



JULY 2022

Planning Statement

Former Capita Call Centre
Dumers Lane
Radcliffe, Bury

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Dumers Lane Ltd

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ON BEHALF OF DUMERS
LANE LTD

July 2022

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Planning Statement
FORMER CAPITA CALL CENTRE

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of Dumers Lane Ltd ('the Applicant'), in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the existing Capita call centre. The description of development is as follows:

"Change of use from existing Class E building to a flexible B2/B8 use, with ancillary Class E(g) offices, along with creation of new site access and vehicle & cycle parking"

Background to the proposal

- 1.2 The application site was home to the former Capita call centre, providing call centre services for Tesco Mobile. Capita relocated from the premises in mid-2021, and since then, the site has laid vacant. The loss of jobs associated with the relocation of Capita's services has had a detrimental impact on the locality however the decision to switch to a hybrid way of working and therefore reduce office requirements by many companies has limited the future appeal of this site for a Class E office use. It is anticipated that the proposal to change the use of this premises into a high quality B2/B8 use will breathe new life into the premises and attract high quality occupiers from within or outside of the Borough.
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to identify and address the main planning issues associated with the proposed development, demonstrating how the proposal is acceptable in the context of Bury Council's ("the Council") Development Plan and other material planning considerations.
- 1.4 The statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 describes the application site and its surroundings and sets out the planning history of the site;
 - Section 3 outlines the policy and legislative framework to be applied;
 - Section 4 describes the proposed development;
 - Section 5 assesses the proposal against the key planning considerations; and
 - Section 6 concludes that planning permission should be granted.

2. SITE & SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site is circa 1.3 hectares and comprises of a large industrial building as well as a multi-storey car park and additional exterior parking. The site was designed and constructed as a B8 warehouse circa 1999. The site currently comprises of what is essentially a high-bay warehouse building which has been utilised as a sales and customer service contact centre by way of raised floor, the addition of extensive mezzanine sections and general office fit-out throughout. The accommodation provides 87,854 sq ft of flexible space over ground and two upper floors. The accommodation is a steel portal frame construction with concrete floors.
- 2.2 The property is situated on Dumers Lane off Manchester Road (A56), 2 km (1 mile) south of Bury town centre and 2 km (1 mile) west of Junction 3 of the M66. The property is 2.8 miles north of Junction 17 of the M60 Manchester's Orbital Motorway, which connects with the wider national motorway network.
- 2.3 The property is located on the opposite side of Dumers Lane to Bury South Business Park, Bracken Trade Park and Bellways' new 250-unit Hardy's Gate residential development, which provides a mix of 3- and 4-bedroom houses. To the rear of the property is Sambro International, the toy makers' distribution warehouse and headquarters. Local occupiers include Toolstation, Crown Paints, Must Have Ltd t/a VIP Electronic Cigarette, Safe Depot, Thumbsup, and Sambro.

