



**NORTHERN TRUST**

WWW.NORTHERNTRUST.CO.UK

# Land at Number One Industrial Estate, Consett, Durham, DH8 6SZ

---

---

Planning, Design & Access Statement

October 2023

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. The Site & Surrounds .....	2
2.1. Planning History .....	2
3. Planning Policy Context.....	3
3.1. County Durham Plan .....	3
3.1.1. Policy 2: Employment Land.....	3
3.1.2. Delivering Sustainable Transport.....	3
3.1.3. Policy 29: Sustainable Design.....	4
3.1.4. Policy 31: Amenity and Pollution .....	5
3.1.5. Policy 32: Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land.....	5
3.1.6. Policy 36: Water Infrastructure.....	5
3.2. Policy CSD 1 National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development .....	6
4. The Proposed Development - Assessment of the Proposals .....	6
4.1. Principle of Development .....	6
4.2. Site Layout.....	7
4.3. Building Design.....	7
4.4. Sustainability.....	8
4.5. Health Impact.....	8
4.6. External Access.....	9
4.7. Internal Access.....	9
4.8. Drainage.....	10
4.9. Transport.....	10
5. Summary .....	10

## **1. Introduction**

Northern Trust Company Ltd (the applicant) is applying to Durham County Council (the council) for planning permission for the proposed development within the existing Number One Industrial Estate, Consett, Durham, DH8 6SZ.

The proposed development utilises vacant land within the existing industrial estate to the south of Werdohl Way. The sites are severed by a road and therefore are labelled as sites A & B.

The development on site A now proposes to include the erection of two buildings to provide 6 self-contained units providing a total of 12,100 sqft of flexible accommodation including ancillary office space. The development of site B now proposes the erection of one building to provide seven self-contained units coming to a total of 7420 sqft in space including ancillary office space. In addition to site B's proposal it also includes the remodelling and refurbishment of the existing block to provide an additional 2 units.

In conclusion the application across both sites consists of the erection of 3 separate buildings to provide thirteen self-contained units amounting to a total of around 19,520sqft of industrial space. In addition to this, the remodelling of the existing block to increase the provision of units from four to six, the existing floor space of 20,000 sqft will remain the same.

The purpose of the development is to provide flexible, smaller scale accommodation, in a range of sizes, particularly to attract start-ups and local business. It is therefore proposed that the use class of the buildings is for B2 and B8 inclusive, in order to provide additional flexibility and to provide wider opportunity for local business. The brief has evolved through extensive research into current market trends, taking account of the current occupancy of the existing development at this location and other planned developments.

This statement sets out the planning history of the site and provides a brief outline of the relevant planning policies followed by a description and assessment of the proposed development in context with the relevant local and national policies.

## **2. The Site & Surrounds**

The site is within Number One Industrial Estate, situated to the south of Werdohl Way. Both parcels are typically level and together total 2.13 acres. Individually site A is 0.65 acres and site B is 1.48 acres. The proposal would utilise small areas of vacant land across both parcels within the existing Number One Industrial Estate. The sites predominantly consist of grass scrubland currently excluding the existing buildings.

### **2.1. Planning History**

Historically as part of the wider industrial estate there have been many applications. However, in terms of these individual parcels there are no relevant applications that may impact the principle of the proposed development.

### **3. Planning Policy Context**

In accordance with section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations demonstrate otherwise. The development plan in this instance is made up of the following:

- County Durham Plan 2020

#### **3.1. County Durham Plan**

The County Durham Plan was adopted in 2020 and currently represents the most appropriate and up-to-date planning policy within County Durham. This forms a key part of the development plan for this application and the relevant policies are identified below.

##### **3.1.1. Policy 2: Employment Land**

As set out in this policy, the area in which the site is located has been designated as an employment land allocation, the policy states that:

*“undeveloped land and plots at the following employment sites and at proposed extensions to these existing employment sites....are allocated for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) unless specifically stated.”*

##### **3.1.2. Delivering Sustainable Transport**

This policy seeks to delivering sustainable transport by:

- a. delivering, accommodating and facilitating investment in safe sustainable modes of transport in the following order of priority: those with mobility issues or disabilities, walking, cycling, bus and rail transport, car sharing and alternative fuel vehicles;
- b. providing appropriate, well designed, permeable and direct routes for walking, cycling and bus access, so that new developments clearly link to existing services and facilities together with existing routes for the convenience of all users;
- c. ensuring that any vehicular traffic generated by new development, following the implementation of sustainable transport measures, can be safely accommodated on the local and strategic highway network and does not cause an unacceptable increase in congestion or air pollution and that severe congestion can be overcome by appropriate transport improvements;
- d. ensuring the creation of new or improvements to existing routes and facilities do not cause unacceptable harm to the natural, built or historic environment; and
- e. developments in the vicinity of level crossings (both vehicular and pedestrian) will be expected to assess the potential increase in risk at each crossing affected and indicate the appropriate mitigation required to reduce or remove such risks.

