
Planning & Economic Statement

Indurent Park, Knowsley

Proposed Industrial and Logistics Development (Class B2 and/ or B8 and/ or E(g)(iii)) with Ancillary Offices, including Provision of Access and all Associated Works and Landscaping.

Indurent Management Limited

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Indurent Management Limited ('Indurent'), in support of an application for the development of Indurent Park, Knowsley. The Site is located within Knowsley Business Park and Industrial Estate, immediately to the east of Indurent's existing site (Moorgate Point) and to the north of Alchemy Way.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the development of 18,384 sq. m (197,880 sq. ft) of industrial and logistics floorspace, arranged across two units, as well as proposed landscaping and all associated works. The units will be designed to the highest modern standards for industrial and logistics warehousing, aiming for BREEAM 'excellent' accreditation, EPC-A+ rating and incorporating a highly sustainable specification of development for both staff and visitors.
- 1.3 The application is being made to provide sustainable and high quality industrial & logistics floorspace which will complete the pattern of development at Knowsley Business Park and contribute positively to the social and economic development of Knowsley. The development will provide significant job opportunities for local residents across a range of skill sets and play a critical role in enabling the efficient and effective supply of goods for consumers and businesses.
- 1.4 Knowsley Business Park is a regionally significant employment hub, and the Site is allocated for industrial and logistics development within the adopted Core Strategy. Accordingly, the development of the Site for employment (Class B2/ B8/E(g)(iii)) uses is considered to be acceptable in principle.
- 1.5 Assessing the impacts of the proposed development, including it's alignment to the NPPF and Knowsley's development plan, the Planning Statement concludes the development will provide a range of social, economic and environmental benefits to the local area and contribute to the Growth Strategy that is currently being encouraged by the Government.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Savills (UK) Limited, on behalf of Indurent Management Limited, in respect of an application which proposes the development of the land to the east of Moorgate Point and to the north of Alchemy Way, within Knowsley Business Park (the '**Site**').
- 2.2 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the development of 18,384 sq. m (197,880 sq. ft) of industrial and logistics floorspace, arranged across two warehouse units. The largest of the units (Unit K135) is located to the north-west of the Site, whilst the smaller unit (Unit K72) is located to the south-west, both of which are provided with dedicated access, servicing and staff parking areas. Access is proposed to be made from Alchemy Way, at the south-east corner of the Site. The application also seeks permission for landscaping and all associated works.
- 2.3 A combination of formal and informal pre-application discussions undertaken with Council's officers, including Alan Kilroe (Head of Planning), Clare Appleyard (Planning Officer), Jon Parry (Highways) and Louise Fortune (Highways & Development Control – Team Leader). During formal pre-application discussions, officers confirmed that the principle of the proposed development in this location would likely be acceptable, subject to satisfying all of the relevant development management criteria.
- 2.4 This Statement and the suite of accompanying documents provide a robust assessment of the proposal in relation to relevant local and national planning policies and other material considerations to assist the LPA's determination of the application. The assessment demonstrates that the proposal is acceptable in all regards and that planning permission should be granted at the first available opportunity.

The Principal Issues

- 2.5 The principal issues are whether the proposal accords with the development plan and material considerations on the following matters:

1. Whether the principle of development accords with the development plan?

2. Whether the proposal accords with national Government policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), including the need to secure sustainable economic growth?
3. Whether the proposal accords with local and national policies relating to sustainability matters?
4. Whether the proposal accords with various development management policies, particularly those relating to biodiversity, landscaping and design matters?

2.6 The existing development plan and material considerations, including the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG'), provide the local and national Government's policies and guidance addressing the above issues.

2.7 In this case, the proposal accords with the adopted development plan, complying with development policies relating to employment, landscaping and biodiversity, sustainable design and highways. Given this is the case, the full weight of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act applies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.8 The relevant material considerations also indicate that permission should be granted, as the proposal accords with the NPPF and PPG. As the proposal accords with the NPPF, it benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The Case for the Proposal

2.9 The case for the proposal is that it:

1. Is a positive investment in Knowsley that will make a significant contribution towards the achievement of local and national Government agendas to promote sustainable economic growth.
2. Provides high quality, modern employment floorspace which is suited to the needs of both local businesses and large national operators.
3. Generates significant new employment positions in both the construction and operational phases.
4. Accords with the Council's allocation of the site in the adopted development plan for employment generating uses.

5. Improves vehicular and pedestrian access to the Site, and contributes to the improvement of the public highway network surrounding the Site.
6. Is of a high quality physical design and appearance.
7. Avoids tree loss wherever possible, mitigates against necessary on-site tree loss and provides a strategy for biodiversity net gain.
8. Uses energy efficiently, utilises low carbon/ renewable technologies and achieves a high standard of environmentally sustainable development.
9. Is acceptable in all regards.

