

Our ref: AV/AC/Q230904
Your ref: PP-12676662
Email: adam.cornish@quod.com
Date: 9th January 2024



Planning Department
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale
OL16 1XU

Submitted via Planning Portal (ref. PP-12676662)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
The Wood Yard, Pilsworth Road, Heywood, Lancashire OL10 2TA
Continued use of site for Class B8 (storage and distribution) and erection of modular units with ancillary offices along with vehicle parking, servicing, external storage and associated works
Application submitted on behalf of Chevron Traffic Management Limited

We are instructed by our client, Chevron Traffic Management Limited ('the Applicant'), to submit the enclosed full planning application for the erection of modular units to be used for storage and distribution with ancillary offices (Class B8) along with car parking and associated works at The Wood Yard on Pilsworth Road, Heywood ('Application Site'). Specifically, consent is sought for the following development:

"Continued use of site for Class B8 (storage and distribution) and erection of modular units with ancillary offices along with vehicle parking, servicing, external storage and associated works."

The application has been submitted under Planning Portal reference PP-12676662, and includes the following information in line with the Council's validation requirements:

- **Requisite planning application forms, duly completed;**
- **Certificate B and Agricultural Holdings Certificate;**
- **Notice to Owner and Cover Letter;**
- **Community Infrastructure Levy Form;**
- **Site Location Plan, prepared by Quod;**
- **The following drawings, prepared by Modular Accommodation:**





Drawing Title	Drawing No.	Scale
Site Plan	23CHE-ADM-OW-GF-3001	1:500 @ A3
Roof Plan	23CHE-ADM-OW-GF-2002	1:75 @ A3
General Arrangement Plan	23CHE-ADM-OW-GF-1001	1:100 @ A3

An online payment of £1,734.00 has been made to the Planning Portal on the day of submission to cover the requisite planning application fee for the creation of 177.8 square metres (GEA) of floorspace.

1 Introduction

Chevron Traffic Management Limited ('CTM') is the UK's leading independent traffic management provider and has been providing traffic management solutions since 1982. They specialise in the provision of temporary traffic management for organisations working within Utilities, Construction, Rail, High-Speed Network, Local Authorities and Events which need to disrupt normal traffic flow to complete a project.

CTM has over 1,000 employees and depots in 27 locations around the UK. It forms part of the Chevron Group, the UK's leading infrastructure safety business, who are specialists in urban and high-speed traffic management, arboriculture, barrier services and digital services.

CTM are seeking a relocation premises in the area following the closure of their old depot in Finedon. This new depot will expand their presence in the area to support and operate alongside their existing premises in Middleton. The Application Site in Heywood therefore provides CTM with an opportunity to operate a strategically located branch with excellent transport connections to the wider area via the A58, M62 and M66.

The application proposals are being advanced on this basis.

2 Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site measures 0.41 hectares and is located approximately 1km south of Heywood Town Centre. The Site fronts Pilsworth Road however, the Site is accessed from a local road, via Pilsworth Road, which forms the southern border of the Site. The Application Site is situated in an established industrial location with commercial operations located immediately to the north, east and south. An area of landscaping sits to the west which screens the site from the nearest residential properties which are separated by the railway line connecting Heywood to Rochdale and Bolton.

The Application Site has been occupied by The Wood Yard, a timber merchant, since c.2014 with it sitting vacant for a period prior to this.



The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 (land at lowest risk from flooding) and there are no trees within the site boundary. There are no locally or nationally listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site nor is the site located within an Air Quality Management Area or Conservation Area. The extent of the Site is edged red on the Site Location Plan enclosed at **Document 1**.

3 Relevant Planning History

The Site itself has not been the subject of many planning applications although it forms part of the relevant planning history for the wider area.

