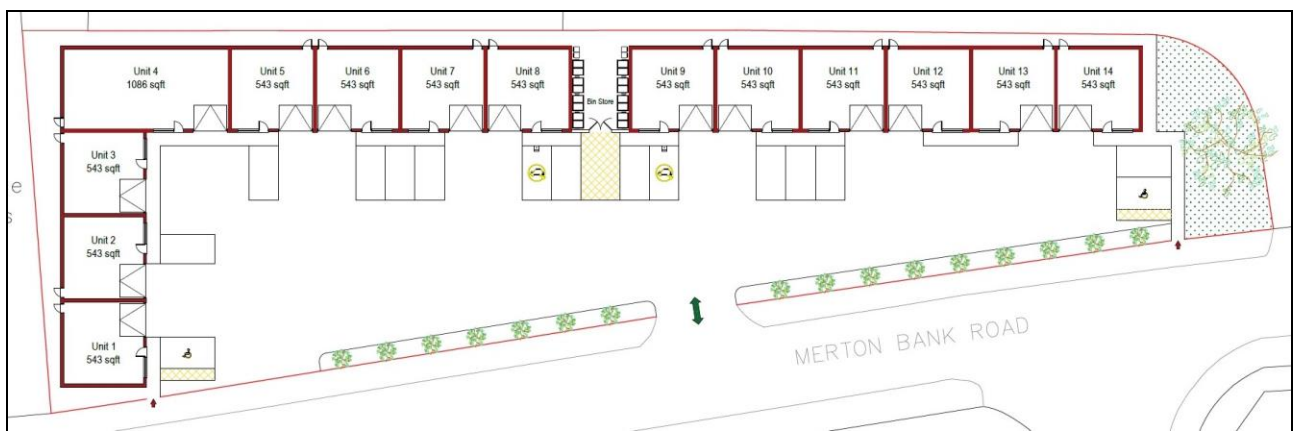


## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



**PROPERTY ADDRESS:**

Former Suregrow Garden Centre, Collins  
Industrial Estate, Merton Bank Road,  
St. Helens, WA9 1HY

**PROPOSED WORKS:**

Construction of 14no. commercial/light  
industrial units comprising 13no. 543ft<sup>2</sup> units  
and 1no. 1,086ft<sup>2</sup> unit

**APPLICANT:**

Mr. John Martlew (JMBC Ltd)

**DATE:**

November 2023

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

### 1.00 INTRODUCTION

---

#### 1.01 APPLICANT DETAILS:

**MR. JOHN MARTLEW**  
**JMBC Ltd**  
Unit 1  
Collins Industrial Estate  
Merton Bank Road  
St. Helens  
WA9 1HY

#### 1.02 DEVELOPMENT SITE:

**FORMER SUREGROW GARDEN CENTRE**  
Collins Industrial Estate  
Merton Bank Road  
St. Helens  
WA9 1HY

#### 1.03 AGENT DETAILS:

**CHRIS COUSINEAU BSC(HONS) MRICS**  
Lynwoods Building Consultancy  
44 Hanford Avenue  
Orrell Park  
Liverpool  
L9 3BW  
  
Tel.: +44(0)7913 238 176  
Email: lynwoods.surveying@gmail.com

---

**1.04** This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Chris Cousineau BSc(Hons) MRICS of Lynwoods Building Consultancy, Liverpool, on behalf of the site owner and applicant - Mr. John Martlew of JMBC Ltd. This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for the proposed development described below:

