

DAWSON WILLIAMSON ARCHITECTS

Proposed Development of Existing Site

at

Vale Works  
25 Morley Lane  
Milnsbridge  
Huddersfield  
HD3 4NS



#### **NEIGHBOURING BUSINESS OPERATION STATEMENT**

Demolition of existing industrial / office buildings & construction of new building containing 18 No residential apartments (C3) along with associated external works to form off street car parking and ancillary facilities.

Revisions

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### 1.1

This Neighbouring Business Operation Statement is submitted by Dawson Williamson Ltd, on behalf of the Applicant, Mr Alan Batley; and as part of a planning application for a proposed building housing residential apartments on land off Morley Lane, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield.

## **2.0 Surrounding Area**

The site sits close to the centre of Milnsbridge, and on a section of land sandwiched between the two channels of the River Colne.

To the direct north lies Morley Lane, and beyond the river within a small area of woodland. Beyond this lies a supermarket, and a large area of land designated for the associated car parking.

To the north-east lies the Milnsbridge Library, the Chistadelphian Hall, and the residential properties running along Morley Lane and Yates Lane.

To the east lies an office building, and various residential properties, with some small commercial properties at the ground floor level along Yates Lane; including restaurants, cafes, and a launderette.

Behind some of these buildings, within the backland areas very close to the river are smaller commercial / industrial properties, terminating with a public house.

To the south-east, across the River Colne lies a complex of commercial and industrial buildings, and this runs into a large area of residential housing directly to the south of the site.

This area of residential housing stretches out to the south-west, along Morley Lane and runs into a larger area of residential housing across Manchester Road.

To the west lies a small commercial property, sharing access with the proposed site from Morley Lane, and then further commercial / industrial properties stretch alongside the river on the opposite site of the public highway.

### 3.0 Relevant Planning Policies

Given that various planning policies have been address during email discussion in relation to this statement, we have listed each under, and provided our comments.

#### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

*Chapter 1 (Building a strong, competitive economy), Paragraphs 18 to 22*

18. *The government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs & prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, & to meeting the twin challenges of global competition & of a low carbon future.*
19. *The government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.*
20. *To help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.*
21. *Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:*
  - a. *set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth*
  - b. *set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period*
  - c. *support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances*
  - d. *plan positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries*
  - e. *identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement*
  - f. *facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses within the same unit*
22. *Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.*

This section of the NPPF relates to the support of both business and economic growth by central government.

The thrust of national planning policy framework guidance is clearly that the planning system should not stand in the way of the needs of businesses in relation to growth, expansion, and being responsive to their markets.

Where businesses, and particularly industrial premises, sit on sites that were historically fit for purpose, but that over time have become more difficult to operate from; the planning system should assist in allowing a business to re-organise built stock and site use in such way that the business can flourish.

In many cases, however, the size and nature of a site that was once considered to serve an industrial premise well has become restrictive to any future development, and a millstone around the neck.

In addition, the transport system of canal and river barges that were once used by many of these waterside industrial premises is clearly outdated and unfit for purpose in the modern commercial world. As such, the river or canal side location can become a burden, restricting expansion, and providing no benefit to the business.

In relation to Paragraph 21, Part (f), it is anticipated that the future integration of residential and commercial uses within the area will assist in allowing more flexible working practices for those within the community.

It is noted that Paragraph 22 of the NPPF alludes to the fact that that long term protection of sites allocated for employment use should be avoided.

Given the nature of the site, being hemmed in between public highway and river (making expansion, contraction, storage, and movement of heavy goods vehicles more difficult), and with a reasonable change of level running from north to south over the site; it is considered that this causes difficulties for industrial use of the manner than it currently houses.

The position of the site also means that access to major road networks requires passing through a number of smaller urban roads.

With that in mind, it is considered that this site would be more suited to the exploration of alternative uses.

