

# PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Supporting a submitted Planning Application for the Erection of a 1980m<sup>2</sup> B8 Storage and Distribution Building and accompanying site works

Land off Cornfold Road, Blackpool FY4 4QQ



**Statement Submitted by Nigel Robinson (DipTP) on behalf of the applicants  
Affordable Aluminium Ltd**

Updated 26-10-2021

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This statement supports a full planning application with all supporting submissions on an allocated employment / industrial land at the end of Cornfold Road which adjoins existing industrial development to the north and north east, vacant allocated employment land directly to the east, an allotments site to the west and the raised Yeadon Way to the south.

1.2 The applicants, the Affordable Windows Group, have acquired a composite site that includes the land to the east which will be submitted in due course as a phase 2 development for a B2 manufacturing plant for their business of producing windows and doors. This current phase 1 development, which is the subject of this application submission, is for a B8 Storage and Distribution in connection with the existing manufacturing business on Cornfold Road. Apart from Cornfold Road, the applicants also have premises in Poulton-le-Fylde and in the Midlands close to Stafford. They are a progressive, expanding company prepared to invest in opportunities even at the time of a global pandemic.

1.3 The site area of this application is 15,590m<sup>2</sup>. A vehicular access to this land is already formed from the end of Cornfold Road and it provides sole access to the development site. Allowance has been incorporated to provide access to the rest of the purchased site [phase2] to demonstrate that that residue can be accessed too and would not become landlocked.

1.4 The site is currently quite overgrown largely with self seeded scrub. It is not an attractive site and is inclusive of quite a high predominance of Giant Hogweed which would require early eradication.

1.5 In addition to this statement, the application is supported by the following submissions:

- A Transport Statement
- A Sustainable Drainage Assessment & Strategy
- A Flood Risk Assessment
- An Ecology Survey
- A Topographic Survey
- Full Application Drawings inc. Landscape and Surface Details

1.6 As will identified in section 3 of this statement the application submission fully accords with the Council's adopted Local Plan as being the Development Plan, and warrants support from the Council as the local planning authority determining this application.

1.7 The topographic survey confirms that the site is relatively flat but drops away to the south and south west.

## 2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The application proposes a development of a single building of 1800m<sup>2</sup> externally together with vehicle circulation and hardstanding areas to the east, south and west of the building. The front and main entrance is to the north east facing elevation, while the vehicle bays are proposed to the rear [south west] of the building. There is a 'goods in' entrance in the side, south east elevation of the building.

2.2 The intended building footprint measures 60m x 30m. It would be 6.5m high to eaves level and would be constructed with a low 8 degree pitched roof giving a proposed ridge height of 9m. The building incorporates a mezzanine floor for administrative office accommodation in association with the primary use of the building.

2.3 The form of the building would be one of a portal frame construction clad with horizontal faced aluminium panels in main to the walls with a dark grey engineering brick base section and then a glazed floor to eaves entrance feature in the north east corner of the building with square faced aluminium cladding adjacent to it; the roof would be metal profile sheeting complete with 44 fibreglass roof lights for much more natural lighting. Internally the building would be constructed in heavyweight concrete blocks with a dense insulated cavity.

2.4 In terms of surface materials, given the nature of the use being continually used by a variety of vehicles coming and going, and needing parking and manoeuvrability space, a lot of the site area would be under hard surface with a mixture of concrete in the less visible operational areas and tarmac to the front of the building. The site area though would benefit from the measures of a sustainable drainage strategy that requires a SUDS retention basin in the south east of the site with vegetation and planting surrounding it. There is also a swale proposed to collect surface water runoff from the hard surfaced areas to the west and south.

## 3.0 DESIGN & ACCESS

### 3.1 Evaluation of the Physical Context of the Site and its Surroundings

[i] The location of the site has already been described. It is a large vacant site which represents unattractive waste land that currently has no economic value and does not contribute at all to the local economy. It directly adjoins, to the north and north east, existing industrial premises that are an important constituent of one of the main employment sites to the Marton side of Blackpool and including a site operated by the applicants as a part of their current business operations.

[ii] To the east of this application site is a continuation of the open wasteland site purchased by the applicants at the same time as the application site, and which would shortly form a second phase to their expansion plans in regard to the intended erection of a new manufacturing plant for the business.

[iii] The development of the application site at this stage can only be regarded as a highly important ingredient of the Council's employment policy strategy. It is the right and correct nature of development for the application site.

### 3.2 The Site Layout

[i] The application proposal intends a purpose designed warehouse and distribution building for an existing established local business. The application intends just one site building for the main purpose of the development applied for, and that was the designer's brief from his clients along with an attractive setting which related well to the existing development in the vicinity. What the proposed layout shows is a building whose main aspect addresses the end of Cornford Road - in particular the building's feature entrance details to its relevant corner aspect and thereby displaying an affiliation to the existing businesses as opposed to a detachment from them.

