



## PLANNING STATEMENT

**35 Boulton Road, Reading. RG2 0NH.**

**PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF PART FRONT AND REAR WITH  
ERECTION OF NEW REAR WAREHOUSE WITH ACCESS &  
PARKING ALTERATIONS.**

Prepared on behalf of: **Courtman & Co.**

AUGUST 2022

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Prepared on behalf of Courtman & Co.

**Prepared by:** Andrew Beard

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**Reference:** ABP/0292



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement report has been prepared for Courtman & Co. who occupy along with a sub-tenant 35 Boulton Road. The proposal is for the front left-hand side to be removed to open up access to the site and replace the rear warehouse with a larger higher warehouse, leaving the front remaining offices.
- 1.2 It will enable and support economic growth and prosperity of an existing local business premises with enhancement and upgrading to improve delivery access and warehouse space and height for modern needs. It reflects the general upgrading of Boulton Road industrial estate that is taking place with many surrounding larger and new buildings being constructed.
- 1.3 The application site is part of the established Boulton Road industrial area.
- 1.4 The full planning application is submitted by Planning Portal **PP-11472603** and comprises –
- Application form and certificates (Portal)
  - CIL Form 1
  - Planning Statement (ABP)
  - Ecology Phase 1 (Nov 2021) and 2 (July 2022) bat survey [Dr. Jonty Denton]
- 1.5 The following full plans are submitted (P J Architectural) –
- Location Plan OS 1:1250
  - B 3187 01 Existing GF and site plan
  - B 3187 02 Existing FF and Elevations
  - B 3187 10A Proposed GF and site plan
  - B 3187 11A Proposed Elevations
- 1.6 The planning application fee is based on a new rear building of 372m<sup>2</sup> at £2,342.20 as calculated by the Portal.

1.7 The application red line site is set out below –



Existing site with building footprint.

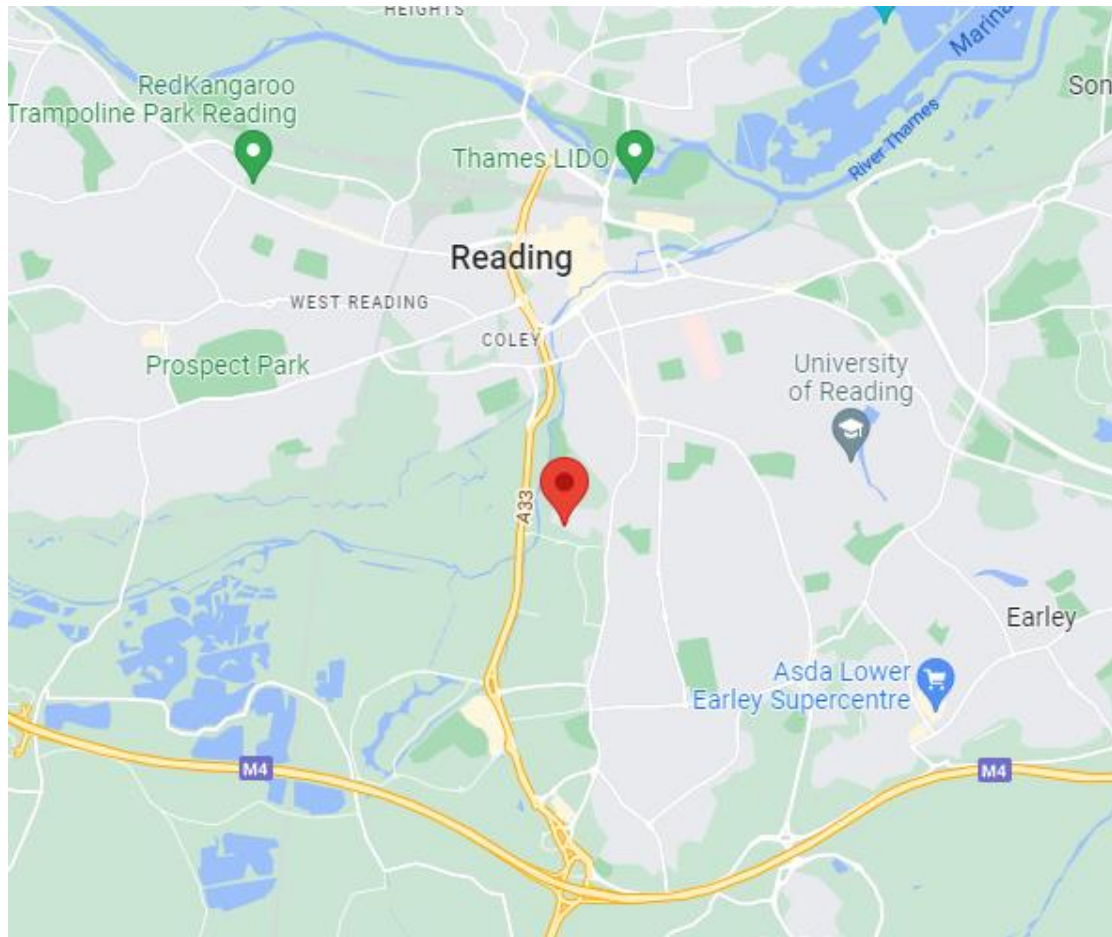
Parking is to the front behind pavement crossover

