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Planning    Development

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## **Planning Statement: Woodlands, Unit 4, Longbow Close, Pennine Business Park, Bradley, Huddersfield, HD2 1GQ**

### Site Description

Woodlands, Unit 4 Longbow Close is a two-storey detached, brick built building with a hipped roof. The building forms part of the Pennine Business Park and is located at the north-eastern end of Longbow Close. The building was formally occupied by Yorkshire Water as offices with internal storage. Access to the site is via Longbow Close, and the unit has its own designated car park comprising of 45 spaces including three disabled spaces. The surrounding area comprises of residential dwellings to the north, a public house and restaurant to the east, and the rest of the Pennine Business Park to the south and west. There is also a large area of woodland located south and south-east of the business park.



### **Front/West Elevation of Unit 4**

### Planning History

86/05337 – Outline application for use of land for high technology industry. Amended access to land to rear – Approved.

90/01540 – Outline application for B1 business park – Approved.

92/05372 – Erection of business park unit – Approved.

94/92855 – Erection of offices and warehouse – Refused.

94/93684 – Erection of company headquarters building incorporating research and development facility and product collation and distribution building – Refused.

2004/91182 – Outline application for erection of offices class B1 (A) - Approved

2004/95103 – Reserved matters application for erection of 4 No. two storey office buildings with ancillary parking - Approved

2005/90262 – Reserved matters application for erection of two storey office building with internal storage and ancillary parking – Approved.

### Policy Designation

The application site is located on land which is designated as a Priority Employment Area in accordance with the Kirklees Local Plan Policies Map.

### The Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for the subdivision of unit 4 from one unit into two units for E(e) and E(g)(i) uses.

The ground floor entrance lobby would remain unchanged. The remainder of the ground floor would incorporate a number of partition walls to form new rooms in association with a private eye clinic which would provide optometry services / laser eye surgery etc. The rooms would include six consultation rooms, two treatment rooms, one diagnostics room, two recovery rooms, reception/waiting area and a staff room. The proposed refurbishment would take place using a phased approach as follows:

Phase 1: Consulting rooms 1 and 2, the reception, staff room and toilets (target date Oct 2024)

Phase 2: Treatment room 1, anaesthetic recovery room and diagnostics room (target date Jan 2025)

Phase 3: Treatment room 2 and consulting rooms 3 to 6 as per demand (target date late 2025)

No internal alterations are proposed on the first floor which would remain an open plan office. The only external alterations proposed involve the removal of one large door on the south-western elevation with the opening to be bricked up.

### Assessment of the Proposals

#### **Principle of Development**

Paragraph 85 in the NPPF states,

*‘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.’*

The application site is located on land which is designated as a Priority Employment Area and as such Local Plan Policy LP8 is also relevant and states,

*'Proposals for development or re-development for employment generating uses (as defined in the Glossary) in Priority Employment Areas will be supported where there is no conflict with the established employment uses (as defined in the Glossary) in the area.'*

The proposed development relates to the subdivision of unit 4 from one unit into two units for E(e) and E(g)(i) uses.

The glossary in the Local Plan defines employment generating uses as, *'The B use class employment uses derived from the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order Guide 1987 (as amended) and enterprises which provide jobs.'*

The existing/proposed E(g)(i) use – offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions, is formally a B1 use, and the proposed E(e) use – the provision of medical or health services, and in this case, a private eye clinic, is considered to be an enterprise which provides jobs. It is envisaged that the eye clinic would create 10 positions. The precise number of positions associated with the first floor office use will depend on the particular end user, which is unclear at present.

The application site forms part of the larger Pennine Business Park, with the other uses on the wider site comprising of various business uses within the E use class including a medical centre (Local Care Direct). As a result, it is considered that there would be no conflict caused between the proposed E(e) and E(g)(i) development and the other employment uses on the wider site. The proposals would allow an existing business (Eyesight Ltd) to expand and grow through the utilisation of this vacant building within the Priority Employment Area.

The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in principle and accord with paragraph 85 in the NPPF and Policy LP8 in the Local Plan.

### **Highways and Access**

Local Plan Policy LP21 states,

*'New development will normally be permitted where safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people and where the residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe.'*

Access to the site would be via Longbow Close. The existing car park located adjacent to the unit comprises of 45 No. car parking spaces including three disabled spaces. It is anticipated that there would initially be 10 members of staff employed at the eye clinic with up to 25 patients visiting the premises per day by year 3. The amount of parking provision is therefore considered to be acceptable and would comfortably accommodate both staff and patients, whilst also leaving enough space for future occupants of the first floor offices.

There is also ample turning within the application site for vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. It is also considered that the volume of traffic entering and exiting the application site on a daily basis would not be to the extent that it would cause harm to the existing highway network, or noticeably increase traffic through the wider business site.

Vehicular access to the site would be via Longbow Close. Visibility at the business park entrance site at the junction of Dyson Wood Way is excellent in both directions, meeting minimum visibility splay requirements.

A bin storage area is located at the rear of the building. It is anticipated that this arrangement would remain unchanged.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to highway matters and accords with Local Plan Policy LP21 and the aims of Chapter 9 in the NPPF.

### **Biodiversity**

Certain types of development are exempt from the mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements. This includes a development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m x 5m) of on-site habitat
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows

The Government guidance states that a development 'impacts' a habitat if it decreases the biodiversity value.<sup>1</sup>

The only biodiversity habitat on-site is a very small area of shrubbery directly south of the building in the existing car park. The proposed change of use of the building would not impact or decrease the biodiversity value of the site, as the car park, and therefore the area of shrubbery, would be completely unaffected by the proposals.

The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to biodiversity and accord with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the aims of Chapter 15 in the NPPF.

### Other Matters

#### **Visual Amenity**

The proposals relate to the subdivision of unit 4 from one unit into two units for E(e) and E(g)(i) uses. As such, only minor alterations to the exterior of the building are proposed. These comprise of the removal of one large door on the south-western elevation with the opening to be bricked up to match the existing building.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to visual amenity and complies with Local Plan Policy LP24 and paragraph 135 in the NPPF.

#### **Residential Amenity**

The closest residential dwellings to the application site are 334 and 334A Bradley Road. These dwellings are over 50m away from the application site and are screened by a buffer of trees. Given the nature of the proposals and the separation distance between the application site and the nearby residential dwellings, the proposed development would cause no undue harm to residential amenity by way of outlook, daylight, privacy, and noise.

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposed opening hours are 09:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 12:00 on Saturdays.

The proposals are therefore considered to be acceptable in relation to residential amenity and comply with Local Plan Policy LP24 and paragraph 135 in the NPPF.

### **Climate Change**

A Climate Change Statement is submitted as part of the application. No renewable energy sources are being proposed at this stage, and no specific measures have been proposed to reduce air pollution. However, given the nature of the proposals, it is considered the development would have a neutral impact on climate change and biodiversity. The proposed development therefore accords with Local Plan Policies LP24 and LP26.

### **Conclusion**

This application seeks planning permission for the subdivision of unit 4 from one unit into two units for E(e) and E(g)(i) uses.

As discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable and there are no significant constraints that would prevent the development with regards to highway matters, biodiversity, visual amenity, residential amenity, and climate change.

The proposed development would enable new and existing businesses like Eyesight Ltd to expand and grow through the utilisation of this vacant building within the Priority Employment Area. This would result in investment and jobs for the local economy.

It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is approved accordingly.

**Robert Halstead Chartered Surveyors & Town Planners**

**June 2024**