

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS
PURSUANT TO OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION
REFERENCE 20/00376/OUT (OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION
FOR 30,350SQ.M OF EMPLOYMENT FLOOR SPACE (USE
CLASS B1/B8)) FOR NEXT PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT AT
EARLSFIELD PARK**

**PLOTS 2-6 EARLSFIELD (LAND OFF KNOWSLEY LANE),
HUYTON, KNOWSLEY, L34 4AH**

JUNE 2023

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Design and Access Statement is prepared in respect of an application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission reference 20/00376/OUT (Outline planning permission for 30,350sq.m of employment floor space (Use Class B1/B8)) [the 'Outline permission'] for next phase of development at Earlsfield Park. The site is located off Knowsley Lane, Huyton, Knowsley, L34 4AH.

1.2 This Design and Access Statement accompanies the Application which has been lodged with Knowsley Council who are the Local Planning Authority (LPA). It should be read in conjunction with the suite of documents and drawings which comprises the submission as follows:

- M3167-100 (Rev D) Proposed Site Layout Plan
- M3167-104 (Rev A) (sht 1) – Site Sections (Sheet 1 of 6)
- M3167-104 (Rev A) (sht 2) – Site Sections (Sheet 2 of 6)
- M3167-104 Rev A) (sht 3) – Site Sections (Sheet 3 of 6)
- M3167-104 (Rev A) (sht 4) – Site Sections (Sheet 4 of 6)
- M3167-104 (Rev A) (sht 5) – Site Sections (Sheet 5 of 6)
- M3167-104 (Rev A) (sht 6) – Site Sections (Sheet 6 of 6)
- M3167-105 (Rev A) – Proposed GRP Substations
- M3167-106 (Rev A) – Fencing Drawing
- M3167-107 – Internal cycle hoops
- M3167-108 (Rev A) – Location Plan
- M3167-(2)-100 – Unit 2 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(2)-101 – Unit 2 – Roof Plan
- M3167-(2)-200 – Unit 2 – Elevations
- M3167-(3)-100 (Rev A)– Unit 3 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(3)-101 – Unit 3 – Roof Plan
- M3167-(3)-200 (Rev A) – Unit 3 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(4)-100 – Unit 4 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(4)-101 – Unit 4 – Roof Plan.
- M3167-(4)-200 – Unit 4 – Elevations
- M3167-(5)-100 (Rev B) – Unit 5 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(5)-101 – Unit 5 – Roof Plan

- M3167-(5)-100 (Rev B) – Unit 5 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(6)-100 – Unit 6 – Floor Layout Plan
- M3167-(6)-101 – Unit 6 – Roof Plan
- M3167-(6)-200 – Unit 6 Elevations
- SF – 3422 LL01(Rev A) – Landscaping proposals – Unit 2
- SF – 3422 LL01(Rev B) – Landscaping proposals – Unit 3
- SF – 3422 LL01(Rev A) – Landscaping proposals – Unit 4
- SF – 3422 LL01 (Rev A) – Landscaping proposals – Unit 5
- SF – 3422 LL01(Rev A) – Landscaping proposals – Unit 6
- SF3422 AIA01 –Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- SF3422 Arboricultural Survey BS5837
- SF3422 TS01 Rev A – Tree Survey Plan
- Noise Impact Assessment NIA-10849-23-11117
- Planning Supporting Statement

1.3 The purpose of this statement is:

- To describe the site and surroundings;
- Review relevant design policy and guidance, and
- Set out the concepts and principles behind the proposed development of the site.

1.4 The proposal is based on a thorough assessment of the immediate and wider context of the site. This has been undertaken through:

- Desk-based research
- Site visits and observations, and
- The information contained within the various technical documents accompanying the planning application.

1.5 This statement then draws conclusions in respect of the design process and sets out an assessment of the design and access arrangements.

- 1.6 This Design and Access Statement, which has been prepared in accordance with CABI guidance 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them', should be read in conjunction with the various other documents supporting the planning application.
- 1.7 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Planning Supporting Statement which sets out the pre-application discussions that have taken place and how the proposed development has evolved in response to those discussions.