Also all development should have regard to the policies set out in the County Durham's Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan and, where possible, contribute to the development of a safe strategic cycling and walking network and in particular the routes set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

### 3.1.3. Policy 29: Sustainable Design

All development proposals will be required to achieve well designed buildings and places having regard to supplementary planning documents and other local guidance documents where relevant, and:

a. contribute positively to an area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and landscape features, helping to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities;

b. create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions and include appropriate and proportionate measures to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security;

c. minimise greenhouse gas emissions, by seeking to achieve zero carbon buildings and providing renewable and low carbon energy generation, and include connections to an existing or approved district energy scheme where viable opportunities exist. Where connection to the gas network is not viable, development should utilise renewable and low carbon technologies as the main heating source;

d. minimise the use of non-renewable and unsustainable resources, including energy, water and materials, during both construction and use by encouraging waste reduction and appropriate reuse and recycling of materials, including appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste and prioritising the use of local materials;

e. provide high standards of amenity and privacy, and minimise the impact of development upon the occupants of existing adjacent and nearby properties; and

f. contribute towards healthy neighbourhoods and consider the health impacts of development and the needs of existing and future users, including those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments. Landscape proposals should:

g. respond creatively to topography and to existing features of landscape or heritage interest and wildlife habitats;

h. respect and where appropriate take opportunities to create attractive views of and from the site;

i. reflect in the detailed design any features characteristic of the locality such as boundaries, paving materials and plant species;

j. create opportunities for wildlife including through the use of locally native species;

k. make appropriate provision for maintenance and long term management; and

l. in the case of edge of settlement development, provide for an appropriate level of structural landscaping to screen or assimilate the development into its surroundings and provide an attractive new settlement boundary

All major new non-residential development will be required to achieve Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) minimum rating of 'very good' (or any future national equivalent)

### **3.1.4. Policy 31: Amenity and Pollution**

Development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions or the natural environment and that can be integrated effectively with any existing business and community facilities. The proposal will also need to demonstrate that future occupiers of the proposed development will have acceptable living and/or working conditions. Proposals which will have an unacceptable impact such as through overlooking, visual intrusion, visual dominance or loss of light, noise or privacy will not be permitted unless satisfactory mitigation measures can be demonstrated whilst ensuring that any existing business and/or community facilities do not have any unreasonable restrictions placed upon them as a result.

Development which has the potential to lead to, or be affected by, unacceptable levels of air quality, inappropriate odours, noise and vibration or other sources of pollution, either individually or cumulatively, will not be permitted including where any identified mitigation cannot reduce the impact on the environment, amenity of people or human health to an acceptable level. Development which does not minimise light pollution and demonstrate that the lighting proposed is the minimum necessary for functional or security purposes will not be permitted.

### **3.1.5. Policy 32: Despoiled, Degraded, Derelict, Contaminated and Unstable Land**

Development will not be permitted unless the developer can demonstrate that:

- a. any existing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land issues can be satisfactorily addressed by appropriate mitigation measures prior to the construction or occupation of the proposed development;
- b. the site is suitable for the proposed use, and does not result in unacceptable risks which would adversely impact on the environment, human health and the amenity of local communities; and
- c. all investigations and risk assessments have been undertaken by an appropriately qualified person.

### **3.1.6. Policy 36: Water Infrastructure**

Disposal of Foul Water In the consideration of development proposals, the hierarchy of drainage options that must be considered and discounted for foul water are (in the following order):

1. Connection to the public sewer;
2. package sewage treatment plant (which can be offered to the Sewerage Undertaker for adoption(128); and
3. septic tank (which must drain into an appropriate soak away and not discharge directly into a watercourse).

Applications involving the use of non-mains methods of drainage (including Septic Tanks/Cess Pits) will not be permitted in areas where public sewerage exists.

Sewage and Waste Water Infrastructure

Proposals for new or extensions/improvements to existing water treatment, waste water, sludge or sewage treatment works will be permitted, unless the adverse impact of development outweighs the need for greater capacity and other benefits.

