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PLANNING STATEMENT

**LAND AT BRITONWOOD TRADING
ESTATE, SOUTH OF FARADAY ROAD,
KNOWSLEY, L33 7UT**

Date: 8 February 2023

Ref: 15058

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Revision	Description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
01	Final	HS	SP	SP	SP	08.02.2023
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, in support of an application for full planning permission for a proposed development at Land at Britonwood Trading Estate, south of Faraday Road, Knowsley, L33 7UT (the 'Site').

1.2 The application relates to the erection of a surface level van storage facility, resurfacing, amendments to the access, associated parking and ancillary infrastructure. The full description of development is:

"Development of the site for the storage of operational vehicles, including resurfacing, amendments to access, associated parking and ancillary infrastructure"

1.3 This Planning Statement describes the proposed development and assesses the development against the Development Plan. This statement will also outline the material benefits of the proposal.

1.4 This application is supported by the following technical reports that should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement:

- Design and Access Statement prepared by Ashton Smith;
- Transport Statement prepared by Vectos;
- Acoustic Report prepared by WSP;
- Air Quality Impact Assessment prepared by WSP;
- External Lighting Plan prepared by RED;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Pinnacle;
- Phase 1 Desk Study Report prepared by WSP;
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment prepared by WSP;
- Sustainability Statement prepared by WPS;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment prepared by WSP; and
- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by WSP.

1.5 In addition, the following drawings have been submitted with the application to illustrate the proposed scheme.

Table 1.1 – Application Drawings

DRAWING NUMBER	DRAWING TITLE
P01	Site Location Plan
P02	Existing Site Plan
P03	Proposed Site Plan
P04	Existing Site Sections
P05	Proposed Site Sections
P06	Proposed Ancillary Structures
P07	Proposed Welfare Block and Guard Hut
P08	Proposed Boundary Details

1.6 The remainder of this Statement is set out as follows:

- Section 2 describes the site and the surrounding area;
- Section 3 sets out the proposals for the site that are the subject of this planning application;
- Section 4 assesses the proposed development against the relevant national and local planning policies and other material considerations; and,
- Section 5 sets out our overall conclusions on the planning merits of the proposals.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, DESCRIPTION AND PLANNING HISTORY

Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The Site, which is located in Knowsley, comprises a 2.35 ha area of undeveloped grassland located adjacent to the existing Brintonwood Trading Estate and within the wider Knowsley Industrial Estate. The Site is accessed from Faraday Road.
- 2.2 The Site is bounded by industrial development on Faraday Road within the Brintonwood Trading Estate to the north, with significant industrial and commercial development spanning to the north within the Knowsley Industrial Estate. To the east and south the site is bound by existing industrial development and to the west there is an area of undeveloped grassland, with industrial development beyond. The Site is one of a number of small pockets of undeveloped grassland, within a largely industrial and commercial built up area of the Knowsley Industrial Estate.
- 2.3 With regards to the local highway network, the Site is accessed primarily from the A5208 which is accessed from the A508. The M57 runs parallel to the south of the Site, and a large roundabout junction (J4) is located to the south west of the Site.
- 2.4 There are 2 existing pylons and overhead powerlines that run from east to west across the Site.
- 2.5 The site is not located in a Conservation Area, nor are there any heritage assets located on or in close proximity to the Site.
- 2.6 The Site is located in Flood Zone 1 (lowest probability of flooding).
- 2.7 There is a TPO covering the woodland area to the immediate east of the Site (TPO Number 6-2006, ref: 06/00006/TPO - 1 -5 Abercrombie Road Knowsley Industrial Park Kirkby Knowsley L33 7YN).

Planning History

- 2.8 Planning application 20/00433/FUL was submitted in July 2020 and sought the development of the site for the storage of operational vehicles, including resurfacing, amendments to access, associated parking and ancillary infrastructure. The LPA accepted the principle of the proposed development at this Site and had shared a draft list of conditions for consideration, however, the application was withdrawn by the Applicant in November 2021. The application the subject of this submission is a very similar proposal in terms of land use, scale and design, but with fewer van storage spaces.
- 2.9 The only other historic planning record listed on the Council's website is for the erection of a 2.4m high steel palisade fence and security lighting, granted permission in 1985. There are no associated documents but it is assumed that this application relates to the Brintonwood Trading Estate and

