



Quod

Unit H2, Heywood Distribution Park

Planning Statement

AUGUST 2024

Q240538

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1 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Quod on behalf of Iron Mountain (the “Applicant”) in support of a Full Application (“the Application”) for the refurbishment and external alterations to the existing warehouse located at **Unit 9, Heywood Distribution Park, Pilsworth Road, OL10 2TL** (“the Site”).

The Proposed Development

- 1.2 The proposed description of development (‘DoD’ or the ‘Proposed Development’) for which planning approval is sought is set out below:

“Refurbishment of existing warehouse and associated works.”

- 1.3 A full description of the proposals is provided within **Section 3** of this Statement.

The Applicant

- 1.4 Iron Mountain is a global leader in storage and information management services. Iron Mountain create a framework necessary to bridge the gap between paper, digital, media and physical data and have a commitment to sustainability at their core.

Scope of this Application

- 1.5 The scope and context of this Application comprises the following documents:

- **Full set of scheme drawings (including existing and proposed plans);** *prepared by UMC Architects*
- **Design and Access Statement;** *prepared by UMC Architects*
- **Drainage Statement;** *prepared by Build Warranty*
- **Completed Application Form;** *prepared by Quod*
- **Planning Statement;** *prepared by Quod*

Scope of this Planning Statement

- 1.6 The remaining sections of this Planning Statement are structured as follows:

- **Section 2 – Site, Surrounding Area and Planning History** details the relevant context to the Site, including a description of the surrounding area and a summary of the relevant planning history;
- **Section 3 – Proposed Development** provides a summary of the Proposed Development, including design and access;

- **Section 4 – Planning Policy Background** summarises the relevant planning policy to the determination of this Application;
- **Section 5 – Planning Assessment** considers the Proposed Development against the relevant policies of the Development Plan and relevant material considerations (including supporting guidance where appropriate); and
- **Section 6 – Conclusions** sets out the overall conclusions of the Application proposals.

2 Site, Surrounding Area and Planning History

Introduction

- 2.1 This section of the Planning Statement describes the Site, the surrounding area and provides a summary of the Site's planning history.

Application Site

- 2.2 The Application Site, outlined in red in **Figure 1** below, is located within the administrative area of Rochdale Borough Council ('RBC'), who act as the Local Planning Authority ('LPA').

