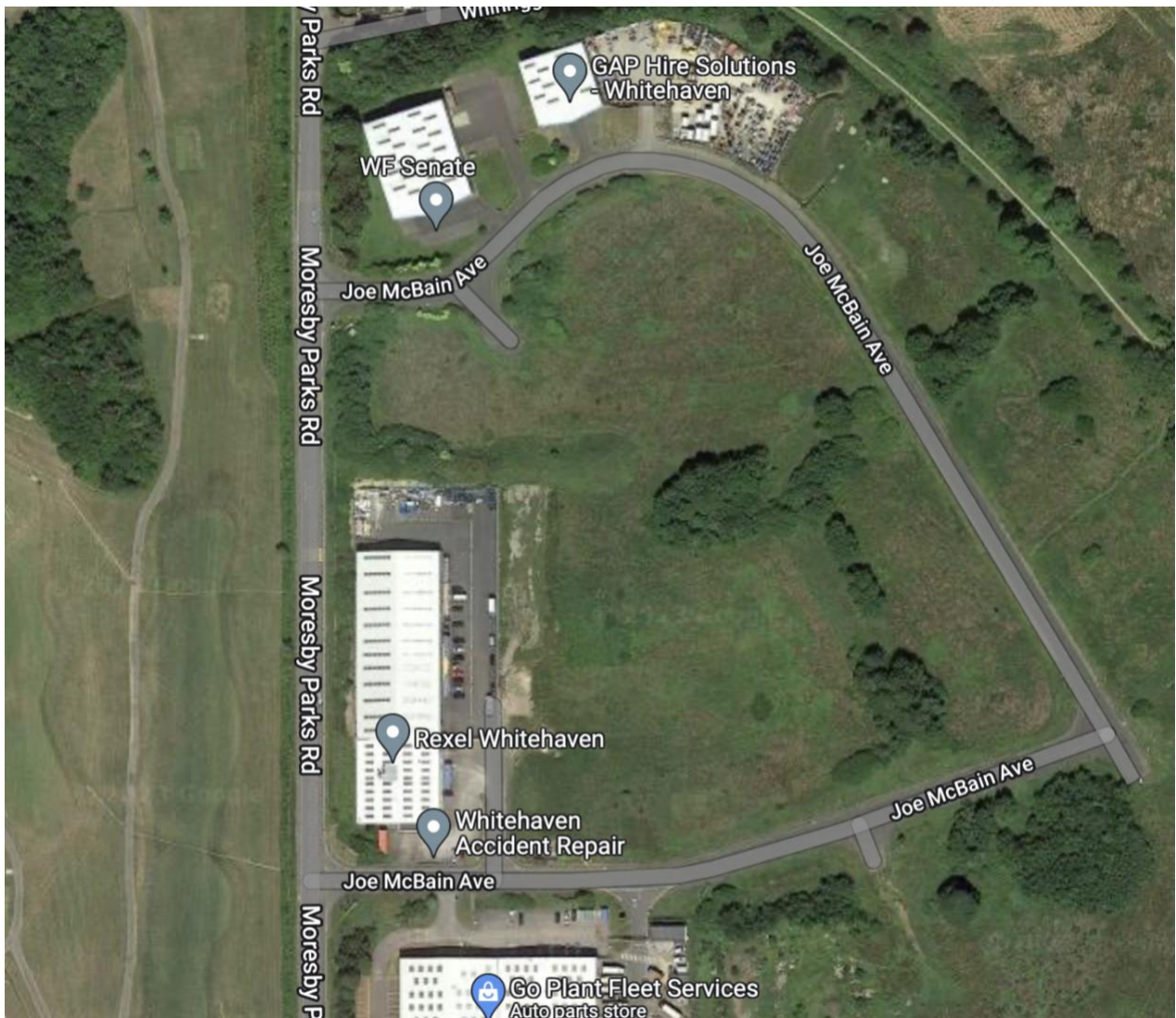


## Planning Statement – Land at Joe McBain Avenue, Moresby Parks, Whitehaven

**Proposal:** Warehouse building with associated car parking, service yard, landscaping and associated drainage infrastructure