not specifically the application Site. The Site's planning history demonstrates that the Site is located within the Brintonwood Trading Estate, but is undeveloped grassland.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The proposed development would provide dedicated storage facilities for the vans required to operate the existing distribution warehouse at Knowsley Industrial Park, Hornhouse Lane. The vans are only used to facilitate the operations at the distribution warehouse through the collection and delivery of packages and/or goods originating from or returning to that distribution warehouse. Without the vans to affect these movements of packages and/or goods, the distribution warehouse cannot operate effectively. Equally, the van storage use on this Site would only take place because the vehicles are required for the distribution warehouse operations. Therefore, the storage of the vans at this Site is a functionally linked necessity for the effective operation of the distribution warehouse.
- 3.2 On new build-to-suit sites, the need for vehicle storage is often built into proposals. On sites such as these, where existing units are operating with limited to no opportunities to adapt the site to meet this operational business requirement, the storage of the vans necessarily has to take place elsewhere. This is the case for the distribution warehouse, and the reason why there is a need to provide a van storage facility a short distance from the distribution warehouse at this Site.
- 3.3 Accordingly, this Site and the distribution warehouse form one single planning unit with the primary distribution warehouse use falling into use class B8 and the proposed van storage use constituting an ancillary use to that primary distribution warehouse B8 use. This means the proposed development will also operate pursuant to use class B8 (storage use) as an ancillary use to the primary distribution warehouse use within the overall single planning unit.
- 3.4 The desire for the operator to rely on their own fleet of vans stored at this proposed development site stems from a number of business objectives, which are considered to be material benefits in planning terms.
- 3.5 Firstly, the proposals include 10% active EV provision and 90% passive EV provision. This will comprise the infrastructure as far as possible, and the power as and when it is available subject to the necessary power upgrades. The operator is aiming to make its operations more sustainable and to this end it is seeking to maximise the number of electric vehicles serving the distribution warehouse. For each electric van used instead of a diesel van, a conservative estimate is that the life-cycle carbon emissions of operating that van have been reduced by 60%+ from 11,533kg CO₂e annually to 3,933 kg CO₂e annually. This includes the emissions from manufacturing the vehicle, the fuel production, the tailpipe and the power plants that make the electricity in the UK. The aim of the operator is to try to power 100% of its operations with renewable energy by 2030. It is

conservative to estimate that the life-cycle carbon emission of operating that van have been reduced by 90% from 11,533 kg CO₂e annually to 422kg CO₂e annually. In this scenario the only emissions associated with operating the electric vehicle come from the manufacturing of the vehicle. It would of course be impractical and unrealistic to require delivery drivers to charge electric vans at home, demonstrating the necessity for a dedicated storage location for the vans to provide the required supporting charging facilities.

- 3.6 Furthermore, the storage facility allows the operator to control the standard of delivery vans that serve the site during the transition to a 100% EV fleet by working towards all vans being Euro 6 compliant vans prior to achieving the 100% EV fleet.
- 3.7 Another benefit of the proposed development is modal shift. At present all of the drivers have to drive to the site in their own vans, with no ability to travel by sustainable modes or trip share. The van storage facility will change this, which is both sustainable and also widens access to the job opportunities for people that would like jobs as drivers but may not be able to access a suitable van.
- 3.8 Another planning benefit from the dedicated van storage site is that this substantially reduces the requirement for drivers to store vans overnight local to where they live. A high proportion of the drivers are unlikely to be able to store the vans on drive-ways, therefore the vans are stored on public roads near to the homes of the drivers.
- 3.9 Finally, the dedicated van storage site can serve to reduce the number and duration of trips. The business can enhance the route that the drivers take from this single starting point, allowing more parcels to be delivered per launch of the vehicle. As is clear from the Transport Statement, the proposed development does not materially impact the throughput of the distribution warehouse therefore there is no increase in vehicles on the local road network. On the contrary, the proposals represent a betterment in terms of trips.
- 3.10 Local drivers would arrive at the Site by various means of transport, collect a van and leave the Site to make their deliveries. Once all deliveries have been made, drivers would return the vans to the Site, collect their own vehicles (if they have driven to the Site), or travel home by other means of transport. Full details of the proposed operation of the van storage facility are contained within the supporting Transport Statement prepared by Vectos.
- 3.11 The proposed development is for the change of use of the Site for the storage of operational vehicles. The proposal also includes the infrastructure to support the storage of the vehicles. This infrastructure comprises the following:

- Laying of hardstanding across the Site;
- Automated vehicle barriers;
- Security gates and guard hut;
- 1 parking space for security purposes;
- Secure cycle parking shelter and motorcycle parking;
- Smoking shelter;
- Lighting columns; and
- 2.4 metre fencing to Site perimeter.

