

Planning Statement

**In Respect of Application for Planning
Permission in Principle for the Use of Land and
Erection of a Building/s for Vehicle Sales, Repair
and Servicing at 21 Napier Road, Hillington**

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Prepared by

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DATE	ORIGINATORS	APPROVED
July 2021	David Campbell Director	Graeme Laing Director




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1.0 Application Site and Proposal

- 1.1 The application that is subject of this Statement is seeking Planning Permission in Principle for the Use of Land and Erection of a Building/s for Vehicle Sales, Repair and Servicing at 21 Napier Road, Hillington.
- 1.2 The application site is located on the north side of Napier Road and adjacent to Hillington Road which is to the east. The site currently accommodates a building of commercial/industrial appearance, typical of the area, and which incorporates a series of pitched roof sections which extend across the building. The building is currently vacant and not in use but was most recently occupied by Harveys/Bensons for Beds who operated a furniture and bed sales business from the building. The site currently benefits from car parking and yard areas, located at the north and south ends of the building.
- 1.3 The application site is within Hillington Park, which is a long established location accommodating a wide range of uses, including office, industrial, trade counter, warehousing and vehicle sales. The area to the south and west of the site accommodates a wide range of uses typical of Hillington, including building supplies, plumbers merchant, vehicle sales and self-storage, and the land immediately to the north is in the process of being developed for a drive thru coffee shop (recently opened) and a drive thru bakery (under construction). An area of land to the north-west is currently undeveloped and this is earmarked for development for Class 4, 5 or 6 uses. There are a number of established vehicle sales, repair and servicing uses (Arnold Clark and Peter Vardy) on the opposite/eastern side of Hillington Road, and a number of other vehicle sales business to the north beyond the afore-mentioned drive thru's. Taking this varied range of uses together serves to demonstrate that the area is of mixed character, and includes a number of vehicle sales uses in immediate and nearby proximity to the application site.
- 1.4 The application site benefits from a Certificate of Lawfulness (ref. 20/0439/CL) for Part use of unit for retail (Class 1) which was granted in September 2020. Albeit the building is currently unoccupied, its past use allied to matters established by the Certificate result in the existing building being comprised of 2,312.5sqm of Class 1 Retail floorspace and 1,815.5sqm sqm of Class 4/5/6 (Business/Industrial/Storage & Distribution) floorspace.
- 1.5 The existing building is in a poor physical condition and it is no longer considered fit for occupation. The physical condition of the building fabric is poor and the mechanical, plumbing and electrical services are very outdated and also in a poor condition, making them non-operational. There does not appear to be a fire alarm control system, or any automatic smoke detection installed and the sprinkler system is at risk of freezing due to the lack of heating. With all of that in mind, allied to the building form and configuration not being suited to modern purposes, the existing building is not capable of economic re-use and so demolition and newbuild on the site is the only viable option.

- 1.6 Planning Permission in Principle is duly sought for the Use of Land and Erection of a Building/s for Vehicle Sales, Repair and Servicing at 21 Napier Road, Hillington. To facilitate the development of the site for these purposes there will be a requirement to demolish the existing buildings before erecting any new building, and the detail of new building/s and other features would be applied for through an application for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions.
- 1.6 Whilst vehicle sales is a sui generis use, repair and servicing is considered to fall within Class 5, and these principle elements of the use will also require an element of ancillary offices and storage of vehicles and parts and, in themselves, these elements would fall within Classes 4 and 6.

2.0 Planning Policy Assessment

- 2.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 provides that:

'where, in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'

Adopted Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

- 2.2 The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in August 2014, and the policies within the adopted Plan are the key determining issues for the application that is subject of this Statement.

- 2.3 The Proposals Map which forms part of the adopted Plan identifies the site as being within a Strategic Economic Investment Location (SEIL) affected by Policy E1, which states that:

"The Council identifies and promotes Strategic Economic Investment Locations and a number of Local Business / Industrial areas for the development of Class 4 Business, Class 5 General Industry and Class 6 Storage and Distribution development and ancillary service provision. Development proposals require to be assessed against the criteria detailed in the New Development SG. The Council welcomes development which can demonstrate that it does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites"

- 2.4 Figure 6 in the adopted Plan identifies the Challenges/Opportunities at Hillington SEIL as:

