Consultation Response from KC, Highways Development Management (HDM)
2023/93539 Land adjacent to Ledgard Bridge Mill, Back Station Road, Mirfield, WF14 8NZ
Outline application, including the considerations of access, appearance, layout, and scale, for the erection of a six-storey building to host 76 residential apartments (C3 use) and ancillary works comprising demolition of vacant building, formation of new access, parking areas, open space and landscaping; erection of cycle and bin refuse storage structures.

Date Responded: 26/02/24	**Responding Officer:** A Darwin	**Responding Ref:** 10-9NW/31

RECOMMENDATION: Acceptable in principle, subject to the submission of further information and amendments that satisfactorily address the following outstanding issues:

- Revised access arrangements to the overspill car park are required, including treatment of visibility splays, and minimising the impact on-street parking (e.g. removing the current need to amend 'No Waiting at any time' TRO);
- Revised EV charging facilities are required, including provision for disabled/accessible parking spaces, and details of EV charging unit locations;
- Revised cycle parking facilities are required, to maximise the level/quality of provision and ensure that it is inclusive;
- Further information/amendments to the waste management arrangements for the replacement waste stores.

Development Overview:

The development site is located on Back Station Road in Mirfield, to the south of the town centre and west of Mirfield Railway Station, and forms land associated with the existing Ledgard Bridge Mills residential development.

The existing Ledgard Bridge Mills development consists of 125 No. apartments, which include 106 No. 1 bedroom and 19 No. 2 bedroom apartments (144 bedrooms in total). The existing mill development is accessed by a private access road (Ledgard Wharf) on to Back Station Road, located on the east side of the mill building that serves the developments private car park (156 spaces).

The proposed development includes an additional 76 No. 2 bedroom new 'build to rent' apartments. These apartments are proposed to be located within the existing mill car park, which would be reconfigured to provide 188 car parking spaces (net increase of 32 spaces) and cycle parking. A further 51 'overspill' car parking spaces are proposed on vacant land to the north-west of the existing Ledgard Bridge Mill apartments and accessed via a new car park access on to Back Station Road.

A pre-application enquiry was submitted for the development (ref. 2022/20121) in 2022, and detailed comments were provided by HDM, which have been taken into account in the proposals. This included the scope of the Transport Assessment that has been provided in support of the proposals being agreed at the pre-application stage.

Reference to Plans/Documents:

- Planning Policy Supporting Statement dated November 2023;
- Transport Assessment dated November 2023;
- Travel Plan dated November 2023;
- Drawing 17/321/TR/001 – Site Access Visibility Splays (from Appendix BGH3 of TA);
- Drawing 17/321/ATR/001 – SPA of Kirklees Refuse Vehicle (from Appendix BGH14 of TA);
- Drawing 17/321/ATR/002 – SPA of Box Van (from Appendix BGH15 of TA);
- Drawing 17001/2 Rev F – Site Plan;
- Drawing 17001/13 - Landscape Hub.

Policy:

Local Plan Policies - LP5, LP19, LP20, LP21, LP22, LP23, LP24; Kirklees Highway Design Guide SPD, Housebuilder Design SPD, NPPF.

Site Access:

The existing mill access is proposed to be utilised as the main site access for the new development, which is acceptable in principle.

However, visibility splays at the site access are below 2.4x43m (measured to the nearside kerb edge), which are typically required based on the 30mph speed limit on Back Station Road. That said, with a reduced 'x' distance of 2.0m, in excess of 43m visibility splays are available in both directions.