### **3.2 Kirklees Unitary Development Plan, Policy B1**

*The Employment needs of the district will be met by:*

- (i) Providing land to accommodate the requirements of existing Kirklees businesses and the establishment of new businesses;*
- (ii) Maintaining the stock of established business and industrial premises and sites, except where this would lead to environmental problems or where they are unsuitable for business and industrial use or there is no realistic prospect of re-use or redevelopment for such purposes;*
- (iii) Accommodating the extension of business premises except where there would be adverse environmental impact;*
- (iv) Providing for office uses to be established particularly in town centres and older industrial areas;*
- (v) Accommodating working from home;*
- (vi) Promoting tourism; and*
- (vii) Accommodating agricultural development and diversification of the rural economy.*

#### **10.8**

*Business and industrial uses comprise classes B1-B8 of the 1987 Use Classes Order.*

*Class B1 "business" comprises industry, research and development and office uses (excluding those falling within class A2) which can be carried out in a residential area.*

*The 1987 Use Classes Order together with subsequent changes to the General Development Order (now incorporated in the General Permitted Development Order 1995) introduced a significant degree of interchangeability between office and industrial uses without the need to seek planning permission. Consequently distinctions used before 1987, particularly between industry and offices, are no longer a practical basis for the control of development.*

#### **10.9**

*While uses such as shopping, high street services and entertainment provide significant employment opportunities, business and industry are central to the economic prosperity of the District. Policies to sustain business and industry, and encourage their growth are likely, if successful, to lead to increases in employment opportunities and subsequently to generate job growth in other sectors such as shopping and high street services.*

#### **10.10 Land for Business and Industry**

*In order to provide opportunities for the accommodation of, existing Kirklees businesses wishing to relocate or expand and the establishment of new businesses, land is required in a range of locations and capable of meeting a variety of needs.*

#### **10.11**

*The scale and distribution of land allocations for business and industry identified on the proposals map are based on the following general requirements:*

- (i) to provide opportunities for development in locations with ready access to the motorway to ensure that there is scope for the expansion or relocation of existing local businesses seeking improved access to the motorway*

network, and for inward investment, which is primarily attracted to motorway related sites, and to avoid increasing heavy goods vehicle movements through built-up areas;

- (ii) to provide development opportunities throughout the remainder of the District located as close as possible to established business areas to increase scope for the relocation of existing businesses;
- (iii) to provide specific opportunities for the creation of business parks incorporating low density development, restricted to B1 uses only in a high quality environment; this should encourage the establishment of types of business currently poorly represented in Kirklees and hence diversify employment opportunities; and
- (iv) to ensure that allocations are of sufficient size to enable a range of site requirements to be accommodated including those of large single users requiring capacity for later expansion.

#### 10.12

In addition to these general requirements the selection of sites for allocation for business and industry has taken into account the following considerations:

- (i) the scale and distribution of undeveloped local plan allocations for industry and employment and of land which has the benefit of planning permission for employment purposes which are expected to come forward for development within the plan period. (Such allocations and planning permissions are regarded as commitments and are listed in the Employment Land Supply Review database for Kirklees),
- (ii) the need to relate allocations to existing settlement form and to existing and proposed infrastructure,
- (iii) the need to ensure that land is genuinely available for development, i.e. free of ownership constraints or exceptional construction requirements, to encourage its take-up,
- (iv) the need to have full regard for environmental concerns, particularly the visual impact of development and its possible affects on nature conservation; and
- (v) the need to encourage shorter journeys to work and the use of public transport for such journeys.

#### 10.13

As a result of balancing the requirements set out in paragraph 10.11 against the considerations listed in paragraph 10.12, the plan contains a relatively modest amount of new land allocations for business and industry when compared with proposed provision in the Leeds and Wakefield UDP's. This reflects the content of Strategic Guidance which states that in respect of land for industry topographical constraints coupled with the likely pattern of demand mean that more new land will need to be identified in the eastern part of West Yorkshire than in the West.

#### 10.14

On the basis that land for business and industry is a relatively scarce resource in Kirklees, it will be appropriate to seek to ensure that job densities achieved through the development of the allocated land are as high as possible, particularly on the larger green field sites. Potentially the most extensive land users achieving the lowest job densities are storage and distribution, which fall into class B8. It is therefore proposed to preclude development for B8 use on those large allocations which have the greatest potential to attract investment intended to secure the future prosperity of established industrial companies in Kirklees or to accommodate new business. The exclusion of B8 uses from these sites should also ensure that there is scope for development drawing on established skills of the local workforce. Sites where B8 uses are to be precluded are identified in policy B2.

#### 10.15

In order to provide business park development several new allocations will be reserved for the accommodation of B1 uses only. These sites are in attractive locations and should provide appropriate conditions for the establishment of business units in a high quality setting. (Sites for B1 use only are identified in policy B2).

#### 10.16

The location of business uses not falling into use classes B1, B2 (general industry) and B8, which are usually "bad neighbour" uses requiring careful control, is considered in para 5.56. It will not be appropriate to permit such uses on sites restricted to B1 uses only or B1 and B2 uses only.

