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PLANNING STATEMENT

Retrospective change of use of land and construction of an
HGV Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) fuelling station.

Land within the curtilage of Romac Logistics, 66 Touchet Road,
Middleton, Manchester M24 2FL.

ViGo Bioenergy

November 2024

Planning Statement		
Proposed LNG Fuelling Station Middleton	ViGo Bioenergy UK	V006-08

Revision	Comments	Author	Date
0	Draft for Client Review	MD	March 2024
1	Final for Submission with Updated Plan References, Address and Hours of Working	MD	November 2024

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APPENDIX 1:

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

1.1.1 This Planning Application is submitted to Rochdale Borough Council (“the Council”) on behalf of ViGo Bioenergy UK (“the Applicant”) and seeks retrospective planning permission for the installation of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) HGV fuelling station on land within the curtilage of Romac Logistics, 66 Touchet Road, Middleton, Manchester M24 2FL.

1.1.2 The application Site is 0.53 hectares in size. This includes the access road to the public highway. The site area is 0.25 ha. However, this includes the fuelling bay, safety zone and drainage basin. The HT43 LNG installation is less than half this area.

1.1.3 The application is seeking permission for the:

‘Retrospective change of use of land and construction of an HGV Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) fuelling station.’

1.1.4 The submission includes the following information, documents, and drawings:

Documents

- Planning Application forms/certificates, and
- Planning Statement (this document);

Drawings

- GPP/VB/MID/23/01 Revision 1 – Site Context Plan;
- GPP/VB/MID/23/02 Revision 3 – Site Location Plan;
- GPP/VB/MID/23/03 Revision 6 – Proposed Site Plan (as existing);
- GPP/VB/MID/23/04 Revision 2 – 1 of 2 Elevations of LNG Mobile Skidded HT43 Station and Control Room
- GPP/VB/MID/23/04 Revision 2 – 2 of 2 Elevations of LNG Mobile Skidded HT43 Station and Control Room
- GPP/VB/MID/23/05 Revision 1 - 1 of 2 Floor Plan of LNG Mobile Skidded HT43 Station and Control Room

- GPP/VB/MID/23/05 Revision 1 - 2 of 2 Floor Plan of LNG Mobile Skidded HT43 Station and Control Room
- GPP/VB/MID/23/06 Revision 2 – Pre-existing Site Plan
- K1007734 – Skidded LNG Fuelling Station Layout

1.2 The Application Site and its Setting

- 1.2.1 The Site is located within the southern part of the Stakehill Industrial Estate, Middleton. It comprises a rectangular piece of land within the curtilage of Roman Logistics. Access is off Finlan Road.
- 1.2.2 The Site occupies the north west corner of the overall Site. There is a narrow belt of woodland to the north beyond which is further industrial development. Whit Brook runs through the woodland
- 1.2.3 There is a vacant employment site to the west.
- 1.2.4 There are no nature conservation designations on or near to the Site. Hopwood Woodland Local Nature Reserve is about 1km to the north west
- 1.2.5 The Application Site lies within Flood Zone 1, an area with low probability of flooding.

1.3 Planning History

On Site

- 1.3.1 Planning consent was granted on 7 May 2021 for:
- “Installation of Liquid Compressed Natural Gas (LCNG) Refuelling Station for the refuelling of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) HGV vehicles” (Ref: 21/00177/FUL).*
- 1.3.2 The application boundary is shown on Figure 1 below:

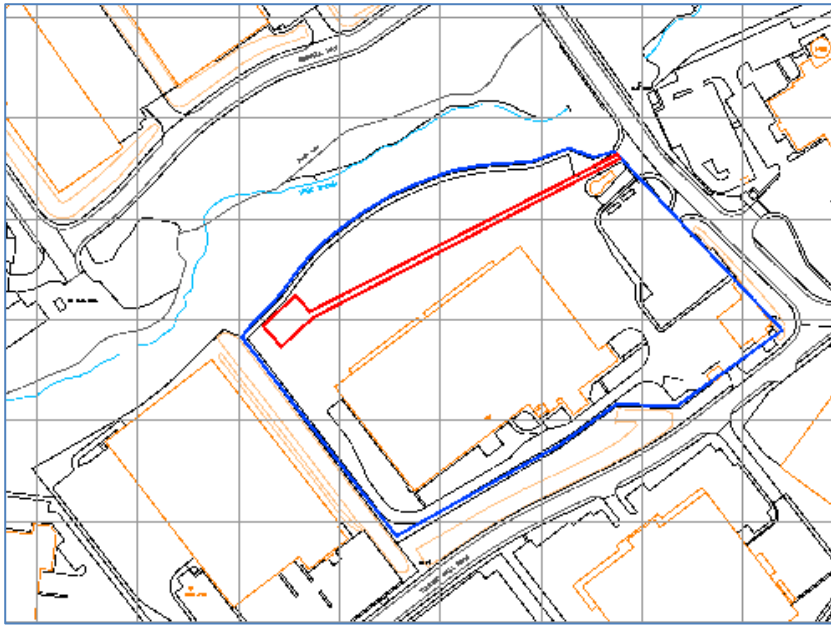


Figure 1: Permitted area for 21/00177/FUL

- 1.3.3 There are several planning permissions relating to the overall site but most are minor and/or historical and have no relevance to this application.

