

The Metal Store

# **Full Planning Application**

**Cleckheaton Fire Station,  
Hightown Road, Cleckheaton,  
BD19 5HD**

Planning Support Statement

# Revision Record

Revision Reference	Date of Revision	Nature of Revision	Revision Author	Checked By
A	May 2025	First Draft	LB	

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Site Context and Non-Policy Designations.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Development Proposals.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Statutory Policy Context.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Reasoned Justification for Proposed Development.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Planning Balance and Conclusion .....</b>	<b>14</b>

---

# 1 Introduction

---

- 1.1 Spawforths have been instructed by The Metal Store (“the Applicant”) to produce this Planning Support Statement in respect of the proposed redevelopment of the vacant Cleckheaton Fire Station into use for B2/B8 (Storage and Distribution).
- 1.2 The description of development is set out as follows:  
*“Full planning application for the change of use from a fire station (Sui Generis) to use class B2/B8 to allow for metalwork and the storage of metals”*
- 1.3 The Applicant is a leading online retailer and supplier of metal products, serving both businesses and DIY enthusiasts across the UK. The business was established in 2011 and currently specialises in providing a wide range of high quality, affordable metal products.
- 1.4 As the business has grown, the applicant now requires additional space to operate in. The applicant is therefore seeking to utilise the vacant Cleckheaton Fire Station as an extension to the existing business located on the adjacent property.
- 1.5 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with these reports, which are outlined below:
  - P4728-SPA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-001 Location Plan
  - P4728-SPA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-002 Plans as Existing
  - P4728-SPA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-003 Elevations as Existing
  - P4728-SPA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-004 Plans as Proposed
  - P4728-SPA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-10-005 Elevations as Proposed

# 2 Site Context and Non-Policy Designations

---

## Site Location and Context:

- 2.1 The property that is the subject of this proposed change of use (hereafter referred to as “the Site”) is Cleckheaton Fire Station, situated in the town of Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire. The Fire Station was originally built in 1952, and was first planned for closure in 2020 when the facility was deemed outdated. The Fire Station was subsequently put up for sale in 2025 and is now vacant.
- 2.2 The boundary of the Site is defined by Westgate (A643) to the north, and Hightown Road to the east. The southern boundary is defined by The Metal Store which sits immediately adjacent to the Site. The western boundary is defined by a steel fabrication business that is also immediately adjacent to the Site.
- 2.3 The Fire Station itself is a two-storey structure (with a mezzanine). The appearance of the building reflects its previous use as a fire station. On its eastern elevation are two large doors that were previously used by fire engines to enter and exit the building. The doors open out to the Site’s sole vehicular access point on Hightown Road. The building also has a tall distinctive tower structure on its north eastern corner.
- 2.4 The Site benefits from off-street parking, is within walking distance of nearby residential dwellings, and is in close proximity (within 100m) to bus stops on both Westgate and Hightown Road. The property is not a listed building, is not located within a conservation area, and is located within Flood Zone 1, which represents the lowest risk of fluvial flooding.



Figure 1 – Aerial Photo of the Site (with approximate Red Line Boundary)

### Relevant Planning History:

- 2.5 A review of the planning history of the Site on Kirklees Council's public access has shown that there are no previous planning applications that are relevant to the proposed residential development of the Site.

Application Ref.	Description of Development	Site Address	Decision
2006/94885	Installation of windows to community room	FIRE STATION,HIGHTOWN ROAD,CLECKHEATON,BD19 5HD	Approved (01/2007)

### Non-Policy Designations:

- 2.6 Following an appraisal of the Site and its constraints, we have produced the table below to outline all the relevant non-policy designations:

Non Policy Designation or Planning Consideration	Site Address / Proximity to the Site
Conservation Areas	The site is not within a Conservation area
Listed Buildings	The property is not listed, and there are no Listed Buildings within close proximity to the Site.
Ancient Monuments	None within close proximity to the Site.
Archaeological Sites	None within close proximity to the Site.
Tree Preservation Orders	None within close proximity to the Site.
SSIs/SSSIs	None within close proximity to the Site.
Flood Risk Zone	The Site is within Flood Zone 1
Other Ecology Designations	None within close proximity to the Site.
Rights of Way (PROW / Bridleway)	No formal Public Rights of Way cross the Site.
AONB or Landscape Designation	None within close proximity to the Site.