2.10 It follows that the proposal will secure a high standard of socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development. As confirmed in the NPPF, the achievement of sustainable development is the primary goal of the planning system.

Structure of this Statement

2.11 In order to comprehensively assess the proposed development against the relevant planning policies, the remaining sections of this Statement are structured as follows:

- Section 3.0** Site Context
- Section 4.0** Proposed Development
- Section 5.0** Review of Planning Policy
- Section 6.0** Securing Sustainable Development
- Section 7.0** Assessment of the Proposal

2.12 We set out in **Section 8.0** our Summary and Conclusions that the proposed development accords with the development plan and all other material considerations.

3. Background Context

Site Context

- 3.1 The proposed application site (the '**Site**') measures approximately 4.5 hectares and comprises land situated on the eastern side of Moorgate Road North, within Knowsley Business Park. The Site is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Kirkby and 6.5 miles north east of Liverpool. Moorgate Point (also within the ownership of the Applicant) lies immediately to the west.
- 3.2 The Site is trapezoidal in shape, and features predominantly flat, low-lying land with a landscaping bund adjacent to the southern boundary. Alchemy Way extends almost to the south-eastern boundary. The western portion of the Site is currently used as a haulage yard, comprising areas of hardstanding surrounded by soft landscaping, with a terrace of small industrial units at the south-western boundary, accessed from Moorgate Road North, via Moorgate Point. The eastern portion of the Site is undeveloped, consisting predominantly of grassland and scattered shrubland.
- 3.3 The surrounding land uses are exclusively large-scale commercial and industrial uses comprising Knowsley Business Park and Industrial Estate. The largest Business Park in the Liverpool City Region, it is home to approximately 800 businesses (including Matalan, QVC and Amazon) and 15,100 employees, contributing £214 million in Gross Value Added to the economy per annum, primarily in the manufacturing and distribution sectors. To the east is an Amazon van park that has recently commenced operations. Land immediately to the south comprises an open area of land which was granted outline planning permission in April 2024 for the erection of two units (Use Class E (g) (ii) (iii) or B2 or B8 Use) with ancillary office space, car parking and vehicular, pedestrian circulation with access onto Alchemy Way (App Ref: 23/00456/FUL).
- 3.4 Whilst access is currently limited, the Site has excellent vehicular connectivity by virtue of its adjacency to the M57 Motorway and East Lancashire Road (A580), connecting the Site to Liverpool, Manchester and beyond. The Site lies in Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding) and is not within a Conservation Area. There are no Listed Buildings or structures on Site, and it is not in an area that is at High Risk of coal mining. There are no other known planning constraints to development.

Planning Context

3.5 The Site has been subject to various permissions over the last 20 years for the delivery of employment floorspace, as set out below. In 2002, outline planning permission was granted for the 'Erection of 10,442 sq. m warehouse unit for B8 Use together with associated car parking and HGV Parking' (App Ref: 01/00708/OUT) (the '**2001 Permission**'). Reserved Matters consent for the 2001 Permission was granted in April 2005 (App Ref: 05/00126/REM), but was never implemented.

3.6 On 23 December 2004, the Council refused planning permission for the 'Erection of an employment unit (B2/B8), circulation, heavy goods vehicle and car parking and landscaping/habitat mitigation (App Ref: 04/01163/OUT) (the '**2004 Application**'). The 2004 Application was refused by the Council on two grounds, being that:

1. The proposal would result in an adverse impact on a locally, ecologically important habitat (Otis Meadows); and
2. The inadequacy of the proposed compensatory mitigation measures.

3.7 On 18 May 2006, the 2004 Application was granted on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (Appeal Ref: APP/V4305/A/05/1172135) (the '**2006 Permission**'), subject to five conditions of approval.

3.8 During the appeal, the Council confirmed that:

"There are no outstanding objections between the Council and the Appellant in relation to ecological issues and the reason for refusal. The Council would now support that which the Appellant proposed subject to the appropriate conditions".

3.9 In allowing the appeal, the Inspector stated at Paragraph 6 of the decision:

"The agreed mitigation works, which involve the translocation of plant species of significance to a receptor site within the Borough, have been completed by an agreed specialist contractor. The Appellant paid for

these works and has financed the cost of their future maintenance in accordance with the agreed mitigation strategy. All of the parties agree that the works amount to adequate compensatory mitigation measures.”

- 3.10 On 16 April 2009, outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except access) was granted for the ‘Erection of 8,746 sq. m. of industrial buildings (B1/B2/B8)’ (App Ref: 09/00045/OUT)(the ‘**2009 Permission**’). An application for approval of the reserved matters were never submitted pursuant to the 2009 Permission and was therefore never implemented.
- 3.11 Regarding the area to the western side of the Site comprising hardstanding, planning permission was granted on 16 June 2009, to retain the use of land for a vehicle storage depot, the use of a building for office and staff facilities together with the insertion of a fire door to the east elevation of that building and the provision of car parking (App Ref: 09/00090/COU) (the ‘**2009B Permission**’).