"The majority landowner is continuing to invest in the park to improve its facilities and environment to maintain its attractiveness to existing and new companies. The park provides a range of opportunities to provide premises at differing scales and for a wide range of businesses"

- 2.5 The New Development SG, which forms part of the adopted Plan, establishes that Development proposals within the Strategic Economic Investment Locations, including Hillington, will require to meet the following criteria:

- Support the role and function of the SEIL as identified in Figure 6 within the LDP and be compatible with the character of the area;*

- *Support sustainable economic growth and strengthen the SEIL's role as a key economic investment location as well as allow diversification or transition into new economic sectors or clusters in response to changing markets or demand;*
- *Ancillary uses may be acceptable if it can be demonstrated that they support the role and function of the SEIL;*
- *Any proposal which relates only to part of the SEIL should not impact upon the existing uses or potential economic investment within the area;*
- *All proposals will be considered in relation to Policy E1, E2 and Figure 6 in the LDP and the Economic Development Criteria (page 3);*
- *Proposals for waste management infrastructure will be acceptable within SEILSS where it conforms to, meets and delivers the objectives of the Zero Waste Plan as well as demonstrating that it will not have a significant impact upon amenity or operation of other uses, subject to site specific considerations.*

Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

2.6 Renfrewshire Council are currently in the process of preparing a new Local Development Plan, and as this is at an advanced stage the policies within the Proposed Plan are also of relevance. The Proposed Plan continues to identify the application site within a Strategic Economic Investment Location (SEIL) and affected by new Policy E1.

2.7 Policy E1 in the Proposed Plan establishes that:

“Renfrewshire’s Economic Investment Locations are identified and promoted for the development of Class 4 Business, Class 5 General Industry and Class 6 Storage and Distribution development as well as airport related uses and ancillary service provision, along with support for a wider range of employment generating uses.

All proposals for employment generating uses not listed in Use Classes 4, 5 & 6 require to demonstrate:

- *the resultant economic impact of the proposed development including the number of additional employment opportunities to be created; and,*
- *that proposals would not have a significant detrimental impact on the role and function of the Economic Investment Location, the vitality and viability of Renfrewshire’s Network of Centres, transport infrastructure and the built and/or natural environment of the area.*

- *Development proposals must demonstrate that development does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites.*

Figure 1 within the New Development Supplementary Guidance sets out the role and function of Renfrewshire's Economic Investment Locations"

- 2.8 Figure 1 in the New Development Supplementary Guidance establishes the Role and Function of Hillington as being for Distribution and Logistics, Manufacturing/ Engineering, Business Services, and Challenges and Opportunities are identified as:

"A Simplified Planning Zone is in place supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth at Hillington Business Park. Opportunity to diversify uses to adapt to changing market demands and facilitate the redevelopment of key sites. This location also includes a Strategic Freight Hub which supports the operation of the Strategic Economic Investment Locations"

- 2.9 The New Development SG which accompanies the Proposed Plan requires that development proposals in the economic locations, including within Strategic Economic Investment Locations (SEILs) such as Hillington, should meet the following criteria, most of which echo the same as the equivalents in the adopted Plan:

- *Support the role and function of the economic investment locations as identified in Figure 1 and be compatible with the surrounding character of the area;*
- *Support sustainable and inclusive economic growth as well as allowing diversification or transition into new economic sectors or clusters in response to changing markets and/or demand;*
- *Employment generating uses not listed in Classes 4 (Business), 5 (General Industry) and 6 (Storage & Distribution) of the Use Classes Order will be supported in these locations subject to the consideration of Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (2017) for development within SEILs and Local Development Plan Policies E1 and E2;*
- *Development should not impact upon the existing uses or potential economic investment within the area;*
- *Proposals for waste management infrastructure will be acceptable where it conforms to, meets and delivers the objectives of the Zero Waste Plan as well as demonstrating that it will not have a significant adverse impact upon amenity or operation of other uses, subject to site specific considerations; and,*

- *All proposals will be considered in relation to Policy E1, E2 and the Economic Development Criteria*

Simplified Planning Zone

2.10 The application site is also located within the Hillington Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ). The stated purpose of the SPZ is to simplify planning controls in order to help retain existing employers and attracting new companies to the area. Whilst the SPZ does not extend to allow for the development that is proposed without planning permission being secured, hence the application is being made, the SPZ does establish that whilst the focus of the SPZ Scheme is on core business and employment uses, in line with the local development plan policy, the Scheme recognises the opportunity to introduce further ‘complementary uses’ and ‘non-conforming uses’ such as small-scale retail and leisure uses, and motor vehicle sales operations: the former to serve the existing organisations and make the park more sustainable and attractive for 21st century business investment; and, the latter to diversify further development opportunities.