Planning permission (ref. 91/D26900) was granted for a new business park comprising an office block and 26 new industrial units in November 1991. This included the Application Site along with two plots to the south. An application (ref. 93/D29859) for new vehicular access and service road on the same land was granted in November 1993. Following this, planning permission was granted in December 1996 (ref. 96/D33705) for the erection of 2no. storage and distribution units with offices, car, lorry and trailer parking. An application (ref. 98/D35716) was submitted again in August 1998 for the same development and approved in October 1999. It is assumed that 98/D35716 forms the baseline permission for the Application Site.

There is no other recent planning history of relevance.

4 Proposed Development

Use

The application seeks the continued use of the Application Site as Class B8, which aligns with the existing use at the site. The proposed modular units will function as ancillary office and staff welfare space as well as provide internal storage.

The wider site area will also be used for storage, car parking, servicing and associated works.

Quantum

The proposed modular units extend to 163.5 square metres (GIA) and will contain offices, meeting rooms and staff welfare facilities including toilets, kitchen and canteen.

The creation of floorspace as a result of the proposals amounts to 177.8 square meters (GEA).

Design

The modular units are a common feature at CTM depots around the country. The units are light, simplistic and utilitarian in nature, giving the site an industrial appearance which is both efficient and functional for the incoming occupier. This is reflective of CTM's operation which does not require a high quantum of floorspace given their storage and distribution focus.



The modular units are grey in appearance and complete with windows. They rise to two storeys, resulting in a maximum height of 5.2 metres. Additional details of the appearance can be found on drawing ref. 2001 P02.

Layout

The site layout has been designed to ensure the vehicular spaces and storage areas are maximised to allow the site to operate effectively and efficiently.

The modular units are located on the southern boundary, close to the site access. Staff parking is located in front of the modular units leaving the remainder of the Application Site to be used for vehicular parking and storage.

Additional details of the site layout can be found on drawing ref. 3001 P04.

5 Planning Policy Context

Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this instance, the Development Plan for the area is comprised of the Core Strategy (October 2016) and the Saved Policies from the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') (June 2006).

The Council is currently in the process of adopting a new Local Plan which will comprise an Allocations Plan as well as, a Joint Development Plan Document together with eight other Greater Manchester districts. Adoption of the Allocations DPD has not been estimated yet and adoption of the Joint DPD is currently expected to be adopted in 2024.

The Site is allocated in the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan under Policy EC/8, Site k 'Site on Pilsworth Road, Heywood' as being available for employment development within a Primary Employment Zone.

Development Plan

Core Strategy (October 2016)

Policy SO1 (To Deliver a More Prosperous Economy) outlines that the Council will focus on identifying quality employment sites and areas to increase the number and range of jobs and employment levels.

Policy SO3 (To Improve Design, Image and Quality of Space) states that the Council will focus on raising design quality and promoting sustainable development.



Policy SD1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) outlines the Council's positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy SP2 (The Spatial Strategy for the Borough) states that in the south of the borough, where there is good access to existing facilities and infrastructure, the motorway corridor, public transport facilities and the wider Greater Manchester city region we will deliver most new housing, employment and commercial development, with investment targeted on Heywood specifically. The spatial strategy identifies Heywood as a Regeneration Area.

Policy SP3/H (The Strategy for Heywood) outlines the priorities for Heywood. Specifically, promoting economic growth in South Heywood:

"Delivering new economic development on sites within the successful employment area in the south of the town to maintain their national reputation as a high quality business location (Policy E3);

Developing higher value housing to support and complement this economic growth area and promote wider prosperity (Policies C1,C3); and

Promoting infrastructure improvements and traffic management to service new and existing development and reduce heavy goods traffic in Heywood town centre and residential areas (Policies E3,T1)."

Policy E2 (Increasing Jobs and Prosperity) sets out the Council's strategy for ensuring a sufficient supply of suitable land, buildings and infrastructure. To do this, the Council will focus most new employment development and jobs in the south of the Borough, specifically in the south Heywood employment sites which are of high quality with good access to the motorway network.

