



Planning Statement

**Land at Hanson Close
Middleton**

**Erection of new industrial units with
associated parking and servicing
infrastructure**



CONNOLLYS

MSM Aerospace Fabricators

November 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

BRIEF

1.1 Connollys is instructed by MSM Aerospace Fabricators (hereafter referred to as “the applicants”) to prepare this Planning Statement in support of a full planning application to Rochdale Borough Council (hereafter referred to as “the Council”) relating to land at Hanson Close, Middleton.

1.2 The description of development given in the planning application form is:

“Erection of new industrial unit (2,160sqm – Use Class B2) and two starter units (890sqm – Use Classes B2 & B8) with associated access, parking and servicing infrastructure”

1.3 The application is accompanied by the following, comprehensive suite of supporting technical documents, alongside a full drawing package:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal | JCA Ltd |
| • Arboricultural Impact Assessment | JCA Ltd |
| • Transport Statement | Sanderson Associates |
| • FRA & Drainage Strategy | PWA |
| • Phase 1 & 2 Site Investigation Assessments | PWA |
| • Coal Mining Risk Assessment | PWA |
| • Design and Access Statement | Campbell Driver Partnership |

BACKGROUND

1.4 Consent is sought for the erection of new premises for the applicant, alongside the delivery of new starter units, located within an existing Mixed Employment Zone within Middleton. The applicant’s existing business is located only a short distance away from the proposed development, separated by the River Irk and accessed from Spring Vale.

1.5 The growth and success of the business in recent years is such that their current premises are no longer fit for purpose and present a constraint to daily operational requirements. However, they wish to remain within Middleton and have identified the site on Hanson Close as the ideal location for the

erection of a new unit which can meet their current and future needs. Owing to the size of the site, it is also sought to deliver additional new starter unit floorspace to maximise employment growth and opportunities in the area.

PURPOSE

1.6 The purpose of this Report is as follows:

- To describe the site and surrounding area.
- To identify any statutory or local planning-related designations affecting the site.
- To provide details of the scheme that is now being brought forward.
- To outline the pre-application discussions that have taken place.
- To outline the other documents submitted in support of the proposals.
- To consider the proposed development having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan.
- To consider any other material considerations.
- To outline the benefits of the scheme.
- To demonstrate that the planning balance lies clearly in favour of the proposals.

1.7 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the suite of documents submitted in support of the planning application.

2. THE SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

- 2.1 The site comprises a parcel of undeveloped land, which appears to have previously accommodated warehousing and outdoor storage, but is now vacant. It measures just over 1 hectare in area and is broadly rectangular in shape, bound by a combination of fencing, walls, soft landscaping and the banks of the River Irk. Access is currently taken from Hanson Close along the northern boundary of site which will be retained and improved as part of the proposals.
- 2.2 In its current, dilapidated condition the site does little to contribute to the visual amenities of the surrounding area and delivers no economic benefits. All previous buildings and structures which once occupied the site have been demolished and the land now comprises areas of hardstanding with overgrown foliage to the perimeter.



Figure. 2.1– Site Location (edged in red)

SURROUNDING AREA AND SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS

- 2.3 The site is surrounded by industrial uses and is situated in Middleton, 5 miles (8.0km) southwest of Rochdale and 4.4 miles (7.1 km) northeast of Manchester city centre. Middleton lies on the northern edge of Manchester, with Blackley to the south and Moston to the south east.
- 2.4 It also falls within the built-up area of Middleton and within easy walking and cycling distance of the town centre, with good access to local public transport provision. Bus stops are located on Boarshaw Road approximately 275m from the site and provide services into and out of Middleton. Further stops are also located on the A669 within 350m of the site which provide services to Ashton-under-Lyne, Rushcroft and Manchester City Centre.
- 2.5 As a result, the site offers realistic alternatives to travel by private car and therefore represents a highly sustainable and accessible location for new employment development within Rochdale.

SUMMARY

- 2.6 In summary the site comprises a highly sustainable, accessible, brownfield site, which can make a much needed contribution to employment provision within the district.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The site has a limited, recent planning history, with the Council's online register indicating a handful of submissions from the late 1970's and early 1980's. There have been no recent applications which would have a bearing on the current proposals.

4. STATUTORY AND OTHER DESIGNATIONS

HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

- 4.1 There are no known Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Conservation Areas on or adjacent to the site which would be affected by the proposed development.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 4.2 The site lies to the north of the River Irk and as a result the extremities of the land lie within Flood Zones 2 & 3. However, the proposal development will be located wholly within Flood Zone 1 and as such no inherent risk arises from the proposals.

