

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**PLANNING APPLICATION AT
ACADEMY BUSINESS PARK, KNOWSLEY**

Prepared by
**The Emerson Group
Planning Department**

On Behalf of
ORBIT INVESTMENTS (PROPERTIES) LIMITED

1	TYPE OF APPLICATION: Erection of 1no. drive thru unit together with car parking, landscaping and associated works.
2	LOCATION: Academy Business Park, Lees Road, Knowsley Industrial Park, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 7SA.
3	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Erection of 1no. drive thru unit (Class E(a) and/or Class E(b) and/or Sui Generis (Hot Food Take-Away)) together with car parking, landscaping and associated works. The proposed development would be accessed off Arbour Lane and the County Road roundabout.
4	DATE OF PREPARATION: July 2023
5	APPLICANT: Orbit Investments (Properties) Limited

6 ASSESSING THE CONTEXT OF THE SITE:

The application site forms part of Academy Business Park, located within the wider Knowsley Industrial Park near Kirkby. To the south of the site is County Road with Park Brow Primary School beyond. To the south west of the site is a residential area with David Lloyd Leisure and Liverpool FC Training Academy to the west off Arbour Lane. Subway sandwich shop is located to the east of the site off Lees Road.

The application site for the proposed scheme consists of hardstanding and a landscaped area and is accessed off the County Road roundabout and Lees Road. Access to Academy Business Park is available from three points: two access points on Lees Road and one directly off the County Road roundabout.

Academy Business Park currently comprises a number of occupied and vacant Class E(g)/B2/B8 industrial/storage and distribution units. The site and its units have been adapted for a number of tenants over the last few decades. Comprehensive redevelopment of the vacant part of the site is needed in order to secure new occupiers going forward.

Planning permission was granted on 26th February 2020 (ref: 19/00337/OUT) for outline planning permission for the erection of 5 no. industrial units (B1(c)/B2/B8 use), 7 no. trade counter units (B8 use), 1 no. self-storage facility (B8 use), 1 no. retail/food kiosk unit (A1/A3/A5 use) and 1 no. drive thru restaurant (A1/A3/A5 use) together with car parking and associated works. Landscaping was a reserved matter. The reserved matter application for landscaping was approved on 12th June 2020 (ref: 20/00146/REM).

A full planning application for the erection of a petrol filling station and coffee shop, with drive thru facility and associated works was also approved in July 2018, which is located off the County Road roundabout also within Academy Business Park (ref: 18/00269/FUL). A variation of condition application (ref: 20/00208/FUL) to 18/00269/FUL was then approved on 22nd July 2020 to amend the site layout and design of this scheme. The Costa Coffee unit is now operating and the Petrol Filling Station is under construction.

A full planning application for the erection of six business units (B1(c)/B2/B8 use) and five trade counter units (B8 use) together with car parking, landscaping and associated works (ref: 20/00467/FUL) was also approved on 30th July 2021. Eight business / trade counters permitted under ref: 19/00337/OUT and ref: 20/00467/FUL have been constructed (known as Units 1F – 1H and Units 6C – 6G) and are all occupied. Construction of Units 1A – 1E is also now underway.

A full planning application was also approved (ref: 22/00543/FUL) for a drive thru unit and a retail kiosk in the location where Unit 6B is proposed, however the potential tenants have since changed and there is now only a requirement for a single drive thru unit.

7	THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: This planning application proposes the following: - 1no. drive thru unit (Class E(a) and/or Class E(b) and/or Sui Generis (Hot Food Take-Away)) This proposal would replace Unit 6B as approved under ref: 19/00337/OUT and Units 6B(1) and Unit 6B(2) as approved under ref: 22/00543/FUL. The floorspace of Unit 6B as approved under ref: 19/00337/OUT was 186 sq. m. The combined floorspace of proposed Unit 6B(1) is 93 sq. m and unit 6B(2) is 130 sq. m as approved under ref: 22/00543/FUL, totalling 223 sq. m. The floorspace of the proposed unit is 229 sq. m. and is 6 sq. m greater than the approved development, which is of no material significance in the context of unit 6B and de minimis in the context of the overall Academy Business Park site. There is no further proposed change to the development granted under planning permission ref: 19/00337/OUT save for the changes to Units 1A to 1C and 6C to 6G secured through the grant of planning permission ref: 20/00467/FUL; reflecting non-material amendments to ref: 19/00337/OUT (ref: 19/00337/NMA and ref: 19/00337/NMA1); and having regard to planning application ref: 22/00302/FUL which seeks to change the use of units 1F – 1H from Class B8 to Class E(g) / B2 / B8 use.
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8	PLANNING POLICIES: The following guidance and planning policies have been considered as part of the proposed development: <u>National Planning Policy Framework</u> The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's commitment to a planning system that does everything it can do to support sustainable economic growth. The NPPF sets down a number of over-arching roles that the planning system ought to play; it provides a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF sets out the Governments planning policy and how this applies to development. It identifies in Paragraph 8 that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles: • An economic role – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; • A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and • An environmental role –protecting and enhancing the natural environment and built and historic environment. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The presumption in favour of sustainable development, asks decision makers to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. In order to foster the delivery of sustainable development, local authorities are encouraged at Paragraph 38 to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Local authorities are encouraged to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Paragraph 81 sets out how planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business
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needs and wider opportunities for development.

Paragraph 124 sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. 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.

