



## Cowap Mobile Welding Services Ltd

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**LAND AT LEES HALL ROAD, THORNHILL LEES,  
DEWSBURY, WF12 9EQ**

Planning Statement



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Planning Statement

**PUBLIC**

**PROJECT NO. 2025UK424022**

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# 1

## **INTRODUCTION**





# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Cowap Mobile Welding Services Ltd ('the Applicant') in relation to a planning application for the proposed erection of a commercial unit for Use Class B2 with ancillary office space, parking facilities and associated infrastructure together with the enclosure of an existing concrete yard to form a new workshop (also for Use Class B2).
- 1.1.2. The application site is located at Lees Hall Road, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury, WF12 9EQ ('the site'). The site location and red line boundary is denoted on the Site Location Plan (Ref: 23013-RWD-ZZ-XX-DR-A-00-001).

## 1.2 COWAP MOBILE WELDING SERVICE LIMITED

- 1.2.1. Cowap Mobile Welding Services are civil engineers providing specialist services within the construction sector. Initially providing mobile welding repairs and services, the company has quickly grown and now additionally offers services in stonemasonry, operated plant, screw piling, gantry and mast installations as well as HGV transport.
- 1.2.2. Cowap have experience of working on many large construction projects within the rail and road transport sectors. Since the commencement of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) project, the company has been heavily involved in providing services to develop the rail infrastructure in the Huddersfield area. With their main site currently located in Manchester, it became clear that the company would require a permanent base more local to the TRU works. This would enable a quick response on call out to ensure that there are no on-site delays to the project, a base to provide storage and a reduction in commuting, providing an environmental benefit. There is a permanent requirement for Cowap to have a presence locally in order to provide essential maintenance services for the rail infrastructure long after the completion of the TRU project.
- 1.2.3. Prior to the purchase of the brownfield site, the site remained derelict for many years which left it neglected and an eyesore in the local community. Re-developing this site provides an environmentally sustainable solution and re-purposes what would be an otherwise derelict site. The site has already seen significant improvements aesthetically and local residents have commented on this. The proposed development would mean that the company could provide employment opportunities locally as the business grows.
- 1.2.4. Cowap are keen to invest in the local community, have been a business partner of 'The Welcome Centre' foodbank since purchasing the site and also support local schools with rail safety education.

## 1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS PLANNING STATEMENT

- 1.3.1. This Planning Statement provides an assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy and guidance and material considerations. It should be read alongside the package of plans, documents and technical assessments submitted with the application.
- 1.3.2. The outcome of the policy appraisal and assessment of material considerations demonstrates that the proposed development aligns with the Development Plan, the NPPF, and there is a significant scheme benefits that would arise from the development, such that the planning balance weighs overwhelmingly in favour of granting consent.

# 2

## **SITE CONTEXT**



## 2 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1.1. The site is currently occupied by Cowap Mobile Welding Service Limited and is situated within a well-established industrial area in Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury.
- 2.1.2. As shown on the aerial image at **Figure 2-1** below, the site is bound by Lees Hall Road to the south and neighbouring development (predominantly of an industrial nature) to its north, west and east boundaries.



**Figure 2-1: Aerial Photograph of the Site**

- 2.1.3. Whilst site conditions have improved since Cowap acquired it, the site is generally in a poor condition and its current configuration is not fit for purpose nor befitting of a modern industrial site.
- 2.1.4. The surrounding area comprises of commercial and industrial uses, set along side residential properties. The site has good access to major transport routes, facilitating ease of access for employees, visitors, and service vehicles.
- 2.1.5. The site is therefore very sustainably located to continue in industrial use and its redevelopment will help facilitate local investment and employment opportunities.

# 3

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



## 3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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3.1.1. Full details of the proposed development can be found in the Design & Access Statement and the architectural drawings submitted with the application. A brief summary is provided here to inform the subsequent planning policy appraisal.

### 3.2 SUMMARY

3.2.1. The proposed development essentially comprises three key elements:

- **Erection of a new commercial building:** The proposed new commercial unit will be of a modern industrial design, providing sufficient space for industrial activities (Use Class B2) and associated (ancillary) office space.
- **Formation of a workshop building:** The existing concrete yard will be enclosed to form a new workshop building, also classified under Use Class B2.
- **Parking facilities:** Adequate parking spaces will be provided for employees, visitors, cyclists, and service vehicles. The proposed site layout ensures ease of access and safe circulation within the site.