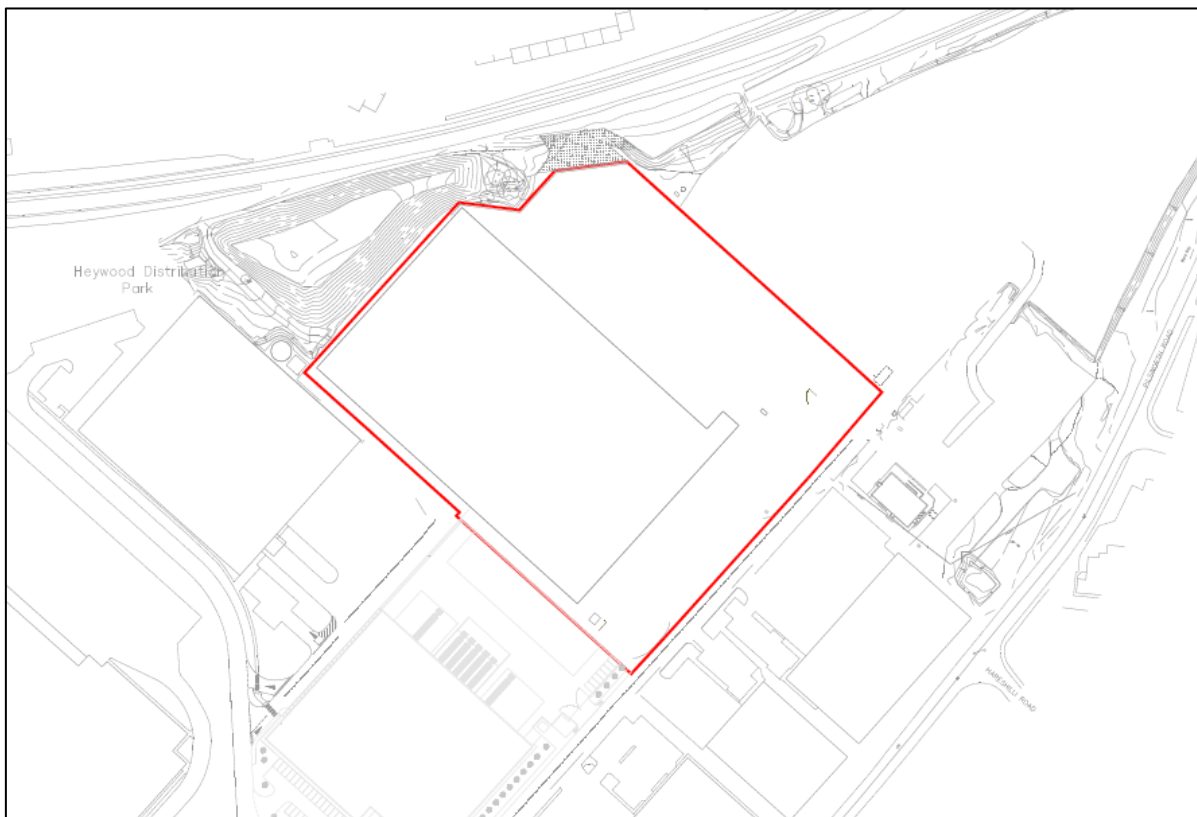


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

- 2.3 The Site is located towards the northeast corner of Heywood Distribution Park, with Mulberry Way forming the Site's southern boundary. The Site is circa 1 km from Heywood Town Centre and is situated approximately 4km from Bury Town Centre, 6km from Rochdale Town Centre and approximately 9.5 km from Oldham Town Centre.
- 2.4 The Site area extends to approximately 7.96 acres/ 3.22 hectares (ha) and comprises a circa 13,800 sqm warehouse building in Use Class B2 (General Industry) and Use Class B8 (Storage or distribution).

- 2.5 The remaining area of the Site is comprised of concrete hard standing, with parking spaces located to the south and a service yard to the south-east of the unit.
- 2.6 The car park and service yards benefits from their own vehicular access points off Mulberry Way, ensuring safe access is provided for both private vehicles and HGVs.
- 2.7 The existing warehouse and access to the Site is shown in **Figure 2** below.



Figure 2: Existing access and warehouse at the Site

- 2.8 The Site is located within easy access of the M66 and M62 motorways, providing links to central Manchester and trans-Pennine routes to Liverpool. Access into Heywood Distribution Park is via Pilsworth Road where access is controlled by an existing gatehouse. Pilsworth Road also provides access to M66 and M62 junctions, which are within 2.5 miles of the site.
- 2.9 There are two access points into the Site itself on Mulberry Way which provide access into the car park at the south of the Site and access into the service yard at the southeastern corner. There is an existing control gate at the access to the service yard. Separate access points for private vehicles ensure that safety is prioritised for all users of the site and there is no conflict between private vehicles and HGV's.
- 2.10 The Site benefits from good public transport access with several bus routes within walking distance of the Site providing frequent services to surrounding towns.
- 2.11 The Site is not subject to any statutory environmental or landscape designations. The Site is not located within a Conservation Area and the Site is not, or within the setting of, a heritage asset.

- 2.12 The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 as per the Environmental Agency's Flood Map for Planning and therefore has a low probability of flooding.
- 2.13 The east, south and west the Site is surrounded by other employment units that form Heywood Distribution Park. The Distribution Park is characterised by a range of typical industrial and storage units and associated hard and soft landscaping. To the north of the Site is the East Lancashire Heritage Railway Line that separates the Site from residential properties further north. Beyond the employment units and Pilsworth Road to the south, there is also land which makes up part of the Northwest Green Belt.

Planning History

- 2.14 A summary of the relevant planning history associated with the Site is detailed in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Planning History Summary

Reference	Development Proposal	Decision
21/00406/FUL	Extension to existing industrial unit and service yard together with temporary alterations comprising two loading doors under scaffold enclosures to allow for continued service access during construction	Approved (16/09/2021)
SPZ1/011	Erection of two industrial/warehouse units	Approved (17/04/2011)

- 2.15 The Officer's Report attached to the most recently approved application (ref. 21/00406/FUL) confirms that the lawful use of the employment unit is Use Class B2 (General Industrial) and Use Class B8 (Storage and Distribution).

3 The Proposed Development

Introduction

3.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides an overview of the development proposals.