**Many of the policies of the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan stem from national guidance, and as such they are a more specific versions of policies contained within the NPPF.**

Policy B1 deals with very similar issues and concerns to the NPPF, and our comments are largely as those listed within Section 3.1.

### 3.3 Kirklees Unitary Development Plan, Policy B4

*Proposals involving the change of use of premises and sites with established use, or last used, for business and industry will be considered having regard to:*

- (i) The suitability of the land and premises for continued business and industrial use;*
- (ii) The availability of business and industrial premises of equivalent quality;*
- (iii) The number of jobs likely to be created or maintained;*
- (iv) The compatibility of the proposed use with surrounding uses;*
- (v) The effect on the future operation flexibility of any neighbouring businesses;*
- (vi) The effect on any buildings of architecture or historic interest;*
- (vii) The effect on the local amenity;*
- (viii) The effect on the local highway network; and*
- (ix) The potential for the site to be served by rail or water for the transport of freight.*

#### 10.27

*Many industrial areas exhibit severe environmental problems associated with obsolete and unused buildings, cleared sites, lack of space for heavy goods vehicles to manoeuvre, load and unload, lack of parking and disturbance to residents of neighbouring housing. These areas are included within the Regeneration Areas defined on the proposals map, with a view to directing resources for environmental improvements to them. Resources will be made available to secure the rehabilitation of buildings, the improvement of roads and access arrangements, the provision of parking and other improvements such as landscaping in order to upgrade such areas and encourage further investment which should secure existing employment and provide additional jobs.*

#### 10.28 Extensions to Business Premises

*As the requirements of businesses change or their activities grow the need to extend their premises can arise. It is desirable to accommodate such extensions in the expectation that employment levels will be safeguarded or possibly increased as a result. However, such extensions may give rise to disturbance for the occupiers of neighbouring property or to adverse visual impact, and may also have adverse implications for highway safety. In such cases a balance will need to be struck between the benefits of accommodating the expanded business operation and adverse consequences for amenity and safety.*

Policy B4 of the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan does address situations where a site or premises may change from established use, and mentions the need to use compatibility of any future use with that of the existing surrounding area.

It is clear that in relation to this application, use of the site to accommodate domestic residential dwellings is in keeping with such similar uses within the wider context; particularly to the south of the site.

With regard to the direct neighbours bounding the site (other than that neighbour sharing access - see below Section 4.0 for comment in relation to this), it is anticipated that the use of the site for residential development will not impact upon their businesses, particularly given that they are accessed from John Street, off Yates Lane, and that they back onto the site itself.

It may be that various of the commercial businesses along Yates Lane could actually benefit from the increase number of local residents, in that existing restaurants, cafes, etc... may find an increase in footfall.

#### 4.0 **Directly Adjacent Neighbour, sharing proposed access route.**

In relation to the direct neighbour sharing access from Morley Lane, this site houses a single storey brick built property with gross external area of approx. 82.52 sqm.

The existing building is used by one business and sits within a partly sloping site area of approx. 524.1 sqm.

It is understood that the business has 1 No. staff member (being the owner), who it is presumed moves into and out of the site each working day.

Processes undertaken within the business premises are unknown, however we understand that the property is largely used as manufacturing warehousing and office space; directly related to the fabric and cloth industry.

The proposed residential apartments have 20 No. car parking spaces associated with them, and therefore could feasibly have a vehicular movement away from the site in the morning, and returning to the site in the evening.

Being relatively centrally situated within Milnsbridge, close to public transport routes, and with various facilities within walking distance, it is not anticipated that all of these car parking movements will occur every day.

In addition, residential use will mean that traffic movements are most likely away from the site between approx. 08.00 - 09.00, and returning to the site between approx. 17.00 and 19.00 each day.

The period of the day when most cars will likely be parked within the car parking areas will be overnight each night.

The exact number of individual daily or weekly traffic movements for either this business, or the existing business on the propose site is unknown, although it is understood that the large percentage of traffic movements into and out of the wider site relate to the existing property forming the site for the proposed works (Vale Works).

It is anticipated that proposed residential use on the site will mean that the number of traffic movements by larger commercial vehicles into and out of the site will be reduced. The proposed residential use requires access by a refuse collection vehicle, but any remaining commercial vehicle movements into the site will likely be to the adjacent neighbour.

#### 5.0 **Conclusions**

It is anticipated that the proposed residential use will be compatible with adjacent land uses.