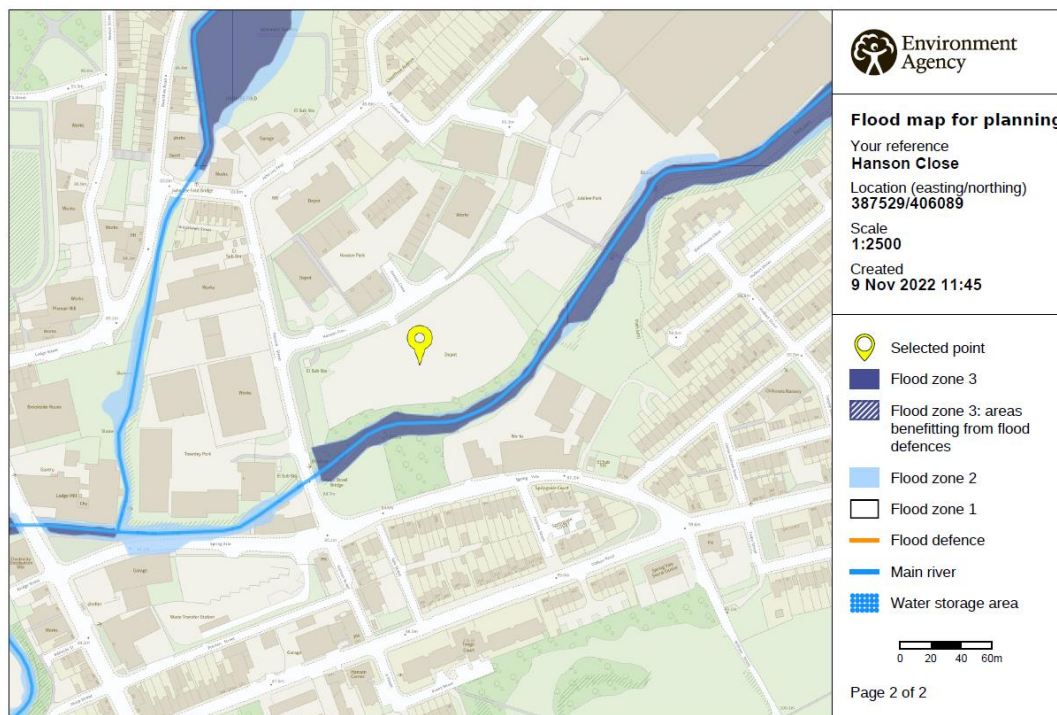


Figure 4.1 – Flood Zone designation (site denoted by yellow marker)

HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS

- 4.3 The development is to be served by an improved access from Hanson Close, which has previously accommodated intensive industrial and commercial activity. A secondary access onto Hanson Street will be permanently closed as part of these proposals.
- 4.4 The application is supported by a Transport Statement prepared by Sanderson Associates which confirms that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the safety and capacity of the surrounding highway network.
- 4.5 Internally, swept path analysis demonstrates that large vehicles can enter, access loading bays and leave in forward gear, providing more than sufficient manoeuvring and circulation space within the confines of the site.
- 4.6 The proposed parking provision will marginally exceed the Council's adopted standards, however the applicant's role in specialist manufacturing generates greater labour requirements when compared to general industrial uses.
- 4.7 The Transport Statement also confirms that the site benefits from high levels of accessibility, with direct links to bus stops, a train station and local amenities.

GROUND CONDITIONS

- 4.8 The application is supported by Phase 1 & 2 Ground Investigation Reports and a Coal Mining Risk Assessment prepared by PWA.
- 4.9 The Assessments confirm that the site can be suitably remediated, resulting in a low risk from contamination arising from former land uses.
- 4.10 The Coal Mining Risk Assessment confirms that whilst the site lies within a high risk area, the actual risk from unrecorded, shallow mine workings in the Lower Bent Mine is considered to be low. Due to its proximity to the River Irk, it is unlikely that this seam has been worked to a significant extent, supported by rotary borehole inspections.

TREES

- 4.11 No trees within or adjacent to the site are protected by preservation order, nor do they lie within a conservation area. However, the application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment

prepared by JCA Ltd to consider the proximity of the proposed development to existing trees on and adjacent to the site.

- 4.12 The AIA confirms that only minimal removal of poor quality trees is required to facilitate the proposals and therefore no significant or unacceptable arboricultural issues arise from the scheme.

ECOLOGY

- 4.13 The application is supported by a detailed Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by JCA Ltd, with fieldwork having been carried out earlier this year. The report confirms that there are no significant ecological constraints associated with the site or the proposed development.
- 4.14 Improvements can also be secured through the retention and introduction of supplementary soft landscaping within the site.

SUMMARY

- 4.15 As demonstrated by the supporting technical reports, the site is not constrained by any local, regional or national statutory or non-statutory designations such that there would be significant or demonstrable harm were the site development in the manner proposed.

5. THE PROPOSED SCHEME

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The description of development given in the planning application forms is:

“Erection of new industrial unit (2,160sqm – Use Class B2) and two starter units (890sqm – Use Classes B2 & B8) with associated access, parking and servicing infrastructure”