4. The Proposed Development

4.1 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the development of 18,384 sq. m (197,880 sq. ft) of industrial and logistics floorspace, arranged across two units. The largest of the units (Unit K135) is located to the north-west of the Site, whilst the smaller unit (Unit K72) is located to the south-west, both of which are provided with dedicated access, servicing and staff parking areas. Access is proposed to be made from Alchemy Way, at the south-east corner of the Site. The application also seeks permission for landscaping and all associated works.

4.2 The proposed units are configured as follows:

Unit	Ground Floor (GIA)	First Floor (GIA)	Total (GIA)
Unit K135	11,394 sq. m (122,651 sq. ft)	571 sq. m (6,151 sq. ft)	11,966 sq. m (128,802 sq. ft)
Unit K72	6,109 sq. m (65,764 sq. ft)	307 sq. m (3,314 sq. ft)	6,417 sq. m (69,078 sq. ft)
Total	17,504 sq. m (188,415 sq. ft)	879 sq. m (9,465 sq. ft)	18,384 sq. m (197,880 sq. ft)

Table 1 – Proposed Floor Areas

4.3 The units will be designed to the highest modern standards for industrial and logistics warehousing, aiming for BREEAM 'excellent' accreditation, EPC-A+ rating and incorporating a highly sustainable specification of development for both staff and visitors.

4.4 The application is being made to provide sustainable and high quality industrial & logistics floorspace which will complete the pattern of development at Knowsley Business Park and contribute positively to the social and economic development of Knowsley. The development will provide significant job opportunities for local residents across a range of skill sets and play a critical role in enabling the efficient and effective supply of goods for consumers and businesses. The proposed flexible use (i.e. Class B2 and/or B8 and/ or E(g)(iii)) will ensure that the floorspace can be used for a range of industrial and logistics uses, in order to maximise

the potential for suitable operators to be accommodated at the site, thereby maximising the potential for economic growth and job creation.

- 4.5 The proposals include provision of vehicular and pedestrian access from Alchemy Way, at the south east corner of the Site. Appropriate footways are provided throughout the site with dropped kerbs and marked crossings at key locations including access to the cycle parking facilities and at site accesses.

5. Review of Relevant Planning Policy

Introduction

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Act directs LPAs to determine planning applications in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The starting point for the consideration of a proposal is an assessment against the development plan. If a development accords with the plan, and it is up-to-date, then the decision should be to grant planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF and PPG are material considerations. The NPPF is the Government's national planning policies that development plans are supposed to accord with and the PPG sets out how the Secretary of State expects national planning policies to be applied.

The Development Plan

- 5.3 The relevant documents contained within the adopted development plan for this application are the:

1. Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted January 2016) (the '**Core Strategy**'); and
2. Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development ('**UDP**').

- 5.4 The key policies to consider in relation to this planning application are:

Core Strategy:

- Policy CS2 – Development Principles
- Policy CS4 – Economy and Development
- Policy CS7 – Transport Networks
- Policy CS8 – Green Infrastructure

- Policy CS11 – Principle Regeneration Area (Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks)
- Policy CS19 – Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
- Policy CS21 – Greenspaces and Trees
- Policy CS22 – Sustainable and Low Carbon Development
- Policy CS23 – Renewable and Low Carbon Infrastructure
- Policy CS24 – Managing Flood Risk
- Policy CS27 – Planning for and Paying for New Infrastructure

UDP:

- Policy CP3 – Development Quality
- Policy EC2 – Sites Allocated for Employment Development
- Policy EC3 – Primary Industrial Area
- Policy T6 – Ensuring Choice of Travel to Serve New Developments
- Policy T7 – New Development and Walking & Cycling Routes
- Policy T8 – Transport Assessments
- Policy T9 – Travel Plans
- Policy DQ1 – Design Quality in New Development
- Policy DQ4 – Trees and Development
- Policy ENV2 – Noise and Vibration
- Policy ENV7 – Flood Risk and Drainage

5.5 The adopted Policy Map identifies that the Site is located within the Primarily Industrial Area of Knowsley Industrial Park, under Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy and Policy EC3 of the UDP. Furthermore, part of the Site is identified under Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy as a Local Wildlife Site (**'LWS'**).

Material Considerations

5.6 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are also material considerations:

1. Adding Social Value to Development (published September 2018)
2. Design Quality in New Development (published January 2016)
3. Developer Contributions (published June 2016)
4. Trees and Development (published June 2016)
5. Ensuring a Choice of Travel (published June 2016)

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance

- 5.7 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Paragraph 10 sets out the guiding principle for the national policy framework and states:

"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."

