

PLANNING STATEMENT

Demolition of existing building and construction of student accommodation with ancillary spaces, associated garden area, store and landscaping, access and car parking

140a Manchester Road

Longroyd Bridge

Huddersfield

April 2024

Background

The site is without notation in the Kirklees Local Plan (2019) but falls within the Manchester Road / Longroyd Lane Local Centre and the Newsome Neighbourhood Area. Manchester Road is also a designated Transport Scheme Route.

There is no planning history relating to development on this site.

In addition to the information set out in the Site Context section above, the application site provides excellent pedestrian access to the town centre and to the University of Huddersfield (UH) which lies a short distance to the north-east and to the local services and facilities of Longroyd Bridge. Bus stops for access to and from the town centre are located on both sides of Manchester Road, within 50m of the site.

Planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF and the accompanying Planning Practice Guide is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF advises as a key objective that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which encompasses three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. The NPPF also states that

development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.

Chapter 5 of the NPPF - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes – states at paragraph 60 that –

To support the government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.....

Chapter 6 - Building a strong and competitive economy – states at paragraph 85 that -

Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. 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....

Chapter 7 - Ensuring the vitality of Town Centres – states at paragraph 90 a) that –

Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:

- *define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail*

and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;....

Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy communities – states at paragraph 96 that –

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings....

Chapter 9 - Promoting sustainable transport – states at paragraphs 114 and 115 –

In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

(a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;

(b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

(c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code ; and

(d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Chapter 11 - Making effective use of land – states at paragraph 123 that

–

Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.

Paragraph 127 continues –

Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:

(a) use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework; and....

Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed and beautiful places – states at paragraph 135 that –

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

(a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

(b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

(c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

(d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

(e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

(f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – states at paragraph 180 that –

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

.....

(d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

(e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.

Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

(f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – states at paragraphs 200 and 201 that –

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.....

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The Kirklees Local Plan (2019) contains a range of planning policies that may be applicable to the assessment of the proposed scheme. These include (but may not be limited to) -

Policy LP7 - Efficient and effective use of land and buildings

Policy LP11 - Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

Policy LP13 - Town Centre Uses

Policy LP15 - Residential use in town centres

Policy LP20 - Sustainable travel

Policy LP21 - Highways and Access

Policy LP22 - Parking

Policy LP24 - Design

Policy LP35 - Historic environment

Policy LP51 - Protection and improvement of local air quality

Other material planning considerations in the determination of planning applications include -

Housebuilders Design Guide SPD

Open Space SPD

Highway Design Guide SPD

Kirklees Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2016

Community Involvement

This is not considered to be essential for this application. The Validation Checklist states that Community Involvement will usually be appropriate where the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on the environment or on the local community and/or the development is likely to attract significant local interest.

In this case, the proposed scheme is unlikely have a significant impact on the environment or the local community and is unlikely to attract significant interest.

ASSESSMENT

In assessing the proposed scheme, the details of the proposal will be appraised against the relevant development plan policies set out above, which are underpinned by the relevant chapters of the NPPF, also as set out above.

Policy LP7 - Efficient and effective use of land and buildings

The proposed scheme makes an effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed. The site is considered to be in a sustainable urban location and is not of a high environmental value. The density of the proposed student housing ensures an efficient use of land and is of a higher density that is normally sought on such sites.

Policy LP11 – Housing mix and affordable housing

All proposals for housing, including those affecting the existing housing stock, should be of a high quality, be of a good design, and should contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities in line with the latest evidence of housing need. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides evidence to allow the Local Plan to set

out policies to achieve an appropriate housing tenure and mix to meet needs within Kirklees.

The SHMA sets out household needs and examines the current range of housing stock within the district. Policy LP11 allows for the provision of sufficient homes and land to ensure that the needs of different groups can be planned for, in accordance with national planning policy, including students.

With regards to student housing, the SHMA notes that the continued expansion of UH has maintained the rental market in and around the town centre (ie within a one-mile radius of the town centre) and has led to high levels of student demand in this area. Whilst the SHMA was produced in 2016, this demand still remains today. There is therefore a need for purpose-built student accommodation so close to the UH and the town centre.