#### 1.05 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

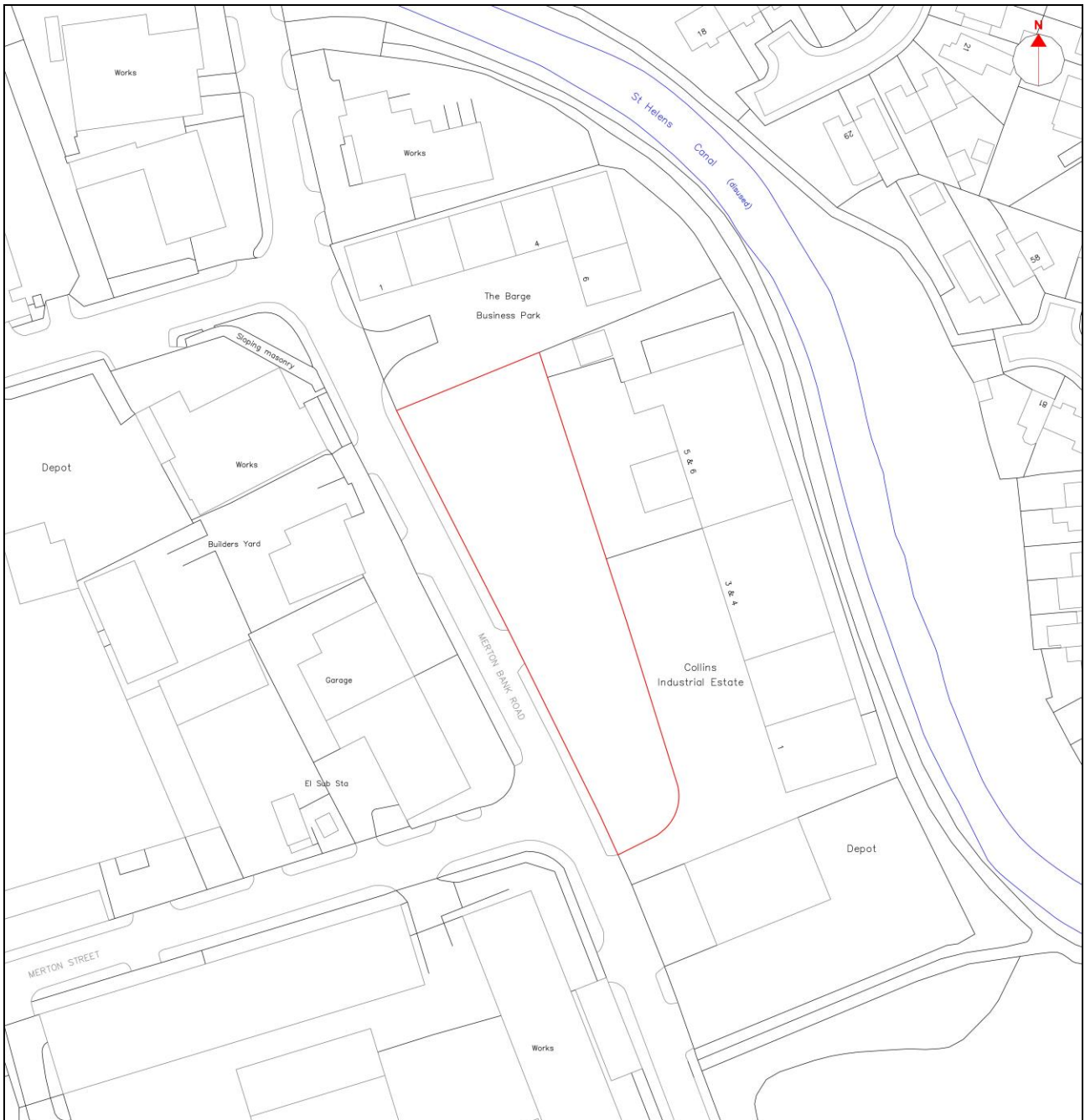
**1.05.1** The proposal made under this planning application is to construct 14no. commercial/light industrial units comprising 13no. 543ft<sup>2</sup> units and 1no. 1,086ft<sup>2</sup> unit, together with ancillary external works, within the existing site use class - Use Class E (*Commercial, Business and Service*). The units are to be arranged in two separate blocks: a block of 8no. units at the north of the site, and a block of 6no. units at the south of the site.

**1.06** Pre-application advice was sought for the proposed development from St. Helens Council in June 2022 and following subsequent discussions with the Council and publication of their Pre-Application Advice in November 2022, a number of recommendations were absorbed into the proposal and changes were made.

**1.07** This Design & Access Statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of Article 4C of the *Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended)*. The purpose of this statement is to explain *‘the design principals and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development and how issues relating to the development have been dealt with’* – paragraph 80 of Circular 01/2006.