PROPOSALS

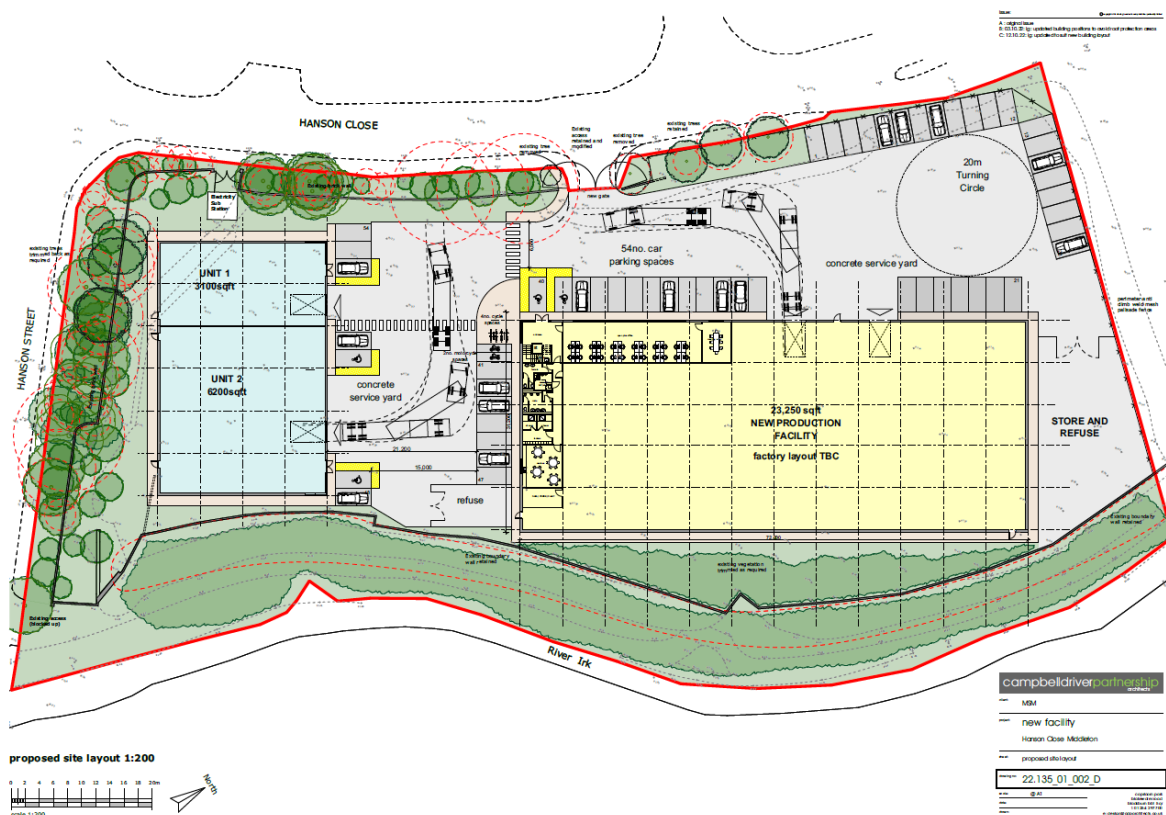


Figure 5.1 Proposed Layout

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- 5.2 The scheme proposes the erection of two new buildings on that site, to accommodate employment generating uses.
- 5.3 The larger building, located within the eastern portion of the site, would be occupied by the applicant, as a new, purpose built facility to support the relocation and expansion of their business. It would measure circa 2,160 sqm in area, predominantly occupied by manufacturing floorspace, with associated, ancillary office space and staff welfare facilities.
- 5.4 A combination of loading and pedestrian doors will be provided to the principal elevation to facilitate access to the building, but will be separated to ensure the safety of all users within the site. Parking is provided to the perimeter of the building and adjacent to the site boundary. Again, pedestrian footways are included between the parking spaces and the building (including dedicated crossings from the primary access) to support safe movements.
- 5.5 The smaller building would be located towards the western boundary of the site and split into two, open plan, starter units measuring circa 890sqm in total. Each would be provided with its own dedicated parking spaces and loading bays. Motorcycle, bicycle and accessible spaces are also included within the scheme.
- 5.6 The proposed layout seeks to make the best use of the site and to provide sufficient circulation space between the buildings for larger vehicles and servicing. Secure, dedicated waste storage and refuse areas will also be provided adjacent to each building.
- 5.7 With regard to design, the approach reflects the utilitarian nature of the surroundings. The external walls and roof will be finished in a combination of profiled metal sheeting, with windows comprising powder coated aluminium, double glazed units.
- 5.8 Soft landscaping is to be retained and introduced to the perimeter of the site to ensure that it retains a soft edge when seen from public vantage points. Some minor tree removal is required, as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

6. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Formal pre-application discussions and meetings have been held with the Council (ref – PREAPP/0080/22), with a written response issued on the 20th September 2022. The response will not be rehearsed in full below but key points raised within the feedback are included for reference:

- The site lies within a Mixed Employment Zone, where general industry and warehouse/distribution uses are acceptable in principle. Accordingly the proposals would accord with these requirements;
- The external design of the building, in tandem with the use of materials helps to break up visual massing and provides a contemporary solution for the upper levels of the structure. It is however, recommended that the darker cladding used at lower levels, with the lighter grey colour used above, matching other buildings in the area;
- The south west elevation should be broken up where possible as it is currently devoid of any features. It is, however, noted that a significant landscaped buffer to the banks of the River Irk is to be retained and will assist in screening this elevation from public vantage points;
- Opportunities should be taken to introduce landscaping to the northern boundary, albeit with due consideration to associated highway implications;
- A Transport Statement should be provided to support the application to consider HGV movements, servicing, parking and the creation of segregated pedestrian access;
- A Primary Ecological Assessment Arboricultural Impact Assessment, FRA/Drainage Strategy and Site Investigation Report will be required to support the application; and
- Pre-application consultation with key stakeholders should be considered

6.2 These matters have been taken into account and references to the relevant supporting documents will be made throughout this Statement, in demonstrating that the proposals are acceptable.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

6.3 In addition to discussions with the Council, the applicant has carried out a pre-submission consultation exercise with nearest neighbours, Ward Councillors and the Council Leader.