- 5.8 Paragraph 11 states that:

"For decision-taking this means:

1. *Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay;*
or
2. *Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date granting permission unless:*
 - a. *The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - b. *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole" (Savills' emphasis)*

- 5.9 The remainder of the NPPF sets out planning principles that underpin plan-making and decision-taking. The development accords with key principles, as discussed in further detail below.

- 5.10 Paragraph 85 confirms that planning decisions should help create conditions where businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It specifically states that 'significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity'. Paragraph 85 is a very important paragraph in the NPPF; it is one of very few policies in the NPPF which sets out the particular weight attached to the consideration of important matters.
- 5.11 Paragraph 117 states that priority should be given to pedestrian and cycle movements; the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility addressed; creation of safe, secure and attractive spaces; allow for the efficient delivery of goods; and be designed to enable use by sustainable vehicles.
- 5.12 Section 11 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land. Paragraph 124 specifically seeks for planning policies and decisions to promote effective use of land in meeting the need for various uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.13 Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.
- 5.14 The NPPF clearly identifies the importance of well-designed places and the need for a consistent and high-quality standard of design. Paragraph 135 states that decisions should ensure that developments:
- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

- Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

5.15 Chapter 14 identifies the approach to meeting the climate change challenge. Paragraph 161 provides that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future by:

- Shaping places in a way that contributes to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions;
- Minimise vulnerability and improve resilience;
- Encourage the reuse of existing resources; and
- Support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure

5.16 Chapter 15 establishes the preferred method to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. Paragraph 193 establishes the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy:

- Significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development should be adequately mitigated or compensated for approval;
- Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported.

6. Assessment of the Proposal

Introduction

6.1 As discussed in the Sections above, the proposed development falls to be assessed in accordance with the policies contained in the development plan and all relevant material considerations. That detailed assessment is set out below, by reference to the following key development themes:

1. Principle of Development for Employment Uses
2. Trees, Biodiversity and Landscaping
3. BNG Assessment
4. Transport & Accessibility
5. Other Development Management Considerations

Principle of Development for Employment Uses

6.2 Given that the Site is within a Primarily Industrial Area and is allocated for employment generating uses in both the UDP and the Core Strategy, the proposed development for Class B2 and/ or B8 and/ or E(g)(iii) purposes accords with Policies CS4, CS11, EC2 & EC3 and is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle. The proposal presents an opportunity for the development of a high quality industrial and logistics scheme that will positively contribute to the economic and social growth of Knowsley.

6.3 Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 81 of the NPPF both emphasize the importance of supporting sustainable economic development. The proposed commercial uses are a key part of the local, regional and UK economy as a generator of employment and economic prosperity. The significant Government borrowing as a result of the economy in preceding years means that private investment is needed to secure and provide employment growth. Accordingly, the requirement for economic investment is a national imperative and the positive economic impacts of the proposal heavily weigh in favour of the grant of permission.

- 6.4 According to the latest research from Savills (2025), vacancy rates for logistics units in the North West stand at 8.09%¹, with circa 40% of the available supply being of poor quality (i.e. Grade B and C). It follows that there is an acute and growing need to provide high quality, large-scale industrial and logistics floorspace at key locations throughout the region and sub-region. The development proposals provide a clear opportunity to attract new investment into Knowsley and deliver against that objective.
- 6.5 An Economic Benefits Assessment has been undertaken by Savills and is submitted in support of this application. The assessment shows that the development will result in the creation of significant and tangible economic benefits in both the construction and operational phases. In terms of the construction phase, the proposed development will create approximately 150 jobs across the one-year construction timeframe, with approximately 50 of these positions expected to be filled by local residents of Knowsley. During the operational phase, the assessment estimates that the development will directly create 340 on-site jobs², with the potential to indirectly create an additional 130 jobs, generating an additional £22.7m in Gross Value Added to the local economy.
- 6.6 In summary, the proposed development seeks permission for employment uses, on a Site allocated for those purposes, within one of the largest industrial estates in the region. The proposal will bring significant economic benefits which will allow businesses to flourish and improve the quality of life for residents in the local area. The proposal therefore accords with the policies and objectives in the Core Strategy which seek to secure sustainable economic development. In those circumstances, Paragraph 85 of the NPPF clearly indicates that planning permission should be approved.

