

Rochdale Dunelm

Framework Travel Plan

Client: ERP (Accrington) Limited

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Framework Travel Plan has been prepared on Arcadis Consulting UK Limited (Arcadis) on behalf of ERP (Accrington) Limited to support the submission of a full change of use planning application at the existing retail unit (Dunelm and Carpetright) off Whitworth Road, Rochdale (the site).

The site comprises a single building divided into two units and the lawful planning use is for non-food retail as controlled by planning permission reference 00/D37893, which was approved on 25 August 2000.

In order to be market facing and commercially attractive, the Applicant is seeking to expand the existing non-food retail use to include Use Class B8 (storage and distribution) including trade counter (i.e. open Use Classes (E(a) and B8). The proposed change of use would enable the Site to be used flexibly between retail, storage and distribution, trade counter, or any combination of those uses to respond to market demand. For the avoidance of doubt, the Applicant does not seek to make any physical external alterations to the existing units.

The proposed description of development comprises:

“Proposed change of use to allow flexible or mixed use for retail (Use Class E(a)), storage and distribution (Use Class B8) including trade counter with ancillary office space (Use Class E(g)).

2 Framework Travel Plan Purpose and Context

2.1 Benefits

Travel planning for new developments, especially where there are multiple users, can bring a number of benefits for the developer, the local authority, wider community, and ultimately the users of the site, including:

- Promote healthy lifestyles and sustainable, vibrant communities;
- Provide adequately for those with mobility difficulties;
- Reduce demand for car parking, thereby enabling more efficient land use;
- Reduce pressure on highway capacity, particularly at peak times;
- Cut carbon emissions and their contribution to climate change;
- Reduce road danger and protecting vulnerable road users; and
- Improve local air quality, while reducing noise pollution.

Continuing operation of a Travel Plan can also play a role in helping businesses mitigate their transport profile that contributes towards Climate Change and help adapt to its impacts. Travel Plans can also form part of an organisation's Corporate Social Responsibility commitments.

2.2 Scope of the Framework Travel Plan

This Framework Travel Plan is for the development of the site as a mixed employment and retail land use. It is intended to encourage the members of staff associated with the site to travel sustainably. The development will be a mixed-use site, which can be used flexibly, as set out in Section 1.1.