## 2.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE

**Fig. 1:** Existing site location map with the proposal site edged in red (not to scale).



**2.01** The proposal site is situated off Merton Bank Road in St. Helens, in a predominantly commercial/industrial use area. The site is approximately centred on coordinates Easting 352284 and Northing 39206. The frontage of the site faces in a westerly direction directly onto Merton Bank Road.

- 2.02** The site is approximately 2,724m<sup>2</sup>, or 0.2724 hectares, in total area. The site perimeter is currently demarcated by 6ft steel palisade fencing on all sides and a small run of concrete panel and post fencing on the front (south west) boundary in the south corner of the site. There is a palisade steel double vehicular access gate on the front perimeter to Merton Bank Road, and a separate personnel access single gate in the south corner of the site - also leading directly onto Merton Bank Road. Most of the front perimeter fence line is set back from the true boundary line, with the boundary line being the edge of the public pavement.
- 2.03** The site is partially surfaced with areas of in-situ concrete hardstanding and other areas of gravel/unmade ground. There are no buildings on the site. The former Suregrow Garden Centre comprised a mixture of temporary polytunnel buildings and steel shipping containers. These were taken down and removed by the previous site owner prior to the applicant acquiring the site in May 2023.
- 2.04** The site is located within an area of commercial and industrial buildings; with Collins Industrial Estate directly to the east, The Barge Business Park directly to the north, a stand-alone commercial unit directly to the south; and a mixture of vehicle maintenance garages, commercial units and light industrial units across Merton Bank Road to the west.
- 2.05** The site is located approximately 1.3 miles north east of St. Helens town centre. The East Lancashire Road (A580) lies approximately 1.1 miles to the north of the site, which provides access to Junction 23 of the M6 motorway approximately 4.4 miles from the site. Junction 7 of the M62 motorway (the Rainhill Stoops Interchange) lies approx. 4.5 miles to the south of the site.
- 2.06** Attached below is a selection of site photographs of the proposal site and the surrounding area, taken on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023, as well as Google Earth 3D renders of the site for illustrative purposes.



Photo 01



General view of the proposal site, looking towards the north from the south corner end.

Photo 02



General view of the proposal site, looking towards the east - with Collins Industrial Estate in the background.



Photo 03



General view of the north end of the proposal site, looking towards the north.

Photo 04



General view of the proposal site, looking towards the south from the north west corner.

Photo 05



General view of the front of the proposal site, as seen from the west side of Merton Bank Road, looking north.

Photo 06



General view of the front of the proposal site, as seen from the corner of Merton Street, looking north.



Photo 07



View of the personnel access gate through the front palisade fencing around the south corner of the site.

Photo 08



View of the front vehicular double access gate and splayed entrance from Merton Bank Road.



Photo 09



View of the bus stop along the front perimeter of the proposal site.

Photo 010



General view of the palisade fencing along the east perimeter of the proposal site with Collins Industrial Estate.

Photo 011



General view of the front elevation of the units comprising 1-6 Collins Industrial Estate, to the east of the site.

Photo 012



View of the stand-alone unit directly to the south of the proposal site.



Photo 013



General view of The Barge Business Park directly to the north of the proposal site.

Photo 014



General view of the commercial/industrial buildings to the west of the proposal site across Merton Bank Road.



Photo 015



General view of Merton Bank Road, looking south from the proposal site vehicular access gate.

Photo 016



General view of Merton Bank Road, looking north from the proposal site vehicular access gate.



Photo 017



View of the entrance to the recently-resurfaced Ravenhead Greenway cycle path, approximately 50m south of the proposal site.

Fig. 2: Google Earth 3D render of the proposal site, with the approximate site boundaries edged in red, looking toward the west. Note: the temporary buildings shown in the image have now been removed.





**Fig. 3:** Google Earth 3D render of the proposal site, with the approximate site boundaries edged in red, looking toward the east. Note: the temporary buildings shown in the image have now been removed.



### 3.0 DESIGN

#### 3.1 Use – under the *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987* as amended

3.1.1 Existing use: Class E (*Commercial, Business and Service*).

3.1.2 Proposed use: there is no proposed change of use of the site.

#### 3.2 AMOUNT AND SCALE

3.2.1 The existing site covers a gross external area of approx. 2,724m<sup>2</sup>, or 0.2724 hectares.

3.2.2 The proposal does not include any plans to extend the existing site area or to alter the boundary positions or shape of the site; or to alter or extinguish any existing rights-of-way, easements, access points and the like to or across the site.

