



JohnsonMowat
Planning & Development Consultants

Wakefield Acoustics

Erection of Industrial Building
Flush Mills, Westgate, Heckmondwike, WF16 0EN

Planning Statement

Ref. JM230120_PS_01



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for erection of an industrial building on land within the site of Wakefield Acoustics at Flush Mills, Westgate, Heckmondwike. An introduction to the applicant is provided below, whilst details of the site are set out in Section 2 of this statement.
- 1.2 The development is described as follows:
- Erection of an industrial building*
- 1.3 A full explanation of the proposed development is provided in Section 3 of this statement.
- 1.4 The relevant planning history of the site is summarised at Section 4; whilst the development plan policies most relevant to the determination of this application are defined in Section 5.
- 1.5 To assist the local authority in determination of this application, an assessment of the proposed development against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations is provided in Section 6.
- 1.6 Section 7 summarises the benefits of the development and case in favour of the grant of planning permission.

Content of Application

- 1.7 This full planning application is formed of the following plans and this Planning Statement:
- Context Plan ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0000_P01
 - Site Location Plan ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0001_P01
 - Existing Site Plan ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0003_P01
 - Proposed Site Plan ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0004_P01
 - Proposed Sections drawing ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0005_P01
 - Proposed Building Details drawing ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0006_P01



Introduction to the Applicant

- 1.8 The application is submitted on behalf of Wakefield Acoustics, which is the occupier of the application site and associated premises.
- 1.9 Wakefield Acoustics is one of the UK's leading manufacturers of advanced industrial, commercial and environmental noise control systems. At Flush Mills, the company manufactures containers to house generator equipment and assembles the generator sets.
- 1.10 The manufacturing process occurs within the main building whilst painting and fit-out of containers occurs within the external yard areas of the site, including within ancillary prefabricated buildings sited within the yard.
- 1.11 Wakefield Acoustics is a significant contributor to the high-value manufacturing and engineering sector of the Kirklees economy.



2.0 LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- 2.1 The application site is located within land leased and occupied by Wakefield Acoustics at Flush Mills, Westgate, Heckmondwike as shown on the Site Location Plan ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0001_P01. Flush Mills is an established industrial complex occupied by a number of businesses, and comprising of a range of older and newer buildings and external areas.
- 2.2 The application site is bound to the south by the Westgate and to the east by Omar Street. Westgate is a main road (A638) whilst Omar Street is a cul-de-sac with terraced properties to its east side in commercial and residential use and of two storeys in height.
- 2.3 The boundary treatment to these elevations is a wall of stone and brick construction. The land within the application site is approximately 2m above the off-site ground level of Westgate at its junction with Omar Street.
- 2.4 The northwest and northeast boundaries of the site are formed of existing fencelines within the Wakefield Acoustics site that separate the yard area from an adjacent car park and circulatory route.
- 2.5 The application site extends to 0.172 ha and is formed of a concrete ground surface with fence, gate and lighting columns. The site is utilised for the assembly of electrical generator sets by the preparation and fit-out of containers with generator equipment. See site photographs provided at Appendix 1 of this statement.
- 2.6 There are no trees or other green infrastructure within or immediately adjacent to the site. A public park with mature trees to the road frontage is located on the opposite side of Westgate.



3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This application proposes development described as follows:

Erection of an industrial building

Type of Building

3.2 The proposed building is a prefabricated structure that is manufactured off-site and assembled on-site. It is to be constructed by fixing to the existing concrete ground surface of the yard, and does not require construction of foundations.

Function of Building

3.3 The building is required as part of the existing operations undertaken at the site by Wakefield Acoustics, as briefly described in sections 1 and 2. Specifically, it is required to house containers for painting, preparation and/or fit-out, but would also be suitable for other general use such as storage or assembly work.

3.4 Save for access/egress, all use of the building may be undertaken with the doors closed.

Siting

3.5 The building is required to be sited at the south of the existing concrete yard area to allow continued utilisation of yard space to the north (i.e. where containers are held externally for fit-out) and efficient circulation.

Scale and Appearance

3.6 The proposed building extends to approximately 250 sqm footprint area, with dimensions of 25m x 10m.

3.7 The building has gable ends to its short elevations and a roof ridge central between its long elevations. The building height is 6.0m to eaves and 7.62m to ridge as shown on the Proposed Building Details drawing ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0006_P01 and the Proposed Sections drawing ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0005_P01.