Trees, Biodiversity and Landscaping

¹ Based on data collected by Savills Research, July 2022

² Full-time equivalent

- 6.7 Given the existing Site has a primarily greenfield nature, the application proposals involve the potential for impacts to occur on natural capital, including trees and ecology. From the outset of the project, the Applicant has sought to understand those impacts, particularly given the history of planning applications submitted in relation to the Site (as summarised in Section 3 above) and the identification of the Site as an LWS under Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy.
- 6.8 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ('**PEA**') was undertaken by SK Environmental Solutions Limited in May 2025, in order to establish a baseline of ecological information and assess whether the proposed development has the potential to adversely affect any protected or notable habitats or species. The results of the PEA concludes that the Site's habitats and floral interest has been degraded to a point where it would no longer meet the criteria for classification as an LWS. Past management of the Site and non-native species colonisation have resulted in the grassland habitats becoming considerably reduced in both area and quality. Those conclusions accord with the planning history, wherein notable flora species were transplanted away from the Site in order to prepare for redevelopment.
- 6.9 Whilst the PEA concluded that no further surveys for specific species were required in relation to the existing on-site habitats, a Preliminary Roost Assessment ('**PRA**') was required to be undertaken to understand the potential for the existing buildings at the south-west corner of the Site to support bat roosting. The PRA was undertaken in July 2025, and concluded that the buildings had negligible potential to support roosting, and therefore no further surveys would be necessary.
- 6.10 A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment ('**AIA**') was undertaken by Lowther Forestry Group Ltd, to identify the impact of the proposal on the existing tree stock and provide mitigation measures, where necessitated or appropriate. Whilst there are no existing Tree Preservation Orders ('**TPOs**') on-site, care has been taken to retain as much of the existing stock while offering a re-planting schedule to contribute to the biodiversity of the Site. The results of the AIA demonstrate that three individual trees (T2, T3 and T4) and one tree group (G4) are required to be removed to facilitate the development. In addition, two further tree groups (G1 and G2) are classified Category U trees which have structural defects and will therefore benefit from management intervention within the next 10 years where they lean onto, or overhang the boundary fence.

- 6.11 In relation to green infrastructure, Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy provides that new development must seek to protect, maintain and (where possible) enhance biodiversity within and around new developments according to their designation and significance. More specifically in relation to trees, Policy CS21 states that the Council will encourage proposals to incorporate the retention of existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features which offer a positive contribution to the local environment. Furthermore, development proposals should include appropriate planting of trees and other soft landscaping for the benefit of biodiversity, including 2:1 replacement provision where tree loss is unavoidable, taking account of species and size.
- 6.12 In accordance with the biodiversity hierarchy, the proposed development of the Site has first sought to avoid impacts on upon the natural environment, then to minimise those impacts, and lastly to mitigate or offset those impacts. Unfortunately, the nature of the development proposals and the physical/ operational constraints of the Site (e.g. revised access provision, proximity of adjacent land uses) mean that, in order to deliver a viable development, the loss of existing vegetation (including trees and grassland) cannot be avoided.
- 6.13 The submission documents include a Landscape Concept Proposal (Dwg Ref: 2465-25-01-S5-05), undertaken by BCA Design, which provides the details of soft landscaping proposed as part of the development. These plans show that proposed landscaping has been incorporated into the design, with a large area provided at the entrance to the Site which combines both landscaping and drainage attenuation, providing visual interest and amenity, helping to create a strong sense of place as well as creating a natural buffer to surrounding land uses. Whilst the felling of existing trees is unfortunate, the proposals will more than mitigate against that loss, including re-providing of a total of 59 new trees, including 31 extra heavy, 6 heavy and 22 standard trees, of a range of native and non-native species.
- 6.14 The application also includes a Biodiversity Impact Assessment ('**BIA**'), undertaken by SK Environmental Solutions Limited, which contains the Biodiversity Net Gain ('**BNG**') assessment. That BNG assessment confirms that the baseline biodiversity value of the Site is calculated to be:

- 13.43 Habitat Units

- 0.55 Hedgerow Units
- 0.94 Watercourse Units

6.15 When taking into account the loss of existing habitats and the proposed landscaping scheme, the BNG assessment demonstrates that the post-development biodiversity value of the Site will be:

- 3.08 Habitat Units (i.e. a net loss of 77%)
- 3.04 Hedgerow Units (i.e. a net gain of 452%)
- 0 Watercourse Units (i.e. a net loss of 100%)

6.16 It follows from the above that, whilst every effort has been made to optimise on-site landscaping and habitat creation, the nature of the development as a Class B2 and/ or B8 and or E(g)(iii) scheme means that large areas of the Site are given over to built development. Therefore, in order to ensure that the proposed development provides a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the BIA concludes that the following units are required to be secured off-site (in line with the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy):

- 11.69 Habitat Units
- 1.03 Watercourse Units

6.17 The Applicant considers that the off-site provision of biodiversity units to deliver a net gain in biodiversity accords entirely with the statutory and policy framework. We understand from pre-application discussions that the Council would typically impose the requirement for biodiversity net gain by the standard condition of approval to provide a Biodiversity Gain Plan, prior to the commencement of development. Although an off-site solution for BNG is not required at planning application stage, the Applicant currently expects to purchase the above required units from a habitat bank (e.g. The Environment Bank).