Policy E3 (Focusing on Economic Growth Corridors and Areas) covers the South Heywood employment area and states that the Council will:

- a. Support improvements to all existing employment areas within South Heywood to maintain and enhance the quality of employment premises;*
- b. Promote the area mainly for distribution uses;*
- c. Promote infrastructure improvements and traffic management to service new and existing development and reduce heavy goods traffic in Heywood town centre and residential areas;*
- d. Promote the extension of the East Lancs Railway line to Castleton to provide a commuter rail service to and from Manchester, with a new station close to Pilsworth Road (Policy T1b); and*



- e. Promote the provision of bus services from Middleton to improve access to jobs in Heywood.*

The policy goes on to state that in these corridors, the Council will:

- a. Focus the majority of employment development in existing employment zones, town centres and on the key sites identified above;*
- b. Focus the delivery of sustainable transport improvements to make the corridors more accessible to the workforce and commercial traffic (Policy T1);*
- c. Provide suitable sites and premises to attract potential growth sectors, such as financial and information and community technology services (ICT);*
- d. Encourage office and other high density employment development subject to Policies E2 & T2;*
- e. Allow appropriate supporting leisure development subject to Policies E2 & C8;*
- f. Focus development to promote clusters and maximise linkages within and between sectors;*
- g. Prioritise the redevelopment of previously developed land for employment uses but promote other uses, such as housing, if it's more appropriate to delivering a prosperous economy or to meeting the needs for any adjoining regeneration areas (Policy C2);*
- h. Promote and focus investment in ICT, including high speed broadband, and any other infrastructure that can support businesses; and*
- i. Promote the development of, and linkages with, education, training and investment services and facilities (Policy C7)*

Policy P3 (Improving Design of New Development) seeks for all new development to be of the highest quality design and sustainability which reflects the Borough's identity and self of place.

Policy T1 (Delivering Sustainable Transport) covers the Council's standards for sustainable transport.

Policy DM1 (General Development Requirements) outlines the Council's requirements for new development which includes the high standards of design, the compatibility and suitability of land uses, that the amenity of neighbours is not adversely affected and provide satisfactory vehicular access and parking arrangements.

Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (June 2006)

Policy EC/2 (Primary Employment Zones) outlines that within these areas, development for business and warehouse uses (Use Class B1, B2 and B8) will be permitted where proposals:

- a) Are of an appropriate scale and character to the area;



- b) Will cause no unacceptable environmental or amenity problems in the employment area or adjoining areas; and
- c) Will cause no unacceptable traffic problems and have adequate on-site provision for parking, servicing and manoeuvring.

Policy EC/8 (Development Sites in Employment Zones) identifies the Site (site k) as available and appropriate for employment development.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023)

Paragraph 11 (Sustainable Development) sets out that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:

- I. approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- II. where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - a) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed;*
 - b) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole*

Paragraph 8 refers to the overarching objectives for achieving sustainable development including the economic objective which seeks to:

“to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;”

Paragraph 85 goes on to advise 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.’ It also outlines how policies should be flexible to ‘accommodate needs not anticipated.”



Paragraph 123 outlines that decisions should promote an effective use of land.

Paragraph 135 seeks to ensure that planning decisions for development:

“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.”

The NPPF encourages authorities to review their employment land regularly and to maintain flexible policies that can react to market signals. The reuse of previously developed land is also heavily promoted.

6 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The Application Site is located within a long-established and allocated Primary Employment Zone. The proposals seek for the site to continue to operate under Class B8, the existing lawful use and therefore this application should raise no matters with the principle of the development. Indeed, the Application Site is surrounded by industrial and commercial uses. Given the allocation, there is policy support for the proposals, particularly from site-specific policy EC/8 which outlines the site is available for employment development (Classes B1, B2 and B8) and does not outline any special requirements for the site.



Policy E3 identifies the South Heywood industrial area as having fantastic access to the M66 at J3 via Pilsworth Road and as a location for potential employment growth in Greater Manchester. CTM's operations rely heavily on access to the wider highway network which makes the Application Site the perfect location.