3.12 The site will be accessed via a new vehicular access arm that will connect to Faraday Road to the north west corner of the proposed development. The access from Faraday Road will be utilised for vehicles, including cars, vans and cyclists and there is a pedestrian footpath proposed along the same road that will be utilised for pedestrian access on foot.

3.13 The vehicular accesses will be controlled by an automated vehicle barrier and the main entrance to the Site from Faraday Road will also be controlled by a security officer in a guard hut located next to the vehicle barrier.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 This section sets out the national and local planning policies relevant to the proposals that seek to achieve sustainable development, build a strong, competitive economy, achieve good design, conserve and enhance the natural environment, promote safe and sustainable transport, and meet the challenge of climate change and flooding.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of determining planning applications, then determination must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The statutory development plan for the area for the purpose of this application comprises:
- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016);
 - ‘Saved’ policies from the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006); and
 - Adopted Proposals Map.
- 4.4 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF advises that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and the degree of consistency of the emerging policies with the NPPF.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 4.5 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It specifies that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through 3 overarching objectives, which should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the NPPF policies:
- An economic role – 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;
 - A social role – 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,

- An environmental role – 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 (paragraph 8).
- At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be applied by approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay (paragraph 11c).
- Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should be granted unless there is a clear reason for refusing the proposal (based on NPPF policies that protect areas of assets of particular importance), or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF taken as a whole (paragraph 11d).

Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

- 4.6 The NPPF sets out the Government's commitment to creating 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 local business needs (paragraph 80).
- 4.7 Local planning authorities are required to make provision for storage and distribution operators at variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations (paragraph 83).

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 4.8 Paragraph 104 requires the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure to be identified, assessed and taken into account. Significant development should be focused on locations which are, or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes (paragraph 105).
- 4.9 In addition, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users (paragraph 108). Developments should create places that are safe, secure and attractive, and respond to local character and design standards (paragraph 110).
- 4.10 With regard to distribution centres, the NPPF specifically requires that proposals should make provision for sufficient parking to cater for their anticipated use (paragraph 109). Although

reference in this paragraph is made to lorry parking, it is considered to be applicable to all operational parking requirements for distribution centres.

Making Effective Use of Land

- 4.11 Local planning authorities are required to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for various uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment (paragraph 119). Substantial weight is to be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements, and the development of under-utilised land should be promoted and supported (paragraph 120).

Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 4.12 Developments are required to be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change, and should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development, and support local transport networks (paragraph 130).

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Flooding

- 4.13 The planning system is required to support the transition to a low carbon future, taking full account of flood risk, by helping to shape places in ways that contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (paragraph 148). New development should be planned for in ways that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions through location, orientation and design (paragraph 152). The NPPF also requires development to be directed away from areas at highest existing or future risk of flooding (paragraph 159). Where appropriate, planning applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment (paragraph 167). Footnote 55 specifies that such an assessment is required for developments in Flood Zone 1 where the site area measures 1 hectare or more.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 4.14 The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gain for biodiversity, and preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of pollution (paragraph 185).
- 4.15 Paragraph 174 requires planning decisions to ensure that sites are suitable for the proposed use, taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 4.16 In accordance with paragraph 194, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their

setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. where a proposed development site includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, an appropriate desk-based assessment, and where necessary, a field evaluation should be submitted.

Local Development Plan Policies

Core Strategy (2016)

- 4.17 Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development) states that 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. 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. 2) Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and any relevant policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.18 Policy CS1 (Spatial Strategy for Knowsley) states that the priorities for Knowsley to 2028 will be will be (amongst other priorities) enhancing existing employment areas and providing a suitable range of sites and premises for new employment development.
- 4.19 Policy CS2 (Development Principles) states that new development in Knowsley will be expected to (amongst other priorities) minimise negative impacts upon flood risk, air quality, water quality, land quality, soil quality, and noise or vibration levels and ensure any negative impacts are appropriately mitigated.
- 4.20 Policy CS4 (Economy and Employment) states that Planning, site assembly and other available interventions will be used to (among other requirements)
- Provide sufficient land to meet employment development needs to 2028;
 - Enhance the quality and efficiency of land use within existing employment areas;
 - Improve accessibility to an appropriate range of jobs, for example by encouraging mixed use employment/residential schemes where appropriate and improving transport linkages between housing and employment areas.