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- 6.4 In addition to a mail drop, by way of a leaflet detailing the proposals, an online portal was also created to allow neighbours and elected members to view the scheme in greater detail. No formal comments have been received in response to the consultation from any parties, other than from the Leader of the Council, who pointed out that ward boundaries were due to change and would need to be taken into account for any future consultation exercises.
- 6.5 The online portal remains active at the time of writing and any late responses will be reported to the Council during the course of the application. However, it is anticipated that any interested parties will respond to the formal, statutory consultation once the application is registered.

7. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.

7.2 In this instance, the Development Plan comprises:

- The Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006)
- The Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted October 2016)

THE LOCAL PLAN

7.3 The current Development Plan in Rochdale comprises a combination of the two aforementioned documents, which are currently used in decision making. As with most Greater Manchester Authorities, work on the Council’s emerging Allocations Plan is held in abeyance subject the adoption of Places For Everyone (the former GMSF), a new Joint Development Plan Document which will set out a new, overarching spatial strategy for the region.

7.4 The PfE DPD has now been submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, for examination. Hearing sessions for the plan will commence in November 2022 and run until early February 2023.

7.5 Whilst only a draft document at this stage and with unresolved objections to key policies, it is noted that the PfE document sets out an expectation that the site will deliver employment development in the future.

7.6 With due consideration to the Framework, the existing, adopted policies of the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (“the UDP”) will be afforded weight insofar as they are consistent with its provisions and not deemed to be out of date or silent on matters relevant to the scheme at hand.

- 7.7 An excerpt from the UDP Policies Map is included below and shows that the site lies within the 'Defined Urban Area' and is currently designated as a part of a larger 'Mixed Employment Zone' located in close proximity to Middleton Town Centre

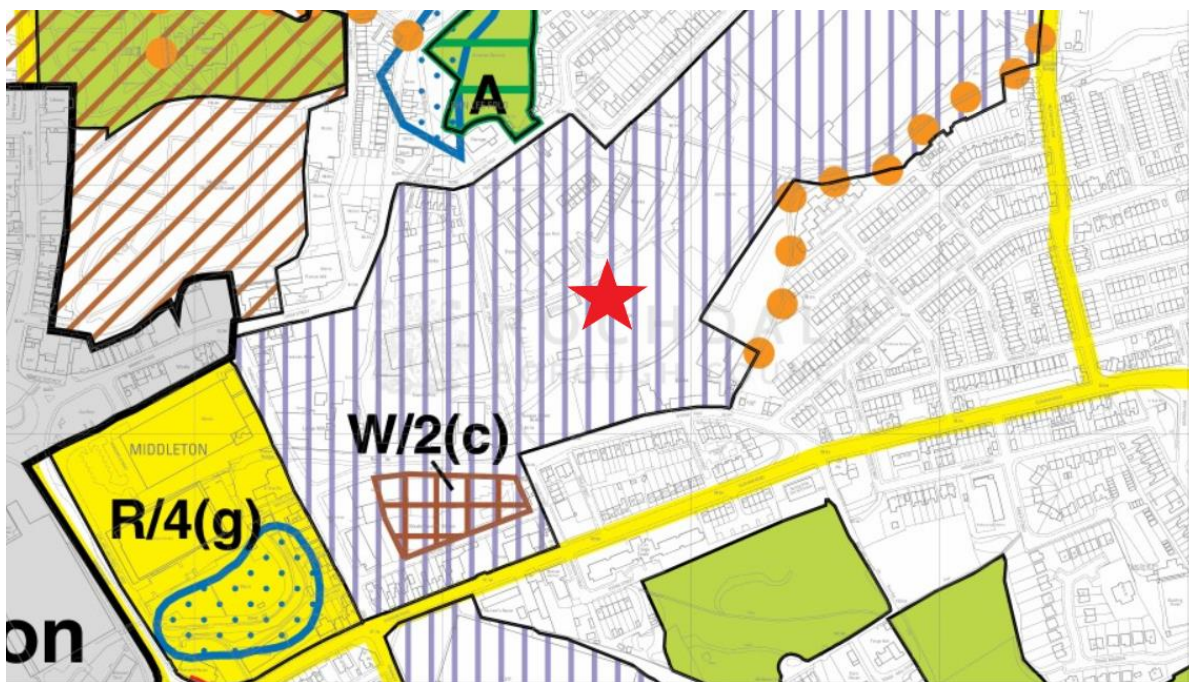


Figure 7.1 Local Plan Map excerpt (site denoted by red star)

- 7.8 In light of the aforementioned allocation, the following UDP and Core Strategy policies are relevant to the determination of the application.

THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

POLICY G/D/1 – DEFINED URBAN AREA

- 7.9 This policy confirms that the drawn settlement boundaries, as shown on the Proposals Maps, remain relevant and define the urban areas of the Borough. Development beyond its boundaries will only be supported where it accords with other relevant policies of the UDP.

POLICY EC/3 – MIXED EMPLOYMENT ZONES

- 7.10 This policy confirms that within defined Employment Zones, development falling within the 'B' use classes (now expanded to include elements of Class E following changes to the UCO) will be supported in principle.

POLICY EM/7 – DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK

- 7.11 The policy states that development will not be permitted where it could contribute to increased flood risk. Where necessary, applications should be supported by an FRA to consider the potential impact of the development.