2.0 Site Description and History

- 2.1 This section describes the site's location, its surroundings and sets out the previous planning history for the site.

Site Location and Description

- 2.2 The wider application site covered by the outline permission extends to 9.06 hectares. It is part of a larger site that is designated as a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) in the CSLP (policies SUE2 and SUE2a) for employment development, new homes, and public open space comprising outdoor sporting provision and associated amenity space in the western part of the site. The SUE extends to 35 hectares and is a greenfield site located to the north of Knowsley Lane and south of the M57.
- 2.3 In addition to being located within the designated SUE, it also now forms part of the Earlsfield Park Development, which gained planning consent in June 2018. The site which constitutes this application does not contain any built form at present except for the internal access roads. There is also a motorway services and Starbucks drive thru already constructed on Plots 2a and 2b but these are outside of the Applicants control.
- 2.4 The area of the site covered by this Application for reserved matters measures 7.44 hectares (including the existing access roads up to the adopted highways) and is formed from the northern most plots fronting the M57, the northern woodland area and the internal access roads that are already constructed but which are to remain private. This is depicted on the Site Layout Plan M3167-100 (Rev D) submitted with this Application by the red line. The blue line indicates other land within the Applicants control which benefits from the Outline permission.

Site History

- 2.5 The site history is set out below:

18/00062/HYB: Detailed application for 4,180sq.m of employment floor space (Use Class B1), 3,275sq.m ancillary floor space (use classes a1/a4/c1/sui generis), 154

residential dwellings, improvements to lord derby playing fields/oak plantation and associated landscaping and infrastructure including a dedicated 500kva substation for the residential neighbourhood and a 1000kva substation for the eastern employment area and the demolition of Knowsley Lane Farm. Outline application for up to 26,350sq.m of employment floor space (Use Classes B1) and associated landscaping and infrastructure. Granted: 17/07/2018

20/00376/OUT: Outline planning permission for 30,530sq m of employment floor space (Use Class B1 / B8) - access to be considered at this stage (all other matters reserved) Granted: 03/02/2021

22/00157/REM: Application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission 20/00376/OUT (outline planning permission for 30,530 sq m of employment floorspace (Use Class B1/B8 – approval sought for layout of a site road (access approved at outline stage) Granted: 1 July 2022

3.0 Design Policies and Guidance

- 3.1 This section sets out the relevant national and local planning policy framework upon which to assess the design and access arrangements of the proposed development.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was first published in March 2012 and last updated in July 2021 sets out national planning policy advice and in particular a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 3.3 Central to the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for the planning system to support economic growth. It explains at Paragraph 8 that there are three dimensions to sustainable development. These are economic, social and environmental.

- 3.4 Paragraph 10 states that at the heart of Framework, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 sets out the application of the policy for decision making and states:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area;

or ii. 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.

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) 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:

i. 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 ii. 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.

Achieving Well Designed Places

3.5 The NPPF identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, which creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

3.6 Paragraph 130 explains that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

National Planning Practice Guidance on Design (2014)

3.7 In March 2014 the Government published guidance on the implementation of national planning policy. The design section of the guidance establishes the

importance of high quality design as part of wider sustainable development and considerations alongside NPPF policies. This guidance supersedes previous planning guidance such as 'By Design'.

3.8 The guidance states that proposals should be responsive to the local context. However, it is established that highly sustainable, well-designed developments should not be refused where there are concerns about compatibility with existing townscape, unless proposals cause significant impact or material harm to heritage assets. In addition, great weight is given to outstanding design quality which raises the local design standard.

3.9 It also goes on to indicate that good design can help schemes achieve social, environmental and economic gain and that the following issues should be considered:

- Local character (including landscape setting)
- Safe, connected and efficient streets
- A network of green spaces (including parks) and public places
- Crime prevention
- Security measures
- Access and inclusion
- Efficient use of natural resources
- Cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.