4.21 Provision will be made for at least 164 hectares of land to be developed for employment uses between 2010 and 2028, to be located primarily within the following locations

- Knowsley Industrial Park (including Knowsley Business Park);
- Huyton Business Park;
- Kings Business Park;
- South Prescott; and
- Jaguar Land Rover (Halewood).

4.22 Land which is currently in use or allocated for employment development will be safeguarded from changes to other types of development, except where: there is no current or likely future demand for employment uses on the land; or where other uses would bring wider regeneration, environmental and amenity benefits.

4.23 Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development) states that 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;
- Complement and enhance (where possible), existing landscape, topography, Green Infrastructure; and features of local importance and historic interest;
- Provide safe, secure and convenient routes for movement (including signage), with priority for walking, cycling and public transport, to meet the access needs of all users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists, less mobile people and the elderly;

4.24 To maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy January 2016 land and buildings, development proposals will be required to:

- a) Avoid unacceptable impacts on existing residents, business occupiers, and future occupiers;
- b) Minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, including good levels of natural surveillance and security; and
- c) Accommodate future maintenance and long-term management requirements

4.25 Policy CS21 (Greenspaces and Trees) states that the Council will encourage proposals for new development to incorporate:

- a) Retention of existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features which offer a positive contribution to the local environment in terms of visual amenity, recreation value or biodiversity/wildlife interest;
- b) Appropriate planting of trees, other soft landscaping and installation of habitat features for the benefit of biodiversity; and
- c) Adequate replacement provision where tree loss is unavoidable, comprising two additional trees for every tree lost and taking account of species and size.

4.26 Policy CS22 (Sustainable and Low Carbon Development) states that new development will be required to meet high standards of sustainable design and construction and minimise carbon emissions. This should be achieved by ensuring developments are comfortable and safe for users, landscaping (including measures such as green walls or roofs) to create shelter and reduce any heat island effect, managing flood risk, including through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and flood resilient design for infrastructure and property, and Promoting sustainable waste practices in new and existing developments.

4.27 CS24 (Managing Flood Risk) states that new development that may cause an unacceptable risk of flooding on the site or elsewhere will not be permitted.

4.28 New development should preferably be located in areas of low probability of flooding. New development in areas of medium or high flood risk will only be permitted if evidence has been submitted demonstrating that the development could not be practicably located in an area of lower flood risk and if applicable the 'exception test' has been complied with, in accordance with national guidance.

4.29 All development which is within or otherwise affects an area of flood risk or is larger than one hectare in size shall be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

4.30 New development shall include flood mitigation measures, where necessary, to manage flood risk associated with or caused by the development. These measures shall be derived from the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), relevant FRA(s) or a local strategy for flood risk management, and:

- a) Be designed to contribute to the biodiversity of the borough unless it can be demonstrated that this would not be technically feasible;
- b) Incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System;

- c) Be fully described in the planning application; and d) Be funded by the developer, including long term maintenance.
- d) The drainage of new development shall be designed to reduce surface water run-off rates to those associated with a green-field site by treating it at its source. The chosen method of implementation should take account of site size, ground contamination or conditions, and potential damage to adjacent buildings or sites.

Unitary Development Plan 'saved' policies (2006)

- 4.31 Policy EC2 (Sites Allocated for Employment) confirms that the Site is allocated on the Proposals Map for development for business (Class B1), industrial (Class B2), or storage and distribution (Class B8) uses (reference E12 Brintonwood). Developments within all these sites must provide good quality buildings and landscaping.
- 4.32 Policy EC3 (Primarily Industrial Areas) states that primarily industrial areas are identified on the Proposals Map and are appropriate locations for Business (Class B1); General Industry (Class B2); and Storage and Distribution (Class B8) uses.
- 4.33 Proposals for development for other uses in these areas (either on sites which are allocated for development or on other land or buildings) will only be permitted where they would:
- a) Be complementary to and compatible with the surrounding employment uses;
 - b) Be consistent with any approved regeneration strategy for the area;
 - c) Preserve or enhance the image of the industrial area; and
 - d) Avoid causing an unacceptable loss of land available for industrial development.
- 4.34 Policy T8 (Transport Assessments) states that development proposals that would prejudice the primary function of any part of the highway network (i.e. the motorway, trunk road, primary and local highway network) by generating a material increase in traffic, which would overload the access to, or any part of the network, will not be permitted, unless the necessary mitigation measures required are undertaken.
- 4.35 Policy DQ4 (Trees and Development) states that proposals for new development should include appropriate planting of trees or other soft landscaping, the location and details of which should be determined as an integral part of the development, and which shall have regard to the character of the surrounding area.

