB1 and DMG2 of the Core Strategy”. As there is still a residual requirement for employment land to meet the needs of the Borough in the remainder of the plan period, we concluded that the development of the site for employment generating purposes would make an important contribution to the provision of local employment opportunities for the area and would support the aims and objectives of the Council.