3.10 Acknowledgment is given to the value which is attributed to well-designed places. The criteria establishing what a "well designed place" should seek to achieve are as follows:

- Be functional
- Support mixed uses and tenures
- Include successful public spaces
- Be adaptable and resilient
- Have a distinctive character
- Be attractive
- Encourage ease of movement.

- 3.11 Guidance is given on how buildings and the spaces between buildings should be considered. In terms of layout, developments should promote connections with the existing routes and buildings, whilst providing a clear distinction of public and private space. Care should be taken to design the right form for the right place, but the extent to which this is achieved can depend on architectural and design quality. In terms of scale of buildings, consideration should be given to size and massing and how they can impact upon surrounding spaces. Individual elements of detailing should be developed with specific consideration to how they act independently and how they come together. Materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive whilst having a clear function.

By Design (DETR/CABE)

- 3.12 'By Design' highlights that good design is important everywhere and the creation of successful places depends on the skill of designers and commitment from those who employ them, as well as input from the planning system. It focuses upon the design of buildings and spaces, landscapes, roads and movement systems. It seeks to enhance the quality of urban development through a move from reliance on prescriptive development standards towards a more design led approach with a positive emphasis on place making.
- 3.13 'By Design' states that successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common. These factors have been analysed to produce principles or objectives of good urban design. They help to remind us what should be sought to create a successful place. 'By Design' lists the objectives of urban design as follows:
- Character – a place with its own identity
 - Continuity and enclosure – a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
 - Quality of the public realm – a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas.

Local Planning Policy

Knowsley UDP Saved Policies

3.14 The UDP was adopted in June 2006 and whilst many policies have been replaced by the Core Strategy some were Saved and the design related policies that were considered at the Outline Permission stage were as follows:

- T7 New Development and Walking & Cycling Routes
- DQ2 Security in the Built Environment
- DQ3 Gateway Sites and Corridors
- DQ4 Trees and Development

Knowsley Core Strategy

3.15 The Knowsley Core Strategy was adopted in 2016 and replaced many of the strategic policies set out in the UDP. The following design related policies were considered relevant to the determination of the application at the Outline Permission stage:

- SD1 Sustainable development
- CS2 Development Principles
- CS8 Green Infrastructure
- SUE2 Sustainable Urban Extensions – Development Principles
- SUE 2a Sustainable Urban Extensions – Knowsley Lane
- CS11 Principal Regeneration Area – Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks
- CS19 Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
- CS21 Greenspaces and Trees
- CS22 Sustainable and Low Carbon Development

The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan

3.16 The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan was adopted in 2013 and the following design related policy was considered relevant at the time of the Outline Permission stage:

- WM9 – Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout of New Development

Other Material Considerations

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

3.17 The following SPDs are considered to be relevant:

- Earlsfield Park SPD
- Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD
- Design Quality in New Development SPD
- Trees and Development SPD

Proposed Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework

3.18 On 22 December 2022, the Government published its proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation. The consultation period ran until 2 March 2023.

3.19 The accompanying paper that explains the changes to the NPPF suggests that the intention is to adopt this new version of national policy sometime in Spring 2023.

3.20 Whilst the proposed changes predominantly relate to housing development there is also an increased emphasis on high quality design with the draft NPPF including numerous references to developments needing to be “beautiful”.

4.0 Opportunities and Constraints

- 4.1 The site, context and policy appraisal undertaken above has provided a thorough understanding on the issues surrounding the site. These can be identified as opportunities and constraints that can be applied to the site which, in turn will influence the nature of the development proposed. These are summarised below:

Opportunities

- 4.2 The key opportunities presented by the site are as follows:
- Creation of new jobs and investment, which will have both direct and indirect positive effects on the local economy;
 - An opportunity to bring forward a development that will enhance the wider environment in terms of design, materials and detailing;
 - The site's accessibility by major transport infrastructure and excellent connectivity by public transport; and
 - The ability of the site to accommodate development with improved landscaping

Constraints

- 4.3 There are a limited number of constraints that will influence the form of development. These are summarised below:
- There is a woodland area to the north of the site which is to be retained;
 - There are more sensitive residential receptors both existing on Knowlsey Lane and coming forward as part of the Earlsfield Park SUE to the west.