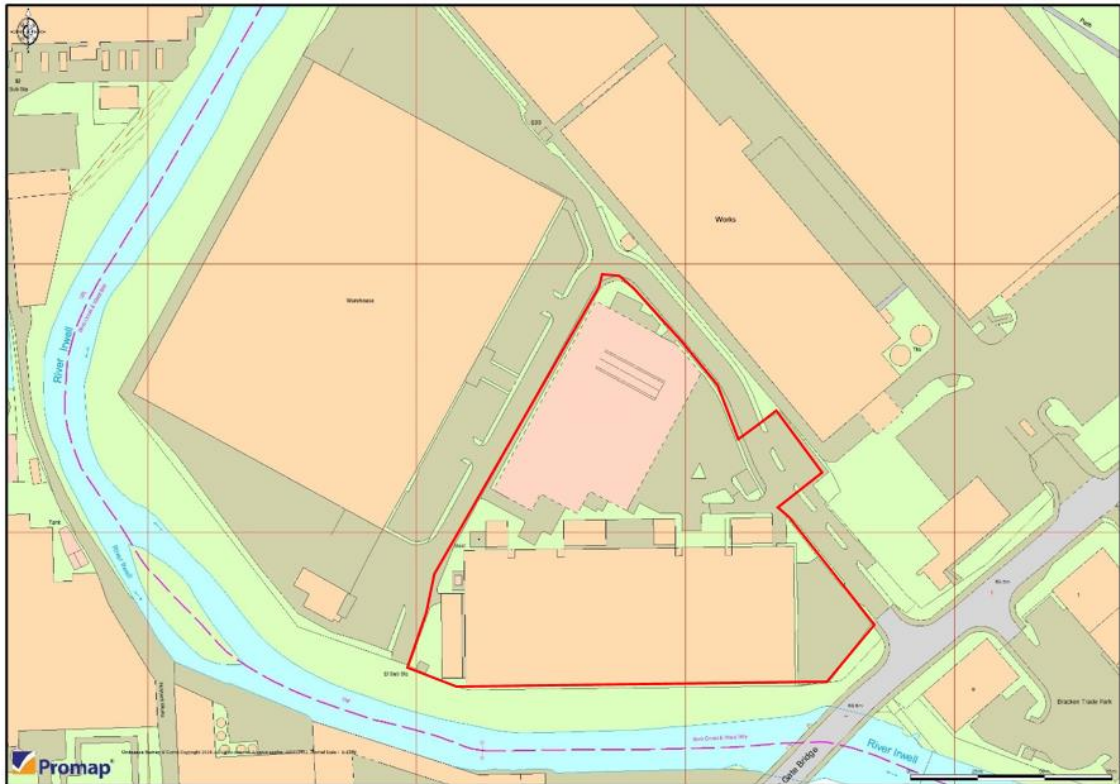


Figure 1. Promap plan of the site (red line indicative)

Planning History

- 2.4 Whilst the site was originally intended to be constructed as a B8 warehouse, Bury's online records do not date back far enough to provide an original copy of the Decision Notice. Nevertheless, we are aware that shortly after the building was completed, an application was approved which sought to change the use of the building from a B8 use to a call centre, office use (formerly known as a B1 use class). The reference number for this application was. 99/35273 and it was approved in April 1999. A separate application was also made for the construction of a multi-storey car park, which was also approved in 1999 (reference number. 35284/99).
- 2.5 More recently, the Applicant has submitted an application for prior approval for the demolition of the multi-storey car park and four free standing plant room buildings to enable this wider redevelopment of the site. The application is currently pending approval.

3. POLICY & LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 This section provides an overview of Bury Council's Unitary Development Plan and other material considerations relevant to the consideration of these proposals, as required by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

3.2 In the context of this application, planning policy operates at two levels:

- **National** | The Government produce the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ('NPPF') and supporting guidance, in the form of Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG').
- **Local** | Bury Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') (1997).

National policy

3.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), published in 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied by Local Authorities and Applicants. Relevant extracts from the NPPF are summarised below.

Achieving sustainable development

3.4 Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (paragraph 11).

Decision-making

3.5 As outlined in paragraph 47, planning law dictates that planning applications should be determined in line with the Development Plan and within the statutory timescales, unless otherwise agreed.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

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

Making effective use of land

3.7 Chapter 11 supports and gives substantial weight to the reuse of brownfield land within new developments whilst meeting local needs, particularly when they are situated in accessible locations. Paragraph 124 notes that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account: a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it; b) local market

conditions and viability; c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use; d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

- 3.8 Chapter 6 of the NPPF (Building a strong, competitive economy) notes at paragraph 81, that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. The NPPF is clear that 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.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.9 The following policies will be of relevance when considering the proposals:

- Policy EC1 – Employment land provision
- Policy EC2 – Existing industrial areas and premises
- Policy EC3 – Improvement of older industrial areas and premises
- Policy EC4 – Small and growing businesses
- Policy EC6 – New business, industrial and commercial development
- Policy HT2 – Highway network
- Policy HT3 – Public transport
- Policy HT4 – New development

Site's planning policy allocations and designations

- 3.10 The site is allocated as an existing employment site under UDP Policy EC2. There are no environmental or historical designations associated with the site. The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 3 however it is protected by Environment Agency flood defences.