Development Description

3.2 As noted in **Section 1** of this Statement, the Proposed Development for which planning approval is sought is set out below.

“Refurbishment of existing warehouse and associated works”.

3.3 The full extent of the proposed works for which planning permission is being sought are detailed within the submitted **drawings** and **Design and Access Statement** prepared by UMC, which should be read alongside this Planning Statement.

The Proposal

3.4 As outlined above, this Application seeks full planning permission for the refurbishment and external alterations of the Site. Specifically, a summary of the proposed works is provided below:

External Proposals

- A new 12m canopy added to the northern level access door;
- A new sprinkler tank and pump house;
- A full perimeter fence allowing 1200mm gap adjacent to the existing facility fence;
- New car park entrance gates, which are proposed to be bifold automated with access control; and
- A new office amenity block.

3.5 The Proposed Site Layout is provided at **Figure 3** below:

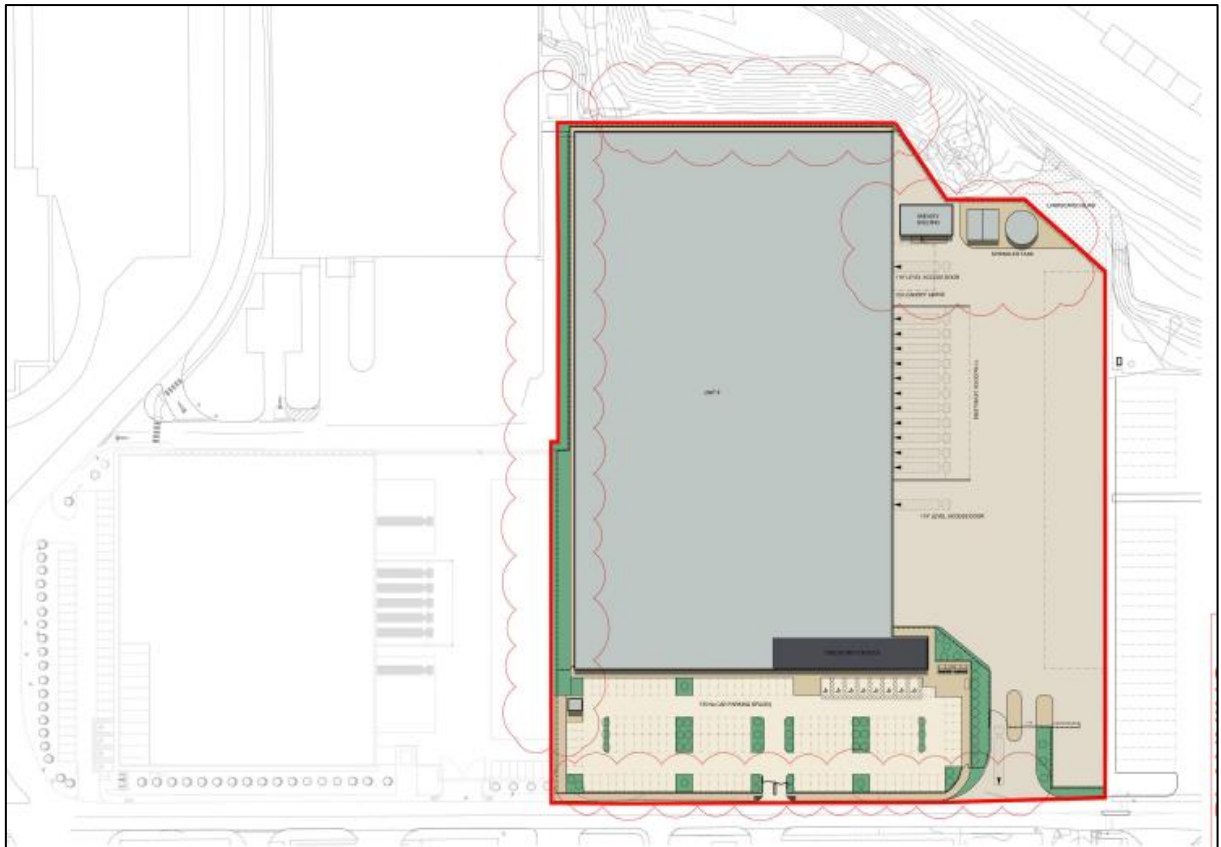


Figure 3: Proposed Site Layout

- 3.6 The rationale behind the design is to support the relocation of a new vault complex within the building. Due to the installation of the vault complex a new canopy, sprinkler tank and amenity building is proposed to support the vault.
- 3.7 The new proposal will introduce a new line of security around the entire perimeter of the site with the addition of new bifold gates into the existing car park.
- 3.8 The refurbishment has been sensitively designed so that personnel access, cycle parking, yard parking and car parking quantities have not been impacted by the works. All existing trees and landscaping within the proposed site have been maintained to preserve the ecological stature of the proposal.
- 3.9 The design of the proposals seeks to provide a modern, high-specification warehouse which will represent an improvement from an operational perspective when compared to the existing development.