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This Planning Application seeks planning permission for a retrospective change of use of the land.
- 2.1.2 The planning application boundary is shown edged red on drawing GPP/VB/MID/23/02 Revision 3 - Site Location Plan. The proposed layout of the development is shown on drawing GPP/VB/MID/23/03 Revision 6 – Proposed Site Plan (as existing).

2.2 Description of Development

- 2.2.1 The proposed description of development is as follows:

‘Retrospective change of use of land and construction of HGV Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) fuelling station.’

- 2.2.2 The proposal will involve the installation of a skidded HT43 LNG station. Up to 14.8 tonnes of LNG will be stored on site.

2.3 Development Components

- 2.3.1 The main elements of the proposed development are shown on drawing:
- GPP/VB/MID/23/03 Revision 6 – Proposed Site Plan (as existing).
- 2.3.2 The proposed development comprises an HGV refuelling station comprising of one refuelling pump supplying LNG for HGVs.
- 2.3.3 The dimensions of the HT43 skidded station are 26.95m x 6.52m, taking the safety barriers into consideration. Full details are shown on the above referenced drawings.
- 2.3.4 The LNG will be delivered to the refuelling station via tankers.
- 2.3.5 The refuelling station is confined to a hard surfaced base with associated fuelling bays also on a hard surface. The rest of the site is already hard surfaced with sufficient space for vehicle manoeuvring around the site in a safe and controlled manner
- 2.3.6 The fuel is stored in one horizontal tank.
- 2.3.7 The Site is accessed via Finlan Road, using the existing access and egress arrangements for the Roman Logistics operation.

2.4 Traffic, Access, and Vehicle Numbers

- 2.4.1 The main access into the site is from Finlan Road.
- 2.4.2 It is proposed to store no more than 14.8 tonnes of LNG on site at any one time.
- 2.4.3 This will give rise to no greater than 4 deliveries per week. Deliveries will be undertaken by 18.3m HGVs with a 20-tonne fuelling rig.
- 2.4.4 One HGV fuelling bay is incorporated into the design. These will be used for delivery of LNG as well as HGV fuelling.
- 2.4.5 The site is L-shaped in nature. HGV's (delivery and fuelling) enter the site in forward gear and travel clockwise around the building to the station. At that point, depending on which side the fuel tank is located, HGVs drive in forward gear to the pump and then off site. For vehicle with a tank on the righthand

side, they travel around the building in the same manner. However, at the station they need to perform a reverse manoeuvre (as shown on the Site Plan).

2.5 Hours of Operation

- 2.5.1 The proposed facility is a 'closed facility' and not open for public access. It is only used by Romac. The facility is available for HGV fuelling 24/7. Hours of opening are not relevant given it is not open to the public.

2.6 Employment & Economics

- 2.6.1 The proposal represents a significant financial investment into the future fuel supply for the logistics business. While the proposed development will not generate employment, it will create indirect and induced employment opportunities as a consequence of how the supply chains operate.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of a planning application must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.1.2 In this instance, the Development Plan consists of the following documents:

- Rochdale Core Strategy, adopted October 2016
- Unitary Development Plan Saved policies, adopted June 2006

3.2 The Development Plan

Core Strategy

3.2.1 The following Core Strategy Policies are relevant:

- SO1 To deliver a more prosperous economy
- SO3 To improve design, image, and quality of place
- E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity
- SD1 Delivering sustainable development
- P3 Improving design of new development
- T2 Improving accessibility
- DM1 General development requirements

Saved UDP Policies

3.2.2 The Site is within an area designated a Primary Employment Zone on the UDP Map.

3.2.3 The following saved policies from the UDP are relevant:

- G/D/1 Defined Urban Area
- EC/2 Primary Employment Zones

3.3 Other Relevant Documents

National Policy

- 3.3.1 Planning Practice Guide (NPPG) confirms that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) represents up-to-date government planning policy and must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application.
- 3.3.2 The following documents are therefore considered to represent a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.
- National Planning Policy Framework, December 2023; and
 - Planning Practice Guidance.

4 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 From an assessment of the Development Plan and other relevant material, the following are considered to be the main planning issues associated with the application proposal:

- Principle of development;
- Environmental & Amenity Considerations.

4.1.2 The above matters are considered in turn below.

4.2 Principle of Development

4.2.1 UDP Saved policy EC/2 states that within Primary Employment Zones development and change of use, for industrial, business and warehouse uses (Use Classes 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,

4.2.2 The proposal broadly falls within use class B8 and so would be an acceptable use in this location. Parts a, b and c of the Policy will be addressed in the next section.