[ii] The residue of the site would be open; some of the area affording vehicular servicing ancillary to the business use and some parking, but with also some details facilitating sustainable development in regard to a designed SUDS drainage scheme as described in an earlier section.

### 3.3 The Proposed Use and intended Design of Building

[i] The proposed use reflects that stipulated in the Adopted Development Plan, while the proposed building strategy informing the design of the development has evolved over a series of weeks of concerted concentration upon the scheme in hand in being a direct collaboration between the applicants, the designer and the planner co-ordinating the development proposals, which is a correct principle to apply to the writing of the 'design and access' element of this statement. It was always the intention that the structure would not just resemble a 'tin shed' as with many warehouses for supply & distribution businesses, often where there is a limited budget and the business is speculative. The applicants wanted

to achieve a development that was above the norm and which was more akin to a business park development for a technology operative - that was more upmarket. And it is considered that the final design displays the high level of design and workmanship that has been involved. A number of design options for the presentation of the building have been considered during the design period with variance in the eaves and ridge heights and entrance requirements, but it is now felt that the final building displays the character that was sought at the outset. In terms of its purpose for hgv supply and distribution, the building though is also a functional one as opposed to being an attractive shell. The multiple vehicle doors to the rear are purpose designed for the continual outgoings that the company will require of their investment in the building. There are also two 'goods -in' supply doors for incoming goods.

### **3.4 The Amount of Development**

[i] The large site area presented here intends just single building 60m x 30m upon a 1.5 hectare site, and as such a high proportion of the site area will be open. Which visually represents a desirable ratio of building to void area. In regard to whether the amount of built development proposed represents an under development of a land use resource for employment use, it is argued that the nature of the use requires the large degree of hard surfaced servicing space proposed - while the applicants present the application in the full knowledge that the intended manufacturing plant as Phase 2 of the cumulative land unit will bring about a different void to building relationship of plot dispersal but one which will still be functional and acceptable.

### **3.5 The Proposed Scale of Development**

[i] The scale of a building reflects that of other industrial buildings in the vicinity, and that which one ought to expect upon a site allocated for industrial and employment purposes. The eaves level is dictated by the necessitated by the need to have multiple vehicle service bays across the rear of the building as well as introducing the intended mezzanine level to at the front of the building. The degree of roof intended, given the low pitch proposed and the lack of necessity to utilise any of the roof space above the mezzanine level, will not be over-dominant given that what is proposed to be a long roof span.

### **3.6 Access**

[i] Vehicular access to the site from Cornford Road is already established and regularised, and that will be the main site access. A secondary access will provided to the north west of the application building to serve overspill car parking from the company's existing premises in Cornford Road.

[ii] Staff car parking is indicated to be provided adjacent to the front of the proposed building and to the north side of the building together as overspill parking. It is considered

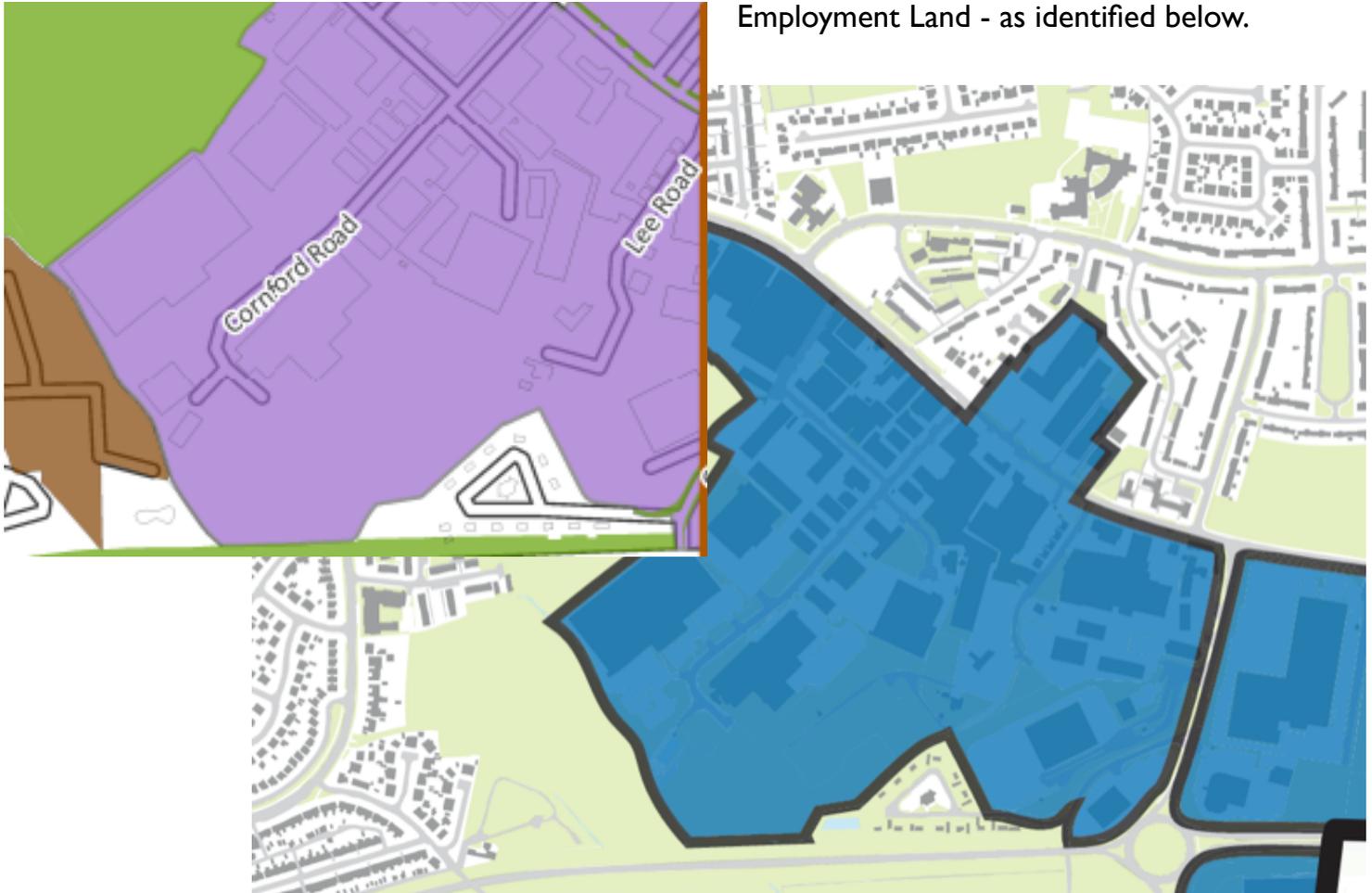
that this more than meets the Council's expected requirements for this type of use. In addition, a double cycle / motorcycle shelter is identified upon the drawings.