- 4.36 Development proposals affecting existing trees, woodlands and other vegetation, which make a positive contribution to amenity, should make provision for their retention.
- 4.37 Applicants for planning permission will be required to provide a detailed survey of all existing trees on the site and the likely effects on them of the proposed development, as outlined in the Council's technical advice note "Trees and Development".
- 4.38 Where the Council accepts that tree loss will be unavoidable the applicant will be required to make adequate provision for their replacement, normally including two new trees for each tree lost. Replacement planting will take into account the number; size and species of trees lost and should contribute to the extension of tree and woodland cover across the Borough.
- 4.39 Policy ENV2 (Noise and Vibration) states that development that will either cause an unacceptable increase in noise or vibration levels or itself be subject to unacceptable noise or vibration from an existing source will not be permitted.
- 4.40 Policy ENV5 (Contaminated Land) states that new development will not be permitted if there is existing contamination on the site which could, as a result of the proposed development, place the occupiers or users of the development, ecological systems, the water environment or surrounding land uses at unacceptable risk.

Summary

- 4.1 The key planning policy issues relating to this site are considered to be:
- The principle of development and the location of the Site within an Existing Employment Area;
 - The impact of the development on the TPOs and ecological features on or in close proximity to the Site;
 - The impacts on the local transport network and promoting sustainable travel; and
 - The design and layout of the proposed development.

5.0 POLICY COMPLIANCE

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 5.1 The proposed scheme represents sustainable economic development on the basis that it would allow the occupier to operate an efficient last mile delivery station serving the local area from a site which is allocated for employment uses in the adopted Development Plan. The Site is currently undeveloped, but is surrounded by industrial and commercial development and is in a prime location for Use Class B8 development without causing adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity or the environment.
- 5.2 Sustainable development is achieved through the collaboration of a number of key requirements. As such, compliance with the above overarching policies requiring sustainable development is set out below.

Building a Strong and Competitive Economy

- 5.3 The proposed development is required to enable the proposed last mile distribution centre to operate efficiently and successfully from the site, which should be afforded significant weight in accordance with national planning policy.
- 5.4 Policy CS4 states that provision will be made for at least 164 hectares of land to be developed for employment uses between 2010 and 2028, to be located primarily within the specific locations, one of which is Knowsley Industrial Park (including Knowsley Business Park). The Policy also confirms that land which is currently in use or allocated for employment development will be safeguarded from changes to other types of development
- 5.5 Policy EC2 (Sites Allocated for Employment) confirms that the Site is allocated on the Proposals Map for development for business (Class B1), industrial (Class B2), or storage and distribution (Class B8) uses (reference E12 Britonwood). The Site is also located in a Primarily Industrial Areas. Policy EC3 states that these areas are appropriate locations for Business (Class B1); General Industry (Class B2); and Storage and Distribution (Class B8) uses.
- 5.6 The site has excellent accessibility to the wider transport network. It is located to the north east of a major junction (J4) of the M57 and can be accessed off the A580 and A5208.
- 5.7 In light of the above, the proposed development is compliant with national, regional and local planning policy seeking to secure sustainable economic growth and productivity.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.8 The proposed van storage area forms part of the servicing infrastructure and operational requirements for the last mile delivery centre on Hornhouse Lane and is therefore supported by local, regional and national planning policy.
- 5.9 The van storage area has been designed to complement the industrial nature of the site and its surrounding area, and reflects the prevailing scale of built development in the area.
- 5.10 Vectos have been appointed to produce a Transport Assessment to consider the impacts of the proposals on the local highway network, which has been submitted in support of the current application. The purpose of this scheme is to provide ancillary van storage that meets the operational requirements of an existing distribution centre. In this regard, and given the capacity of the distribution centre will not be increased as a result of these proposals, the traffic flows presented will already be present on the wider network and thus do not constitute new trips in their own right. The proposed development will therefore result in a redistribution of existing trips, rather than generate entirely 'new' trips. In conclusion, the proposed development would not give rise to any severe transport impacts.
- 5.11 The application site is accessible by a various means of transport. As well as being accessible by car from the A580 (off the M57) and the A5208, the site is accessible by bus from the Hornhouse Lane bus stop which has frequent services to Knowsley and Kirby. Cycle parking is proposed as part of the development allowing employees to cycle work and store their bicycles safely.
- 5.12 In light of the above, the site is demonstrated to be accessible and the proposals would allow for sustainable transport movements both by staff and delivery drivers. The proposed van storage area, which forms part of the servicing infrastructure for the local distribution centre, would result in redistributed vehicle trips and as a result would not result in any additional trips, as required by planning policy. The proposal is, therefore, considered to comply with national, regional and local planning policy seeking to promote sustainable transport.