This restricted junction visibility was identified by HDM at the pre-application stage, and the applicant was requested to investigate this matter further, including obtaining existing traffic speed data on Back Station Road to determine the necessary Stopping Sight Distances (SSD). The supporting Transport Assessment includes this further assessment data, with a summary of their findings as follows:

- ATC speed survey obtained between 28/11/22 – 04/12/22 indicates 85th percentile wet weather speeds of 25.5mph and 26.0mph (with 85th percentile speeds of 28.0mph and 28.5mph) in the eastbound and westbound approaches to the site access respectively. The TA confirms that wet weather speeds have been used in accordance with Manual for Streets (MfS) guidance, as the weather was predominantly dry during the survey period.
- Based on Manual for Streets guidance, the TA suggests that SSD of 34.2m and 35.2m are required for the eastbound and westbound approaches respectively, using the 85th percentile wet weather speed data. HDM agrees with these calculations.
- Drawing 17/321/TR/001 including in Appendix BGH 3 of the TA suggests that a visibility splay of 2.4m x 60m is available looking west of the site access, which is in excess of the 2.4x34.2m that the TA has determined is required. HDM have checked this measurement on site and do not agree that 60m SSD is available. However, the available SSD is in excess of 34.2m when measured to the nearside wheeltrack (based on the 1m offset assumed in the TA).
- Drawing 17/321/TR/001 including in Appendix BGH 3 of the TA then suggests that a visibility splay of 2.4m x 35.2m is available looking east of the site access measured to a 1m offset. HDM have checked this on site, and this also appears to be an overestimate with an SSD of circa 29m available. The drawing then suggests that when looking over the low height boundary wall of the adjacent site, the available SSD increases to 47m to a 1m offset. Again, based on HDM's on site measurements, this appears to be an overestimate, with an SSD of circa 43m available to a 1m offset when looking over the boundary wall.

In light of the above findings, it appears that the visibility splays identified in the TA are overestimated and are slightly below what is required to the east of the access (circa 29m SSD available rather than the required 35m SSD), without looking over the neighbours boundary wall. However, as the boundary wall is low (below 900mm) and will need to be maintained as such by the neighbour for their own visibility requirements, it is considered that adequate visibility should remain available. Furthermore, there is adequate visibility when an 'x' distance of 2m is utilised; and there have been no injury related collisions reported at the site access since the residential development was originally approved in 2005, which suggests that there are no significant safety problems at the site access. Therefore, it is considered that the existing site access arrangements are adequate to serve the proposed development without further alteration/improvement.

A new 6m wide dropped vehicle crossing of the footway is proposed to provide access to the proposed 'overspill' car park on the west side of the existing mill development. This form of access is considered to be acceptable in principle for a light vehicle access to a car park. At the pre-application stage, the applicant suggested locating the access closer to the junction with Ledgard Bridge/Newgate. However, HDM requested that the access be relocated a minimum of 25m from the junction for safety/operational reasons, and that 2.4x43m junction visibility splays be provided, commensurate with the 30mph speed limit.

The applicant has relocated the site access to circa 45m from the Ledgard Bridge/Newgate junction, to address the concern previously raised by HDM. Whilst this is acceptable in principle, the access is now located directly opposite an area of Back Station Road where there are no parking restrictions, and car parking frequently occurs. Therefore, some of this parking would need to be removed to enable the proposed access to operate safely, which would need the applicant to fund alterations to the existing 'No Waiting at any time' Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Whilst the Councils Road Safety Team have confirmed that changes to the TRO may be possible, there are significant levels of on-street parking occurring on Back Station Road, including parking associated with the nearby railway station. Therefore, it is considered that the car park access should be moved to the west instead, to avoid the need to change the TRO. A revised car park access and car park layout should be provided to address this issue. This must clearly show the existing no waiting restrictions and parked cars; and demonstrate that right turners into the car park can wait for oncoming traffic to pass before turning right into the access without blocking oncoming traffic, and that the waiting right turners can safely observe oncoming traffic at the required SSD.

A visibility splay of 2.4x43m has been shown to the west of the overspill car park access, and a splay of 2.4x35.5m to the east. The splay to the east is below the 2.4x43m that is typically required based on the 30mph speed limit, which has been justified in the TA based on the surveyed 85th percentile wet weather speed of 26.2mph, and is considered to be adequate. The visibility splay to the west is based on the 30mph speed limit of Back Station Road. However, due to the presence of the Ledgard Bridge/Newgate junction, approach speeds are likely to be less than 30mph, hence why HDM previously recommend that the access be located a minimum of 25m from the junction, which would enable a 2.4x25m visibility splay to be provided that should be adequate in this situation based on a 20mph design speed. Therefore, it is considered that the car park access could be located closer to the junction as previously recommended.