### 3.2. [Policy CSD 1 National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development](#)

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”

For decision-taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless: – 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; or – specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

## 4. [The Proposed Development - Assessment of the Proposals](#)

This section of the statement identifies the main issues and considerations of the development and demonstrates why the proposals are acceptable in principle and sets out the case for the development of this site. This will deal with the principle of the development followed by site specific issues and design considerations.

### 4.1. [Principle of Development](#)

As set out above, the site is located within an area identified for employment uses in the adopted Local Plan and specifically set aside for B1 and B2 developments.

The proposal will help to support economic growth and prosperity of the County and build on the success of the existing development Number One Industrial Estate. The proposals will complement the existing uses at Number One Industrial Estate. In allowing a variety of small scale uses to be accommodated, the site will provide greater opportunities for more local businesses.

The sites are subject to Employment Land Allocations, and in relatively close proximity to residential areas, pedestrian and bus links and major road networks to allow diverse accessibility options, therefore development of these sites for the intended purpose is considered acceptable. This development will be in keeping with the wider Number One Industrial Estate in regards to design specification and boundary treatments to maintain homogeneity.

Accordingly, having considered the sites land use allocation and the established use of the site, it is deemed that the principle of development is acceptable and as such complies with the relevant policies within the development plan.

## 4.2. [Site Layout](#)

The application site is located within the central area of Number One Industrial Estate. Surrounding land and buildings are also predominantly commercial and industrial uses which are also managed by Northern Trust.

The spatial dimensions of the sites play a key role in the dictation of the final layout and will be described for each parcel below:

**Site A** (Parcel to the west) - On this occasion for site A we have adopted a courtyard style approach. The main car park for all units is placed central between both of the blocks. Block one will be constructed on the northern edge, and block 2 will be on the southern edge.

**Site B** (Parcel to the east) - The final layout for this site has been derived to achieve efficient use of space and designed in a way to complement the re-modelling of the existing block. Block A is on the southern edge of the site and Block B (existing) is on the northern edge. Block A and the southern half of Block B (Units 1-4) have a courtyard style approach with common areas such as the car park located central between them. The northern half of block B (Units 10A-10B) has frontage onto the existing retained access where parking for the units will be located.

The final layout ensures to maximise the use of the site and provides a central focus with buildings orientated around common service areas which increase security and attractiveness to tenants and makes smaller units economically viable.

## 4.3. [Building Design](#)

The design, scale and appearance of the buildings are both suitable to the character of surrounding properties and appropriate to the proposed use class. The buildings will be faced with metallic protected steel wall panels and facing brickwork to add detail and interest.

Across both sites the units consist of varied size, scale, form, design to provide potential occupiers with a diversity of options. However, externally the buildings are uniformed to the rest of the scheme and similar to the remainder of the estate and as such the impact on the street scene and visual amenity of the area would be limited.

The sizes of the units are driven by market forces and the size of the site but are well proportioned to the floor areas. The proposed buildings are of similar scale and maintain homogeneity and association to each other, and have been designed to make efficient use of available space, market forces and local business need, in compliance with Policy 2 and Policy 29.

The heights of the buildings/eaves and levels are restricted by proportion and likely usage. The chosen heights reflect a small scale appearance and reduce any detrimental effects on neighbouring buildings. The site upper and lower eaves will be provided below:

Site A: Both blocks have upper eaves of 6.18m and Lower eaves of 4.51m.



Site B: Block A upper eaves of 5.7m and lower eaves of 4.34m.

As set out above, the upper eaves height of all new build blocks reaches a maximum of 6.18m. This remains similar to the buildings in the direct vicinity and the wider business park area as a whole.

Each of the buildings is well proportioned in terms of footprint dimensions, sub-division lines, and co-ordinated to an economic and consistent structural grid and are arranged in courtyard format. The design of the building facades has been arranged to generate a simple, clean and coherent aesthetic with crisp detailing in keeping with the existing development in the area.

#### 4.4. [Sustainability](#)

The proposal will result in the loss of open space on two sites within the existing industrial estate. However, the loss of space is considered to be outweighed by the economic benefits of the proposal and the efficient use of space as result.

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. From an economic context the focus is on contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The social focus is on supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities. And finally the environmental role looks at contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. This development fulfils all of these criteria by providing economic benefits in the form of new, much needed, high quality workspace of this size in a sustainable and accessible location. Social benefits are found in creating space for SME's and independents to work and operate from allowing a more diverse choice of business options in the area and providing space for start-ups and other none major operators.

Furthermore, the location is sustainable the sites can be accessed in a variety of transport modes. The site benefits from pedestrian access and has links to bus routes as well as being in a location that is easily accessible in terms of servicing the local area.