POLICY EM/8 – PROTECTION OF SURFACE AND GROUND WATER

- 7.12 The policy states that development which poses an unacceptable risk to surface water and ground water quality will not be permitted. New schemes will be expected to make satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of surface and waste waters. Adequate safeguards should also be provided to avoid the pollution of surface/ground water.

THE CORE STRATEGY

POLICY SO1 – TO DELIVER A MORE PROSPEROUS ECONOMY

- 7.13 This strategic policy confirms that the Council will seek to increase the number and range of jobs in Rochdale, particularly in locations with good transport accessibility.

POLICY SO3 – TO IMPROVE DESIGN, IMAGE AND QUALITY OF PLACE

- 7.14 This strategic policy seeks to raise design quality and promote sustainable development. The creation of new identity and character will be supported where it is currently lacking.

POLICY SO4 – TO PROMOTE A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 7.15 This strategic policy confirms that the Council will seek to ensure that new development is energy efficient and contributes to carbon reduction.

POLICY SO5 – TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND DELIVER SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 7.16 This strategic policy promotes the efficient use of land and directs new development towards to the most accessible locations, or those which can be made more accessible.

POLICY SD1 – DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.17 This policy reflects the requirements of the Framework in adopting a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Schemes which accord with the relevant policies of the Core Strategy will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

POLICY SP2 – THE SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE BOROUGH

- 7.18 This policy confirms that in the south of the Borough, within the fringe of Manchester (including Middleton) where there is good access to existing facilities, infrastructure and the highway network, the Council will seek to deliver the majority of new housing, employment and commercial development.

POLICY SP3/M – THE STRATEGY FOR MIDDLETON

- 7.19 This policy sets out a number of overarching, strategic priorities for Middleton.

POLICY E2 – INCREASING JOBS AND PROSPERITY

- 7.20 This policy details the Council's approach to the delivery of sufficient land, buildings and infrastructure to create and retain successful businesses and increase the number/quality of jobs. Sites within existing employment zones will be protected for continued employment use.
- 7.21 The majority of new development will be delivered in the south of the Borough and be focused on economic growth corridors which offer good access to the motorway network.

POLICY E3 – FOCUSING ON ECONOMIC GROWTH CORRIDORS AND AREAS

- 7.22 This policy confirms that within the Middleton town centre / Oldham Road corridor, the Council will support the regeneration of existing employment areas.

POLICY P1 – IMPROVING IMAGE

- 7.23 This policy requires new development to deliver high quality design, particularly in key gateway locations, improvement corridors and prominent sites. This also includes the development and re-use of under utilised land and buildings.

POLICY P2 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

- 7.24 This policy seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's character and distinctiveness. To achieve this, new schemes will be expected to integrate successfully with surrounding features, protect important views and conserving townscape character.

POLICY P3 – IMPROVING DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 7.25 This policy confirms that the Council expect new development to include associated landscaping regardless of its location and lists a number of design principles which should be considered as part of the design process.

POLICY G1 – TACKLING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.26 This policy sets out the Council's approach to climate change and the reduction in CO2 emissions. This includes locating new development in locations which reduce the need for travel and utilising modern construction techniques to limit the amount of energy that buildings require to function over their lifetime.

POLICY G2 – ENERGY AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 7.27 This policy outlines an 'energy hierarchy' which should be considered during the design process, with the preference being that measures are incorporated at the outset to reduce the demand for energy.

POLICY G6 - ENHANCING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.28 This policy seek to secure, protected and enhance green infrastructure, in a manner appropriate to the development proposed.

POLICY G7 – INCREASING THE VALUE OF BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

- 7.29 This policy confirms that the Council will ensure that features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are afforded recognition and protection. New development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity.

POLICY G8 – MANAGING WATER RESOURCES AND FLOOD RISK

- 7.30 This policy seeks to ensure that new development does not increase flood risk on site, or elsewhere.

POLICY G9 – REDUCING THE IMPACT OF POLLUTION, CONTAMINATION AND LAND INSTABILITY

- 7.31 This policy contains a number of requirements to ensure that new development does not lead to unacceptable impact with regard to air, water, noise, light or other forms of pollution.

POLICY T2 – IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

- 7.32 This policy promotes development which offers good levels of access to public transport and other measures which reduce the need to travel. Facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and those with impaired mobility will be expected to be provided.
- 7.33 Applications should also be supported by Transport Statements where the requisite thresholds are met. Parking will also be required in accordance with the Council's adopted standards.

POLICY DM1 – GENERAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 7.34 This policy outlines a number of general development management parameters that new development will be expected to address including design; amenity; access; parking; ground conditions; landscaping and drainage.

POLICY DM2 - DELIVERING PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 7.35 The policy sets out the circumstances in which planning obligations associated with new development will be required.

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

- 7.36 In addition to the aforementioned suite of policies, the Council also have a number of supporting SPD's which are used in the decision making process. Of relevance to this application is the Urban Design Guide SPD (2007).