Design Principles

- 4.4 The opportunities and constraints provide a context for a series of principles that have been adopted in arriving at the design solution now proposed. In summary, these are:
- Modern building design which meet the occupiers requirements;
 - Using a consistent materials palette whilst also being uniform with the occupiers' own branding;

- Ensuring businesses have the opportunity to grow in the future by providing sufficient car parking within the site;
- Maintaining legibility and security of the site; and
- Introducing landscaping to soften the appearance of the building and to improve the site's ecological value

5.0 The Proposed Development

- 5.1 The proposed development comprises five light industrial (Use Class B1 now E(g)(iii)) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8) units with ancillary offices, electricity substations, car parking, service yards and landscaping. The development will be accessed from the internal access roads constructed within the site which take access from Knowsley Lane.

Amount and Use

- 5.2 The precise schedule of development for which permission is sought is for five light industrial (Use Class B1) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8) units. A full schedule of the development is enclosed at Appendix 1.

Layout

- 5.3 The general layout of the proposed development is shown on the M3167-100 (Rev D) Proposed Site Layout Plan
- 5.4 The units will be located in the northern half of the site with Outline Permission and will be adjacent to the M57. Future development proposals for the southern half of the wider site will come forward as part of a future phase and will be subject to a separate approval of reserved matters application.
- 5.5 At the Outline Permission stage the Parameters Plan was approved which guides the layout of the development and intervening landscaping.
- 5.6 The Parameters Plan shows the retention of a woodland area to the north which is shown to be retained and will be maintained in perpetuity via a Management Company that will be appointed by the Applicant. Whilst access is shown through a gate on the Site Layout Plan it is intended that this won't permit general public access to the users of the development. However, individual break out areas within the grounds of each unit have been shown with benches etc.

5.7 The Parameters Plan also showed landscaped buffer areas along the site frontage between the internal access road and the units and between the units which are replicated within the proposed Landscape Proposals which accompany this Application.

5.8 In accordance with Condition 23, fencing details have been provided with this Application on M3167-106 (Rev A) – Fencing Drawing showing the proposed boundary treatment along the M57. This same plan also shows the fencing details around each unit.

Scale

5.9 At the Outline Permission stage a Parameters Plan establishing the maximum heights for the proposed development and the layout of the units including intervening landscaping was approved and made subject to a condition. This Parameters Plan was carefully thought out and takes into consideration the wider context including existing residential properties along Knowsley Lane, new and future residential properties to the west on part of Earlsfield Park and the M57 motorway to the north.

5.10 The maximum height permitted for the northern-most plots is 19 metres to the ridge. Appendix 1 sets out the heights for the units and confirms that the proposed development is below 19 metres. It is therefore considered that the scale of the development is acceptable having regard to the site context as taken into consideration at the Outline Permission stage.

Landscaping

5.11 The western part and beyond contains trees which will be protected during construction. The proposed landscaping shown on Landscape Proposals LL01 for Units 2-6 inclusive will enhance the site not only softening the appearance of the development proposed but also enhancing the general character and appearance of the wider area.

Appearance

- 5.12 In terms of the external appearance of the units, this has, by necessity, been driven by function and operational requirements. The appearance of the development in terms of the external appearance units, has, by necessity, been driven by function and operational requirements.
- 5.13 The proposed units will be steel portal frames with the external envelope consisting of Composite cladding to the office areas and generally to the corner of the units, with twin skin cladding to the main elevations. The choice of colour palette has been proposed to communicate with the historic agricultural use of the site, with the colour tones chosen similar to those of 'hay bales' stacked in an open sided agricultural barn. The Mushroom and cream coloured cladding also links through with the cladding used on the newly constructed Star Bucks adjacent.
- 5.14 The main entrance curtain walling with entrance canopies over, provide an easily recognisable entrance and focal point to each unit.
- 5.15 This palette of materials and colours provides a modern proposed development and in turn, maximising buildability and maintenance throughout the life cycle of the units. All the units are proposed in the same colours, to provide a strong identity for the business park and attract companies to the park