The proposals will result in an allocated employment site continuing to be occupied by a policy compliant industrial occupier which will retain existing jobs. These proposals go to the very heart of Policies S01, SD1 SP2, SP3/H, E2 and E3 of the Core Strategy.

The NPPF supports business expansion and job creation. At Paragraph 85 the NPPF states "significant weight" should be placed on supporting economic growth and productivity. The development of the site supports the key NPPF objectives of achieving sustainable development including the economic objective of helping to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. In view of this and the wider Development Plan compliance, the principle of development is fully supported by the NPPF.

The proposed development will result in the occupation of an allocated employment site by an efficient and effective business within the traffic management sector. These proposals will result in the continued occupation of the site and allow the retention and creation of jobs.

There are no matters of principle to prevent this development coming forward and it is wholly supported by national and local planning policy.

Site Layout and Design

Careful consideration has been awarded to the layout of the Application Site to ensure the occupier can achieve the most efficient and effective layout. This includes the positioning of the modular units as well as the vehicle parking and storage areas, which are key to CTM's operation. This will sit directly in front of the modular units and predominantly occupy the centre of the site.

In terms of design, UDP Policy EC/2 outlines that within these allocated areas, development for business and warehouse uses (Classes B1, B2 and B8) will be permitted where proposals are of appropriate scale and character to the area, will cause no unacceptable environmental or amenity problems in the employment area and finally will not cause any traffic problems.

The modular units are modest in scale, amounting to just 163.5 square metres (GIA) and 5.2 metres in height. They are situated on the southern boundary, towards the heart of the established industrial area and within the shadow of the larger warehouses to the south. These units are wholly in keeping with the character of the established industrial area.

The units will provide a modern depot for CTM which will update and improve the existing site creating a clean and tidy site which meets the demand of the occupier. The proposals are reflective



of the industrial nature and commercial character of the surrounds and therefore appropriate to the site.

Furthermore, there are no residential properties in the vicinity to be adversely affected by the proposals and given the nature of the proposed operations to take place on site, there will be no adverse impact to the amenity of the wider employment area. The Application Site has its own separate vehicular entrance and sufficient provision of on-site parking and so the proposed development will not cause an unacceptable traffic impact, in line with the requirements of UDP Policy EC/2.

Summary

It has been demonstrated above that the application proposals accord with the policies contained within the Core Strategy and Unitary Development Plan which form the Development Plan. Notably, the principle of the development is acceptable given it is currently operating under the same use within an allocated Primary Employment Zone, and is surrounded by a large amount of industrial and commercial operators.

The proposals are modest and therefore do not give rise to any development management considerations beyond layout and design, which have been fully justified above.

The application has demonstrated that it accords with all relevant local and national planning policy and therefore planning permission should be granted without delay.

7 Summary and Conclusions

We have been instructed by our client, Chevron Traffic Management Limited, to prepare and submit this application for the proposed development comprising the erection of modular units to be used for storage and distribution (Class B8) along with car parking, storage and associated works within the allocated Primary Employment Zone at Pilsworth Road, Heywood.

Consistent with national and local planning policy, the proposals seek the continued occupation of this allocated employment area within the jurisdiction of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough. The application should raise no matters of principle and has demonstrated that the relevant development management considerations have been addressed. In short, the scheme has significant planning merit, is a sustainable development and planning permission can be granted accordingly.

All of the above are laudable planning benefits, particularly given the current unpredictable economic and political situation which reflects the uncertainty in the industry at this time. In short, the application proposals constitute a sustainable economic development.

We trust the enclosed is sufficient for you to register this planning application and we look forward to receiving confirmation in due course. If for any reason this is not the case, please contact us immediately.



We will be in contact with the relevant officer once the application is registered. In the meantime, if there is any further information we can provide to assist you with your consideration of this application please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Adam Cornish
Associate

enc.

cc.