ASSESSMENT

- 7.37 In the context of the aforementioned policies and guidance, this Statement will now consider the proposed development and demonstrate compliance with the UDP and the Core Strategy.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 7.38 The application site comprises brownfield land, located within a Mixed Employment Zone. This designation supports and protects the continued, long term use of such sites for development falling within Class B (and also now the relevant sections of Class E) of the Use Classes Order.
- 7.39 In light of these factors, the proposed development of a new specialist aerospace manufacturing facility, with additional starter units, is wholly compliant with the relevant strategic aims of the Council, set out within the UDP and the Core Strategy.
- 7.40 As outlined earlier in this Statement, the development will facilitate the relocation of the applicant's existing business, which currently employs up to 55 staff. The delivery of a new, bespoke unit will not only ensure that the enterprise remains within Middleton, but also that future growth ambitions can be secured.
- 7.41 Furthermore, the provision of new, smaller starter units will help to improve the supply of local, modern employment premises generating growth, investment and opportunities within the town.
- 7.42 In light of all of these factors, the principle of development is acceptable and contributes to economic growth within Rochdale.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 7.43 The design and layout of the scheme has been informed by the applicant's requirements and the natural constraints which the site presents. As existing the land comprises a cleared, previously developed plot which has become overgrown following the demolition of former buildings.

- 7.44 The surrounding area is characterised by utilitarian buildings of varying sizes, styles and external finishes. The approach to the proposed buildings is to ensure that they are modern, fit for purpose and deliver the necessary floor space to accommodate current and future business needs in Middleton.
- 7.45 The larger building, to be occupied by the applicant, would measure 71m by 31.2m, standing 7m to the eaves and 9m to the ridge. The unit is positioned to the south east of the site but with a suitable buffer to the site boundary to accommodate circulation space, parking, servicing and storage capacity.
- 7.46 The exterior would be clad in a combination of black and grey cladding, with the darker colours used in the lower areas of the building as requested by the Council during the pre-application process. Window frames would be finished in powder coated aluminium.
- 7.47 Loading doors and the primary pedestrian access points are located to the north facing elevation, adjacent to the car park and the yard area. Office windows are provided at ground and first floor level to the principal elevation and openings have also been included to the rear elevation at the request of Officers, to provide some articulation and detailing to break up the massing of the building.
- 7.48 The smaller building would be located to the west of the site and accommodate two new starter units. It would measure 36m by 24m and stand 8.5m to ridge level. The external treatment would match that of the adjacent building to provide uniformity and a sense of identity within the site.
- 7.49 Parking for both units will be provided immediately adjacent to the principal elevations of the respective buildings, with additional capacity along the northern and eastern boundaries of the wider site.
- 7.50 In addition to the built form of the layout, and as confirmed within the arboricultural information which supports the application, existing trees and landscaping will be retained (where appropriate) and supplemented with new planting.
- 7.51 The overall approach to the design and layout has been informed by the commercial nature of the surroundings and is of a scale and appearance commensurate with this setting. The proposals are therefore wholly compliant with Policies SD1, SP2, E2, E3, P1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

HIGHWAY SAFETY AND ACCESS

- 7.52 The site benefits from an existing, established vehicular access point on Hanson Close which has served previous uses at the site. There is also a secondary access to the site from Hanson Street, however, this is to be closed as part of the proposals.

- 7.53 The Hanson Close entrance will therefore be the sole and primary access for vehicles and pedestrians, and will be improved as part of the scheme.
- 7.54 The Transport Statement which supports the scheme has been prepared following an earlier appraisal at the site in 2019.
- 7.55 The Statement confirms that the primary vehicular access on Hanson Close, with access to the wider highway network via Hanson Street by way of a priority controlled junction, is more than sufficient to support a development of this scale. With regard to the immediate and wider capacity of the highway network, the Statement is informed by accident data and traffic flow assessments. The results confirm that the traffic generated by the proposals can be accommodated without undue harm to capacity or safety.
- 7.56 With regard to the internal layout, more than adequate provision is provided for vehicles of all sizes to move freely, turn, load and unload within site. Pedestrians and cyclists are also provided with clear, legible routes through the site, with safe and direct links to the respective buildings.
- 7.57 Parking will marginally exceed the Council's adopted standards, however, the rationale for this is set out within the TS. Aside from standard spaces, accessible, motorcycle and bicycle spaces are also provided to encourage variety in the modes of transport used by staff.
- 7.58 Issues around wider accessibility have already been addressed earlier in this Statement and are expanded upon in the Transport Statement, by way of walking and cycling isochrone diagrams. It is, however, clear that the site is highly sustainable and offers numerous alternatives for travel by means other than private car.
- 7.59 The development is therefore acceptable in terms of highway and pedestrian safety, and is compliant with Policies SD1, E3, T2 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

- 7.60 The whilst a small part of the application site lies within Flood Zone 3, due to its proximity to the River Irk, the entirety of the developable area is within Flood Zone 1. Level differences between the site and the Irk are also such that there is no inherent flood risk associated with the proposals.
- 7.61 Surface and foul drainage will be implemented in accordance with adopted technical guidance and with due consideration to the hierarchy set out in Planning Practice Guidance. Connection to the surrounding network of foul water sewers is also possible.

- 7.62 The development is therefore at low risk from fluvial and pluvial sources and the discharge of foul and surface waters can be suitably managed as evidenced within the FRA which supports the application. As a result, the drainage proposals are acceptable and the development is wholly compliant with Policies EM/7 and EM/8 of the UDP and Policies G1 and G8 of the Core Strategy.