4.2.3 Planning permission has already been granted for a similar development in the same location in 2021. (ref: 21/00177/FUL).

4.2.4 That application involved:

"...installation of a Liquid Compressed Natural Gas (LCNG) Refuelling Station for the refuelling of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) HGV vehicles. This will consist of an LNG Tank 15m in height, pumps x 2, vaporisers x 2, storage modules x4 and electrical control panel's within a security compound bound by fencing. Two fuel islands are also proposed on islands."

- 4.2.5 This proposal involves the installation of a skidded HT43 LNG station with up to 14.8 tonnes of LNG stored on site. The proposed development will comprise an HGV refuelling station comprising of one refuelling pump supplying LNG for HGVs
- 4.2.6 There are some differences in the two applications, notably the type and quantity of fuel to be used, but they are basically the same type of development. Furthermore, the existing permission was granted in 2021 so that the policy considerations are the same.
- 4.2.7 It is therefore considered that the principle of development is already established on this site, and so would comply with UDP Policy EC/2.

4.3 The impact upon the character of the area

- 4.3.1 Part a of UDP Policy EC2 requires new proposals to be of an appropriate scale and character to the area. Core Strategy Policy P3 requires that, amongst other things, new developments should have regards to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings
- 4.3.2 The skidded tank is a proprietary design. The scale and design of the proposed installation is consistent with plant and buildings found on the rest of the industrial estate.
- 4.3.3 In this case the development would be located to the rear of the existing warehouse and away from the public highway. It would therefore be discreet and would not be incongruous its surroundings.
- 4.3.4 It should also be noted that the 2021 permission plans show the LNG tank standing vertically, with a height of 15m. In this case the tank would be stored horizontally with height of 6.2m.
- 4.3.5 It is therefore considered that the proposal would satisfy the requirements of UDP Policy EC2 and Core Strategy Policy P3.

4.4 Neighbouring Amenity

- 4.4.1 Saved UDP Policy EC/2 requires development not to cause unacceptable environmental or amenity problems in the employment area or adjoining areas. CS Policy DM1 states that all development should be compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents / users.
- 4.4.2 The area where the proposed tank and refuelling station are sited would not be widely visible from public vantage points, and is set back from Finlan Road towards the back of the site itself. In addition, the

proposal in this location would not appear out of character in this industrial setting amongst large buildings. The tank is a minor addition in the overall scale of the site and by its nature would not result in a significant visual presence. Furthermore, the size of the tank and its associated apparatus are proportionate and are well below the height of the existing industrial buildings. The small-scale nature of the proposal is not a dominant addition in comparison to the existing scale of the warehouse.

- 4.4.3 In light of the above, the proposal would not result in undue harm to visual amenity. The application therefore accords with CS Policy DM1 and saved UDP policy EC/2.

4.5 Other Matters

Impact on Public Highway/parking

- 4.5.1 Saved UDP Policy EC2 part c) requires development to not cause unacceptable traffic problems and have adequate on-site provision for parking.
- 4.5.2 It is proposed to store no more than 14.8 tonnes of LNG on site at any one time which will give rise to no greater than 4 deliveries per week. The application does not propose a change of use to the existing building which would remain in its respective use as an industrial and storage distribution facility. Furthermore, the tank would not be positioned on land currently used for the parking of vehicles. It is not intended that HGVs will park on site. However, there is sufficient space on site to ensure that vehicles can enter and exit the site safely and avoid any queuing onto the public highway.
- 4.5.3 Therefore, given the above, it is considered that the application would result in no undue harm to highway safety and would accord with Saved UDP EC2.

Employment & Economics

- 4.5.4 The NPPF and Local Plan support economic growth. The proposal represents a significant financial investment into an alternative, more sustainable fuel supply for the logistics business and other public access users.
- 4.5.5 The proposed development will not generate full time job opportunities. However, it will create indirect and induced employment opportunities as a consequence of how the supply chains operate.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Planning Balance

- 5.1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies a Planning Application on behalf of ViGo Bioenergy UK seeking planning permission for the installation of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) HGV fuelling station.
- 5.1.2 The following sets out the conclusions of the assessment of the proposal against the Development Plan and other material considerations in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.1.3 The principle of development is already established by the recent grant of planning permission on the proposed site for a similar development.
- 5.1.4 The proposal will provide the adjacent haulage/logistics business with an alternative, cleaner fuel.
- 5.1.5 The proposal has been assessed against the Development Plan and other relevant material considerations which has demonstrated that that the location of the proposal is entirely appropriate and does not conflict with existing or emerging local planning policies and will not give rise to any unacceptable adverse environmental or amenity related impacts.
- 5.1.6 In overall conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development should be supported and granted planning permission.

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