6.18 We conclude that the proposed development will deliver a highly sustainable employment scheme which will avoid impacts upon natural capital wherever possible, and will provide a net gain in biodiversity through the development process. As a result, the scheme complies with Policies CS8, CS19, CS21 and CS22 of the Core Strategy, as well as Paragraphs 153 and 179 of the NPPF.

Transport & Accessibility

- 6.19 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment, undertaken by SWECO, which provides details of the proposed development with regards to traffic and transport, including the proposed access and servicing strategy, proposed pedestrian and walking infrastructure, and car and bicycle parking provision, which aligns with the prevailing standards.
- 6.20 As detailed at Section 4 above, access to the Site will be provided via a connection to Alchemy Way, which will link to a new internal private spine road. This will facilitate access to the Site for all car and HGV traffic, as well as pedestrians and cyclists.
- 6.21 Car parking provision is provided in accordance with the applicable standards and the requirements outlined by the Council during pre-application discussions. Given that the proposed development is of a speculative nature and could incorporate a variety of employment based uses, the level of parking provision required could vary greatly when assessed against the Council's standards. As a result, the design of the proposal includes sufficient parking to meet the Council's maximum standards for Class B8 use, which is in line with advice provided by officers during pre-application discussions. In the event that both units are occupied in Class B2 use, it is proposed that areas of HGV parking within the service yards of each unit would instead be given over to car parking (given that Class B2 uses have lower HGV parking requirements than Class B8 uses). The application includes an Alternative Site Layout (Dwg Ref: 22520-UMC-ZZZZ-SI-DR-A-0611) illustrating the changes to the layout that would be required if both units were occupied in Class B2 use, which will be controlled by a pre-occupation condition of approval on any forthcoming decision notice.
- 6.22 Forecast traffic flows and multi-modal trips have been identified and it is noted that the predicted level of demand for walking, cycling and public transport can be easily accommodated within the existing provision. The operational performance of the A580 / Alchemy Way signalised junction and Alchemy Way roundabout have been tested against the baseline traffic flows and the predicted operational traffic flows for the AM and PM peak hours. It is noted that both junctions will operate well within their capacity thresholds, in both scenarios, for the future design year of 2030. The existing highway network is therefore considered appropriate to accommodate development generated traffic and no mitigation is required.

- 6.23 On the basis of the above, we conclude that the proposal complies with Policies T8 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 112 of the NPPF in relation to transport and accessibility.

Design

- 6.24 Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy states that development proposals in Knowsley will be expected to meet a high quality of physical design. As detailed in the Design & Access Statement submitted with this application, not only is the proposed development functional as an employment destination, it is at the same time both highly sustainable (in terms of the selected materials and finishes) and also of a very high standard of external appearance.
- 6.25 Specifically in relation to the design of the proposed buildings, the appearance of the industrial units was informed by the surrounding context, whilst seeking to produce a modern building form which is well-suited to the needs of a wide variety of operators. Whilst the proposed units differ in size, their appearance has been designed to be uniform meaning that the units clearly present as one composite development. The main entrances to the units were intentionally designed to be visible from the road, with glazed front elevations to ground and mezzanine level providing active frontages.
- 6.26 Generally speaking, the proposed design will deliver a modern industrial development of a very high standard of appearance and performance, which is associated with the Indurent brand. Indurent's track record of delivery in this sector provides the LPA with the assurance that the proposed development of the Site will be delivered and will be of a high quality.
- 6.27 We conclude that the proposed development will deliver a high quality, contemporary industrial warehouse development which will raise the standard of the built form in this area of Knowsley. As a result, the proposal complies with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, and Paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.28 As detailed in the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy ('**FRA**'), provided by HSP Consulting, the

Site lies within Flood Zone 1 (lowest probability of flooding) from rivers and the sea. Furthermore, the FRA goes on to confirm that the Site is generally at a low risk of flooding from most other sources, however the Site is within an area at risk of surface water flooding in each of the 1 in 30, 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 year storm events, and is also within a Critical Drainage Area, as confirmed by the Lead Local Flood Authority.

6.29 As a result, the proposed Drainage Strategy has been carefully designed to ensure that the risk of flooding to the Site post-development will be adequately managed. Whilst site investigations are currently ongoing, the available evidence suggests that the Site is not suitable for infiltration drainage, and there are no existing watercourses in the vicinity of the Site. Therefore, surface water is proposed to be drained into the existing sewer network in accordance with the drainage hierarchy. Permeable paving with an impermeable liner will be used within private parking areas to provide surface water treatment. In addition, an attenuation pond will be incorporated into the drainage strategy to manage runoff volume and provide further storage and treatment prior to discharge.

6.30 It follows that the proposed development accords with Policy CS19 and CS24 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 153 of the NPPF.

Air Quality

6.31 Whilst the Site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area, the number of new vehicular trips generated by the proposal were considered significant enough during pre-application discussions to warrant assessment by reference to the Council's validation checklist for planning applications. As such, an Air Quality Assessment ('AQA'), undertaken by Logika Group, is included with the application submission.