4 Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 4.1 This section provides commentary on the key Development Plan policies which are applicable to the Proposed Development, together with a summary of the relevant material considerations.

Development Plan Overview

- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan in this instance consists of the following:
- **Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted October 2016);**
 - **Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') (adopted June 2006);**
 - **Places for Everyone Joint Development Document (adopted March 2024);**
 - **Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan (adopted April 2012); and**
 - **Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (adopted April 2013).**
- 4.3 RBC is currently in the process of preparing a new Local Plan document that will supersede the current Local Plan (Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy) which was adopted in 2016. It will set out a range of planning policies that will seek to sustainably manage development and will designate land for specific uses over the next 15 years. The Local Plan will sit alongside and complement the adopted Greater Manchester Minerals and Waste Plans and the Places for Everyone Plan.
- 4.4 A Regulation 18 consultation is currently open. It commenced on Friday 28th June 2024 and will close on Friday 9 August 2024.
- 4.5 The key designations, Development Plan policies and other material considerations are detailed below.

Key Designations

- 4.6 An extract from the Council's Local Plan proposals maps is provided at **Figure 4** below, with the Site indicated by the blue arrow.

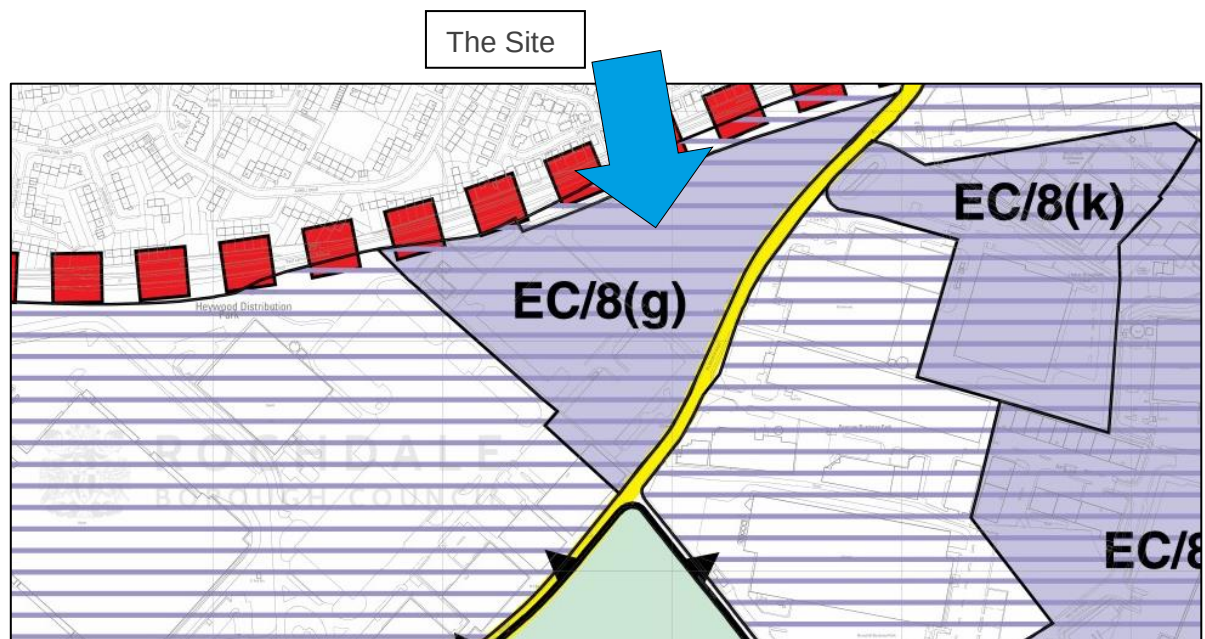
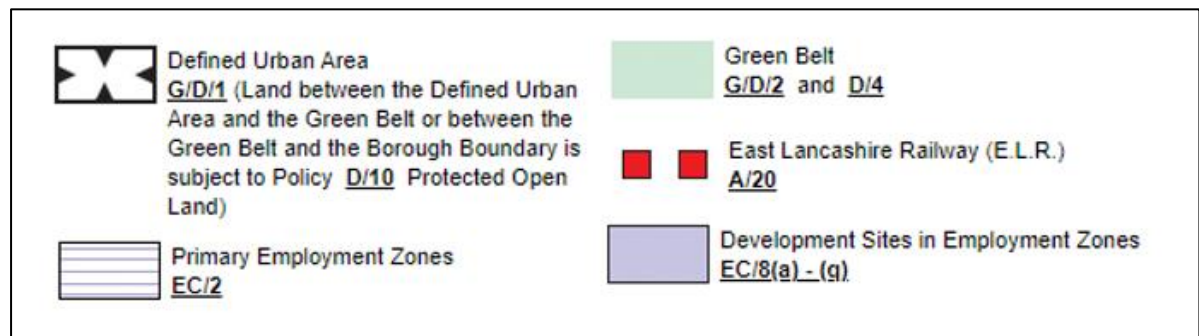


