

## **Demolition of Industrial Buildings and Change of Use to Residential**

**Victoria Works, 444 Bradford Road, Batley**

### Planning Statement

1. The application seeks outline planning permission for the change of use and re-development of the site for residential purposes.
  - 1.1 The site consists of a number of existing industrial buildings constructed during the Victorian era. The buildings are in various states of disrepair and are considered to be uneconomical to maintain and repair.
  - 1.2 The current buildings are not watertight and suffer from water ingress which has had a detrimental effect on production continuity levels at the site and impacts on the viability of the company.
  - 1.3 The applicant wishes to move to alternative modern premises within the local district and the re-development of this site for residential use would facilitate the move to alternative premises.
  - 1.4 The site lies in an area without notation in the Kirklees UDP.

### **Loss of Premises for Business and Industry - Policy B4**

2. There are three companies that operate from the site which are in the same ownership. The companies have operated from this site for over twenty years and the business currently employs approximately 20 full time people, mainly from the north Kirklees area.
  - 2.1 The companies supply packaging products and rely on large printing/packaging machines to manufacture the products. Some of the buildings within the site are used for the storage of paper/cardboard waiting to be made into packages whilst the storage of same awaiting transport also takes place on site.
  - 2.2 The site consists of eleven different buildings most of which have been constructed in the Victorian era. There is one replacement building that was recently constructed following a fire.
  - 2.3 Of the eleven buildings on site four have had to be abandoned due to their structural defects whilst from the remaining seven a further five have problems associated with movement and lack of investment.
  - 2.4 Whilst the companies have continued to try and invest in the upkeep and maintenance

of the premises it has now reached a point where a decision has to be made regarding the future of the site.

- 2.5 Accompanied with the application is a large file of photographs showing the present state of disrepair of some of the buildings. The photographs provide a comprehensive view of the large number of defects affecting the present buildings.
- 2.6 The company has been slowly expanding and has recently secured a major contract for the producing packages for healthcare. The result of this contract will be the requirement for a large capital injection for new machinery and a safe and secure environment for same.
- 2.7 The three companies have traded from this site for a long period of time and wish to remain in the Kirklees area. Consideration was given by the applicant for redevelopment of the site with new units to house the growing business but after deliberation of the following factors it has left the business owners to conclude that alternative premises are needed.
- 2.8 The site is within a area with a number of mixed uses and has residential dwellings on the opposite side of Caledonia Road whilst there is a residential dwelling on the opposite side of Bridge Street facing Bradford Road. Within the vicinity are also some disused warehouses on Well Lane and on the opposite side of Bradford Road is an empty public house. One of the warehouses on Well Lane has had a change of use for residential purposes.
- 2.9 Access to the site from Bradford Road for HGV's is considered to be poor for a number of reasons such as the poor visibility splay onto Bradford Road and internal manoeuvring within the site. There are a number of photographs submitted with the application (included in the dilapidated buildings report) that clearly demonstrate the problems with HGV's seeking access and egress from the site and the limited manoeuvring capability within. Bradford Road is a busy arterial road and the continued HGV use has an impact on the free flow of traffic along it as HGV's have to reverse into the site to collect/deliver materials.
- 2.10 Further thought regarding development of the site for the continuation of the current use was given and a new access from Caledonia Road was considered. The problem with such a proposal is the physical limitations of the site. HGV's require a 15 metre access radius and also a 20 metre turning square to be incorporated on the site. This leaves little room available for visitor and staff parking **and** sufficient space for the newly created business units to house the manufacturing machines and storage of materials required by the existing site companies.
- 2.11 It is considered that the close proximity of the existing residential uses, the lack of an access of sufficient standard that would not impede on the free flow of traffic along Bradford Road/Caledonia Road indicate that the site is not ideally suited for continued industrial use and that redevelopment of the site for such a use is not practical. The site constraints impact on the viability of developing the site with new units for business and industry.