GROUND CONDITIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.63 The application is supported by detailed Ground Investigation and Coal Mining Risk Assessment reports to consider potential contamination issues and possible mining legacy within the site.
- 7.64 Intrusive site investigations confirm that the land generally comprises made ground with some evidence of contamination from previous land uses. Subject to limited remediation works to address these issues, the site would represent a very low risk with regard to human health, controlled waters and any other associated environmental considerations.
- 7.65 A ground gas risk assessment has also been undertaken and confirm the measures that should be incorporated into the final build process to ensure suitable protection for future users.
- 7.66 With regard to coal mining risk, the Assessment confirms that whilst the site lies within a high risk area, the actual risk from unrecorded, shallow mine workings in the Lower Bent Mine is considered to be low. Due to its proximity to the River Irk, it is unlikely that this seam has been worked to a significant extent, supported by rotary borehole inspections.
- 7.67 With regard to noise, the Framework requires that new development should not give rise to significant adverse impacts upon health or quality of life as a result of noise pollution, and that mitigation measures should be put in place to reduce any potential impact. These requirements are repeated in Policy G9 of the Core Strategy.
- 7.68 The applicant is an established operator and currently located near the proposed site to the south. It is proposed to carry out the same activities at the application site, which is even further away from the nearest dwellings than the current facility. As such it will have limited impact on the wider area as it is no closer to other sensitive receptors than other commercial buildings in the vicinity.
- 7.69 The development therefore results in no land contamination or coal mining risk issues and is compliant with Policies G9 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

TREES & ECOLOGY

- 7.70 The application site contains no protected trees and as confirmed by the Arboricultural Impact Assessment which supports the submission and the proposed layout only requires the removal of two category 'C' trees to facilitate the development.
- 7.71 With regard to ecology and biodiversity, the application is supported by a detailed Ecological Appraisal which refreshes and updates the findings of earlier assessments at the site, following further fieldwork.
- 7.72 The Appraisal confirms that the site offers negligible to moderate potential to support most protected species, with assessments undertaken with regard to bats, badgers, hedgehogs, amphibians, great crested newts, reptiles, otters and voles.
- 7.73 The site does offer a high potential for nesting birds due to the presence of existing, unmanaged tress and foliage within the confines of the site. However subject to best practice measures and controls over the timing of any clearance works, this matter can be suitably mitigated.
- 7.74 Japanese Knotweed is also present on the site, and will be addressed in accordance with a management plan to ensure safe and suitably removal to avoid further spread.
- 7.75 In light of these factors, the proposals are compliant with Policies G6 and G7 of the Core Strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

- 7.76 It has been demonstrated above that the proposed development complies with the relevant provisions of the Core Strategy and the Unitary Development Plan in every respect. Accordingly, we now demonstrate that there are other material considerations that indicate planning permission should be granted in the following Chapter.

8. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

"In principle...any consideration which relates to the use and development of land is capable of being a planning consideration. Whether a particular consideration falling within that broad class is material in any given case will depend on the circumstances" (Stringer v MHLG 1971).

- 8.2 Material considerations must be genuine planning considerations, i.e. they must be related to the development and use of land in the public interest. The considerations must also fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned (*R v Westminster CC ex-parte Monahan 1989* refers).
- 8.3 The Courts are the arbiters of what constitutes a material consideration. All of the fundamental factors involved in land-use planning are included, such as the number, size, layout, siting, design and external appearance of buildings and the proposed means of access, together with landscaping, impact on the neighbourhood and the availability of infrastructure.
- 8.4 The Courts have also held that the Government's statements of planning policy are material considerations which must be taken into account, where relevant, in decisions on planning applications. These statements cannot make irrelevant any matter which is a material consideration in a particular case. But where such statements indicate the weight that should be given to relevant considerations, decision-makers must have proper regard to them. If they elect not to follow relevant statements of the Government's planning policy, they must give clear and convincing reasons (*E C Grandson and Co Ltd v SSE and Gillingham BC 1985* refers).
- 8.5 Emerging policies, in the form of draft policy statements and guidance, can be regarded as material considerations, depending on the context. Their existence may indicate that a relevant policy is under review; and the circumstances which have led to that review may need to be taken into account.
- 8.6 In those cases where the Development Plan is not relevant, for example because there are no relevant policies, or policies in the DPDs pull in opposite directions so that there is no clear guide for a particular

proposal, the planning application should be determined on its merits in the light of all the material considerations.

8.7 In this case the following material considerations are relevant.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

8.8 A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (hereafter referred to as “the Framework”) was published on 20 July 2021. Whilst the Framework remains largely unchanged from the previous version in relation to the relevant considerations for the site, the new version is referred to throughout our representations to reflect the latest national policy position. The following extracts are relevant and are reproduced below for ease of reference together with commentary where necessary:

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

8.9 Section 2 sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve this, the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – 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;
- b) **social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 8.10 The application proposals would deliver sustainable development in the following ways:
- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Economic | <p>The development of the land would contribute to generating full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs within the construction industry over the build period and through subsequent use of the buildings, which would be a benefit to the economy of the local area.</p> <p>Strengthening the economy in accordance with the strategic aims of the Council and improving facilities which promote growth, through the provision of new, modern, fit for purpose units.</p> <p>Payment of business rates and other revenues to the Council throughout the life of the development</p> |
| Social | <p>Supporting the creatin of healthy, accessible communities through the provision of walkable employment opportunities.</p> <p>Providing new and varied employment premises which vary the stock available, helping to meet the needs of current and future generations.</p> |
| Environmental | <p>Making effective use of under-utilised land within a sustainable settlement.</p> <p>Reducing reliance on private cars/vehicles by providing accessible local employment.</p> <p>Delivering new, highly efficient buildings using modern construction techniques.</p> <p>Biodiversity gains through the retention of trees and the introduction of new, structural planting</p> |
- 8.11 Paragraph 11 confirms that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In relation to the subject application, for decision-taking, paragraph 11 c) is relevant, requiring development which is compliant with an up to date development plan to be approved without delay.