Figure 4: Extract from the UDP Policies Map



4.7 As per the UDP Policy Map the Site has the following designations:

- **Defined Urban Area (Policy G/D/1)**
- **Primary Employment Zone (Policy EC/2)**
- **Development Sites in Employment Zones (EC/8(a) – (g))**

4.8 An extract from the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (March 2024) is provided at **Figure 5** below:

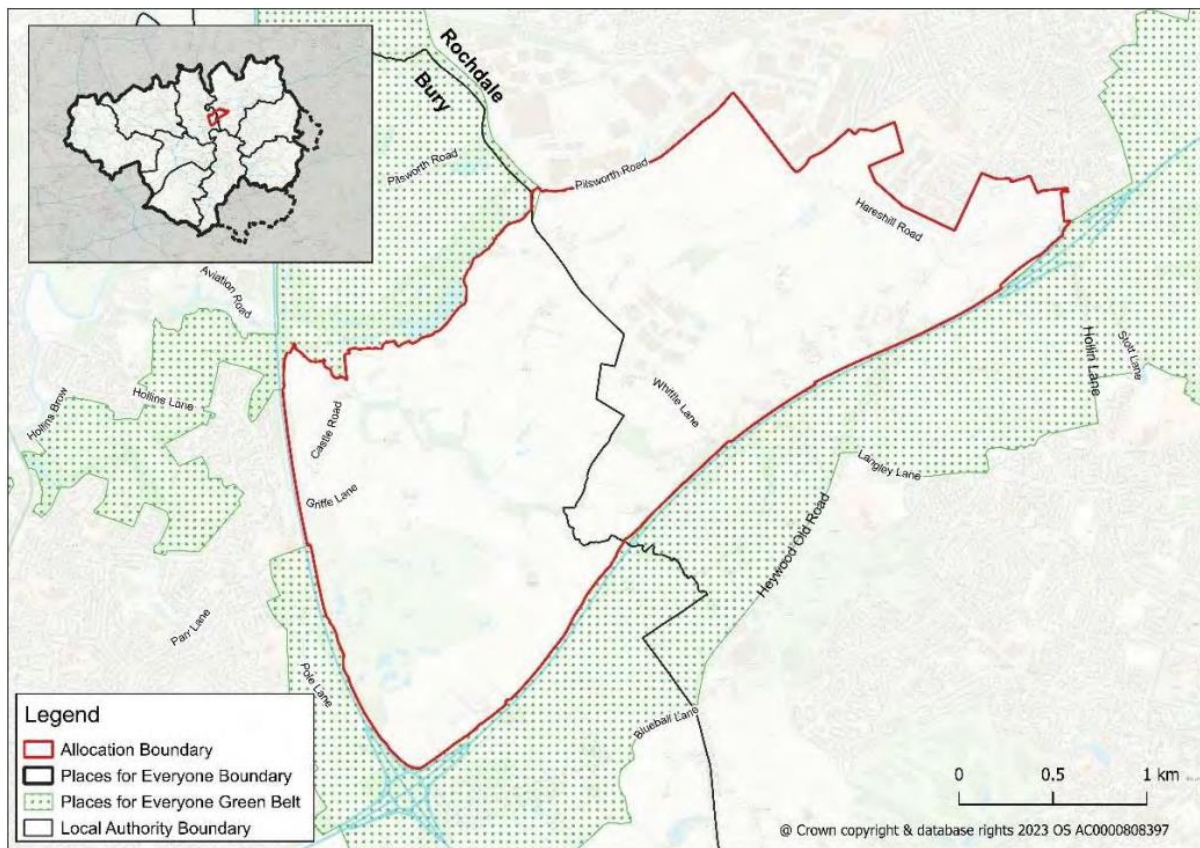


Figure 5: Places for Everyone Policy Map Extract

4.9 Land immediately south of the Site forms part of a larger site allocation (the Site is outlined in blue) which is allocated within the Places for Everyone Joint Plan for the delivery of:

- Approximately 1,200,000 sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace; and
- Approximately 1,200 new homes.

Adopted Planning Policy Overview

4.10 An overview of the adopted planning policies relevant to the determination of the Application is provided below:

Unitary Development Plan (June, 2006)

- **Policy G/D/1** – Defined Urban Area
- **Policy EC/2** – Primary Employment Zones
- **Policy EC/8 a-g** - Development Sites in Employment Zones
- **Policy A/10** – New Development – provision of Parking
- **BE/2** - Design Criteria for New Development
- **Policy BE/8** – Landscaping in New Development
- **Policy G/EM/1** – Environmental Protection and Pollution Control
- **EM/13** – Energy Efficiency and New Development

Rochdale Core Strategy (October, 2016)

- **Policy E2** – Increasing Jobs and Prosperity
- **Policy E3** – Focusing on Economic Growth Corridors and Areas
- **Policy P1** – Improving Image
- **Policy P3** – Improving Design of New Development
- **Policy G1** – Tackling and Adapting to Climate Change
- **Policy G2** – Energy and New Development
- **Policy G7** – Increasing the Value of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- **Policy T1** – Delivering Sustainable Development
- **Policy T2** – Improving Accessibility
- **Policy DM1** – General Development Requirements
- **Policy DM2** – Delivering Planning Contributions and Infrastructure

[Places for Everyone Joint Development Document \(March 2024\)](#)

- **Policy JP-S1** – Sustainable Development
- **Policy JP-S2** – Carbon and Energy
- **Policy JP-J1** – Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth
- **Policy JP-J4** – Industry and Warehousing Development
- **Policy JP-C1** – An integrated Network
- **Policy JP-C6** – Walking and Cycling
- **Policy JP-C8** – Transport Requirements of New Development

Other Material Considerations

[National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(2023\)](#)