3.2.3 The proposal is to construct 14no. commercial/light industrial units on the site; comprising 13no. 543ft<sup>2</sup> units and 1no. 1,086ft<sup>2</sup> unit, together with ancillary external works.



### 3.3 LAYOUT

- 3.3.1 The proposed units are to be arranged in two separate blocks: a block of 8no. units arranged in an 'L' shape at the north of the site, and a block of 6no. units at the south of the site. The 'L'-shaped block of units to the north of the site naturally follows the shape of the site and echoes the layout of the units on the adjacent Barge Business Park site directly to the north.
- 3.3.2 (The pre-application advice received from the Council in November 2022 advised that the redevelopment proposal would not likely have any greater impact on the appearance of the area than the temporary buildings that were previously on the site. The pre-application advice noted that the proposed 'L-shaped' block of units to the north end of the site is typical of other developments in the area - for example, The Barge Business Park directly to the north of the site - and would therefore not be considered out of character for the area.)
- 3.3.3 The pre-application advice received from the Council advised that the opportunity should be taken to improve the site frontage. Taking these recommendations on board, the proposed block of 6no. units to the south of the site has been rotated so that the units face onto Merton Bank Road. (The previous draft of the proposals showed this block of units having its back facing onto Merton Bank Road.) The layout of this block of units now follows the shape of the site, and keeps a consistent line with the block of units at the north end of the site.
- 3.3.4 The void in between each block of units is now shown as a bin storage area - which is to be fenced off from public view. This alteration was driven by the necessity to provide on-site waste collection and storage facilities, the difficulties in providing these facilities elsewhere on site without reducing the green landscaping areas, and subsequent details yielded by the vehicle tracking analysis. For example, it was originally proposed to locate the bin store compound at the south end of the site; however, this would have placed the bin compound in public view from Merton Bank Road and would have removed some of the green space at the south of the site. By placing the bin compound in the void between the blocks of units, this will not only remove the compound from public view - and therefore improving the appearance of this site when viewed from Merton Bank Road, it also places the compound centrally within the site and close to the vehicular access gates - making it easier and faster to access by refuse and recycling trucks.

### 3.4 DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

3.4.1 *St. Helens Borough Local Plan - Policy LPA01: Spatial Strategy*, requires new development to maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the local environment, with a focus on the importance of local distinctiveness, as well as using good design to improve the quality of areas that may have become run down and be in need of regeneration. The policy also requires that development should avoid causing unacceptable harm to the amenities of the local area and surrounding residential and other land uses and occupiers etc. These principles have been taken on board when considering the design and visual appearance of the development and the materials to be used. The proposed main external materials and finishes are outlined below.

#### 3.4.2 Roof Panels and Rooflights:

3.4.2.1 The proposed panels for the roofs of the units are *Kingspan QuadCore KS1000RW Roof Panel* in Gull Grey colour (RAL 240 80 05). The proposed roof lights are *Kingspan Day-Lite Trapezoidal FAS Rooflight* in Clear translucence, with Anti-Glare and Infra-Red Absorbing coatings in order to minimise the use of HVAC equipment and energy consumption within the units during the building life-cycle.

**Fig. 4:** Image showing *Kingspan QuadCore KS1000RW Roof Panel*.

(Source: <https://www.kingspan.com/gb/en/products/insulated-panels/roof-panels/quadcore-ks1000rw-roof-panel/>)



**Fig. 5:** Image showing *Kingspan Day-Lite Trapezoidal FAS Rooflight*.

(Source: <https://www.kingspan.com/gb/en/products/daylighting-solutions/rooflight-systems/day-lite-trapezoidal-fas-rooflight/>)