Other material considerations

- 3.11 Bury Council are currently in the process of preparing a new local plan that will guide future developments in the borough, along with the Places for Everyone (PfE) joint development plan for Greater Manchester. The local plan is at the very early inception stages, and as such, has no weight in the decision making process.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The planning application seeks consent for the following:

“Change of use from existing Class E building to a flexible B2/B8 use, with ancillary Class E(g) offices, along with creation of new site access and vehicle & cycle parking”

4.2 Specifically, the proposals will include the following:

- Stripping out and removal of existing internal structures which are no longer required, associated with the former call centre use. Provision of new openings including loading doors and delivery doors.
- Provision of new asphalt surfacing to indicate new vehicle parking bays and HGV unloading bays. Provision of 135 parking bays, including 3 EV charging bays and 7 disabled parking spaces.
- Creation of new site entrance and exit, including the erection of sliding security gates.
- Provision of a designated pedestrian entrance, bike shelter (for 12 bicycles) and intercom to aid site access and security.
- Provision of CCTV and lighting across the site to aid safety and security.
- Retention of existing trees and landscaping around the borders of the site.
- Aesthetic improvements to the elevations, including repainting of the existing cladding.

There are several benefits to the proposed scheme, including:

- Supporting local employment opportunities – following the closure and relocation of Capita in 2021, the investment into this site will ensure it is fit for purpose for a new occupier.
- Improved access into the site for pedestrians – at present there is no dedicated pedestrian entrance.
- Improved staff facilities -improvements made to the internal quality of the buildings, alongside provision of bike shelters and electric vehicle charging points to encourage sustainable travel to and from the site.
- Improvements to the appearance of the site, creating a more attractive environment.

5. KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 This section assesses the proposals, highlighting the key planning considerations relevant to the determination of the application, by taking each element of the scheme in turn. Having agreed the validation requirements with an officer prior to submitting to the application, the key matters that have been addressed are:

- Principle of the Development;
- Highways impact;
- Noise impact;
- Ground conditions; and
- Flood risk and drainage

Principle of the Development

5.2 The site is allocated as an 'Employment Generating Area' under UDP Policy EC2/1. This policy states that:

In the defined Employment Generating Areas, as identified on the Proposals Map, the Council will only allow development for the uses specified. Other uses will only be permitted where they constitute limited development or do not substantially detract from an area's value as an Employment Generating Area. The following areas have been identified for the uses specified:
Business (B1), General Industrial (B2), and Warehousing (B8):
EC2/1/9 - Dumers Lane, Bury.

5.3 The change of use from one employment generating use (Class E (g)) to another (Class B/2B) is therefore acceptable in principle. The site will benefit from significant investment which will deliver an attractive scheme, making it an important local asset worthy of protection for economic development purposes well into the future.

5.4 The approach to the application is to seek permission for a flexible B2 and B8 use. This is to ensure that the site explicitly benefits from permitted development rights contained within Schedule 2, Part 3, Class V of the GPDO (2015).-

Development consisting of a change of use of a building or other land from a use permitted by planning permission granted on an application, to another use which that permission would have specifically authorised when it was granted.

- 5.5 The benefit of securing the flexible use is that it will allow the site to convert between B2 and B8 uses for up to 10 years from the date of the decision. After 10 years, the use that the site is then in, at that point in time becomes fixed.
- 5.6 This flexibility is beneficial to the occupier, as well as future local businesses; the unit can be more easily converted into another employment use in the future, allowing an efficient, streamlined approach to the planning system.

Highways Impact

- 5.7 A Transport Statement has been prepared by Mode Transport Planning, which provides an evaluation of the existing public transport, walking and cycling provision in the vicinity of the site, consideration of Personal Injury Collision (PIC) statistics on the surrounding local highway network and an assessment of the impact of the development proposals on the surrounding highway network.
- 5.8 As shown on the site layout plan provided in the application pack, the site operates using a separate entrance and exit for HGV's and the main car park area. The proposals also seek to retain the existing access to a small portion of parking at the front of the site (directed for office staff), as well as another small cluster of parking across the road from the main building.
- 5.9 By its very nature the size of the site ensures that all vehicular traffic, once within the site, has adequate space to turn, layover and route through the site. There is no need for any vehicles to reverse or access the adjacent public highway in anything other than a forward gear.
- 5.10 Parking has been provided in accordance with the policy requirements as closely as possible, in addition to provision of disabled parking bays, cycle parking bays, motorcycle parking bays and EV charger points.