Making Effective Use of Land

- 5.13 The formal layout of the proposal has been efficiently designed to ensure that a sufficient number of storage bays are provided to support the distribution centre, whilst providing safe access for vehicles and pedestrians. The formal layout proposed, with high quality infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping will complement the existing industrial development in the locality. The design of the proposed development has also taken into account the existing site constraints, including

the existing pylons and the areas of TPOs, and the layout and massing of the proposed development has been designed to ensure these existing constraints are not adversely affected as a result.

- 5.14 In light of the above matters, the proposals are considered to comply with national, regional and local planning policies concerning the effective use of land.

Achieving Well-Designed Places

- 5.15 As set out above, the van storage area has been designed to complement the industrial nature of the Site and its surrounding area, and makes use of materials and finishes that match those of the existing buildings.
- 5.16 As stated above, the design of the proposed development has also taken into account the existing site constraints, including the existing pylons and the TPO area, and the layout and massing of the proposed development has been designed to ensure these existing constraints are not adversely affected as a result.
- 5.17 With regards to sensitive receptors, the design has taken into consideration the TPO adjacent to the Site to the north and east, and ensures this feature is not negatively impacted. There are also eight arboricultural features on the Site, the majority of which will be retained in full as a result of the considered design and layout. There are no residential properties in proximity to the Site given the industrial nature of the area, and as such no negative impacts are anticipated.
- 5.18 The site will be accessed via a new vehicular access arm that will connect to Faraday Road to the north west corner of the proposed development. The access from Faraday Road will be utilised for vehicles, including cars, vans and cyclists and there is a pedestrian footpath proposed along the same road that will be utilised for pedestrian access on foot.
- 5.19 In light of the above matters, the proposal is considered to comply with national, regional and local planning policies seeking to achieve well-designed places.

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Flooding

- 5.20 The Site is located in Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding) and as such complies with the NPPF requirement and Policy CS24 to locate development in areas of lowest risk of flooding and avoiding development in flood risk areas.
- 5.21 The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy prepared by Pinnacle and submitted with this application states that the surface water runoff from the proposed impermeable areas will be collected in a series of gullies and drainage channels to then discharge via a proposed gravity piped surface water network to be attenuated by an attenuation tank. The attenuation tank will discharge

into the public surface water sewer under Faraday Road, matching the greenfield runoff rate for the site. The proposed development will therefore not increase the risk of flooding at the Site.

- 5.22 The Sustainability Assessment prepared by WSP and submitted with this planning application confirms that the proposed development has responded well and proportionately to local policy and strategic commitments. In particular the proposed development demonstrates innovation and engagement in low carbon technologies, through the installation of passive infrastructure for EV charging points. The development also considers future climatic changes by incorporating a 40% additional drainage capacity.
- 5.23 The development has taken proportionate steps to efficiently manage ecological and arboricultural assets, with the majority of the existing arboricultural features being retained in full, and the ecological surveys undertaken confirming that there are no protected habitats or species on the Site.
- 5.24 The development has been located near public transport links and incorporates bicycle racks to encourage staff to travel sustainably / actively which provides benefits for the environment.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 5.25 The Site is not located in an Air Quality Management Area. The Air Quality Impact Assessment prepared by WSP submitted with this application concludes that there is a medium risk of dust soiling impacts and a low risk of impact to human health at identified sensitive receptors. Through good site practice and the implementation of suitable mitigation measures, the impacts of dust and particulate matters released on local air quality from construction site activities will not be significant.
- 5.26 Based on the assessment results, the development proposals comply with national and local policies and there are no air quality constraints relating to the proposed development during both the construction and operational phases.
- 5.27 There is a TPO covering the woodland area to the immediate east of the Site (TPO Number 6-2006, ref: 06/00006/TPO). The site contains good quality, semi-improved grassland and open mosaic habitat. In addition, it is adjacent to an area identified in the National Forestry Inventory as broadleaved woodland that is also an area of priority deciduous woodland habitat.
- 5.28 The Preliminary Ecological Assessment prepared by WPS and submitted with this application confirms that the habitat across the Site consists of a mosaic of species poor, semi-improved grassland with areas of scattered and dense scrub, and tall ruderal species. Immature broadleaved