With regard to the junction visibility splays, the landscaping and parking bays within the overspill park currently block the visibility splays. Therefore, in the revised access design, the boundary fence and landscaping needs to be set back to the rear of the visibility splays. This should also be reflected on all other submission drawings, including the site layout plan.

Parking

Car Parking

The existing mill development includes 125 No. apartments, with a total of 144 bedrooms. 156 existing car parking spaces are provided, which are understood to be allocated at 1 space per apartment, with 31 unallocated visitor/overspill parking spaces (circa 25% provision), which is in full accordance with the Council guidance contained in the Highway Design SPD.

It is proposed to reconfigure the existing car park and remove an existing redundant building, which will enable 188 car parking spaces to be provided in the main car park. A further 51 'overspill' car parking spaces are to be provided in a new parking area to the west of the existing mill building. This equates to a total car parking provision of 239 car parking spaces, to be used by the existing and proposed development, which would total 201 apartments (125 existing + 76 proposed) with a total of 296 bedrooms (144 existing + 152 proposed).

Based on guidance contained within the Councils Highway Design SPD, each apartment would be expected to be provided with 1 car parking space, with an additional provision of 1:4 visitor parking spaces. This equates to a recommended provision of 201 residents parking spaces and 51 visitors parking spaces, totally 252 car parking spaces. Therefore, the proposed car provision is circa 95% of the recommended provision.

However, due to the sites accessible location (e.g. located close to Mirfield Railway station and many local amenities) and based on the applicants experience at this and their other similar local sites, they consider that this level of provision is adequate. To demonstrate this, and as requested by HDM at the pre-app stage, the TA includes parking survey data of the existing car park, with the main findings as follows:

- Car parking accumulation surveys undertaken on Tuesday 18th April and Saturday 22nd April 2023.
- 30 minute parking beats surveys undertaken between the hours of 2.00pm and 10.00pm on the Tuesday and 10.00am and 10.00pm on the Saturday.

- A maximum parking accumulation of 89 vehicles (57% occupancy) was observed at 10pm on Tuesday 18th April.
- Based on the maximum parking accumulation, this equates to a peak parking accumulation rate of 0.62 occupied spaces per bedroom.

When the above peak parking accumulation rate per bedroom is applied to the site following development, which would include a total of 296 bedrooms, this would equate to a peak parking accumulation of 184 vehicles.

In light of the above, it is accepted that the proposed parking provision should be adequate to accommodate the typical parking demand of the development. However, to ensure that adequate visitor parking is available at all times, it is recommended that the 51 space 'overspill' car parking spaces should not be allocated to individual apartments, and a planning condition should be imposed to secure this.

Disabled Car Parking

8 No. disabled/accessible car parking are proposed within the reconfigures car park, which include rear and side transfer zones, in accordance with good practice. This provision appears to be adequate and is an improvement over the current situation, where no disabled/accessible spaces are available.

EV Charging Spaces

16 No. EV charging spaces are proposed within the reconfigure car park, which equates to a circa 6.7% provision. This is below the 10% provision required by the West Yorkshire Low Emission strategy for the entire site. However, the TA justifies this on the basis that it represents a 21% provision for the additional 76 apartments, as no EV charging provision is currently provided at the site. This approach is somewhat disappointing, given the rapid adoption of electric vehicles and the future needs of all residents. However, based on the argument presented by the applicant in the TA, HDM do not object to the level of provision that is proposed. That said, it is recommended that additional ducting is installed within the car park to allow additional EV charging spaces to be provided in future. Clarification is also sought on the exact number of EV charging spaces, as a number of the documents refer to 25 No. EV charging spaces being proposed.