- 4.11 The updated National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') sets out the Government's most up-to-date vision for future growth. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.12 The golden thread that runs through the heart of the NPPF is the presumptions in favour of sustainable development as set out in **paragraph 11**. This means that local planning authorities should:
- "approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, grant permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits".*
- 4.13 **Paragraph 38** of the NPPF confirms that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed developments in a positive and creative way and seek to approve applications for sustainable development.

4.14 **Paragraph 81** of the NPPF places significant weight on the need to “*support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.*”

4.15 Chapter 6 of the NPPF is focused on building a strong and competitive economy. **Paragraph 85** sets out 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.”*

4.16 **Paragraph 83** of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and distribution operations “*at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.*”

National Planning Policy Framework Draft Text for Consultation (2024)

4.17 A NPPF consultation was recently published on 30 July 2024, and is due to close on 24 September 2024. It seeks views on the proposed approach to revising the NPPF in order to achieve sustainable growth in the planning system. The key draft policies of relevance to the Site are summarised below:

4.18 Draft **Paragraph 84** states planning policies should:

*“b) set criteria, or and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet **anticipated needs** over the plan period. Appropriate sites for commercial development which meet the needs of a modern economy should be identified, including suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, **freight and logistics.**”*

4.19 Draft **Paragraph 85** states planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:

“b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation;

c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”

5 Planning Assessment

Introduction

- 5.1 This section provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the policies in the Development Plan and relevant material considerations as set out in Section 4 of this Statement.
- 5.2 The Planning Assessment considers the main uses and planning considerations as follows:
- **The Principle of Development**
 - **Design and Layout**
 - **Transport and Highways**
 - **Flood Risk and Drainage**