- 2.12 The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes would have a positive effect on the amenity of nearby residential properties both in terms of visual amenity and the removal of an industrial use from an adjacent residential one. The proposed residential use is considered to be compatible with the nearby residential uses on Clarence Street, Holland Street and Bridge Street.
- 2.13 The current industrial use has heavy goods vehicles visiting the site and causing a disruption to the free flow of traffic along Bradford Road whilst they access and egress the site. The proposed change of use of the site to residential would remove the associated industrial traffic element and its detrimental impact on traffic flow.
- 2.14 The site is not within close proximity to a railway station for the transport of freight by this method and therefore is reliant on HGV's.
- 2.15 On checking the Kirklees website there appears to be a number of alternative business sites available on Grange Road, Healey Lane, Carlinghow Mills and Batley Enterprise Centre. A limited search of Grange Road & Bradford Road provides the following industrial premises that are available on the market :-
1. Grange Road, Batley - modern workshop to let 1,335sqm
  2. Grange Road, Batley - loft warehouse 1,803sqm
  3. Grange Road, Batley - various units from 350sqm to 3,836sqm
  4. Bradford Road, Batley - industrial premises 579sqm to let
  5. Bradford road, Batley - works premises 1,258sqm
  6. Bradford Road, Batley - for sale industrial premises 3,113sqm on a 1.82 acre site
- 2.16 At this present moment in the economic cycle the company would not wish to over extend their lending facilities by investing in both the purchase of new equipment and redeveloping the site with new bespoke premises. They require to move to other premises tailored to suit their demands to enable the expansion of the business to continue.
- 2.17 The change in use of this for residential purposes would enable the company to hopefully sell the site and invest in new premises and machines. The company has been a local employer for a considerable number of years and the relocation to an alternative site within another part of north Kirklees is the key reason for this application.
- 2.18 The degree to which the loss of the site from a business and industry use is considered to be small due to the factors mentioned above, therefore it is considered that this proposal does not fall foul of Policy B4 of the Kirklees UDP.

### **Unallocated Land**

3. Sites without notation in the Kirklees Proposals Map fall to be assessed against Policy D2 of the Kirklees UDP which assesses the effect planning applications have on highway safety, residential amenity, visual amenity and the character of the area.

- 3.1 The current site is overdeveloped with industrial buildings that are not used and in various states of disrepair. The site has very limited manoeuvrability for vehicles servicing the site and suffers from a lack of parking for employees and visitors.
- 3.2 The site is accessed via Bradford Road which requires traffic to stop whilst HGV's back into the site to load and unload. The proposed change of use would remove this problem and therefore have a beneficial effect on the free flow of traffic along Bradford Road..
- 3.3 There are residential dwellings nearby and it is acknowledged that industrial uses and residential uses are not compatible and can have a detrimental effect on residential amenity.
- 3.4 The buildings currently on site are poor and unkempt in appearance and are inimical in terms of visual amenity for local residents.
- 3.5 There are a number of mixed uses within the vicinity of the application site and the character of the area has changed over recent years. An industrial mill building on Well Lane, which is opposite the site entrance, has recently been converted to residential apartments. This application is not considered to have a negative impact on the character of the area.
- 3.6 The change of use of the site to residential, and it's removal of decaying buildings and heavy goods vehicles would improve the amenity of nearby residents in terms of both visual amenity and highway safety. It is submitted that this proposal complies with Policy D2 of the Kirklees UDP.

#### **PPS1 - Sustainable Development**

4. One of the Government's main objectives set out in PPS1 is for development to occur in places that are easily accessible by public transport, near to local shops and services and encourages people to use other modes of transport other than the motorcar.
  - 4.1 The application site lies immediately adjacent to the A652 which is the main arterial road that runs from Bradford to Dewsbury. The A652 has a dedicated cycle lane on both sides of this A class road.
  - 4.2 The site is well served by public transport as there are three bus services that run along Bradford Road. In addition the site is within an easy level walk to Batley Bus Station which provides bus services to other towns such as Halifax, Wakefield, Morley and Leeds.
  - 4.3 The site is within 1000 metres of the train station which provides train services to other main centres within West Yorkshire and further afield via the Transpennine Express.
  - 4.4 There are a variety of local shops within Batley Town Centre whilst a major

supermarket lies further along Bradford Road.

- 4.5 It is submitted that the location of the site and easy accessibility to public transport and a variety of local shops indicates that the site complies with the thrust of PPS1: Sustainable Development.

### **Summary**

5. The application is submitted with a number of independent specialist reports dealing with issues such as noise and highway safety.
- 5.1 The applicant is willing to make an affordable housing contribution in accordance with Policy H10 of the Kirlees UDP and SPD2.
- 5.2 The need for more modern industrial units to cope with the existing business needs and any future expansion is the driving force behind the applicant's need to submit this planning application.
- 5.3 The application site, due to the proximity of residential use and poor access from Bradford Road, is considered to be below the standard normally required for industrial sites. The buildings are in a state of disrepair and will require a considerable amount of investment to bring them up to a decent standard. Redevelopment of the site for continued business use has been considered but after taking into account HGV turnin and the space required for staff and visitor car parking it leaves a small development that is still not considered to be ideal due to surrounding residential uses.
- 5.4 It is submitted that the application complies with Policies D2 and T10 of the Kirklees UDP and PPS1: Sustainable Development