With regard to the design of the EV charging spaces, there does not appear to be space to locate a charging unit in the spaces located next to the cycle parking hub building. If the EV unit is fixed to the wall of the hub, this is likely to result in cars not being able to park fully within the car parking spaces. Therefore, further consideration of the EV parking space designs are required, which include details of the charging unit locations.

No EV charging facilities have been shown for the disabled car parking spaces, and this issue should also be addressed.

Cycle Parking

A cycle hub is proposed that includes 76 No. cycle parking spaces, which provides 1 space for each new additional apartment. The cycle hub appears to be a good quality provision and is welcomed.

However, it is disappointing that no cycle parking has been proposed for the existing apartments, which do not appear to currently benefit from any cycle parking (none is mentioned in the TA). When HDM have checked the approved plans for the existing mill development, it appears that cycle parking was going to be provided along the western building frontage, but this has not been provided.

Therefore, it is considered that additional cycle parking should be provided within the hub building that can be used for all residents at the site. This could be achieved without enlarging the cycle hub building if double stacking cycle racks were used. This appears to be possible subject to a minimum height clearance being available of circa 2.6m (and some systems can work with a slightly lower height clearance if necessary).

The cycle hub also does not include any provision for non-standard cycle types, such as cargo bikes, tricycles or adapted cycles. Therefore, the current design does not provide an inclusive provision for all users groups, and should be reviewed.

Kirklees Council's current guidance suggests that 1 cycle parking space is provided per dwelling. Therefore, for the existing/proposed development, this would equate to a total provision of 201 cycle parking spaces. It is clear that this level of provision cannot be achieved within the current cycle hub, even if double stacking cycle racks were used. However, given the large number of apartments and the ability to share the provision, HDM do not consider it necessary to provide the full provision of 1 space for all 201 apartments. Instead, it is requested that the number of cycle parking spaces are maximised, with a combination of double stacking cycle racks and other spaces for non-standard cycle types, which should ensure that high quality / inclusive provision is provided.

18 No. visitor cycle parking spaces are proposed. This level of provision is considered to be adequate. However, these spaces would benefit from being covered, which doesn't currently appear to be the case.

For further guidance on providing high quality / inclusive cycle parking, this is available in DfT document LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

Motorcycle parking

12 No. motorcycle parking spaces are proposed. This level of provision is considered to be adequate. However, it would be beneficial if EV charging were provided for some of the spaces.

Servicing & Waste Collection:

The TA includes Swept Path Analysis (SPA) of a box van and the Kirklees waste collection vehicle accessing and circulating within the site, and waiting within the two new laybys proposed along the building frontage. The SPA demonstrates that these vehicles can be satisfactorily accommodated within the site.

However, there are two replacement waste stores marked 'iv' on the site plan, which appear to be remote from the proposed layby. As such, this will add significant time and effort for waste collection personnel and appear to be beyond normally acceptable bin carried distances. Therefore, further information/amendments are required to the sites waste strategy, to ensure that it complies with the Councils Waste Management Team requirements. Consideration also needs to be given to how waste will be managed during the construction process, as the Councils waste teams will not enter constructions sites.

Further detailed comments have been made by the Councils Waste Strategy Team in their consultation response dated 03/01/24, which should be fully addressed.

Road Safety:

The Transport Assessment includes an assessment of personal injury collision data on the local network, and concludes that:

'The rate of PICs experienced is an average (of the total PICs occurring) of three per annum over the study period and, given the number of junctions considered as well as listed causation factors, there are not considered to be any road safety concerns that are likely to be exacerbated by the development.'

HDM have consulted with the Councils Road Safety Team who have not raised any specific issues within the immediate vicinity of the site. They have also confirmed that there has been only 1 incident on Back Station Road within the last 5 years, which was not located at the development site access; and there have been no recorded incidents at either the Back Station Road/Ledgard Bridge or Back Station Road/Station Road junctions.

Therefore, it is agreed that there does not appear to be existing accident problem within the vicinity of the site that would be exacerbated by the development.

