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Our ref: 6460/DA

September 2023

## **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

**for**

### **THE CONVERSION OF FORMER MAGAZINE BUNKER INTO A MANUFACTURING AND STORAGE FACILITY**

**at**

**BUNKER 8/9,  
DRAW WELL ROAD,  
KIRKBY,  
KNOWSLEY,  
L33 7BJ**

## INTRODUCTION

This supporting planning statement has been prepared to assess and support the merits of a full planning application, which seeks full planning permission for the conversion of a dis-used former Magazine Bunker into a manufacturing and storage facility.

## INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY THE PLANNING APPLICATION

| Plan Number | Description                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 6460-01     | Location Plan                             |
| 6460-101    | Floor Plan – As Existing                  |
| 6460-102    | Floor Plan – As Proposed                  |
| 6460-103    | Elevations – As Existing                  |
| 6460-104    | Elevations – As Proposed                  |
| 6460-105    | Site Plans – Existing and Proposed        |
| 6460-106    | Landscaping Plans – Existing and Proposed |

## THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site, subject of this planning application is the site of a former Magazine Bunker, believed to have been constructed during World War 2 for the storage of ammunition.

The reinforced concrete bunker occupies the whole site, leaving almost no ground visible. The bunker is covered in a thick layer of vegetation, presumably to camouflage the bunker; obscuring it from any potential war time aerial threat – however, since the bunker's abandonment, the vegetation has become wildly overgrown with small trees and shrubs present.

The immediate surrounding area forms part of the Knowsley Business Park, which is home to many industrial premises.



**Figure 1 - One entrance into Knowsley Business Park**

The site is located at the cul-de-sac end of Draw Well Road; a long, straight tarmac road with tarmac pavements on each side.



**Figure 2 - Entrance to Draw Well Road**

Either side of the site are other former Magazine Bunkers which have been converted into industrial premises.



**Figure 3 - Mulberry Waste Ltd – Located to the South and West of the application site.**

Directly across the street there are no buildings; the whole area between Draw Well Road and Acornfield Road has been demolished and is currently under re-development.

## SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 4 - Magazine 9-8.



Figure 5 - Magazine 9-8 Entrance door.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The existing road-side perimeter wall is to be demolished; exposing the bunker's external wall – this will release a portion of land between the road and the bunker's external wall for the creation of landscaping and car parking. Once the road-side wall and back filled ground have been removed, the external concrete wall of the bunker will become exposed. The exposed bunker wall will then be clad with profiled metal sheeting and the site perimeter will be enclosed with a new stripe-mesh paladin fence.

The building will also have CCTV, an alarm system, broadband, and LED lighting installed.

The main bunker will remain primarily a large open-plan space, which can be adapted to suit the assembly and storage requirements of Abbey Engineering. An internal fire-protected escape corridor will be constructed along the southern-edge of the bunker; to provide a safe emergency egress point for all people within the bunker. A new Kitchen, Canteen, and WC will be installed to cater for the building's employees – a new office will also be created for the site manager.

The existing vegetation to the bunker roof will be cleared of any trees and shrubs and then be levelled off. The remaining vegetation will be retained and enhanced by the addition of wild flowers.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The site is free of any mature trees and the extensive poor quality overgrown vegetation will be removed. New landscaping will be planted as part of the overall site plan.

## **TRANSPORT**

Vehicular access is provided via the existing site entrance off Draw Well Road. Car parking for staff and visitors will be provided along the front of the site – as shown on the proposed site plan. Deliveries/exports will be brought/removed to/from the site via Light Commercial Vehicles, such as commercial delivery vans and flat-bed vans; these vehicles will be unloaded/loaded on site in the existing dedicated loading/unloading bay.

## **PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY**

A pre-application enquiry concerning the proposed development was submitted to Knowsley Council in April 2023 – Application Number: 23/00012/PREAPP. A response from the council was received on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2023.

The response was positive. There were no objections from any consultees, and the conclusion states: "It is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle with design considerations and documentations as noted previously, and such an application is likely to comply with planning policies".

Comments were received from the Conservation Officer as follows:-

Some of the changes proposed do affect features that add to the heritage significance of the structure, and further consideration be given to these aspects of the proposals with a view to lessening heritage impacts. In particular it is advised that any planning application proposal should consider:

- Retention of timber loading bay doors - while these do not appear to be the originals, they are a close copy and the original strap hinges may have been re-used.
- Consider options to retain sections of both the concrete wing walls and concrete retaining wall adjacent Draw Well Road if possible. This may be difficult, particularly with regard the wall adjacent the road given the access / egress requirements and the parking needed.
- Retaining / reinstating earth mounding as far as practicable.

In light of these comments the applicant has determined that it is not practical to retain the traditional wooden doors from a security risk, fire risk and practicality point for day to day operations. A roller shutter will be required. However, the applicant is willing to take the doors down and have them repaired and re-painted. The doors can then be hung on the wall on the inside of the bunker as a historical record.

Also from a practical operational point of view it will not be possible to keep both wing walls, the existing wing wall forming the Western boundary will be retained, but the Eastern wall will need to be removed.

Again as far as is practical the vegetated earth mound on top of the bunker will be retained and be enhanced over the bunker roof.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Applicant considers that the proposed development will provide a good example of repairing, developing, and reusing an existing dilapidated building for commercial use. Care has been taken to ensure this development reflects its position in the locality, along with the existing industrial and commercial arrangements on all sides of the site. As such, the Applicant feels that there are no material planning reasons why this application should not be approved, subject to any reasonable conditions associated with this type of development.