6.0 Access

- 6.1 Access to the development would be obtained from Knowsley Lane via the internal access roads which have already been provided to service the proposed development.
- 6.2 In terms of car parking, detailed justification is provided in the Planning Supporting Statement and it is considered that the level of parking proposed is appropriate given the anticipated future occupiers requirements, the nature and scale of the development, the character and setting of its location, the current levels of public transport accessibility and opportunities for walking and cycling in the area.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Outline Permission, the amount of cycle provision required has been achieved with the use of internal hoops provided in each unit, as was requested at the pre-application stage. Drawing M3167-107 provides details of the internal cycle hoops proposed. In addition, all service yards and accesses have been tracked on the Site Layout Plan.
- 6.4 Pedestrian access is provided into the site by a two metre wide footway with pedestrian which will will facilitate staff and visitors to safely enter the development on foot.
- 6.5 Disabled car parking spaces are provided close to the entrances, and level access thresholds are provided into the building. The building is designed to be fully DDA compliant and will meet Building Regulations requirements in respect of internal facilities, lobby areas, WC's, door widths etc.
- 6.6 The front entrance point to the buildings are located opposite to the car parks and will therefore be legible and visible to all site users. The building's main entrances will have a canopy or covered recess to provide protection from the elements and help to make the entrance more identifiable in the façade.

7 Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1 “Good design” is embedded within National, Regional and Local Planning Policy. This is reflected in the provisions of the NPPF in particular and local development plan policies.
- 7.2 It should be noted that there are circumstances where building design, scale and massing are largely dictated by operational needs. In this instance, good design can still be achieved through appropriate layout and landscaping, thereby ensuring accessibility to, and the legibility of, the development for users of the site.
- 7.3 The proposed buildings have been sited to take account of wider site conditions such as vegetation and nearby sensitive noise receptors. New landscaping is also proposed to enhance both the development and ecological opportunities on site.
- 7.4 In terms of accessibility, the proposals make provision for both vehicular and non-vehicular access. The location of the proposal is such that the development is highly accessible by public transport although a good standard of parking is required to meet the initial and proposed future growth requirements of the development.
- 7.5 Overall, it is considered that the design approach represents a positive balance between supporting the operational requirements of future business occupiers and mitigating any adverse impacts on its surroundings. The development can therefore be considered to comply with local and national planning policy in design terms.

APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE OF ACCOMODATION

Schedule of Areas & Building heights : Earlsfield Park, Knowsley.

Unit 2	
Area type	Value (m2)
GF Office area	126
FF Office area	382
Warehouse area	4663
GIA	5038
GEA	5121

Unit 2	
Height	Value (m)
Haunch	12
Eaves	13.75
Ridge	15.25
Eaves and ridge height subject to steel sizes	

Unit 3	
Area type	Value (m2)
GF Office area	110
FF Office area	195
Warehouse area	1867
GIA	2060
GEA	2114

Unit 3	
Height	Value (m)
Haunch	10
Eaves	11.70
Ridge	13.60
Eaves and ridge height subject to steel sizes	

Unit 4	
Area type	Value (m2)
GF Office area	425
FF Office area	429
Warehouse area	2337
GIA	2766
GEA	2825

Unit 4	
Height	Value (m)
Haunch	10
Eaves	11.75
Ridge	12.85
Eaves and ridge height subject to steel sizes	

Unit 5	
Area type	Value (m2)
GF Office area	282
FF Office area	285
Warehouse area	6526
GIA	6790
GEA	6890

Unit 5	
Height	Value (m)
Haunch	12
Eaves	13.60
Ridge	15.35
Eaves and ridge height subject to steel sizes	

Unit 6	
Area type	Value (m2)
GF Office area	53
FF Office area	145
Warehouse area	1868
GIA	2012
GEA	2065

Unit 6	
Height	Value (m)
Haunch	10
Eaves	11.80
Ridge	13.70
Eaves and ridge height subject to steel sizes	