Accessibility and Travel Plan:

Given the sites location close to Mirfield Town Centre and Mirfield Railway Station, the site is in an accessible location. The supporting documents include a review of the sites accessibility by alternatives modes of transport to the private car, with a summary of their findings as follows:

- The site is considered to be in a sustainable location to promote trips on foot, with the site located less than 500 metres walking distance from Mirfield Town Centre and 350 metres walking distance from Mirfield railway station.
- Back Station Road is part of National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 66, which runs nationally from Central Manchester to Spurn Head, via Bradford, Leeds, York, Beverley and Kingston upon Hull. Locally, this route also forms part of Calder Valley Greenway, providing a largely off-carriageway cycle route between Huddersfield and Dewsbury.
- The nearest bus stops are located on Calder Road on both sides of the carriageway, approximately 280 metres walking distance from the site access to the south-west. These bus stops are served by bus service number 261. Further bus stops can be found on A644 Huddersfield Road, approximately 500 metres walking distance to the north of the site. These bus stops are served by bus service numbers 203 and 205.

The Transport Assessment concludes by stating:

'In summary, the development is considered to be well located to encourage journeys by all modes of sustainable transport.'

HDM generally agrees with the above findings. However, the existing bus stops located closest to the site on Calder Road are not accessible via dropped pedestrian crossings, with the nearest accessible stops located on Newgate (circa 220m walk from the site boundary) and Huddersfield Road (circa 350m walk from the site boundary). At present, neither of these stops benefit from real-time information displays. Therefore, it is recommended that real-time displays are provided by the development at the stops on Huddersfield Road (northwest bound stop 15147 and southeast bound stop 15148 or 15150) as these stops provide the most frequent services and benefit from bus shelter provision; and will require a S106 contribution of **£21,000**.

As the development includes over 50 dwellings a Travel Plan is required for the development. As identified at the pre-application stage, to enable the delivery of an effective Travel Plan, the funding of Travel Plan measures is essential and it was confirmed that a Sustainable Travel Fund (STF) should be identified.

A Travel Plan has been submitted in support of the proposals. However, no reference to the STF has been identified. As such, the Travel Plan will need to be developed further prior to occupation, and include the above STF, the mechanism for it's delivery and the associated measures that have been agreed with the LPA. The final Travel Plan should be secured by condition, and implemented prior to first occupation. As identified in the pre-application response provided by HDM, the applicant is encouraged to investigate the delivery of car club vehicle(s) at the site as part of the package of measures funded by the STF, which would appear to be a good option for this development.

The STF will need to be secured via a S106 agreement, and should be based on the Residential MCard scheme value for a bus only MCard (which could form part of the STF offer), which is currently £511.50 per dwelling. This equates to a STF value of **£38,874**, based on the 76 dwellings currently proposed.

Kirklees Council will require a Travel Plan Monitoring Fee to be secured as part of the S106 agreement. For a development of this scale (classed as a 'small scale major residential development') the fee is **£10,000.00** (£2,000 per year for 5 years).

Traffic Impact Assessment:

The supporting Transport Assessment includes an assessment of the traffic impact of the development on the local highway network during the weekday network peak periods. This has been reviewed by HDM, with comments as follows:

Base count data

The base traffic count data that has been used within the assessment was obtained in 2017. Therefore, at the pre-application stage, the applicant was requested to obtain a more recent sample of traffic data to validate the 2017 base traffic counts. This has been undertaken in the supporting TA, with data obtained in 2022 on Back Station Road and Hopton New Road. The 2022 data showed some variation in flow from the 2017 data, but was within expected daily variation (e.g. less than 10% variation for the traffic flows on Hopton New Road). Therefore, HDM agrees that the use of the 2017 base traffic data is acceptable in this instance.

Trip Rates

A site-specific trip rate has been utilised within the assessment, using count data from the existing mill site. As requested by HDM at the pre-application stage, the trip rate has been calculated on a 'per bedroom' basis to ensure a robust assessment of the proposed development, which includes a higher proportion of 2 bedroom dwellings (100%) when compared to the existing mill development (15%).