3 Site Assessment

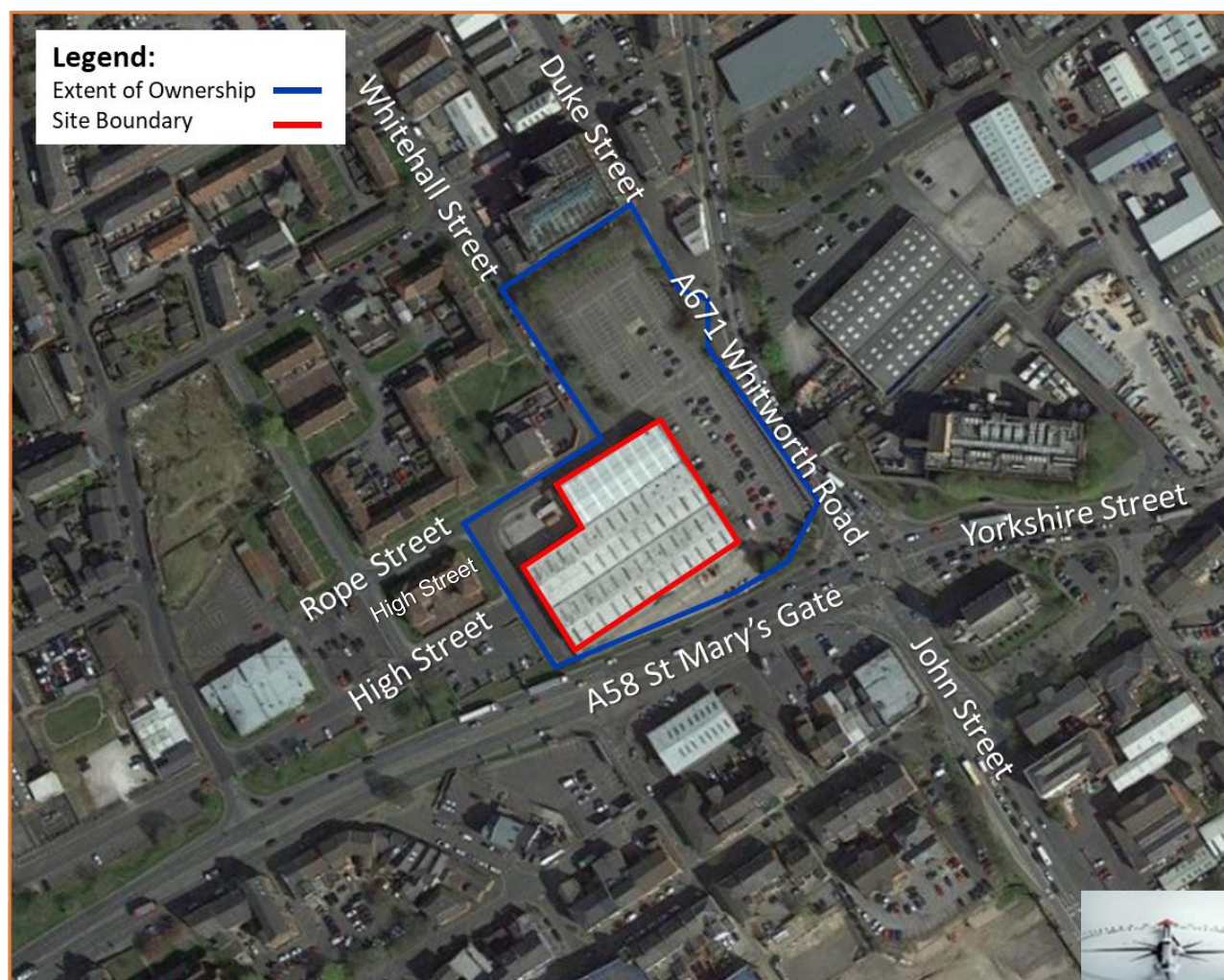
3.1 Introduction

This section provides a description of the site, the access to each plot and a summary of the existing accessibility by all modes of transport within the vicinity of the site. The site description should be read alongside the corresponding Transport Statement.

3.2 Site Description

The application site is located on the northwest corner of the junction of St Mary's Gate (A58) and Whitworth Road (A671) in Rochdale's Central Retail Park, shown in Figure 1. The site consists of the Dunelm and Carpetright retail store and its associated car parking area; the site is proposed to become a mixed development unit with the possibility of including some land use class B8 elements such as storage unit and / or trade counter use.

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan and Application Boundary



Proposed Land Uses

As mentioned in Section 1.12.2, the proposed development's land uses will be flexible and range across non-food retail to distribution and storage.

Access

Access to the site is for different modes are shown in Figure 2 and described for each mode as follows:

Vehicular

- The existing access routes remain unchanged with some additional lining at the junction of Duke Street with the site access to change priority with a give way and no right turn for northbound traffic.
- An upgrade of the junction of Redcross Street and St Mary's Gate by the Council will provide an alternative route for customers to egress from the site (right turn).