- 3.8 The building is orientated with its gable ends to the north and south, with the slope of the roof to the east and west.
- 3.9 The building is of metal frame construction with insulated panel walls and heavy-duty PVC canvas roof. The walls are finished in 'white aluminium' colour (RAL 9006) and roof in 'traffic white' (RAL 9016) or similar.

Access

- 3.10 Operational access to the building is via a roller shutter door to its north elevation, thereby facing 'inwards' to the yard area. Pedestrian access doors are provided to the north and south elevations.
- 3.11 As the building is to operate only as part of the existing industrial use of the site by Wakefield Acoustics, independent access is not required. No change is proposed to any access arrangement within or beyond the site.

Other

- 3.12 If necessary, an existing lighting column within the site adjacent to the proposed building will be decommissioned (i.e. to avoid illumination of the roof).
- 3.13 No other works or landscaping are proposed.



4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The online register of planning applications held by Kirklees Council indicates the following planning applications (excluding discharge of conditions applications) to have been determined in relation to the subject site.

Reference	Description	Decision date	Decision
2018/92005	Demolition of existing industrial units and erection of new industrial units and formation of car parking.	08/10/2018	Granted
2015/90708	Change of use of building to mixed use comprising B1, B2 and B8.	26/06/2015	Granted
2010/93074	Change of use to approved authorised treatment facility for recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (waste transfer).	22/03/2011	Granted

Table 1 - Planning History Summary

4.2 Application reference 2018/92005 approved the construction of two industrial units (Units 24 and 25) located approximately 40m north of the subject site, which have been built and are occupied. Whilst this application indicated the subject site to be laid out for car parking, this preceded the demolition of a further building (Unit 20) that was located to the front of Units 24 and 25. Demolition of Unit 20 has allowed the parking and yard requirements of Units 24 and 25 to be provided wholly to the front of these units and removed any need for the subject site to be utilised as car parking for these units. This logical reorganisation of this part of the site by the landowner serves to improve operation of the site to the benefit of all occupier businesses.

4.3 Application reference 2015/90708 relates to the unit (Unit 17) and external areas occupied by Wakefield Acoustics and approved a change of use of the building to mixed use comprising B1, B2 and B8 uses. The premises remains occupied and operated in conformity to this permission and conditions (as varied). There is no element of this planning permission which would be inconsistent or incompatible with the further development now proposed.



4.4 Application reference 2010/93074 relates to the use of unit (Unit 17) but precedes the above application and current use of the premises. It does not therefore have any bearing on this application.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Development Plan

5.2 The development plan for the Kirklees district comprises the following documents:

- Local Plan Strategy and Policies 27 February 2019
- Local Plan Allocations and Designations 27 February 2019
- Policies Map

5.3 There is no Neighbourhood Plan in place for the location of the application site.

5.4 Given the nature of the application site and development proposed, the policies of the Minerals and Waste Plan are not considered to be relevant to the determination of this application and are not therefore discussed further.