6.32 The results of the AQA demonstrate that the impact of the proposed development will be 'not significant' when assessed against the relevant criteria. As such, the AQA concludes that air quality should not present any significant obstacle to the grant of planning permission. It follows that the proposal complies with Policies CS7 and CS23 of the Core Strategy and Paragraphs 185 & 186 of the NPPF.

Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

- 6.33 As detailed in the submitted Energy Statement, prepared by MBA, the proposed development of this Site will incorporate building fabric enhancements, as well as low carbon and renewable technologies, including photovoltaic panels and air-source heat pumps. As a result, the proposed development is estimated to achieve a total of a 116-119% reduction in regulated CO² emissions, in line with policy requirements and according with Part L Building Regulations.
- 6.34 The BREEAM Pre-Assessment which accompanies the submission (also prepared by MBA) highlights the objective to achieve a certification of 'Excellent' for this development, alongside an EPC 'A+' rating. It follows that the proposed development of the Site will actively reduce carbon emissions and has been designed in a manner which prioritises energy efficiency.
- 6.35 In light of the above, we conclude the proposal accords with Policies CS22 and CS23 of the Core Strategy.

7. Securing Sustainable Development

Introduction

7.1 Chapter 2 of the NPPF relates to the achievement of sustainable development, and Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives which all development should seek to achieve:

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

7.2 In association with its funding partners, Indurent has an established track record of delivering high quality trade and industrial developments throughout the country. The developments within their portfolio focus on achieving each of the objectives of sustainable development through the development lifecycle. The substantial, vacant site within Knowsley Business Park for employment uses presents the opportunity to achieve a highly sustainable form of development, in accordance with the objectives of Paragraph 8 of the NPPF, as provided for in detail below.

Social Sustainability

- 7.3 As highlighted in the Adding Social Value to Development SPD, the Council aspires to deliver social value benefits within proposed developments to allow for a significant increase in job availability and increased opportunities for skill growth. Knowsley Business Park is a key employer within the Liverpool City Region and is responsible for the generation of over a quarter of job opportunities within the entire Borough of Knowsley. The proposed development seeks to build upon that reputation and will therefore deliver meaningful social value for the surrounding community. The Applicant has a proven track record of designing and delivering similar developments at various locations across the country, which have resulted in numerous social benefits to local communities. It follows that the proposal will contribute positively to the investment of the Park and continue to support the building of strong communities and the provision of job opportunities.
- 7.4 The application will include a Social Value Strategy, produced in partnership with Fusion21, which will set out the Applicant's approach to improving the quality of life of Knowsley's residents and workers. This will be secured as an end-user agreement where contractors/ sub-contractors will be required to provide job/ apprenticeship and work experience opportunities to enable local residents to gain hands-on experiences and improve job prospects; directly targeting the high rates of worklessness within the Borough³.
- 7.5 The Framework focuses on the opportunities provided by redevelopment projects, we consider that the proposed development has a role to play in the transformation of the area, by providing access to employment which is:
- Intended to attract workers from the local labour market;
 - Create apprenticeship/traineeship/work experience opportunities;
 - Designed to be attractive to a wide range of people, skills and job roles; and
 - Suitable to both small and national businesses alike.

³ In comparison to the North West (2.4%) and national (1.9%) percentages, Knowsley hosts a population of 3.4% of a workless resident population of working age.

- 7.6 Employment opportunities enable individuals to improve their living standards whilst making constructive use of human resources. As a direct result of the proposal, compounded with the implementation of a Social Value Strategy, which will continue to be monitored by Fusion21 to ensure its delivery, the proposal will generate wage growth and reduce unemployment. Consequently, living standards and consumer spending will increase, contributing positively to economic growth.
- 7.7 The NPPF states that development proposals should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by fostering well designed beautiful and safe places with accessible services. This proposal meets an identified requirement for new employment floorspace within Knowsley. It will deliver a significant number of new employment positions, of which a significant proportion will be drawn from the local labour market and the surrounding areas.
- 7.8 In light of the above, the social benefits of the proposal are significant and weigh heavily in favour of the grant of planning permission.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.9 The need to create highly sustainable industrial warehousing units is a key element of the proposed scheme, and every opportunity will be taken to introduce energy-saving and sustainability measures as part of the proposed development. The strategy for the proposed development is to create low carbon, low resource demand development through design approaches, including those that:
- Have low energy demands;
 - Use low carbon technologies; and
 - Incorporate use of renewable technologies.