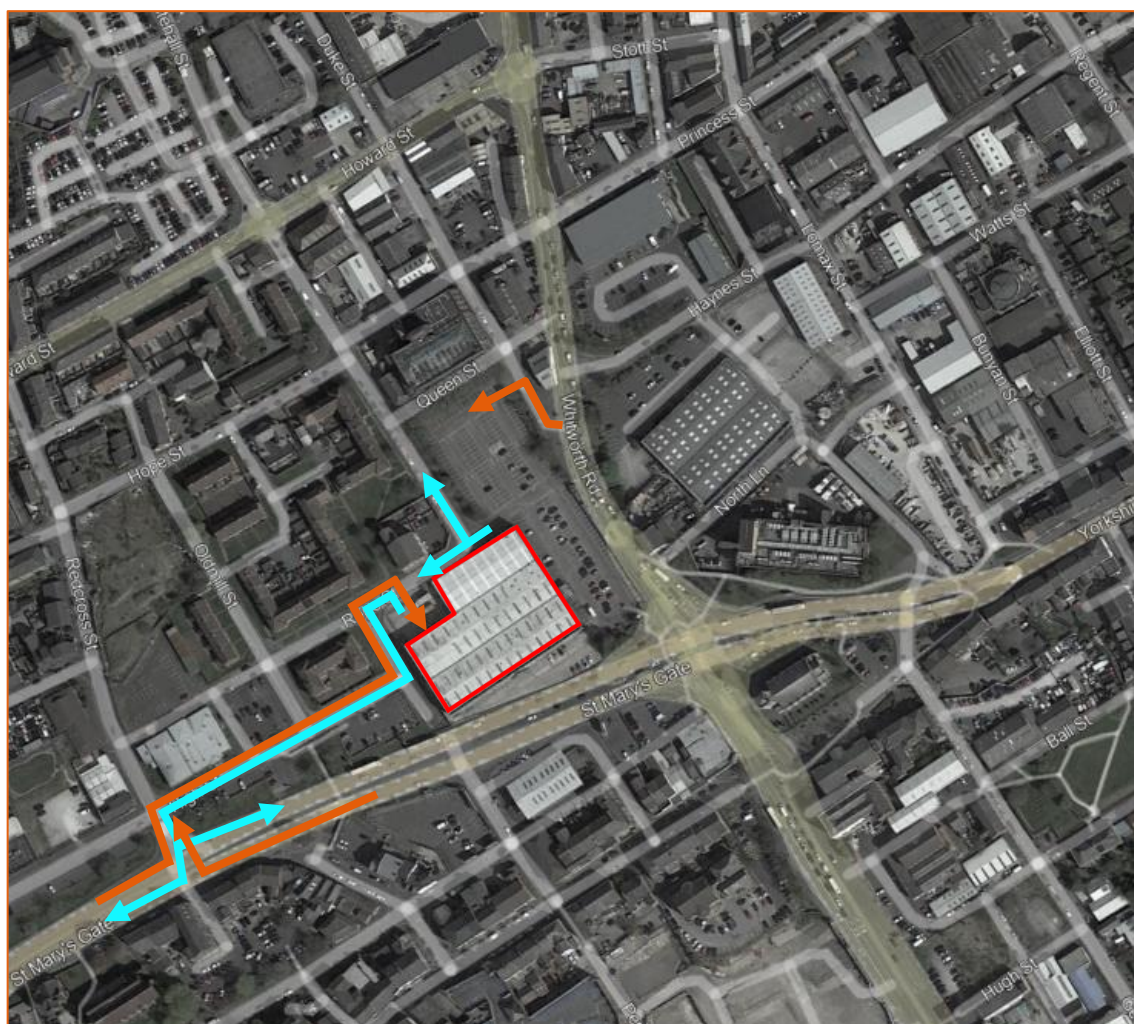
Pedestrians and cyclists

- The existing access points remain the same with the additional access points from Duke Street and Whitehall Street that connects directly to the store entrance.

Deliveries

Vehicles will arrive via at the servicing entrance of the existing unit, which is located at the western end of the site off Rope Street, via High Street and Union Street. Vehicles will also depart using the same route.

Figure 2 – Site Boundary, and Access Points (Orange) Egress Points (Blue)



Car Parking

Rochdale Borough Council provides information on the car parking spaces for the existing Whitworth Road (Dunelm) Car Park:

- General use spaces: 250
- Disabled spaces: 6 (Free parking with a valid Blue Badge)

3.3 Current Transportation Network

Highway Network

The site is surrounded entirely by adopted public highway. The site is close to a major junction on the ring-road around the north of Rochdale town centre (St Mary's Gate (A58) with Whitworth Road / John Street). This section of the network is busy with east/west traffic movements along the A58 and to / from Whitworth Road. The junction can become congested during the peak hours with queues forming on all arms.

Buses

Numerous bus routes pass the site along St Mary's Gate and Whitworth Road, namely:

- Whitworth Road – 464, 862, 885, 999, R1.
- St Mary's Gate – 458, 587, 590.

The nearest bus stops are located on:

- Whitworth Road – 170m to the north either side of the junction of Whitworth Road with Howard Street.
- St Mary's Gate – 160m south on the east side of the junction with Whitworth Road.
- Rochdale bus station is located 625m to the south.

4 Objectives

This chapter sets out the aims and objectives of the Framework Travel Plan for the proposed development.

4.1 Aims

Framework Travel Plans are put in place with the overarching aim to influence the behaviour of staff of the proposed or existing development in using more sustainable modes of transport.

4.2 Objectives

With consideration to the nature of the development being a car focused site for customers, the Framework Travel Plan is focused upon the staff. As such, the main objectives of the Framework Travel Plan are as follows:

- To promote measures to encourage sustainable travel principles;
- Reduce the number of single occupancy (drive alone) vehicle trips made by staff and visitors to/from the site;
- Promote 'healthy travel' to the site (i.e. walking and cycling) and increase the number of staff travelling by these modes;
- Implement a range of measures that will encourage and support the use of alternative modes of transport other than travelling as a car driver (i.e. public transport and cycle parking);
- Sustain the Framework Travel Plan through suitable management strategies and financial investment;
- Monitor the performance of the Framework Travel Plan against its targets by regularly collecting accurate travel information.

5 Targets

Targets are essential to ensure everyone involved in the Framework Travel Plan process knows what needs to be done and to enable progress to be assessed. Targets should be SMART (see below) and can take the form of 'aim-type' targets and 'action-type' targets:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Realistic; and
- Time-bound.

At this stage (i.e. prior to occupation of the site) it is accepted practice to derive interim targets based on the estimated baseline trip generation and mode split. However, given the car focused nature of the proposed development the targets will be linked to staff travel patterns.

The Framework Travel Plan will promote and monitor sustainable travel for each of the plots, and only apply targets should an issue be identified in the first post operational survey.

6 Measures

The key to successful travel planning is to identify and promote the most suitable modes of transport that are realistic and practical for staff. There is no single solution to any one person's transport needs. Different people will respond to different measures, whilst some may not react to any.