Kirklees Local Plan 2019

Policies Map / Site Allocations

5.5 The application site (outlined in red) as shown on the Policies Map extract below:

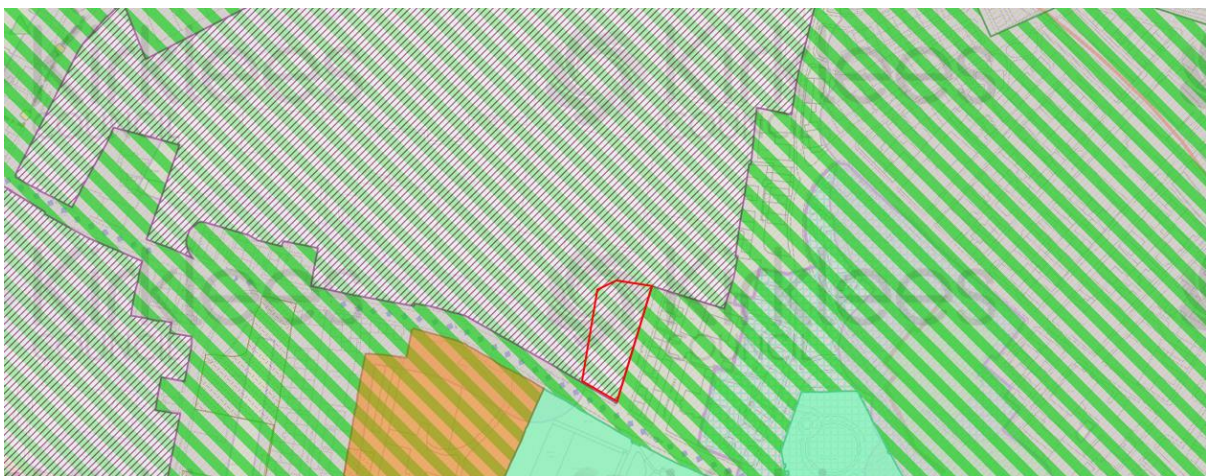


Figure 1 - Local Plan Policies Map extract



5.6 The application site has the following designations:

- Priority Employment Area – PEA55 (Local Plan ID) – 7.94 Ha;
- Strategic Green Infrastructure Network – Spen Valley Corridor;
- Biodiversity Opportunity Zone – Built Up Area; and
- Mineral Safeguarding – SCR with Sandstone and/or Clay and Shale.

Relevant Policies

5.7 The policies of the Local Plan considered to be most relevant to the proposed development and assessment of this planning application are as follows:

Policy LP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy LP2	Place shaping
Policy LP3	Location of new development
Policy LP8	Safeguarding employment land and premises
Policy LP24	Design
Policy LP28	Drainage
Policy LP30	Biodiversity & Geodiversity
Policy LP31	Strategic Green Infrastructure Network

Table 2 - Relevant Local Plan Policies

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

5.8 Paragraph 85 states that *‘planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt’* and that *‘significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development’*.

Supplementary Planning Documents

5.9 Following review of the list of Kirklees Supplementary Planning Documents, none are considered to be applicable to the development proposed.



6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 The proposed development is assessed against relevant planning policy and other material considerations below to assist decision taker in determining the application. The topics which are discussed within this section are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Economic Benefit / Business Growth
- Amenity
- Biodiversity
- Other

Principle of Development

6.2 Policy LP1 of the Kirklees Local Plan reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and seeks to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

6.3 Policy LP2 encourages development proposals to build on the strengths, opportunities and help address identified challenges within the particular sub-area of the district. Within the Batley and Spen area '*good local employment opportunities*' are listed as a strength/opportunity for growth.

6.4 Policy LP3 seeks to permit development that supports the delivery of employment growth in a sustainable way, including by realisation of development opportunities on previously developed sites and to meet local employment needs.

6.5 The site is located within a Priority Employment Area (ref. PEA55 Flush Mills, Heckmondwike) where Policy LP8 part 1 indicates that proposals for development for employment generating uses will be supported where there is no conflict with the established employment uses in the area.

6.6 The application proposes the erection of an industrial building within an established employment site for use by the existing occupier business, which reflects increased demand and business growth in the manufacturing sector. The use of the proposed building does not introduce a change to the existing business use of the site.



- 6.7 The site is already developed and serves to provide local employment which conforms to Policy LP3. The proposed development serves to build on the local strengths and opportunities set out in Policy LP2, and causes no conflict with the established employment uses in the area, such that it is supported by Policy LP8.
- 6.8 Overall, the principle of development for the nature and location of the use proposed is fully established and supported by planning policy.

Economic Benefit / Business Growth

- 6.9 The proposed development represents a significant investment by an existing business in its manufacturing capacity. This therefore creates economic growth through the procurement and construction of the building, and thereafter through the increased operational efficiency it provides for the business, thereby supporting on-going viable operation and business growth.
- 6.10 The business commitment to this investment and the improvement/expansion of its manufacturing operations at the site are a material consideration in support of the proposed development in accordance with paragraph 85 of the NPPF.

Amenity

- 6.11 Although within an established industrial complex, the location of the application site and proposed building is in close proximity to the neighbouring residential properties at Omar Street. Consideration has therefore been given to the matter of residential amenity at these properties.
- 6.12 Local Plan Policy LP24 sets out a range of measures by which proposals should promote good design. Of relevance to this application, these include ensuring that (*inter alia*):
- *(a) the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape;*
 - *(b) they provide a high standard of amenity for future and neighbouring occupiers; including maintaining appropriate distances between buildings and the creation of development-free buffer zones between housing and employment uses incorporating means of screening where necessary;*