Assessment

2.11 The application that is subject of this Statement is for Planning Permission in Principle for the Use of Land and Erection of a Building/s for Vehicle Sales, Repair and Servicing at 21 Napier Road, Hillington, and which, if granted, would require a subsequent application to be made for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions. Whilst vehicle is a *sui generis* use and not within Class 4 (Business), 5 (General Industrial) or 6 (Storage & Distribution) it is a use that shares many of the same characteristics of these uses insofar as it typically requires a building with a large footprint and generous surrounding yard space and parking areas, and the activities associated with the use will typically generate noise and activity appropriate to a business/industrial/commercial location. As previously set out, the repair and servicing elements of the proposals are considered to fall within Use Class 5 (Industrial) and there would likely be ancillary elements of Class 4 (Office) and Class 6 (Storage) uses within the resulting operational development.

2.12 Taking the above-mentioned policies of the adopted Local Development Plan, the Proposed Plan, and the Simplified Planning Zone together as one, the over-arching planning policy framework that applies to the Napier Road site establishes clear and unambiguous support for Class 4, 5 and 6 use and development and the Class 5 and 6 elements of the proposal clearly meet the prevailing planning policies. The planning policies also provide support for other uses which are compatible and do not adversely impact on the existing uses, which respond to changing market demand, have a positive economic impact, and motor vehicle sales uses are afforded specific support by the policies of the SPZ. This, allied to the prevalence of existing vehicles sales uses in the vicinity of the application site, including the Arnold Clark and Peter Vardy establishments to the east on the opposite side of Hillington Road, demonstrates that the application proposals are in line with

the above-mentioned Policies E1 (and the associated Figures) in both the adopted and Proposed Local Development Plans as:

- The existing use of the site includes for element of Class 1 and Classes 4/5/6 and the application proposal includes for elements of Class 5 and/or 6 use;
 - The planning policies affecting the site offer clear support for Class 5 and 6 uses;
 - Vehicle sales, repair and servicing use is a commercial use which will generate employment over a vacant site which currently provides no employment and which will therefore support the role and function of the SEIL, and the Hillington SPZ explicitly supports such uses;
 - The proposed use will have impacts equivalent to surrounding existing uses and so will be compatible with and not have any adverse impact on the character of the area;
 - The proposed development will support sustainable economic growth through re-activating use of a vacant site and generating employment on a site that presently does not accommodate any employment, and so will strengthen the SEIL's role as a key economic investment location and help to diversify the range of uses in response to changing markets and demand;
 - The proposed development will support the principle role and function of the SEIL as a business/industrial location;
 - Given that the site currently accommodates a vacant and outdated building the redevelopment of the site is essential, and the proposed development will support and not undermine the core role and function of Hillington Park or its vitality and viability, and it will maintain an element of Class 5 and/or 6 use within the proposed use
 - There is a generous supply of premises and land across Hillington Park to accommodate other new and/or expanding Class 4, 5 and 6 uses, as demonstrated by the Hillington park Masterplan that accompanies this application
- 2.13 Notwithstanding all of the above, the New Development Supplementary Guidance which forms part of the adopted Plan, requires all developments to meet the Places Development Criteria which requires the layout, built form, design and materials of new developments to meet the following criteria, and we have set our comment/assessment of the application proposal against each criteria in red:

- *The density of new housing proposals will require to be in keeping with the density of the surrounding residential areas, higher densities may be appropriate in areas which have good access to walking, cycling and public transport; Not applicable as the application that is subject of this Statement is not for residential/housing development.*
- *It should be demonstrated that adequate provision has been made for all services including water, sewerage, power, communications, education, health and social facilities. Proposals for community, educational and commercial facilities will require to serve the local needs of the area; The application site already accommodates a building that has previously been used for commercial purposes, with some similarities to what is now proposed, and so it is anticipated that all necessary service connections can be made.*
- *Where considered necessary by the Council, areas of public and private open space will be retained where they are of recreational or amenity value. Not applicable as the application site that is subject of this Statement does not accommodate any existing private or public open space*
- *Existing landscape and ecological features will also be retained where they make a positive contribution to the character of the area and should be supplemented by new integrated landscaping and habitat proposals; The application site is currently developed 'brownfield' land and does not accommodate any existing landscape or ecological features of interest.*
- *Surrounding land uses should not have a significant adverse effect on the proposed residential development with regards to visual amenity, noise, smell, traffic, hours of operation, vibration, dust, overlooking and meeting statutory air quality objectives; Not applicable as the application does not propose residential development.*
- *Development proposals require to create attractive and well-connected street networks which will facilitate movement; Not applicable as the application does not propose residential development.*
- *Development should contribute to the overall character of a place, public health, social interaction and help in tackling climate change through reductions in carbon emissions. The application aligns with the Scottish Government strategy for sustainable economic development by virtue of making use of previously developed brownfield land, and by providing additional employment in a location that can be accessed by public transport, cycling and walking.*

2.14 The New Development Supplementary Guidance also includes 'Creating Places' guidance that applies to all new development across Renfrewshire Council area. This establishes requirements relative to Access and Connectivity, Environment and Community, Context and Character,

Buildings and Design, and Layout and Built Form. Those criteria that are relevant to this application are set out below with our comment/assessment of the proposals against each respective part set out in red:

- Does the development provide good connectivity for all modes of transport ? *The site is well connected for all modes of transport, including for bus stops immediately adjacent on Hillington Road and Hillington West railway station within approximately 1 mile. The site can also be easily accessed by walking and cycling.*
- Does the development integrate with existing street, paths and surrounding development as well as wider access and path networks ? *The site already does and will continue to integrate with existing street and path networks on Napier Road and Hillington Road.*
- Has potential flood risk for the site been assessed and has a flood risk assessment been prepared for proposals in medium to high category flood risk areas as defined in SPP ? *The SEPA Flood Map shows that the application site is not affected by either river or coastal flooding, and any surface water will be dealt with through the drainage proposals for the final development.*
- Have SUDS been incorporated into the design and layout and have long-term maintenance arrangements been put in place ? *The site currently accommodates a building and has had a past use, and so benefits from existing drainage infrastructure.*
- Will the development result in an increase in noise levels to the detriment of amenity ? *Given the established use of the site and the surrounding context it is not anticipated that the proposed vehicle sales use will have any material or detrimental impact on noise levels and/or impact on amenity.*
- Does the development integrate with its surroundings, existing buildings, and the natural features of the site reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones ? *As above, the site currently accommodates a building and has had a past use, and the surrounding area is characterised by similar commercial, industrial, storage and vehicle sales uses. In light of this, the proposed development will integrate with and be appropriate to its surroundings.*
- Do the buildings positively contribute to the built environment and the overall character of the area ? *The application is for Planning Permission in Principle and so the final building design will need to be subject of a later application for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions, and it is anticipated that an appropriate building will be proposed.*
- Does the building layout allow priority to pedestrians over vehicle movement and parking to ensure roads and parking do not dominate ? *As above, the application is for Planning*

Permission in Principle and so the final building and site layout will need to be subject of a later application for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions, and it is anticipated that an appropriate building layout will be proposed.

- *Does the proposed density reflect the character of the surrounding area ? As above, the application proposals are for a commercial vehicle sales, repair and servicing use, and this is in keeping with the prevailing character around the site which includes equivalent vehicles sales uses alongside Class 4, 5 and 6 uses.*
- 2.16 Taking all the above together, we have demonstrated that the application proposals are in line with the various relevant policies in both the adopted and Proposed Local Development Plans as well as the associated New Development SG's that are associated with each Plan.

3.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 3.1 This Statement supports a planning application that has been made for Planning Permission in Principle for the Use of Land and Erection of a Building/s for Vehicle Sales, Repair and Servicing at 21 Napier Road, Hillington.
- 3.2 The foregoing Statement has demonstrated that the application proposals satisfy the various planning policy requirements that are set out in the adopted and Proposed Local Development Plans, and the associated New Development SG's, and the applicable terms of the SPZ.
- 3.3 Having regard to all the foregoing points and the proposal's compliance with the development plan, the proposed development is commended to Renfrewshire Council and we respectfully request that Planning Permission in Principle be duly granted.