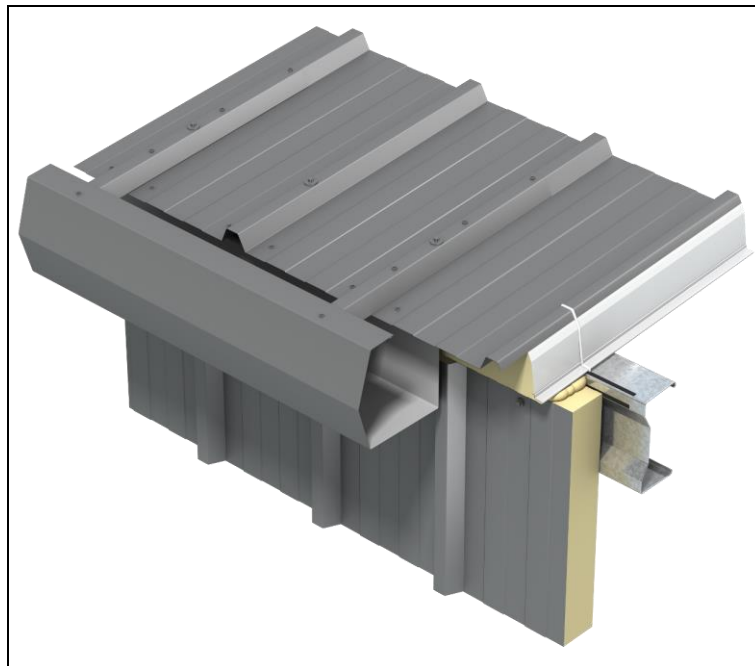


### 3.4.3 Gutters etc.:

3.4.3.1 The proposed rainwater goods of the units are *Kingspan Highline Industrial Gutter* with associated square-section downspouts in Moonstone grey colour (RAL 7035) in order to match the wall cladding panels.

**Fig. 6:** Image showing *Kingspan Industrial Highline Gutter*. (Note: stock image below does not show Moonstone grey colour and is intended to demonstrate the shape of the guttering only.)

(Source: <https://www.kingspan.com/gb/en/products/insulated-panels/gutters/industrial-highline-gutter/>)





### 3.4.4 Wall Cladding Panels:

3.4.4.1 The proposed panels for the external walls of the units are to be a mixture of *Kingspan QuadCore AWP Supreme Wall Panel* in Tramline Profile in Lazuli colour (RAL 5002), laid horizontally around the personnel access doors as shown on the elevation drawings; and *Kingspan Quadcore KS1000RW Low-Embodied-Carbon Wall Panel* in Moonstone grey colour (RAL 7035), laid vertically to all other wall areas as shown on the elevation drawings. The cladding is to be laid in both horizontal and vertical sections, using different profiles and colours, in order to break-up the lines of the elevations for visual appeal.

**Fig. 7:** Image showing *Kingspan QuadCore AWP Supreme Wall Panel* in Tramline profile. (Note: stock image below does not show Lazuli colour and is intended to demonstrate the profile of the cladding only.)

(Source: <https://www.kingspan.com/gb/en/products/insulated-panels/wall-panels/quadcore-awp-supreme-wall-panel/>)



**Fig. 8:** Image showing *Kingspan Quadcore KS1000RW Low-Embodied-Carbon Wall Panel*. (Note: stock image below does not show Moonstone grey colour and is intended to demonstrate the profile of the cladding only.)

(Source: <https://www.kingspan.com/gb/en/products/insulated-panels/wall-panels/quadcore-ks1000rw-lec-wall-panel/>)



