



SD/LS4082

sophie.drury@wyg.com
14th August 2018

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

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDING (USE CLASS B8) IN CONNECTION WITH ITS PROPOSED USE AS A DATA CENTRE (USE CLASS B8) COMPRISING THE INSTALLATION OF SIX AIR CONDITIONING UNITS AT UNIT 1 QUEENSMILL BUSINESS PARK, OLD FIELDHOUSE LANE, HUDDERSFIELD HD2 1AG

PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP-07164798

WYG are retained by CityFibre to prepare and submit a planning application for external alterations to Unit 1 Queensmill Business Park in connection with the use of the unit as a data centre. The planning application is submitted to Kirklees 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 and Site Plan (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD21AG-001 Rev A);
- Existing Site Layout (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD13HJ-002 Rev A)
- Site Proposed Site Layout (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD21AG-002-Prop Rev A);
- Existing Elevation (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD21AG-003 Rev A);
- Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. MSL24504-HD21AG-003-Prop Rev A); and
- Technical Specification of Air Conditioning Units.

The Application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (PP-07164798) 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.

Rowe House, 10 East Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5LT
Tel: +44 (0)1423 857 510 Fax: +44 (0)1423 564982
Email: harrogate@wyg.com Website: www.wyg.com

WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited. Registered in England & Wales Number: 3050297
Registered Office: Arndale Court, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 2UJ



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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 Kirklees' 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 at Unit 1, Queensmill Business Park, Huddersfield (the application site). The 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 a vacant double height, single-storey commercial/industrial unit forming part of a small complex of warehouse units known as Queensmill Business Park, located approximately 1.8km north-east of Huddersfield Town Centre.

The building is steel framed with a concrete block inner leaf and part brick elevations, part profile sheet metal cladding to eaves under a dual pitched profile sheet metal clad roof incorporating Perspex rooflights. The front (eastern) elevation features one blocked-up window, a pedestrian door and a corrugated shutter door. Additional windows and two pedestrian doors are located on the rear (eastern) elevation. On the side (north) elevation there is one further pedestrian door. Internally the building is primarily formed of warehousing/workshop accommodation on the ground floor together with a trade counter/showroom area, ancillary kitchen and WC provision. The unit also has a mezzanine for storage.

Access to the unit is from the adjacent Old Fieldhouse Lane via vehicular gates. To the front of the property there is a secure yard and parking area. To the rear there is an additional parking area.

A planning history search for the site has identified one planning application relevant to the current proposal. Planning permission was granted in March 2000 for a change of use of Units 1-5 on 'Old Fieldhouse Lane Industrial Estate' (now known as Queensmill Business Park) from B1-B2 to B1, B2 and B8 use and the erection of extensions to Units 1, 2 and 3 (application ref. 2000/62/90383/W2). Unit 1 is currently vacant and was previously occupied by City Plumbing Supplies – a trade counter and showroom business, which we consider to be a B8 use. A data centre comprises a B8 use and thus the principle of development is considered to be acceptable in this location.

Proposed Scheme

The proposed works comprise the use of the building as 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 building will house computer systems and associated components,



such as telecommunications and storage systems located within a purpose-built cabin. A 220 kVA emergency standby generator within an enclosure (used in the unlikely event of a power cut) will also be located within the existing building.

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 existing building. The proposal includes the installation of freestanding air conditioning units on the eastern exterior of the building. The units comprise four 25Kw air conditioning units with dimensions of 0.8 metres square and a height of 1.8 metres and two further 7.1Kw air conditioning units with dimension of 0.9m by 0.3m and a height of 0.8 metres.

Analysis

The site is located within an area designated in the adopted Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (site ref. B8.9) for "Business, General Industrial and Storage and Distribution Uses (Classes B1, B2 and B8)".

The 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 lies in a designated 'Employment Priority Area'. The Employment Strategy (Section 7.1) in the new Local Plan states:

"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"**.

As previously stated, we consider the current lawful use to be storage and distribution (B8) and we seek confirmation of this from the Council through this planning submission. The proposed use has been determined to also fall within B8 use as storage and distribution and again we would seek confirmation from the Council in relation to this too.

The proposals represent essential infrastructure for Huddersfield and ensures that high-speed full fibre broadband access is available to users in Huddersfield. The site is located within an existing employment site where the principle of this form of development is acceptable. The use of the building in this manner is typically regarded as constituting 'storage' of both physical computer systems and of virtual data.

The external works are confined to eastern elevation of the building, adjacent to employment buildings, and therefore the proposals will have no visual impact upon the wider industrial area.

In terms of external impact from noise, disturbance and general activity, this would typically be negligible following initial installation and fit-out. The air conditioning units and generator are 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.

A small number of employees would work out of the building including maintenance staff and engineers. In addition, CityFibre's presence in the area would create additional employment comprising of one city development manager, an approximately eight-person Operations team, plus circa 20 construction workers to build the network. Parking for the premises is available at the front and rear of the building.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S. Drury'.

Sophie Drury
Principal Planner
for WYG

Encs.