### 3.3 DESIGN OVERVIEW

3.3.1. As set out in the Design & Access Statement, the design of the proposed commercial unit and associated facilities has been developed with the following key principles in mind:

- **Functionality:** The design ensures that the proposed new commercial and workshop buildings are fit for purpose, providing adequate space and facilities for industrial use (Use Class B2).
- **Aesthetics:** The architectural style and materials have been chosen to reflect the industrial character of the area while ensuring the development is visually appealing and in harmony with its surroundings.
- **Sustainability:** The proposal incorporates sustainable design elements, including energy-efficient building materials and systems, to reduce the environmental impact of the development.

### 3.4 LAYOUT AND SCALE

3.4.1. The Proposed Site Plan shows the proposed layout of the development with the proposed new commercial building situated to the rear of the site to ensure circulation and industrial activity in the remainder of the site is unaffected. An area of existing concrete yard will be enclosed (located in the centre-right) of the site, to form the new workshop building. Parking will be located in safe and accessible locations across the site.

3.4.2. In terms of scale, as evidenced on the submitted plans, the proposed new commercial building will consist of 649sqm (GIA) split across ground (557sqm) and first floor (92sqm) and will be up to a maximum height is akin to that of similar developments in the area and is therefore not out of character. The proposed enclosed yard area to form a new workshop building will provide additional internal floorspace (ground level only) and will also be of a similar height to existing buildings in the area.

### **3.5 APPEARANCE**

- 3.5.1. In terms of appearance and materiality, the proposed buildings will comprise a combination of Yorkstone cavity walling from the ground level with the middle and upper parts of the buildings to comprise panelling painted in juniper green to soften the appearance.
- 3.5.2. The roof will comprise the same green panelling with translucent panels at intervals to provide natural light into the buildings.
- 3.5.3. Windows and doors would be aluminium PPC and double glazed with black painted frames.

### **3.6 LANDSCAPING**

- 3.6.1. Proposed new landscaping will be to the site peripheries to soften the existing appearance of the site, including:
  - New enhanced natural grassland with 12no. new trees to the eastern boundary;
  - 8no. new trees planted along the rear boundary;
  - New enhanced neutral grassland with 5no. new trees to the north-west boundary; and
  - Existing grassland, wild flower mix and existing trees located at the site entrance to be retained and bolstered with the inclusion of 3no. new trees.

### **3.7 ACCESS**

- 3.7.1. The site benefits from existing access points from Lees Hall Road.
- 3.7.2. The proposed development will utilise these access points, ensuring safe and convenient entry and exit for vehicles. The site currently has a one way system for traffic which will be maintained.
- 3.7.3. The site is well-served by public transport, with bus stops located within walking distance, providing convenient access for employees and visitors.
- 3.7.4. In terms of parking, 6no. existing car parking spaces will be retained and supplemented by 10no. new car parking spaces (including 1no. accessible parking space) and 6no. covered secure cycle parking spaces. These meet or exceed the required parking standards. Additionally, 2no. HGV parking spaces will be provided.

# 4

## **PLANNING POLICY APPRAISAL**



## 4 PLANNING POLICY APPRAISAL

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### 4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2. In the context of this application, planning policy operates at two levels:
- **National:** The Government produces national policy in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (2024) and the supporting National Planning Policy Guidance ('PPG'); and
  - **Local:** The Kirklees Local Plan Strategy and Policies, Allocations and Designations (2019) ('the Kirklees Local Plan').
- 4.1.3. This chapter of the Planning Statement summarises planning policy and guidance that is considered relevant to the positive determination of this planning application.

### 4.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

#### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2024)

- 4.2.1. The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024.
- 4.2.2. The NPPF, along with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), carries significant weight in the decision-making process for this planning application.
- 4.2.3. The primary objective of the NPPF is to actively promote sustainable development to support the government's economic growth goals.
- 4.2.4. The NPPF identifies three key dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. These dimensions are interconnected and should be pursued in a mutually supportive manner.
- 4.2.5. Within the NPPF there are several sections that are directly relevant to the proposed development. The key sections are as follows:
- Achieving Sustainable Development**
- 4.2.6. To ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). This means, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.
- 4.2.7. Paragraphs 7-10 confirm that the Government will seek to ensure that the planning system does not impede sustainable growth and requires Local Planning Authorities to place significant weight on the need to support sustainable economic growth.
- 4.2.8. For the reasons set out within this Planning Statement and as demonstrated in the accompanying technical reports, the proposed development constitutes the sustainable redevelopment of a brownfield site and will lead to economic, social and environmental benefits for the area.