[iii] The site will gated at the points of entry from Cornford Road in order to provide a safe and secure environment for staff and for the protection of the investment being made in the site development by the applicants.

[iv] **Building Access:** Access to the application building at a single level threshold entry is a principle objective of the designer and that is achievable on this proposal. A surfaced pathway is provided between the front parking spaces and the building affording safe access to the building entrance as identified. The other building entrances are vehicular apart from those single doors facilitating pedestrian emergency access points. The internal construction of the building will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations, but moreover shall reflect the guidance of the Equality Act 2010 & ODPM 2003 publication - 'Planning and Access for Disabled People - A Good Practice Guide'.

#### 4.0 ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The Blackpool Local Plan, Part I Core Strategy identified Employment Locations Plan & Blackpool Local Plan Publication Policies Map 2012-27 both identify the application site, in association with the Local Plan Part 2 [now adopted], Policy DM7 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies as Employment Land - as identified below.



The application site is within the identified 2.5h employment area of Clifton Road and the appropriate use classes of B2 & B8 are identified as being appropriate for this particular employment area for supporting the economy in Blackpool. As such, the intended use of the application site in facilitating a storage and distribution business would be acceptable and meet the requirements of the Development Plan.

In regard to other other relevant Part 2 policies:

4.2 DM17 - Design Principles . Consideration of this is largely covered in the Design and Access Statement.

4.3 DM31 - Surface Water Management. A stand alone application submission deals with this. The site layout has been designed alongside the SUDs recommendations in the statement.

4.4 DM35 - Biodiversity . This is dealt with in the separate ecological appraisal, but it should be noted that there will be replacement areas of landscaping to replace existing potential habitats that might be lost.

4.5 DM21 - Landscaping . Appropriate details are identified upon the site layout plan as proposed and in the landscaping details text. These areas assist with the replacement biodiversity potential as described above.

4.6 With regard to national planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 is relevant. Para.81 is quite clear in regard to planning decisions being pivotal in how businesses can invest, expand and adapt. “*Significant weight*” is states should be placed upon “*the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development.*” In this case, the applicants are a local business with existing premises in Cornford Road. This proposal is a genuine expansion of the existing business and will not result in a closure of existing premises. It is an investment in the local area. The locational factor of being close to those existing premises is also highly relevant, something which is relevant to the text in para. 83 concerning the locational requirements of businesses.

\* The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic though cannot be disregarded by the decision maker in regard to how important it is now to secure new manufacturing investment into the economy. Company diversification and expansion at this time with an investor actually purchasing a site, such as this here with Affordable Windows, is of high importance at this time and is relevant in compliance with NPPF guidance in this regard although the NPPF does not specifically relate Covid consequences.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The proposed development has been carefully considered over a number of weeks and is fully compliant with the submission requirements for the nature of the application development.

5.2 It is considered that it has been adequately demonstrated that the proposed development accords with both local and national planning policy, and as such ought to be supported by the Council with a recommendation of approval.