- 7.10 In summary, as explored in Section 6, the proposal avoids biodiversity impacts where possible and will provide a 'net gain' in biodiversity through the development process. Although that is the case, the habitats on-site are not considered to be of particular value and therefore the unavoidable loss of existing green infrastructure should not present an impediment to the grant of planning permission for the proposed development.
- 7.11 The proposal will enable the development of a high-quality industrial and logistics scheme, which introduces new commercial uses into a highly accessible location which is designated for its use and has excellent vehicular connectivity. It will deliver new employment floorspace within Knowsley and assist in fulfilling the Council's goals for the regeneration of Knowsley Industrial Park. In addition, low carbon and renewable technologies will be incorporated in accordance with adopted policy allowing the active reduction of carbon emissions and designed in a manner which prioritises energy efficiency.
- 7.12 The above demonstrates careful thought has been placed in the green and landscape-led scheme, as well, as engaging with the Council through various formal and informal discussions to meet environmental policy objectives, namely that it:
- Optimises the development of land allocated for employment use;
 - Incorporates the provision of sustainable drainage systems ('**SuDS**') into the design of the proposal;
 - Incorporates renewable and low-carbon technology;
 - Is energy-efficient;
 - Aims to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' certification; and
 - Mitigates against on-site tree and habitat loss, and results in a net positive benefit upon green infrastructure.
- 7.13 The proposal meets the key policy objective to mitigate and adapt to climate change by providing development in a designated location with excellent connectivity. In light of the above, it is concluded that the proposal complies with the local policy requirements along with the NPPF's overarching objective to deliver sustainable environmental development.

Economic Sustainability

- 7.14 The proposed development will assist in supplying industrial and logistics floorspace in a sustainable manner and assist in securing economic growth. In line with Paragraph 85 of the NPPF, the proposal proactively encourage sustainable economic growth.
- 7.15 The proposal will make a positive contribution to economic growth and prosperity, and accords with the Government's agenda to promote development that results in economic growth.
- 7.16 In terms of the construction phase, the proposed development will create approximately 150 jobs across the one-year construction timeframe, with approximately 50 of these positions expected to be filled by local residents of Knowsley. During the operational phase, the assessment estimates that the development will directly create 340 on-site jobs⁴, with the potential to indirectly create an additional 130 jobs, generating an additional £22.7m in Gross Value Added to the local economy, and an additional £7.8m in business rates over a 20 year period.
- 7.17 In summary, the economic benefits of the proposal are significant. Notably, the proposal will allow the Site to be brought into an economically productive use in a highly sustainable manner and assist in economic and social growth within the Borough.
- 7.18 In light of the above, the overwhelming economic positives of the proposal weigh heavily In favour of the grant of permission. The proposed development accords with the overarching objectives of the NPPF which aim to support proposals that support economic growth. It follows that the proposal should be supported under the terms of the relevant policies in the NPPF that seek to build a strong, competitive economy and place significant weight on the need to support economic growth.

Conclusion

⁴ Full-time equivalent

- 7.19 In light of the above, it is evident that the proposal will secure a high standard of socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development. It therefore complies with Policies CS2, CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy, in addition to the overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development contained in Chapter 2 of the NPPF.
- 7.20 Given that position, it follows that the full weight of the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained at Paragraph 11 of the NPPF and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applies, and planning permission should be granted at the earliest available opportunity.

8. Summary and Conclusions

8.1 The application proposes the erection of 18,384 sq. m of industrial and logistics (Class B2 and/or B8 and/or E(g)(iii)) floorspace at the Site, including all associated landscaping and provision of revised access arrangements from Alchemy Way. The proposal is entirely policy compliant and will achieve the three objectives of sustainable development, which lie at the heart of the planning system.

8.2 The assessment undertaken as part of this Statement has demonstrated that the proposal:

1. Is positive investment in Knowsley's largest employment area, on a Site which the Council has allocated for development. The proposal therefore contributes towards local and national Government agendas to promote sustainable economic growth.
2. Provides high quality, modern employment floorspace which is suited to the needs of both local businesses and large national operators.
3. Generates significant new employment positions in both the construction and operational phases.
4. Continues the pattern of ongoing investment in Knowsley Business Park as the premier industrial estate in the Liverpool City Region.
5. Greatly improves the accessibility of the Site, and provides a development which will be accessible by a range of active and public transport modes.
6. Is of a very high quality of physical design and appearance.
7. Avoids loss of green infrastructure wherever possible, mitigates against on-site tree loss.
8. Uses energy efficiently and utilises low carbon / renewable technologies.
9. Is resilient to Climate Change.
10. Achieves the social, environment and economic objectives of sustainable development.
11. Acts as a catalyst for further investment and redevelopment in Knowsley.
12. Is acceptable in all regards.

8.3 In light of the assessment of the proposal, we conclude that the application accords with all relevant documents in the development plan and all material considerations. As the proposals comply with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and there are no factors which outweigh that presumption,

Planning & Economic Statement

Land to the East of Moorgate Point, Alchemy Way, Knowsley Business Park



planning permission should be granted in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.