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West Yorkshire Combined Authority
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Planning Services
Kirklees Council
Via Email

3rd October 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

PLANNING APPLICATION REF: 2023/92448

WYCA REF: K1013

Outline application for erection of B8 industrial unit

Location: Leeds Road, Mirfield

Thank you for consulting with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on this application. Please note that these are officer comments relating to sustainable transport matters only.

City Region context

The West Yorkshire Plan sets out an ambitious vision and five missions for 2040 that will drive our work to transform lives and communities across the region. The missions have been informed by our values and ambitions, whilst being underpinned by robust evidence. They focus all our work for the long term and set the framework for our strategies and investments for the future.

The West Yorkshire Plan strengthens the existing policy framework of the Combined Authority. It provides newly agreed regional priorities and targets, supported by a suite of policies and strategies (for example, including the Culture Framework, Housing Strategy, Climate and Environment Plan) with the collective suite of documents known together as the West Yorkshire Plan.

In relation to planning, our aim is to 'to develop complementary spatial plans that collectively reflect a shared ambition to tackle the climate emergency, achieve inclusive growth and well-designed places, and to support delivery of this growth through investment in an active portfolio of strategic sites'. We will do this by – in part – supporting the delivery of well-designed commercial and residential developments within Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) and sites included in strategic pipelines; and working with local planning authorities to secure site-specific mitigation of the impact of development achieved in an efficient and coordinated way through planning obligations (relating to transport matters).

Transport Comments

To achieve the region's ambitions to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and address the climate emergency, new developments play an important role in shaping places that are not car dominated and offer alternatives such as high-quality bus services and rail connectivity, as well as active travel modes where possible.

This is reflected in Kirklees Council's Local Plan policies:

- Policy LP20 Sustainable travel
 - New development will be located in accordance with the spatial development strategy to ensure the need to travel is reduced and that essential travel needs can be met by forms of sustainable transport other than the private car. The council will support development proposals that can be served by alternative modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking.
 - The council will support demand management measures which discourage single occupancy car travel within new development and encourage the use of low emission vehicles to improve areas with low levels of air quality. Proposals should include measures to encourage the use of sustainable travel options, including public transport, the promotion of personal journey planning, walking, cycling, car sharing, electronic communication and home working.
 - Proposals for new development shall be designed to encourage sustainable modes of travel and demonstrate how links have been utilised to encourage connectivity. Proposals will be required to facilitate the needs of the following user hierarchy: a. pedestrians b. cyclists c. public transport d. private vehicles
 - The council will expect site layouts to: facilitate connectivity and accessibility to existing public transport modes, cycling and walking routes; facilitate connectivity and accessibility to proposed public transport modes, cycling and walking routes, where appropriate; minimise conflict between vehicular traffic, pedestrians and cyclists and ensure that development can accommodate service vehicles; provide on-site safe, secure and convenient cycle parking/storage facilities to encourage sustainable travel modes; provide opportunities for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Policy LP24 Design
 - Proposals should promote good design by ensuring high levels of sustainability, to a degree proportionate to the proposal, through providing charging points to encourage the use of electric and low emission vehicles.

It should be noted that a broader scheme is also in the pipeline for the surrounding area: the A62 Cooper Bridge Improvement. This scheme involves highway improvements, road widening and junction upgrades to relieve the severe congestion that develops in the Cooper Bridge area, particularly during the morning and evening peak. It also includes cycling provision and pedestrian crossings.

The site is located off Leeds Road. It benefits from access to the 202 MAX, 203 MAX, 229 Sapphire and 260 bus services. Bus stops (13099 and 11851) are within 200m of the site and departures are every 5-20 minutes to Huddersfield, Leeds, Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike. It should be noted that access to these stops is limited due to the lack of safe crossing facilities. The aforementioned Cooper Bridge Improvements scheme will address this once completed.

Bus stops 14001 and 13100 are slightly further away on Cooper Bridge Road, however a canal path under the bridge allows for safer pedestrian crossing of the road, as there are no pedestrian crossings in the immediate vicinity of the site to access Leeds Road; this will be addressed through the Cooper Bridge Improvement scheme. The current bus services are good and the following proposed measures would support Policy LP20 to enhance the public transport offer.

In accordance with policy LP20, we recommend that the developer be conditioned by an S106 agreement to contribute to real time information (RTI) units at bus stops 14001 and 13100 at an estimated cost of £21,000. Shelters would not be feasible at these stops due to the existing pavement/road arrangements.

The Travel Plan suggests covered and secure cycle parking within the site. We support this measure, which aligns with policy LP20. Per Policy LP24, we additionally recommend that on-site parking facilities factor in electric vehicle charging points.

It is likely that the development will directly benefit from the improvements that are anticipated to be delivered by the A62 Cooper Bridge Scheme. We therefore would support the council in securing a developer contribution towards the A62 Cooper Bridge Improvement scheme. This will support the aforementioned policies and will support this scheme to alleviate transport congestion in the area. The contribution should be proportionate to the impact of the development and equatable to other developments that have made similar contributions and should be secured via S106 agreement.

I trust these comments will be useful in your appraisal of the application and I am happy to discuss these in further detail if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Fenton
Policy Assistant – Place and Environment