## 3 Development Proposals

---

3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the proposed development as follows:

*“Full planning application for the change of use from a fire station (Sui Generis) to use class B2/B8 to allow for metalwork and the storage of metals”*

3.2 The proposal will consist of a change of use for the entirety of the existing building. There will be no required external alterations to the existing building, and no new structures will be added.

3.3 The purpose of the proposed change of use is to utilise the vacant fire station as an extension to an existing business (The Metal Store) located at the adjacent property to the South. The proposed development to amend the vacant building to use class B2/B8 (industrial storage/distribution) is proposed predominantly to enable greater storage space for the existing business, while also providing additional space for metalwork to take place.

3.4 The conversion of the proposed site to support the expansion of The Metal Store will provide the following benefits:

- **Integration** – There is direct access between the existing Metal Store and the Site
- **Increased capacity** – The need for more space reflects growing customer demand. It will also allow The Metal Store to hold more stock, purchase materials in larger quantities for better efficiency, and pass those cost savings onto customers
- **Job Creation** – New roles in warehousing, sales and administration
- **Continued support for the local economy** – The expansion will allow for continued business between local suppliers and service providers
- **Minimised disruption** – the existing access to the Site would allow for easier loading/unloading of metals, whilst avoiding parked cars on Hightown Road.

# 4 Statutory Policy Context

---

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning authorities must determine each application under the Planning Acts in accordance with Development Plan so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 This section identifies the Planning Policies and other material considerations which are relevant to this proposal.

### Statutory Development Plan:

- 4.3 The Site is located within the Kirklees Council authoritative area. The Statutory Development Plan for the consideration of this full planning application comprises of:
  - Kirklees Local Plan Strategy and Policies (Adopted Feb 2019)
- 4.4 The application Site is currently unallocated within the Statutory Development Plan, and therefore has no specific designation or preferred use within local planning policy.



Figure 1: Kirklees Development Plan Policies Map

**4.5** The key policies within the Kirklees Local Plan, relevant to his application are as follows:

Policy LP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy LP7	Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Buildings
Policy LP21	Highways and Access
Policy LP22	Parking
Policy LP24	Design

**4.6** In line with national policy, Kirklees Council has a presumption of sustainable development. This requires the council to take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as committing to working proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. From an economic perspective, this includes a commitment to “contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements including the provision of infrastructure”

#### **National Planning Policy Framework 2024**

**4.7** The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the Government’s directive to build a strong and competitive economy.

**4.8** The key elements of the NPPF relevant to the Site are, in summary as follows: -

- Achieving Sustainable Development
- Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
- Making Effective Use of land
- Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

**4.9** The NPPF has a presumption of sustainable development central to the framework. Unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or the need to protect areas or assets provide a strong reason for refusing the development, development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan and therefore align with the principles of sustainable development should be approved without delay.

**4.10** Furthermore, the NPPF makes it clear that significant weight should be given to the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into consideration the needs of local businesses. As a result, planning policies and subsequent decisions should be committed to creating the conditions which will enable businesses to invest, expand and adapt as stated in paragraph 85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific requirements of different sectors, which includes, in accordance with paragraph 87, making provisions for “storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods”.

**4.11** The National Planning Policy Framework states in paragraph 124 that planning policies and decisions, should also promote an effective use of land, particularly when it comes to meeting the needs of housing and other uses. National policy therefore encourages the use of previously

developed land and brownfield sites in paragraph 125d, specifically supporting the development of land and buildings which are under-utilised.

- 4.12** Although located in Flood Zone 1, the Site has been identified as a location for surface water flooding, which means national policies regarding this risk have been considered. In line with paragraph 175 of the NPPF, a sequential test is usually required for areas at risk of any form of flooding. However, paragraph 176 specifically states that this will not be required for minor developments, such as change of use, which implies this will not be required in this case.

# 5 Reasoned Justification for Proposed Development

---

**5.1** It will be demonstrated that the application proposals fully accord with the provisions of the Local Plan and that there are no material considerations which warrant a refusal of planning permission for this scheme. Within this overarching policy framework, the evaluation of the application proposals is now considered against the following issues:

- Principle of Development
- Visual Amenity
- Residential Amenity

## **Principle of Development**

- 5.2** The Site is currently not allocated for any particular use within the Local Plan.
- 5.3** Policy LP1 of the Local Plan states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
- 5.4** The proposed change of use from a vacant fire station to a storage and distribution (B2/B8) use would support the expansion of a well-established local business, providing them with more capacity to operate. Chapter 6 of the NPPF states that the planning decisions should help create conditions where businesses can invest, expand and adapt, and significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.
- 5.5** In addition, Paragraph 87 of the NPPF supports the provision of storage and distribution operations at the variety of scales in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods.
- 5.6** The development makes efficient use of previously developed land, and seeks to reuse a vacant property; both of which accord with the aims of Policy LP7 and LP24 of the Local Plan.
- 5.7** The principle of development is considered to be acceptable. Other material planning considerations have been assessed below.

