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Head of Development Management
Investment and Regeneration Service
Kirklees Metropolitan Council
PO Box B93
Civic Centre 3
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PROVISION OF A DATA CENTRE TOGETHER WITH THE INSTALLATION OF SIX AIR CONDITIONING UNITS AND ONE GENERATOR CONTAINED WITHIN AN OUTDOOR COMPOUND ON LAND ADJACENT TO IVS CAR REPAIR GARAGE, HUDDERSFIELD HD4 5BW

PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-07155904

WYG are retained by CityFibre to prepare and submit a planning application for the provision of a data centre together with the installation of six air conditioning units and one generator contained within an outdoor compound on land off Manchester Road, Huddersfield.

The planning application is submitted to Kirklees District Council as the Local Planning Authority, and is supported by the following documents which, together with this supporting Planning letter, comprise the application submission:

- Site Location Plan (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-001 Rev A);
- Existing Site Layout (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-002 Rev A);
- Proposed Site Layout (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-002-Prop Rev A);
- Existing Elevation (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-003);
- Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-003-Prop-01 Rev A);
- Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-003-Prop-02 Rev A);
- Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD45BW-003-Prop-03 Rev A); and
- Technical Specification of Air Conditioning Units.

The Application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (PP-07155904) and the planning application fee of **£462.00** will be paid under separate cover.

Background

CityFibre is a builder of Gigabit Cities. Through the design and deployment of future-proof, full fibre infrastructure, this helps bring the benefits of unlimited bandwidth and Gigabit speed connectivity to entire communities.

Huddersfield was one of the first Gigabit 'Cities', launched in 2014. Since its launch the town-landscape has changed dramatically following the building of a new state of the art full fibre network which now serves Huddersfield's council sites and over 200 customers across the public and private sector, including administrative offices, data centres, schools and hospitals.



CityFibre is planning on expanding their Network within the wider Huddersfield area which will transform the entire town's digital landscape, bringing full-fibre connectivity within reach of nearly every building in the town. This will not only deliver extensive fibre but provide a step change in internet speed and quality, and a future-proof platform for economic growth in the digital age.

As part of this expansion, data centres, hosting high speed servers are being established including on land adjacent to the IVS car repair garage (the application site). The stand-alone compound use of the building in this manner is essential to the roll out of fibre internet connections across the town over the forthcoming months and years.

Current site

The Application Site comprises approximately 600m^2 (445m^2 excluding the vehicular access) of existing rough ground to the north of Manchester Road, south of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, east of 490 Manchester Road and west of the IVS car repair garage building. The site lies approximately 1.6km south-west of Huddersfield Town Centre.

The Site is bounded to the north by an established woodland screen and to the west by additional established trees. The southern boundary comprises a stone wall running along Manchester Road and to the west is the curtilage of IVS. The nearest residential property to the Site is located approximately 30m along Manchester Road to the west (490 Manchester Road).

The north-east corner of the site is occupied by part of a temporary cabin, which will be removed to install the perimeter fence of the data centre. The remainder of the site is used as open-air storage for vehicles. A planning history search for the Site confirms there are no planning applications on this site relevant to the current proposal.

Proposed scheme

The proposed works comprise the development of a data centre. The operation itself comprises a centralised repository for the storage, management, and dissemination of data and information connected with the CityFibre network operation. The computer systems and associated components, such as telecommunications and storage systems will be located within a purpose-built single storey cabin in the west of the Site. The proposed cabin will be constructed in galvanised steel – grey in colour. A 220 kVA emergency generator (within an enclosure and used in the unlikely event of a power cut) will also be located to the south of the proposed cabin.

Due to the operation of a large number of computer systems, which are typically required to operate at low temperatures, additional air conditioning will be required for the proposed building. The proposal includes the installation of freestanding air conditioning units on the southern exterior of the building. The units comprise four 25Kw air conditioning units with dimensions of 0.7 metres square and a height of 1.7 metres and two further 7.1Kw air conditioning units with dimension of 0.9m by 0.3m and a height of 0.8 metres.

The proposed building, generator and associated equipment will be located within a purpose-built compound comprising a 2.4m high palisade fencing. Access to the compound will be from Manchester Road via the IVS site and vehicular gates located on the east boundary of the Application Site.

Analysis

The Site is currently used for open-air storage and is not allocated for a specific use in the adopted Kirklees Unitary Development Plan. The new Kirklees Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in April 2017 and is yet to be adopted. In the new Kirklees Local Plan, the site is not allocated for a specific use. The Employment Strategy (Section 7.1) in the new Local Plan supports new telecommunications infrastructure in the District:

"The Local Plan will assist in the creation of new jobs in a variety of ways, most obviously through the allocation of new prime land for employment uses, the safeguarding of existing employment sites but also by less direct means, for example, by promoting town centre regeneration, supporting local services in rural areas, enhancing visitor facilities, supporting expansion of education and training, and facilitating improvements to transport and telecommunications" (our emphasis).

Furthermore, the supporting text to new Local Plan Policy 'PLP 24 – Design' states **"Broadband provision is an important consideration throughout the district and applicants should support the roll out of superfast broadband provision in the district"**.

The Application Site lies in Flood Risk zone 1 (lowest probability).

The site lies approximately 50 metres east of a gateway entrance to Milnsbridge Conservation Area. The proposals represent essential infrastructure for Huddersfield and ensure that high-speed full fibre broadband access is available to users in Huddersfield. The existing stone wall along the Manchester Road boundary of the Application Site will be retained. The Proposed Elevations drawings (the east and west views) show the Application Site sits 2.4 metres below Manchester Road and the proposed development will be screened from Manchester Road by the aforementioned wall. Therefore, the visual impact of the development proposal on road users will be minimal.

The Site is located within the 'River Colne Corridor Strategic Green Infrastructure Network'. The Applicant has sought to minimise the loss of vegetation by designing a facility that encompasses the minimum footprint required for the proposed data centre. Furthermore, the siting of the compound in the location proposed will ensure that is is well screened by existing mature vegetation situated on the northern and western boundaries.

In terms of external impact from noise, disturbance and general activity, this would typically be negligible following initial installation and fit-out. An air conditioning unit or generator produces the equivalent noise to a typical fridge and therefore is not expected to cause any impacts upon the amenity of the neighbouring area in this regard. The technical specifications for each of the air conditioning units are appended to this application. No residential properties are allocated within 30m of the Site, which lies adjacent to the busy Manchester Road.

A small number of employees would work out of the building including maintenance staff and engineers. Communal parking for the premises is available within the compound. There will also be additional employment within the area linked to the build of the Network.

The scheme would offer substantial wider benefit by allowing Huddersfield to increase its capacity of extremely fast high-speed broadband fibre connections for the residents and business of the town.

It is not considered that there are any objections to the proposed works and it is requested that planning permission is granted.

I trust this is sufficient for you to validate the planning application and we look forward to receiving a favourable decision. If you do require any additional information or advice, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,



Sophie Drury
Principal Planner
for WYG

Encs.