Summary

- 5.11 Overall, it can be concluded that the proposed development will not have a severe impact on the local highway network, which is the threshold stated by the NPPF (Paragraph 111) under which development should not be refused on highways grounds. The proposal therefore complies with both the NPPF and Core Strategy Plan Policy DM 13 (Sustainable Transport).

Noise Impact

- 5.12 A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by acoustic consultants, Professional Consult. The Assessment has been undertaken to identify any key noise sources associated with the Development which may have the potential to adversely impact upon any nearby residential amenity.
- 5.13 The assessment relied upon a noise survey completed on Site in order to measure the existing background sound level in a location considered to be representative of the sound climate at the closest residential dwellings to the south of the Site. This Assessment also used library noise level data for a HGV manoeuvring and unloading in a service yard associated with a similar warehouse elsewhere.
- 5.14 The assessment has shown that the rated level of noise generated by HGVs manoeuvring and unloading in the service yard falls below the typical measured background sound level at the closest residential receptors. In addition, the specific level of noise in the closest bedroom falls below the adopted noise criteria levels and so there is no requirement to consider noise mitigation measures.
- 5.15 In summary, the predicted level of noise from the Site is sufficiently low enough at the identified residential dwellings to accord with the 'No Observed Adverse Effect Level' as detailed in the PPG and as such noise should not be deemed to be a determining factor in the granting of planning permission for this Site.

Ground Conditions

- 5.16 A Preliminary Risk Assessment has been prepared by Delta Simons and submitted in support of the application. Significant potential sources of contamination have not been identified associated with the current land use, however, soil and groundwater contamination may be present associated with the historical use of the Site and the surrounding area. Whilst the presence of localised contamination cannot be completely ruled out, it is considered that the risk of significant possible contaminant linkages to exist in the context of the Site remaining in its current use is low. Delta-Simons considers that intrusive investigation of the Site in its current state is not required.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 5.17 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared by Townsend Water Engineering Limited. The report notes the following key points and conclusions:
- The site's north, west, south boundary is the River Irwell. This is a main river and any works within 7m of the top bank or toe defence will require flood risk permit.

- The site is within a defended Flood Zone 3 The proposed development passes the sequential test as it is a less vulnerable development in a Flood Zone 3.
- The change of use proposed to a Use Class B8 building decreases the risk of flooding, as less staff will be on site in a warehouse set up as opposed to an office (or former call centre, as the site was).
- The flood defences are set at 70.04mAOD and the flood level in the 1 in 1000-year event is 68.74mAOD. The defences are maintained by the Environment Agency. The site is defended up to and including the 1 in 1000-year event. The existing floor levels are 68.125mAOD
- As the site is behind flood defences and no works are being undertaken compensatory storage is not required.
- As the planning application seeks consent for a change of use of the existing building, the existing drainage will not be changed and therefore no drainage strategy will be supplied. This has been agree with Mr. Andy Southgate at the Lead Local Flood Authority as there is no increase in impermeable area and thereby no increase in surface water.

6. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of Dumers Lane Ltd ('the Applicant'), in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the existing Capita call centre. The description of development is as follows:

"Change of use from existing Class E building to a flexible B2/B8 use, with ancillary Class E(g) offices, along with creation of new site access and vehicle & cycle parking"

- 6.2 The application accords with local and national planning legislation and ensures the ongoing retention and protection of this existing employment site. In particular, the proposal complies with UDP Policy EC2/1 - Employment Generating Areas.
- 6.3 The significant investment into the site will allow it to become a high performing employment use once more, suitable for HGV vehicles (which it currently is not). This will allow the site to appeal to a much wider range of local employers, and the site has already gained significant interest from local businesses looking to expand premises.
- 6.4 The applicant and project team look forward to liaising with Bury Council to ensure the timely validation and determination of this planning application.