6.1 Hard Measures – Infrastructure

Accessibility and cycle parking

The access points and cycle parking for both pedestrians and cyclists remain the same as the existing site. No immediate changes are to be made to accessibility and active travel provisions, however, should demand be identified for cycling from the staff baseline survey, cycle parking provision could be considered.

Car parking

The car parking provision on site is to remain unchanged compared to the existing at 250 general use spaces and 6 disabled spaces.

Deliveries

Deliveries to the site will be undertaken by 12m rigid HGV to the existing service yard to the rear of the property.

6.2 Soft Measures – Marketing and Promoting

The site is located close to public transport services and existing cycling facilities create the conditions to make sustainable travel choices a natural option. However, it is also recognised that a communication strategy is key to the success of the Framework Travel Plan.

The marketing and promotion of the Framework Travel Plan will commence when the development becomes operational.

Details of the proposed communication strategy for the proposed development are set out below.

Travel Information

Information on sustainable travel options including travel leaflets will be placed within the staff areas. The travel leaflets will be produced by the site operator.

The travel leaflets will contain a map of the local area and show walk, cycle and public transport routes to / from key local facilities. A key role of the travel leaflet will also be to raise awareness of the sustainable travel initiatives being implemented through the Framework Travel Plan.

A summary of key information to be included within the leaflet is set out below:

- Promotion of walking and cycling: Information on walking and cycling routes will be provided together with links to sources of further information; and
- Promotion of public transport services: Details of bus service including information regarding frequency and times of the first and last services, (i.e. timetable information, Traveline journey planner, etc.).

Walking

In recognition of the importance of walking given the town centre location the Travel Plan measures will encourage walking as a mode of travel to work by implementing the following initiatives:

- Provision of information about walking routes between the site and key local destinations; and
- Promote the health and other benefits of walking, including participation in the annual 'walk to work' campaign.

Cycling

The Travel Plan will seek to encourage cycling as an alternative mode of travel to work by promoting and implementing the following initiatives:

- Regular monitoring of cycle parking use, and installing cycle parking where necessary and practicable; and
- Promote the health, fitness and time saving benefits of cycling, through specific events such as National Bike Week and Bike2Work Days.

Public Transport

The Framework Travel Plan will encourage use of public transport as a mode of travel to work by implementing the following initiatives:

- Reviewing and updating the provision of public transport information on a dedicated site specific Facebook page / or website and door to door leaflet drops.

The proximity to Rochdale Interchange and being located on 2 key bus routes will provide a key asset in promoting the use of public transport for journeys to and from work.

7 Monitoring and Remedial Strategies

7.1 Introduction

To establish the success of the Travel Plan, a monitoring and review process would be beneficial. Monitoring will help to establish if staff are changing their travel to work habits to more sustainable modes.

7.2 Monitoring Strategy

Monitoring will take place in years 1, 3 and 5 with the potential for the operators/employers to continue monitoring thereafter on a voluntary basis.

The monitoring of the plan is important for the following reasons:

- It will demonstrate to the local authority the effectiveness of the measures implemented and the progress being made towards the aims and objectives of the travel plan;
- It maintains support for the Travel Plan by reporting successes;
- It helps to identify any deficiencies and measures that are not effective; and
- The data can be shared with any other nearby employment travel plans as well as inform the local authority and public transport operators of local travel patterns.

Baseline surveys to establish the starting point will be issued to staff when the operation commences.

A questionnaire will be distributed to staff to monitor travel to and from the site and gain an understanding of travel habits. The results can then be reviewed and interpreted to identify mode split and identify if any private car use is taking place, and whether specific mode split targets are required to be introduced with the Travel Plan.

8 Action Plan

The proposed measures and targets for the staff are summarised in terms of timescales and responsibilities in the action plan below.

Table 1 – Action Plan

Action	Target Date	Responsibility
Initial Setup		
Exchange contact details with Local Authority.	Prior to occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Set up Travel Plan working file.	Prior to occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Obtain public transport timetables.	Prior to occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Prepare travel information for staff.	Prior to occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Issue travel information in packs to staff.	Upon occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Agree discounts on cycles and equipment with local cycle shops	Prior to occupation	Building Owner / Operator
Review adequacy of cycle provision	Biennially	Building Owner / Operator
Monitoring & Review		
Distribute initial Travel Plan survey staff	On commencement of operation	Building Owner / Operator
Undertake further travel surveys	Year 3 and 5	Building Owner / Operator
Organise traffic / multi-modal counts at entry / exit points to the development	Year 1, 3 and 5	Building Owner / Operator
Collect travel plan surveys and count data and analyse results	Within 3 weeks of issue	Building Owner / Operator
Submit progress report to LHA	Within 3 months of survey	Building Owner / Operator

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