- *(d) high levels of sustainability, to a degree proportionate to the proposal.*
- 6.13 Much of Policy LP24 is related to ‘new’ development rather than a proposal such as this to erect a new building within an established industrial site for use by the existing business. Nevertheless, relevant aspects of design have been considered.
- 6.14 The form, scale and details of a modular building such as this are designed in response to its function and the requirement of the user. Its size and shape are specific to allow the preparation and assembly of large containers within. Its details are largely neutral, with cladding and roofing materials finished in white.
- 6.15 The position of the building within the site makes efficient use of land. Its orientation serves the business operation with the main door facing north into the yard. This orientation also serves to reduce visual prominence with the longer, lower elevation facing towards the adjacent houses and the higher gable end perpendicular.
- 6.16 As shown by the Proposed Sections drawing ref. 23006-MOS-SI-XX-DR-A-0005_P01, the nearest elevation of the proposed building is c.11m from the houses on Omar Street, and the effective height of the building (given the difference in ground levels) is broadly similar to those houses, which creates a relationship not dissimilar to a street with terraced properties on both sides.
- 6.17 The position of the proposed building is opposite and visible to the houses at numbers 8-14 Omar Street. Premises at 2-6 Omar Street / 12 Westgate are in commercial use as a plumbers’ merchant. The outlook of houses at numbers 16-24 Omar Street will not change significantly.
- 6.18 The proposed uses of the building (as stated at paragraph 3.3) are not of a type that could impact on amenity by generation of noise, light, dust etc. The existing business operations already undertake the movement, siting and fit-out of containers externally within this part of the site and painting within the wider site without any issue or complaint.
- 6.19 The proposed building serves to internalise and screen activity at the site thereby reducing the potential for disturbance.
- 6.20 Overall, the design of the proposed development is optimised to meet the operational requirement and avoid impact on residential amenity. The proposed development is



considered to enhance the existing use of the site in a manner compatible with the adjacent residential properties and therefore conforms to Local Plan LP24.

Biodiversity

- 6.21 The application site is located within the area-wide designations of the 'Built Up Area Biodiversity Opportunity Zone' and the 'Spenn Valley Corridor Strategic Green Infrastructure Network'.
- 6.22 The proposed development conforms to Local Plan Policy LP30 insofar as it results in no loss or harm to biodiversity. Given the nature, use and location of the development proposed (i.e. erection of a building for industrial use in an existing operational yard area) suitable opportunities are not considered to exist to enhance biodiversity or create habitats as part of this development.
- 6.23 The application site contains no habitat and is actively used for industrial purposes. The proposed development shall have no impact on the existing network of green infrastructure in the surrounding area and thereby conforms to Local Plan Policy LP31. Given the nature, use and location of the development proposed (as above) it is not feasible or appropriate to introduce elements of green infrastructure development.

Other

- 6.24 The application proposes no changes to surface water drainage arrangements at the site. The site is understood to be drained by a recently installed system as approved pursuant to planning permission ref. 2018/92005. As the building is sited upon and fixed to the existing concrete ground surface, rainwater catchment shall not change and it shall be conveyed and attenuated by the existing system, as approved. Given the existing system was approved by discharge of condition in July 2021, this is considered to satisfy the requirements of Local Plan Policy LP28.
- 6.25 Whilst the proposed development shall enhance the business operation and thereby support the success and growth of the business, it shall not directly generate any increase in vehicle movements or requirement for parking at the site. The existing business operation utilises the site efficiently for external preparation and fit-out of containers, with all vehicle parking and circulation requirements met elsewhere within the Flush Mills site. The proposed development shall therefore cause no change or create any impact in respect of vehicle movements and parking.



6.26 Overall, the proposed development is in conformity to all relevant policies of the Kirklees Local Plan and constitutes sustainable development by supporting economic growth and socio-economic benefit in a manner without environmental or social impact.



7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Wakefield Acoustics seeks planning permission for the erection of an industrial building within the yard of its premises at Flush Mills, Heckmondwike as shown on the submitted drawings.
- 7.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.3 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed scheme would comply fully with both relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan and relevant policies in the NPPF.
- 7.4 The Principle of Development is acceptable in accordance with Kirklees Local Policies LP1, LP2 LP3, and LP8. With regard to Local Plan Policy LP24, the proposal shall not adversely alter the visual appearance or character of the area and will not introduce any issues which would affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.5 The economic growth and productivity that the development generates is a significant material consideration in favour of the application. Overall, this application constitutes sustainable development by supporting economic growth and socio-economic benefit without harm to environmental matters.
- 7.6 In accordance with the guidance contained in paragraph 11(c) of the NPPF, planning permission should therefore be granted.



Appendix 1 – Site Photographs



Site Photographs