O'Connor Fencing Limited Directors Pension Scheme

January 2023

SRE Associates - Planning and Development Consultancy



## 1.0 Introduction

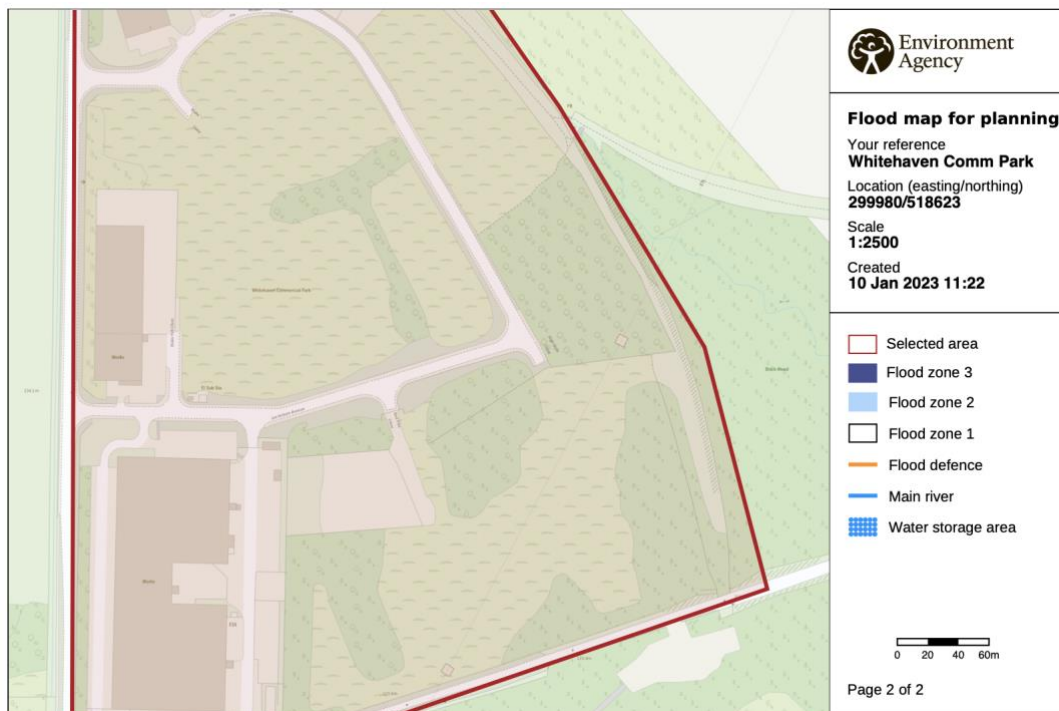
- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of a planning application for the construction of a new warehouse building.
- 1.2 The application is submitted in full. The purpose of this statement is to set out the planning case in support of the development of the site, and it should be read in conjunction with the plans submitted.
- 1.3 Section 2 of this Statement will set out the site's context, Section 3 covers the proposed development, Section 4 relates to the planning history of the site and surroundings, Section 5 will set out the planning policy context against which the application must be considered and undertakes a planning assessment of the proposed development and section 6 will draw together the conclusions.

## 2.0 The Site

- 2.1 The site is noted as land with the Whitehaven Commercial Park at Moresby Parks. It is located fairly centrally within the site, which adjoins other business park users or vacant plots on all sides. The Commercial Park itself extends to around 18 hectares.
- 2.2 It adjoins vacant commercial plots to the north and east, and the Whitehaven Accident Repair Centre building and yard to the west. It adjoins the main estate access road, Joe McBain Avenue, to the south.
- 2.3 The site is currently vacant grassed over land, sloping slightly from west to east.
- 2.4 There are no Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or Tree Preservation Order's on the site as detailed below on the Copeland GIS Map:



- 2.5 The site is located in an area that the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning has noted as Flood Zone 1, and as such have a low probability of flooding.



### 3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application is a full planning application for the proposed building on the site.
- 3.2 The application is proposed within the Whitehaven Industrial Park located at Moresby Parks, Whitehaven. The site was initially developed by the North West Development Agency in the late 1990's and more recently sold to the present owners who have a number of ongoing operations within the site alongside others. The business park is presently home to a number of local employers including Copeland Council, GAP Hire, Sellafield Site, and O'Connor Fencing.
- 3.3 The site is to be developed for warehousing to accommodate a storage demand for ongoing construction projects by suppliers at the nearby Sellafield project. The equipment stored within the warehouse will generally comprise mechanical equipment manufactured elsewhere; and transported and stored at the proposed development before call off at the Sellafield site.
- 3.4 The site is presently fallow having been developed in the late 1990's for development with the inclusion of infrastructure around the site to accommodate developments of this nature. Drainage and other services are present on the site and have been designed and installed to accommodate such developments.

- 3.5 The access to the site will be from a new point of access onto Joe McBain Avenue to the south of the site. It will have a locked gate at this access. Within the site will be parking spaces and a suitable turning area for larger vehicles.
- 3.7 The proposed building is to be 30.0m wide, with a height to the ridge of 7m. It is proposed to be finished in a light grey colour to match other buildings on the wider site. It will have a large roller shutter door to the frontage for vehicle access, with only one other pedestrian door on the side elevation. Internally, the entire building will be open plan.
- 3.8 The application site will be enclosed by a 1.8m high 'W' section palisade fencing along all boundary, which is already in place to the western boundary with the Whitehaven Accident Repair Centre.

#### **4.0 Planning history**

- 4.1 There are no recent planning application directly on the application site, however the initial site development applications are detailed below.
- 4/1991/0222 - Industrial development including use classes B1, B2 and B8 and non-food retail sales – Approved
  - 4/1991/1050 - Access and infrastructure for future industrial development - Approved

#### **5.0 Planning Policy and its application to the proposed development**

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Local Development Plan consists of policies within the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (December 2013). The policies in the following paragraphs are considered relevant to the proposed development.
- 5.3 The Local Plan sets out a long-term spatial vision and strategic objectives to support Copeland’s vision which is “Working to improve lives, communities and the prosperity of Copeland”. Although it was adopted before the updated NPPF (2021) it was adopted after the first NPPF that was published in March 2012 and therefore closely follows the principles of sustainable development, as defined by national policy and delivering sustainable housing in accordance with that policy.