BUILDING A STRONG, COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

- 8.12 Paragraph 81 confirms that planning 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.
- 8.13 This site represents a highly sustainable location for new employment development, is allocated as a protected employment zone and helps to fulfil the Council's strategic economic aims. It is therefore compliant with the Framework in this regard.

DESIGN

- 8.14 The creation of high-quality buildings and places is outlined by the Government to be fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. A key element of sustainable development is good design, which should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 127 of the Framework sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) 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 landscaping setting;
 - d) Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
 - e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses, and support local facilities and transport; and
 - f) Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.
- 8.15 As demonstrated in Section 7 of this Statement, the development meets all of these criteria and represents good, sustainable design.

CONSIDERING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 8.16 Paragraph 108 requires that in assessing applications for development it should be ensured that:
- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
 - b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and
 - c) significant impacts from the development on the transport networks (in terms of capacity and congestion), or highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 8.17 Paragraph 109 goes on to confirm that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 8.18 It has been demonstrated, through the provision of technical reports, and as agreed with the Council, that the proposed development presents no such issues and supports pedestrian connectivity to the adjacent town centre.

ENVIRONMENT

- 8.19 The Framework also requires that development proposals should also prevent new and existing development from contributing to or being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.
- 8.20 No unacceptable impacts or risks have been identified with regard to these environmental matters.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 8.21 Paragraphs 105 of the Framework requires the planning system to actively manage sustainable patterns of growth and paragraph 106 supports development which reduces the number and length of journeys needed for employment.
- 8.22 Paragraph 107 confirms that in setting local parking standards, policies should take into account the accessibility and type of development proposed and the availability of public transport. Paragraph 110 advises that in considering sites allocated for development, it should be ensured that opportunities to

promote sustainable modes of travel have been maximised. Safe and suitable access for all future users should also be provided.

8.23 Paragraph 111 confirms that confirm that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

8.24 It has been demonstrated, through the provision of technical reports, that the proposed development presents no such issues, would result in improvements to the local highway network and offers future users access to sustainable modes of transport. The proposals are therefore compliant with the Framework.

PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

8.25 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was launched on 6 March 2014 in its final form and has subsequently been updated on numerous occasions. The PPG replaces some 230 planning guidance documents but results in no amendments to the Framework.

8.26 Regarding design, Paragraph ID: 26-001-20140306 reiterates the guidance set out in the Framework; that good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. Furthermore, the PPG notes that:

“Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well and will adapt to the needs of future generations.”

8.27 The PPG makes it clear that planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure the physical environment supports the three strands of sustainable development (i.e. economic, social and environmental) and in doing so issues including the promotion of local character; designing safe connected and efficient streets; incorporating a network of greenspaces; promoting cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods, should all be given careful consideration.

8.28 The PPG also reiterates the guidance set out in the Framework, that both Local Plans and planning decisions should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph ID 21b-006-20140306 and ID 12-011-20140306).

8.29 This submission has demonstrated that the development is appropriate by way of its access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale and is therefore acceptable.

SUMMARY

- 8.30 This brownfield site is protected for future employment use, lies in an accessible location and will deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits to the local area. It has been demonstrated that there are a number of material considerations which weigh in favour of the application proposals. Furthermore, there would be no significant or demonstrable harm caused by the development which would justify withholding a grant of planning permission
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9. SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Connollys is instructed by MSM Aerospace Fabricators to prepare this Planning Statement in support of a planning application to Rochdale Borough Council relating to land at Hanson Close, Middleton.

9.2 The description of development given in the planning application form is:

“Erection of new industrial unit (2,160sqm – Use Class B2) and two starter units (890sqm – Use Classes B2 & B8) with associated access, parking and servicing infrastructure”

9.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.

9.4 It has been demonstrated in this Planning Statement that the proposals accord with the relevant provisions of the Unitary Development Plan and the Core Strategy in every respect and that there are other material considerations which support the granting of detailed planning permission.

9.5 It is set out herein that the proposals represent sustainable development and that there are significant benefits associated with the proposed development with no technical or material considerations that significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits.

THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS

- The redevelopment of a sustainably located, previously developed site;
- The delivery of a protected employment site within the settlement boundary;
- Contribution to employment and economic growth in Rochdale;
- The provision of new, modern employment premises and the retention of an existing, successful and expanding business;
- New employment opportunities during and post construction;
- Support to and expenditure within the local supply chain;

- The delivery of new, accessible employment opportunities within the urban area;
and
- Environmental benefits through the delivery of new landscaping and biodiversity
features

9.6 For the reasons set out above we respectfully request on behalf of the applicant that planning permission be granted without delay.