plantation woodland is present to the east, beyond the Site boundary. Two LNRs are present within 2km of the Site, however given the lack of pathways between the Site and the designated sites, not direct or indirect impacts are envisaged to occur. The Assessment also confirms that no incidental observations of activity or presence of protected and/or notable species were recorded during the field survey.

- 5.29 The arboricultural walkover survey identified eight arboricultural features at the Site, comprising five moderate quality features including two trees, one tree group and two woodlands and three low quality tree groups. The proposed development will result in the loss of 82% canopy cover of the semi-mature moderate quality woodland (W8) to facilitate the proposed Cellular Attenuation as set out in the Proposed Drainage Strategy. The remaining three tree groups, two moderate quality individual trees and the TPO woodland are all to be retained in full. As the highest quality features are to be retained in full and the no trees will be removed in full, the Arboricultural Assessment concludes that the proposed development will have minimal impact on the sites arboricultural quality.
- 5.30 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed development complies with national, regional and local policies seeking to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Policy Compliance

- 5.31 There are no designated heritage assets on or in close proximity to the Site. As such, the proposed development will not cause any adverse impacts on any heritage assets. An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been undertaken and submitted with this application. The Assessment confirms that there is limited potential for direct impacts with significant effects on below ground heritage assets. The construction phase would have permanent impacts on any below ground heritage assets, however previous construction activity has lowered the potential for the survival of below ground heritage assets. Due to the relatively low potential for archaeological survival, and following consultation with Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, no mitigation measures are recommended.
- 5.32 In light of the above matters, the proposed development is considered to comply with national, regional and local planning policies concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

6.0 PLANNING BENEFITS

- 6.1 The proposed installation of a van storage facility south of Faraday Road would result in a number of planning benefits, as well as being an optimal solution to meet the business needs of the identified occupier.
- 6.2 As discussed above, and within the accompanying Transport Statement the proposed development would improve operational efficiencies and will assist the prospective occupier to achieve its objectives relating to reducing emissions.
- 6.3 The proposals involve the use of a fleet of delivery vans to be managed by the operator, which would comprise more modern, efficient, well-maintained vehicles. This would result in environmental benefits particularly to air quality.
- 6.4 With regards to sustainability, the proposed development demonstrates innovation and engagement in low carbon technologies, through the installation of passive infrastructure for EV charging points.
- 6.5 The development has taken proportionate steps to efficiently manage ecological and arboricultural assets, with the majority of the existing arboricultural features being retained in full, and the ecological surveys undertaken confirming that there are no protected habitats or species on the Site.
- 6.6 The development has been located near public transport links and incorporates bicycle racks to encourage staff to travel sustainably / actively which provides benefits for the environment and staff wellbeing.
- 6.7 In terms of economic benefits, the proposals would provide employment opportunities for those wishing to take up delivery driver jobs, but who are unable to afford to purchase or hire their own vehicle.
- 6.8 Overall, the proposed development represents an opportunity to make efficient use of this existing employment in such a way that provides a variety of economic, social and environmental benefits.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Site, which is located on Faraday Road, comprises a 2.35 ha area of undeveloped area of grassland located adjacent to the existing Brintonwood Trading Estate and within the wider Knowsley Industrial Estate.
- 7.2 The proposals, the subject of this planning application, are required to provide a secure van storage facility close to the distribution facility.
- 7.3 All key planning considerations have been taken into account in the preparation of the development proposals, which comply with national, regional and local Development Plan policies.
- 7.4 In summary, these proposals represent sustainable development, securing an employment generating economic use of a currently vacant site. It would result in improvements to economic productivity without negatively impacting on highway capacity, highway safety, biodiversity, arboricultural, flood risk, air quality, heritage or amenity interests.
- 7.5 The development has been demonstrated to be compliant with the Development Plan and, therefore, warrants support from the Local Planning Authority.