#### Strategic Policies

- 5.4 **Policy ST1** of the core strategy sets out the fundamental principles that will achieve sustainable development. Amongst other things it seeks to ensure that development created a residential offer which meets the needs and aspirations of the Boroughs housing markers and is focussed on previously developed land away from greenfield sites.
- 5.5 **Policy ST2** sets a spatial development strategy whereby development should be guided to the principal settlement and other centres and sustain rural services and facilities.

- 5.6 As the development is located within the boundary of a local service centre as designated in the last adopted Copeland Local Plan, it is considered that this is a suitable location for the development and is sustainable.
- 5.7 **Policy ER4**, regarding land and premises for economic development, states as follows:  
*'The Council will maintain an adequate supply of land and floorspace for economic development by:*  
*A Allocating land for economic development over the plan period at a rate ahead of that implied by projecting past take up rates, to allow a flexible response to emerging demand*  
*B Safeguarding employment areas which are considered to be essential for meeting future strategic economic development requirements and assessing development proposals against criteria in Policy DM3*  
*C Identifying sites which are better suited to alternative uses.'*
- 5.8 The proposed development complies with the above, given that it is located on an allocated employment site, which had been allocated for such use for around 20 years. In the last adopted Copeland Local Plan 2013 – 2028, it was identified as employment land allocation E2.
- 5.9 **Policy ER6** is regarding location of employment land. This states that:  
*A Employment development will be supported in Whitehaven and Key Service Centres*  
*B Outside Whitehaven, the Key Service Centres, and the allocated sites, smaller scale economic development proposals will be considered on their merits.'*
- 5.10 It is considered that the proposal complies with the above, as the building, while not in a key service centre, is located in a Local Service Centre near to the Principal Settlement of Whitehaven, on an allocated employment site.
- 5.11 **Policy DM3** is regarding safeguarding employments sites, and states:  
*Proposals for non-employment uses on land allocated for employment or on sites in proposed safeguarded employment areas will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:*  
*A The site is no longer viable for employment use and would not make a significant contribution to the Borough's employment land requirements over the plan period; and*  
*B Applicants have considered the 5-year supply of sites and premises in the Borough and provide robust evidence that there are no suitable alternatives for the proposal; or*  
*C In exceptional circumstances the proposal provides benefits that significantly outweigh the loss of land for employment use. Alternatives which comprise a mix of uses which provide employment opportunities will be preferred to single-use residential development.'*
- 5.12 The development is considered in accordance with the above policy, given that it is a suitable industrial building on a commercial park location, which is an allocated employment site.

5.13 **Policy DM10** regarding Quality of place states:

*'The Council will expect a high standard of design and the fostering of 'quality places'. Development proposals will be required to:*

*A Incorporate a complementary mix of uses, especially within or near town centres or at sites adjacent to public transport routes*

*B Respond positively to the character of the site and the immediate and wider setting and enhance local distinctiveness through:*

*i) An appropriate size and arrangement of development plots*

*ii) The appropriate provision, orientation, proportion, scale and massing of buildings*

*iii) Careful attention to the design of spaces between buildings, including provision for efficient and unobtrusive recycling and waste storage*

*iv) Careful selection and use of building materials which reflects local character and vernacular*

*C Incorporate existing features of interest including landscape, topography, local vernacular styles and building materials; and in doing so, have regard to the maintenance of biodiversity*

*D Address vulnerability to and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by ensuring that the design, location and layout of all new development creates:*

*i) Clear distinctions between public and private spaces*

*ii) Overlooked routes and spaces within and on the edges of development*

*E Create and maintain reasonable standards of general amenity.'*

5.14 With regards to the above, the proposed development is considered to meet the policy. The proposed building is considered to be appropriate in terms of the surroundings of the commercial site in general, and the other buildings/users on the site. The materials are considered acceptable for a new commercial building, and maintain a good standard of amenity in relation to the general area and the adjacent site users, which it will not negatively impact at all.

Principle – National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") (as revised July 2021)

5.15 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that sustainable development has three objectives social, economic and environmental.

5.16 The social and economic are as follows:

*"a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being. “*

5.17 Ultimately when assessing the proposal there is a need to balance any harm caused by the proposed development with the positives of the proposal. The vacant site is considered an appropriate location for such a use proposed, and there is no impact on any residential properties due to its location, or the adjacent commercial estate users. The case put forward demonstrates how the proposal meets the policies of the Local Plan.

## 6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed use will provide a suitable use for a vacant site within a Local Service centre.

6.2 The proposed development is located on an area of land designated for such a use.

6.3 It is contended therefore that the proposed development is acceptable and is in accordance with both national and local planning policy, and therefore should be approved.

Simon Blacker MRTPI