## **Amenity**

### Visual Amenity

- 5.8** Section 12 of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development which creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities.

- 5.9** Local Plan Policies LP1, LP2 and LP24 all seek to achieve good quality design that is in keeping with the scale of development in the local area and is visually attractive.
- 5.10** The proposed development is not seeking to amend the external appearance of the building, and would not therefore create any harm to the visual amenity of the surrounding character and appearance of the area. The proposals therefore accord with Policy LP24 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 5.11** Paragraph 135f of the NPPF states that developments should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future uses. Policy LP24 similarly requires proposals to minimise their impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers.
- 5.12** The change of use to B2/B8 uses for storage and metalwork is considered to have a minimal impact on residential amenity due to the predominately commercial uses that surround the site. This is discussed below:

Residential uses along Wilton Terrace (East)

- 5.13** There are residential properties located south east of the site, approximately 65m in distance at their closest point. These properties are already located within a similar proximity to The Metal Store, separated only by Hightown Road. Activities associated with the use of the Site for industrial and storage uses will have no greater impact on residential amenity than already exists.

Commercial uses on Hightown Road (South)

- 5.14** The Metal Store is located immediately south of the Site. The Metal Store is currently in B2/B8 use and will not be adversely impacted by its own expansion onto the Site.

Commercial uses on Westgate A643 (West)

- 5.15** CU Phosco Lighting is located immediately west of the Site and is an industrial use relating to the manufacturing of steel lighting columns. There is a 10m separation between the shed this business operates in, and the Site. CU Phosco Lighting also has its own separate access and will not therefore be adversely impacted by activity on the Site following the proposed change of use.

Residential and Commercial uses on Westgate A643 (North)

- 5.16** A house located at 66 Westgate, a printing business and an accountancy firm are located to the north of the Site. At their closest point, these uses are 37m from the Site, and are separated by the A643. There is not expected to therefore be any adverse impacts resulting from the proposed change of use.
- 5.17** Overall, the change of use can be considered to have minimal impact on residential amenity. The Site's immediate surroundings are other commercial units engaged in similar activities; the closest being The Metal Store who are the applicants of this proposal. The nearest residential properties are located across the road from the proposed Site, and any concern regarding the operational hours of the business and days or times of deliveries can be addressed through an appropriately worded planning condition. It is therefore concluded that the proposals comply with Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

## Highway Safety

- 5.18** Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Local Plan policies LP21 and LP22 seek to ensure safe and suitable access to new development, and that proposals avoid a detrimental impact on highway safety and the local highway network.
- 5.19** This proposal is seeking to utilise the existing access of the Site as well as the existing car parking provision. Given the Site's former use as a fire station, the proposed use will reduce the impact on the local road network as vehicles servicing the business will not need to travel as far down Hightown Road to access the business. Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to represent any additional harm in terms of highway safety and as such complies with local policy.

# 6 Planning Balance and Conclusion

---

- 6.1** This planning Statement has shown that the proposal accords with the requirements of the relevant planning policies contained in the statutory development plan and in national planning guidance.
- 6.2** The development represents sustainable development as defined by the NPPF. Local and National planning policies are supportive of the proposed development which will bring back to use a vacant building to allow for the growth of The Metal Store business.
- 6.3** The proposal will consist of a change of use for the entire (both floors) of the existing building. There will be no required external alterations to the existing building, and no new structures will be added.
- 6.4** Owing to the industrial nature of the surrounding area and the distance of the Site from residential uses in Cleckheaton, there is not expected to be any amenity issues resulting from this application.
- 6.5** The planning policy context establishes the commitment of the Government to facilitate growth, investment and developments that are clearly sustainable. There are no technical reasons why the application proposal should not be approved.
- 6.6** As per Local Plan Policy LP1, “proposals that accord with the policies in the Kirklees Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise”. This planning statement has demonstrated that the proposed development represents the definition of sustainable development and is compliant with both national and local planning policy.
- 6.7** We therefore respectfully request that this application is supported by Kirklees Council in order to realise the benefits outlined above.