The TA goes on to compare the above bespoke trip rates to alternative trip rates obtained from the TRICS database, which demonstrates that the bespoke trip rates are higher. Therefore, HDM agrees with the TA findings that the bespoke trip rates provide a robust basis for assessment, with the bespoke trip rates and associated development trips shown in the following tables:

Table 6.2

Trip Rate for the existing Ledgard Wharf development

	Trip Rates Per Bedroom					
	Morning Peak Hour			Evening Peak Hour		
	Arrive	Depart	Two-Way	Arrive	Depart	Two-Way
Observed Vehicle Movements	3	26	29	29	13	42
Calculated Trip Rates, Per Bedroom	0.021	0.181	0.201	0.201	0.090	0.292

Table 6.4

Trip Generation of the Proposed Development

	Trip Generation					
	Morning Peak Hour			Evening Peak Hour		
	Arrive	Depart	Two-Way	Arrive	Depart	Two-Way
Trip Generation (152 bedrooms)	3	27	31	31	14	44*

*Note slight error due to rounding

Traffic distribution, traffic growth and committed development

The development trip distribution has been based on journey to work census data from the local MSOA area, which is acceptable.

Traffic assessments have been undertaken at a design year of 2028, 5 years post planning submission, as agreed at the pre-application stage. To determine the 2028 base traffic levels, local traffic growth rates have been obtained from Tempro for MSOA Kirklees 002, which are acceptable.

As there are a number of completed / ongoing developments in the area that will not have been fully taken into account by the Tempro growth rates alone, the TA has specifically taken into account committed development traffic from the following developments, as agreed with HDM at the pre-application stage:

- Ref: 2017/90557 – Calder View, Mirfield; 99 dwellings;
- Ref: 2017/92997 – Station Road, Mirfield (Former Lidl Site); 70 apartments;
- Ref: 2019/91467 (APP/Z4718/W/21/32790400) – Granny Lane; 67 dwellings.

Traffic impact assessment

As agreed with HDM at the pre-application stage, the TA includes an assessment of the development traffic impact at the following junctions using PICADY modelling assessments:

- Main Site Access on toe Back Station Road;
- Back Station Road / Newgate / Ledgate Bridge junction;
- Back Station Road / Station Road / Hopton New Road junction.

The PICADY assessments confirm that all of the above junctions will operate well within capacity at the design year of 2028, following the introduction of the additional development traffic. Beyond the above study area, the development would generate less than 30 two-way peak hour vehicle trips. Therefore, HDM generally agrees with the findings of the TA, which states:

'…the traffic it [the development] *is likely to generate will not have a severe impact on the existing local highway network.'*

Construction Access Strategy

A Construction Management Plan (CMP) is required for the development and should be secured by planning condition, which must specifically include details of wheel washing facilities and street cleansing. The CMP will also need to carefully consider the routing strategy for construction traffic, which will need to avoid routes that include weight restrictions, and take account of the low railway bridges on Newgate and Station Road (e.g. construction vehicle heights will need to be restricted).

Highway condition surveys (pre and post construction) and remediation is also required, and secured by condition.

Recommended Planning Conditions/Section 106 obligations:

Conditions - to be advised fully in due course, but including:

- No allocation to individual apartments of the 51 'overspill' car parking spaces;
- Cycle parking;
- Construction Management Plan (CMP);
- Highway Condition Surveys;
- Agreement and implementation of Travel Plan;
- Standard site access condition and other highway informatives.

Section 106 Contributions/Requirements - to be advised fully in due course, but including:

- Sustainable Travel Fund - **£38,874.00** (£511.50 per dwelling, based on 76 No. dwellings);
- 2 No. Real-time displays at bus stops (at Huddersfield Road bus stops, or as otherwise agreed with WYCA) - **£21,000.00**
- Travel Plan monitoring fee - **£10,000.00** (£2,000 x 5yrs).

Conclusion:

Acceptable in principle, subject to the submission of further information and amendments that satisfactorily address the issues raised in the above response - see recommendation.