### **3.4.5 Roller Shutters and Access Doors etc.:**

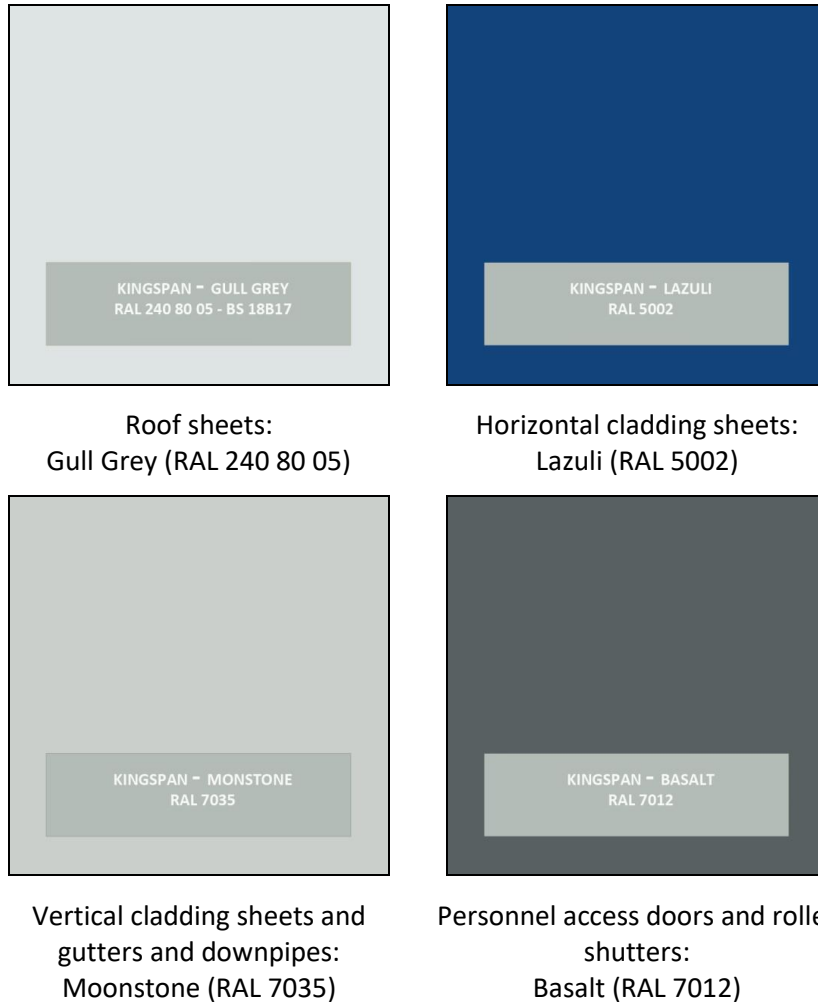
3.4.5.1 The front and rear personnel access doors are to be powder-coated aluminium-frame doors in Basalt grey colour (RAL 7012) to provide a visual contrast against the adjacent cladding panels.

3.4.5.2 The roller shutters are to be insulated sectional roller shutter doors in Basalt grey colour (RAL 7012), with vision panels as shown, to provide a visual contrast against the adjacent cladding panels.

### 3.4.6 Outline Colour Chart:

3.4.6.1 The below chart demonstrates the proposed RAL colours of the roof panels, gutters and downpipes and wall cladding panels.

Fig. 9: Outline Colour Chart for the main external materials and finishes.



3.4.7 Being in a predominately commercial/industrial area, and considering the proposed development being single-storey and relatively low-rise in proportions, the pre-application advice received acknowledges that the development will not have any impact on the residential amenities to the north and to the east of the site, with regard to overbearing or overlooking impacts.

3.4.8 Similarly, being no more than 6m in height to the apex of the roof ridges, the proposed units will sit approx. 2.25m lower than the existing units to Collins Industrial Estate at the rear of the site and will therefore not dominate the existing street scene. The proposed units will also sit lower in height than the units on the adjacent Barge Business Park and will therefore sit within the existing street scene lines.



### 3.5 LANDSCAPING

- 3.5.1 The pre-application advice received recommended that opportunity should be taken to improve the site frontage, including the provision of landscaping along Merton Bank Road. Taking these recommendations on board, the proposal includes a new bank of landscaping along the front of Merton Bank Road, which is to be planted with trees as shown on the Proposed Site Layout Plan (drawing no.: 022-043-MRS-JM 003).
- 3.5.2 The existing border to the south end of the existing site is to be preserved and remodelled and a landscaped bank as shown as shown on the Proposed Site Layout Plan (drawing no.: 022-043-MRS-JM 003).
- (Appended to this application is an *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* report - dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023, and a *Method Statement* report - dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023 by Lally Tree Management, Manchester; detailing proposals for retaining and protecting some of the existing trees to the landscaped area at the south end of the site. Please refer to these reports for further details.)
- 3.5.3 Should the proposed application be successful in securing planning approval, the details of the landscaping along Merton Bank Road and to the south of the site are to be agreed with the Council tree officer under the pre-commencement planning applications.