Principle of Development

- 5.3 The Site forms part of the Heywood Distribution Park, with its lawful use being Use Class B8 and B2. The principle of the Proposed Development is therefore already established under the operative consent and is considered acceptable.
- 5.4 The Site is located within the Primary Employment Zone as per the Council's adopted Development Plan where the Council sets out strong support for industrial, business and warehouse use as per saved UDP **Policy EC2**. In addition to this, the Site is also allocated as a Development site in an Employment Zone as per saved UDP **Policy EC/8(g)** where the Council will be supportive of developments that provide industrial, business and/ or warehouse uses.
- 5.5 The development proposals will benefit from best-in-class design and functionality and is considered necessary to enhance the existing employment unit to a level that is suitable for modern occupants. In accordance with **Policy E3** of the Core Strategy, the development proposal will improve the quality of the employment premises within the business park and support the Council, and the Greater Manchester region more widely, in providing a high-quality employment space that will provide employment opportunities in the local area.
- 5.6 Therefore, it is considered that the development proposals accord with the employment related policies within the Council's adopted Development Plan and will make a positive impact to the employment allocation.

Design and Layout

- 5.7 The design proposals are set out in full within the **drawings** and **DAS** submitted as part of this application.
- 5.8 The external works associated with the development proposals are minor in nature and relate exclusively to those set out in paragraph 3.5 of this Planning Statement.

- 5.9 In addition to this, the proposed materials and design of the external changes have been informed by an understanding of the existing built development on the Site and the surrounding area. The proposed changes are therefore sensitive to, and in keeping with, the surrounding architectural vernacular, in accordance with **Policy BE/2** of the UDP and Core Strategy **Policy DM1**.
- 5.10 There are no proposed changes to the landscaping currently provided on the Site and this will remain as it currently is (with no habitat disturbed, and no requirement for biodiversity net gain to be provided).
- 5.11 As such, it is considered that the development proposal accords with the design-related policies included within the Council's adopted Development Plan and will make a positive impact to the Site.

Transport and Highways

- 5.12 The development proposes to provide a bifold entrance with automated access control at the access to the existing car park. These proposals will assist in providing enhanced access to the Site and ensure that safety is prioritised in respect of access, in accordance with Core Strategy **Policy T2** and **Policy C/A/1** of the UDP.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.13 This application is supported by a **Drainage Statement** prepared by Building Warranty confirming that the development proposal will not increase the impermeable area drained into the existing system and as such there will be no detrimental impact on the existing surface water drainage network.
- 5.14 The development is therefore considered to be acceptable from a flood risk and drainage perspective and compliant with **Policy G8** of the Core Strategy.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Quod, on behalf of Iron Mountain in support of a Full planning application for the external refurbishment of the site including a new sprinkler tank and pump house, the installation of a new fence and gate access, installation of a canopy, a new amenity building and drainage alterations.
- 6.2 As set out in this Statement, the Proposed Development is required to provide an enhanced employment unit that meets operational requirements of a future tenant and allows for the modernisation of existing on-site activities, bringing with it significant economic benefits.
- 6.3 The Site is identified as being located within the Primary Employment Zone where the Council is supportive of proposals that enhance the suite of employment uses located within the designation.
- 6.4 Heywood Distribution Park is also identified as an area where the Council will work collaboratively with owners and developers to improve the quality of employment premises, including the refurbishment of existing employment units. Therefore, the development proposals for which planning is being sought are considered acceptable and in line with the Council's strategic ambitions for the Borough's employment allocations.
- 6.5 The external works for which planning is being sought are minor in nature and have been designed to ensure that they are appropriate to the surrounding built environment, with particular consideration given to the types of materials used.
- 6.6 Overall, it is considered that the development proposals will facilitate the delivery of a high-quality employment space that is fit for purpose to meet the needs of future occupiers.
- 6.7 This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the Application accords with the aims and objectives of national, regional and local planning policy, and indeed the development plan (when read as a whole). This means that the presumption in favour of the development plan, which is provided for by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), amounts in this matter to a (strong) presumption in favour of approving the proposals. It follows that unless material considerations indicate otherwise, planning permission should be granted. Far from indicating otherwise to the grant of permission, the material considerations lend very substantial further weight to permission being granted and in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11 (c), this should be done without delay. Accordingly, we respectfully request that planning permission is granted.