#### 4.5. [Health Impact](#)

The proposed development will have a positive impact upon the health of the local community and public realm. The site currently occupies a small area of unused land across two parcels and as part of the proposals will be developed to provide 15 industrial units including the remodelling of the existing block offering significant employment opportunities for the local population. The provision of employment opportunities for both new start-ups, and existing businesses to expand and subsequent employees is a significant benefit to the local community and will have a positive impact upon the health and well-being of the local population, both directly and indirectly. The investment such a development will bring during construction and once operational will facilitate valuable opportunities for the local community. The proposed development will offer flexible floorspace that can be tailored to a variety of different uses subject to the end user requirements. This can appeal to a wide variety of different occupiers and is a significant positive attribute of the proposals, offering significant and far-reaching benefits to a wide catchment. As with the above, this would

provide a positive impact upon the health and well-being of the local community. This is in accordance with Policy 29 of the development plan.

#### 4.6. [External Access](#)

The site is would be accessed via the existing road off Werdohl way.

Access to and within the property will meet the necessary requirements of Part M 'Access and Use of Buildings' of the Approved Building Regulations documentation.

Both sites will be accessed by a new access road off the existing estate road off Werdohl Way with pedestrian access also being achieved of this road. The new access implemented as part of the development has been designed on the basis of an accurate number of vehicle movements and therefore is compliant with Policy 21.

Car parking is provided generally to the front of the buildings for the convenience of the occupiers, with disabled parking to each unit as close as possible to the entrance. There is no tandem parking. Loading areas allow access for vehicles to loading doors and permit parking to load and unload without inconvenience to other areas of the site.

The parking provisions for both sites are set out as follows:

**Site A:** A total of 21 spaces will be provided in the courtyard between both blocks, including 6 disabled bays.

**Site B:** Currently for the existing unit there is no allocated parking. Parking is however provided for in the overspill car park used for the wider estate located in-between unit 10 and unit 9. A total of 50 spaces will be provided across the whole site. In the courtyard which has frontage to Block A and Block B (Units 1-4) there is 34 car parking spaces of which 8 are disabled bays. The remaining 16 spaces will be located in front of unit's 10A-10B.

Paved pedestrian access is provided to the frontage of all buildings and is distinguished from parking areas and hard standings by the use of different material.

All disabled bays will have access from dedicated parking areas onto the paved areas in front of the blocks and into each building. Changes from paved areas to car parking or yard areas will be distinguished by the use of contrasting tactile paving, all in accordance with Part M of the building regulations and policies 2, 29, 31 and 32 of the development plan.

#### 4.7. [Internal Access](#)

Access to and within the property will meet the necessary requirements of Part M 'Access and Use of Buildings' of the Approved Building Regulations documentation.

The internal doors are to have minimum effective clear width of 800mm. The entrance doors are to have a minimum effective clear of 900mm for one leaf. Please see plans for further details.

#### 4.8. Drainage

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework and Building Regulations, the site should ideally be drained on separate systems for surface water and foul.

It is proposed to utilise the existing sewer connections serving the premises, with foul water currently discharging into the combined public sewer and surface water currently discharging into the public surface water sewer at an un-restricted rate. It is imperative that surface water is not discharged to the South of the site, as the deepest flood levels have been identified on the surface water flood maps, to the Southwest of the site. As part of these development proposals, it is intended to reduce the rate of surface water discharge into the public surface water sewer, thereby achieving a betterment of approximately 40%, including 30% for climate change and 10% for urban creep.

Surface water attenuation for the site shall be provided below ground, in the form of geo-cellular attenuation crates located beneath the proposed car parking areas on both sites A and B, see drainage report for further details.

Please refer to the Flood Risk & Drainage Strategy provided with the application for the technical details.

#### 4.9. Transport

A travel plan and a transport assessment have been provided to support the application. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy 21 'Delivering sustainable transport' of the Adopted Local Plan.

### 5. Summary

The proposed development of 1,813 sq m 19,520 sq ft of industrial space over 13 units, and the provision of an additional 2 units in the remodelling of the existing block with associated parking is located in a sustainable area with nearby bus links and suitable pedestrian and cycle access.

The vacant plots across both sites are within an area designated for employment in the current local plan and have clear benefits to provide industrial needs of the area.

The development is in keeping with the existing units across the estate and continues a high quality design suitable to this type of development.

The development as a whole complies with local, regional and national policies, and provides a clear benefit to the locale by providing much needed workspace of this size and flexibility. The development is compliant with the relevant planning policies and the NPPF and as a result should be approved without delay.