## **Plan-Making and Decision-Making**

- 4.2.9. Paragraph 23 states strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption.
- 4.2.10. Paragraph 39 states that Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and is supportive of the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) if applicable.
- 4.2.11. Annex 2 of the NPPF sets out what previously developed land is:

*‘Previously developed land: Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.’*

## **Building a strong, competitive economy**

- 4.2.12. Paragraph 85 states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity through development. This is particularly important where the UK can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should capitalise on their performance and potential.
- 4.2.13. Local planning authorities should recognise and address the locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations (paragraph 87).
- 4.2.14. The site is located in an area of longstanding industrial heritage and is therefore in a highly sustainable location for B2/B8 use and employment development and responds positively to the Council’s drive for economic development in Kirklees.

## **Making effective use of land**

- 4.2.15. Paragraph 125 (b) states development decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land for identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

- 4.2.16. Paragraph 126 states that Local planning authorities should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward sites that are suitable for meeting development needs, including brownfield sites.
- 4.2.17. As noted above, the proposed development constitutes the sustainable redevelopment of a brownfield site and will lead to economic, social and environmental benefits for the area. It is the very demonstration of an effective use of land and is wholly aligned with the NPPF in this regard.

#### **Achieving Well Designed Places**

- 4.2.18. Paragraph 131 stresses the importance of planning positively for ‘the creation of high-quality buildings and places.
- 4.2.19. Paragraph 135 ensures that developments will function well and add to the quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish or maintain a strong sense of place; accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development including greenspace and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing.
- 4.2.20. The design philosophy and approach set out in the Design & Access Statement and illustrated in the Proposed Site Plan and Proposed Elevation Plans demonstrate that a high quality and sensitively designed development, including the careful choice of materials, colour scheme, scale and thoughtful layout arrangement, can be achieved at the site that aligns with national planning policy.

### **4.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY**

#### **STRATEGIC POLICIES**

- 4.3.1. Policy LP1 carries forward the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
- 4.3.2. The Vision and Strategic Objectives for Kirklees envisage and seek to make Kirklees “*ideally placed to encourage inward investment and stimulate economic growth*”.
- 4.3.3. Policy LP7 supports the efficient and effective use of land and buildings, including encouraging the efficient use of previously developed land in sustainable locations and the reuse or adaptation of vacant or underused properties.
- 4.3.4. As indicated above, the site is located in an area of longstanding industrial heritage and is therefore in a highly sustainable location for B2/B8 use and employment development and responds positively to the Council’s drive for economic development in the Dewsbury area. The proposed development is therefore aligned with Policies LP1 and LP7 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.5. Through Policy LP71, the site is allocated as a Mineral Infrastructure Site (Ref: MIS3) in the Kirklees Local Plan. However, Policy LP40 provides a policy mechanism for alternative development to come forward on protected minerals infrastructure sites where one of the following five criteria are demonstrated:
  - a) *that use of a mineral infrastructure site is no longer economically viable, or there is already adequate provision meeting the need elsewhere; or*

- b) *the new development will result in the provision of alternative facilities of equal or better quality; or*
- c) *there is an overriding need for the development; or*
- d) *the development will be of a temporary nature that would not preclude a site being brought back into use for mineral infrastructure purposes; or*
- e) *the development would involve the extension of existing buildings or the erection of ancillary buildings within their curtilages*

4.3.6. The proposed development is considered to meet a number of these criteria, including:

**(b)** – the proposed development would significantly improve the quality of the existing employment site and sustain its long term viability and enable an existing business to expand;

**(c)** – in a time of economic uncertainty and a cost of living crisis, there is a pressing need for sustaining and expanding economic activity in established and sustainable areas to reinforce the local labour market and economy; and

**(e)** the proposed development would constitute an expansion of existing built form at the site and the efficient re-use of existing yard space to form an additional building on site.

4.3.7. The proposed development therefore meets one or more of the Policy LP40 criteria for alternative development to come forward at an allocated Mineral Infrastructure Site.

4.3.8. The proposed development therefore accords with the Development Plan in terms of the principle of development.

4.3.9. Only in the event that material considerations in the form of technical or environmental impacts outweigh the benefits of the proposed development should planning permission be refused. An appraisal of the proposed development against relevant technical and environmental policies is carried out below.

## TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

4.3.10. The table below demonstrates how the proposed development accords with most pertinent technical and environmental planning policies in the Kirklees Local Plan:

Local Plan Policy	How the proposed development accords
<b>LP21 – Highways and Access</b>	The proposals incorporate the retention of the existing in-out access arrangement and facilitate improved circulation throughout the site.
<b>LP22 – Parking</b>	The proposals meet or exceed the required standards for car and cycle parking provision.
<b>LP24 – Design</b> <b>LP26 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</b>	The design has been developed with the following key principles in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Functionality:</b> The design ensures that the proposed new commercial and workshop</li> </ul>

	<p>buildings are fit for purpose, providing adequate space and facilities for industrial use (Use Class B2).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Aesthetics:</b> The architectural style and materials have been chosen to reflect the industrial character of the area while ensuring the development is visually appealing and in harmony with its surroundings.</li> <li>■ <b>Sustainability:</b> The proposal incorporates sustainable design elements, including energy-efficient building materials and systems, to reduce the environmental impact of the development.</li> </ul> <p>The Proposed Site Plan shows the proposed layout of the development with the proposed new commercial building situated to the rear of the site to ensure circulation and industrial activity in the remainder of the site is unaffected. An area of existing concrete yard will be enclosed (located in the centre-right) of the site, to form the new workshop building. Parking will be located in safe and accessible locations across the site.</p> <p>In terms of scale, height and massing, as demonstrated on the submitted plans, the proposed development will be in keeping with the scale, massing and height found in the surrounding area and will not lead to any adverse visual or amenity impacts.</p> <p>In terms of appearance and materiality, the proposed buildings will comprise a combination of Yorkstone cavity walling from the ground level with the middle and upper parts of the buildings to comprise panelling painted in juniper green to soften the appearance.</p> <p>The roof will comprise the same green panelling with translucent panels at intervals to provide natural light into the buildings.</p> <p>Overall, a high quality design will be achieved.</p>
<p><b>LP27 – Flood Risk</b> <b>LP28 – Drainage</b></p>	<p>The site is making use of the already existing drainage that is located on site, the existing site drainage will be as per existing drainage system which is currently working well and draining the site well as is.</p> <p>The proposed new workshop and offices has the foul drainage which will be collected in a new local drainage system which is then</p>

	<p>connected to the existing foul drainage system on site.</p> <p>Full details are set out in the accompanying Drainage Statement.</p>
<p><b>LP30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b> <b>LP32 - Landscape</b></p>	<p>As shown on the Proposed Site Plan, proposed new landscaping will be installed to the site peripheries to soften the existing appearance of the site, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ New enhanced natural grassland with 12no. new trees to the eastern boundary;</li> <li>■ 8no. new trees planted along the rear boundary;</li> <li>■ New enhanced neutral grassland with 5no. new trees to the north-west boundary; and</li> <li>■ Existing grassland, wild flower mix and existing trees located at the site entrance to be retained and bolstered with the inclusion of 3no. new trees.</li> </ul> <p>The landscaping strategy will deliver biodiversity enhancements as well as visual mitigation and a significant improvement to the overall appearance of the existing site.</p>

4.3.21. In summary, the proposed development also aligns with the technical and environmental planning policies in the Kirklees Local Plan. The proposed development is therefore acceptable both in terms of principle and technical and environmental impacts.

4.3.22. The following section considers this outcome in the planning balance.

# 5

## PLANNING BALANCE



## 5 PLANNING BALANCE

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- 5.1.1. The principle of B2/B8 development at the application site has long been established through its planning history and the precedent set for Council's approving similar development in the vicinity.
- 5.1.2. The proposed development has been designed with the principles of sustainable development in mind. The sustainable re-use of a brownfield site in a heavily industrial area to sustain and enable the expansion of a local business and increase employment opportunities whilst ensuring any environmental impacts are acceptable.
- 5.1.3. The proposed development will also deliver substantial socio-economic benefits to the area, including:
- Supporting and promoting economic development in the Dewsbury area;
  - Sustaining and facilitating the expansion of a local business than in turn will support other local businesses; and
  - Creating and maintaining jobs for residents in the locality and wider area.
- 5.1.4. Based on the submitted information to support this application and the evidence set out in this Planning Statement, the proposed development therefore meets one or more of the Policy LP40 criteria for alternative development to come forward at an allocated Mineral Infrastructure Site.
- 5.1.5. The proposed development therefore accords with the Development Plan in terms of the principle of development. Furthermore, a key component of NPPF is the importance of re-developing brownfield sites and the efficient use of land to boost the economy, which the proposed development is wholly aligned with.
- 5.1.6. Furthermore, as evidenced by the technical assessment documents submitted with the application, there are no technical or environmental planning matters which cause any conflict with the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan.
- 5.1.7. Overall, the proposed development clearly constitutes sustainable development.
- 5.1.8. The proposed development clearly and demonstrably accords with relevant local and national planning policy and guidance in respect of sustainable development, design and environmental impacts. In addition, there are no technical considerations which prevent the proposed development coming forward and substantial socio-economic benefits will be delivered to the area.
- 5.1.9. Considering the above, the planning balance weighs overwhelmingly in favour of the granted of consent and in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the proposed development should be supported by Kirklees Council and approved without delay.



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