It should be noted that purpose-built student accommodation is considered to be a specific type of housing accommodation based on single-person occupancy and so affordable housing policies are not held to apply in this instance.

Policy LP13 – Town centre uses

Whilst the application site does not lie within Huddersfield Town Centre, it does lie within a nearby local centre, which provides top-up shopping and local services (particularly food and drink). Policy LP13 states that centres shall provide a mix of uses to serve the local community, businesses and visitors to the district and it is considered that the provision of student accommodation within this local centre and so close

to the town centre will add to a mix of uses and not compromise the retail core of either the local centre or the town centre.

Policy LP15 – Residential uses in town centres

Policy LP15 states that proposals for residential uses (including student accommodation) within defined town centres will be supported subject to certain provisos. The policy justification, at paragraph 9.25, states that the principle for the provision of residential accommodation in town centres is supported provided it does not lead to an adverse impact on the operation of the towns retail core or would reduce space for other main town centre uses if outside of the primary shopping area.

In this instance, whilst on the edge of Huddersfield town centre and within a local centre, the provision of student accommodation would support the vitality and viability of both town centre and the local centre, especially given that the range of uses within the local centre would likely meet the immediate needs and requirements of students. As such, the proposed scheme will not lead to a detrimental impact to adjacent established uses, either within the local centre or the town centre.

Policy LP20 – Sustainable travel

The application site is held to be in a very sustainable location, within easy walking distance of the town centre and UH, and with close proximity to public transport (bus services and stops on Manchester Road). The scheme also includes the provision of cycle storage, as would be expected in a scheme for student accommodation.

Policy LP21 – Highways and access

The proposed scheme ensures the safe and efficient flow of traffic within the development and on the surrounding highway network (see the Highways Statement / Travel Plan and the Design and Access Statement submitted to support the application).

The proposed development can be accessed easily and safely by all sections of the community and by different modes of transport and provides an adequate layout and visibility to allow the development to be accessed safely by all users. The proposed scheme also takes into account access for emergency, service and refuse collection vehicles and provides on-site safe, secure and convenient cycle parking/storage facilities to encourage sustainable travel modes.

Policy LP22 – Parking

Full details have been provided with regards to the design and levels of proposed parking provision. As the proposed scheme is for purpose-built student accommodation, no permanent on-site parking is proposed, with spaces only for short-term drop-off and pick-up.

Policy LP24 – Design

The design rationale for the proposed scheme is set out comprehensively in the supporting Design and Access Statement. In summary, the proposed scheme is considered to promote high-quality design by ensuring that the development respects and enhances the character of the streetscape and nearby heritage assets (see below) and

provides for a high standard of amenity for future and neighbouring occupiers.

The future occupiers of the building will enjoy a high standard of indoor amenity and outdoor amenity areas, which would be typical of such high-quality accommodation. The neighbouring uses are predominantly commercial, although there is residential development to the north of the site (Woodthorpe Terrace) and some of the commercial properties nearby may have residential accommodation “above the shop”.

However, the proposed scheme will not result in any adverse residential amenity issues for nearby residential properties, as the proposed development is not considered to affect these properties in terms of any overlooking or overshadowing, or by being overbearing.

The proposed scheme will significantly enhance the biodiversity on the site and trees will be retained where appropriate in conjunction with the planting of new trees and other landscaping to afford good quality outdoor amenity areas for future occupiers.

Policy LP35 – Historic environment

Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset such as a listed building should seek to preserve or enhance the significance of the asset. In this regard, there is a listed building to the rear of the site (27 Woodthorpe Terrace), which lies in an elevated position above the development site. A Heritage Statement has been provided to fully assess any impact of the proposed development on the significance of the setting of this listed building.

Policy LP51 – Protection and improvement of local air quality

The proposed development does not lie within an Air Quality Management Area but it does lie adjacent to a main arterial road with the potential for standing traffic due to the nearby signalised junction. As such, an Air Quality report has been submitted with the application.

Conclusion

Given the information set out above, and the other supporting information provided with the application, it is considered that the proposed development represents a highly sustainable scheme that more than adequately satisfies the three strands that underpin the NPPF – economic, social, and environmental – whilst also meeting the specific requirements of the policies contained within the development plan.