Paragraph 127 states that developments should function well and add to the quality of the area, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and landscaping, be sympathetic to local character, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate an appropriate amount and mix of development, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016)

The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016. The following policies have been considered as part of this planning application:

Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development - When considering development proposals, a positive approach will be taken, which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Work will be undertaken proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Policy CS1 - Spatial Strategy for Knowsley - The spatial development of Knowsley to 2028 will be achieved by a focus on development within existing urban areas, with emphasis upon areas that are within or easily accessible from areas in need of regeneration. The policy also states that development should make an efficient and sustainable use of land and infrastructure, encouraging where possible the reclamation and reuse of previously developed land.

Policy CS2 - Development Principles – sets out the principles for new development in Knowsley including protecting and enhancing environmental assets, enhancing local character and promoting quality of place.

Policy CS4 - Economy and Employment - support sustainable economic growth and meeting the development needs of established and emerging employment sectors.

Policy CS7 - Transport Networks - new development will be required to be located and designed to prioritise accessibility and sustainable modes of travel through a choice of walking, cycling, public transport, and incorporate access for private vehicles.

Policy CS11 - Principal Regeneration Area – Knowsley Industrial & Business Parks – the regeneration of Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks will be supported, which encourages a mix of new high-quality employment development.

Policy CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development - to enhance the local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility of places, new development within Knowsley will be expected to respond to and integrate positive characteristics of immediate surroundings, including local materials, scale, mass, form, layout, alignment and density of the existing built environment.

Knowsley Replacement (Unitary Development Plan) (2006)

Saved Policy EC2 - Sites Allocated for Employment Development - Policy EC2 lists sites which are allocated for new development for employment uses in the period to 2016.

Saved Policy EC3 - Primarily Industrial Areas - The Proposals Map designates a number of areas as Primarily Industrial Areas. These are where industrial, business or warehousing uses are the predominant existing land uses. These areas have a key role to play in providing jobs for the residents of Knowsley and of Merseyside. However, other uses can be appropriately located within these areas, provided they are complementary in scale and nature and address identified needs of the area.

Saved Policy T6 - Ensuring Choice of Travel to Serve New Developments - proposals for new development should provide or be served by a good choice of modes of travel appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, including cycle parking in accordance with the Council's minimum standards, car parking which does not exceed the maximum standards, parking facilities for the less mobile, delivery and other service vehicles within the site in accordance with the Council's minimum standards and safe and convenient vehicular access to and from the highways.

Saved Policy DQ2 - Security in the Built Environment - new development to be designed so as to provide good levels of personal and property security. Also, security features in new developments should be designed so as to avoid causing harm to visual amenity, the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties, or highway safety.

Saved Policy DQ3 - Gateway Sites and Corridors - new development proposals which are adjacent to or visible from key road or rail routes which link to Knowsley town or district centres should seek to enhance the visual appearance of the route.

9	DESIGN PRINCIPLES & CONCEPTS APPLIED: <u>Use:</u> The proposal is for 1no. drive thru unit (Class E(a) and/or Class E(b) and/or Sui Generis Use (Hot Food Take-Away)). The proposed development has been designed to relate to the existing and approved parts of Academy Business Park so that the Park can be developed in a comprehensive manner. It is considered that the proposed uses would support the wider employment aspirations for Academy Business Park and Knowsley Industrial Park. <u>Amount:</u> The unit would be detached and would be single storey and would total 229 sq. m. The floorspace of the approved Unit 6B(1) and Unit 6B(2) was previously 223 sq. m. The units would have access to the wider car parking area within Academy Business Park, which includes 4 disabled bays and 8 cycle parking spaces for the units. The parking provision approved as part of the original outline scheme incorporated in the scheme is consistent with KMBC standards. <u>Layout:</u> The application site is located to the east of the Academy Business Park site and would be accessed off the Arbour Lane and County Road roundabout. This is an existing access which the proposed units would share with the approved Petrol Filling Station, drive thru coffee shop and trade counter units. The site is in an accessible location on foot, by bicycle and is also linked to the local bus network. Pedestrian access would also be provided by the existing footpath network.
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	<u>Scale:</u> The scale and height of the proposed unit is consistent with the mixture of buildings and uses within the Business Park and the surrounding area. The proposed development is also consistent with previous planning applications that have been approved on Academy Business Park including the previous mixed use scheme, the two large warehouses and the petrol filling station and drive thru coffee shop. <u>Landscaping:</u> The landscaping scheme has been designed to help soften the proposal and provide a focal point as vehicles and pedestrians enter Academy Business Park and the wider Industrial Park. <u>Appearance:</u> The visual appearance of the development would be in keeping with the surrounding built environment. The construction materials would consist of modern materials and would be of high quality. The proposed materials would include masonry red smooth facing brick, grey cladding and double glazing, in character with the surrounding environment. The full external materials schedule is set out on Drawing Nos. 1373-PL-2009. The proposed development has been designed to relate to the existing and approved parts of Academy Business Park, so that the Park can be developed in a comprehensive manner. The proposals would bring forward a high-quality development in this 'gateway' location, creating a strong entrance to the wider Knowsley Industrial Park and enhancing its function and status as a key employment location in the Borough.
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10	APPROACH TAKEN TO ACCESS: Access for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles will be maintained by the proposals. The development would be accessed from the County Road / Harbour Lane roundabout. This is an existing access point. There would also be a separate pedestrian access from County Road.
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11	COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING A RELEVANT ACCESS STATEMENT: Opportunities to advance issues of design and access at the site shall be undertaken when appropriate, after consultation between the units' owner and tenants. The Local Authority may also be consulted on these matters if deemed appropriate by the building's owner.
12	DESIGN & ACCESS STANDARDS & GUIDANCE FOLLOWED TO PREPARE THIS DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT: In the preparation of this Design and Access Statement, the following documents were considered: • Article 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 • CABE (2006): Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use them • Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016)