### 3.6 ACCESS - GENERAL AND INCLUSIVE

- 3.6.1 The pre-application advice received advised that, having reviewed the proposals, there would not likely be a significant variation in the number of trips to the site when compared to the previous use of the site as a garden centre; though the proposed development may create a more tidal profile of visits to the site with employees arriving and leaving the site within set times rather than sporadically throughout the day.
- 3.6.2 The pre-application advice received advised that the existing vehicular access to the site from Merton Bank Road would be acceptable.
- 3.6.3 The pre-application advice received advised that an additional pedestrian/cycle access should be provided at the south end of the site near to Unit 1 of Collins Industrial Estate in order to improve accessibility. Taking these recommendations on board, the proposal has now been altered as follows:
- The existing personnel access to the south end of the site will be retained to enable pedestrian/bicycle access to the south of the site from Merton Bank Road. This personnel access will provide a closer link to the nearby Ravenhead Greenway cycle path, which is located approximately 50m to the south of the site. This cycle path provides bicycle links to the site from the residential estates to the east and to the north of the site.

- An additional personnel access gate has been added to the north end of the site, enabling pedestrian/bicycle access to the north of the site from Merton Bank Road. This personnel access will provide a closer link to the residential estates at the north of the site; and, via the Ravenhead Greenway cycle path - which runs around the east and north of the proposal site - will provide bicycle links to the residential areas north of St. Helens town centre, which are located approximately 1 mile to the west of the proposal site.

3.6.4 The pre-application advice received advised that the provisional 32no. parking spaces allowed for around the site on the draft development proposal was deemed to be excessive as based upon the approximate overall floor area of the development being 757m<sup>2</sup>. It was advised that, under *Supplementary Planning Document - Ensuring a Choice of Travel (June 2010)*, the maximum number of parking spaces for a comparable B2 Use Class should be 16no. spaces, or a maximum of 19no. spaces for B1 Use Class. It was advised that the car parking allocation should not exceed these limits.

3.6.5 Furthermore, it was advised that the provision of electric vehicle charging spaces on the site would also be welcomed. Taking these recommendations on board, the proposal has now been altered as follows:

- In conjunction with rotated the block of units to the south end of the site and moving this block of units back to the rear (west) boundary; the car parking layout has been altered to provide a maximum of 15no. parking spaces, as follows:
  - 2no. accessible parking bays (at opposite ends of the site.
  - 2no. electric vehicle charging bays.
  - 11no. standard parking bays.
- (Should it become necessary during day-to-day use of the site, overspill parking would be possible on the aprons in front of the loading bays of each of the units - thereby providing the option of an additional 9no. temporary parking spaces).

3.6.6 (The previously-proposed parking bays in front of Unit 12 and Unit 13 have now been removed in order to suit the vehicle tracking advice provided by JG Highway Design Ltd, Helston. The vehicle tracking and swept path information is shown on drawings numbered JG01, JG02 and JG03 - these drawings are now attached to this planning application. Please refer to these drawings for further information.)

3.6.7 Each speculative unit will be fitted with suitable internal bicycle storage facilities in order to encourage sustainable travel to the site. The applicant acknowledges the pre-application advice given and confirms the bicycle storage facilities will include lockers for staff use.

3.6.8 Although not shown on the plans, each speculative unit will be fitted with first-fix drainage and services in the expectation that the incoming owners/occupiers will fit the units out with accessible WC facilities in full compliance with current Building Regulations. Similarly, the external entrance and egress doors will have a minimum clear width of 800mm to enable wheelchair access in according with current Building Regulations.

Design & Access Statement prepared by:

**Chris Cousineau BSc(Hons) MRICS**

Chartered Surveyor



**LYNWOODS BUILDING CONSULTANCY**

44 Hanford Avenue

Orrell Park

Liverpool

L9 3BW

Tel.: +44(0)7913 238 176

Email: [lynwoods.surveying@gmail.com](mailto:lynwoods.surveying@gmail.com)

Web.: [www.lynwoods.com](http://www.lynwoods.com)

Date: November 2023

Version: 1.01

---