A Gunnel through the frontage provides access to the rear.

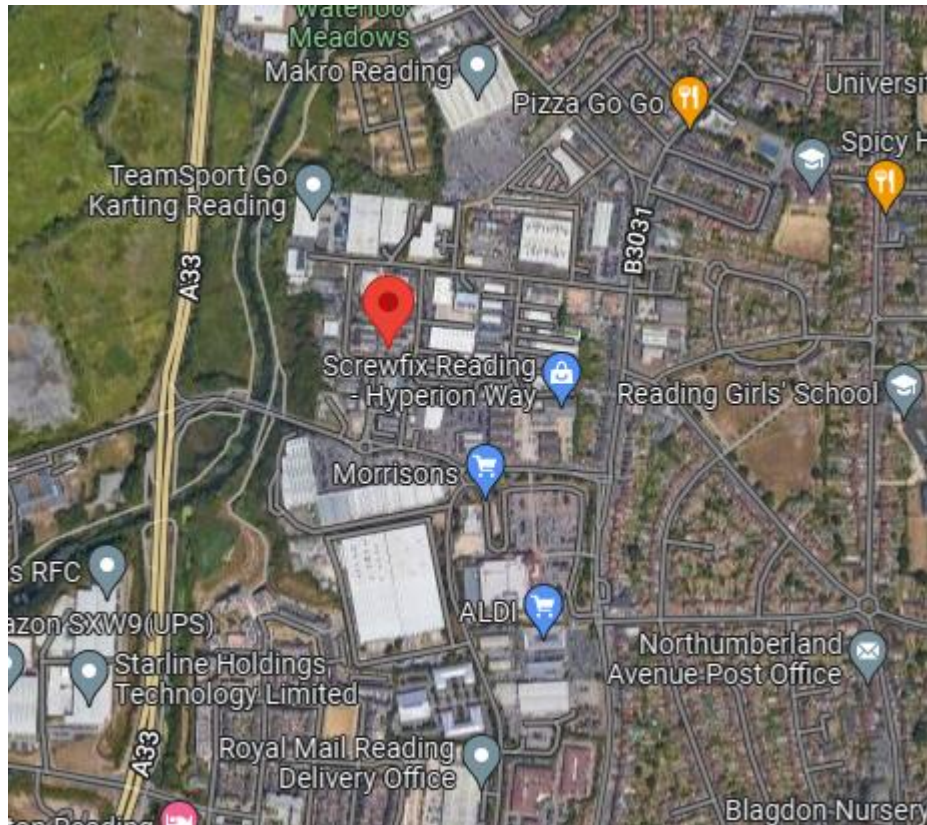
The site is surrounded by other non-sensitive employment uses.

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located south of Reading city centre and north of the M4 within a general industrial area on Boulton Road. The site is east of the A33 which links the M4 to the centre.



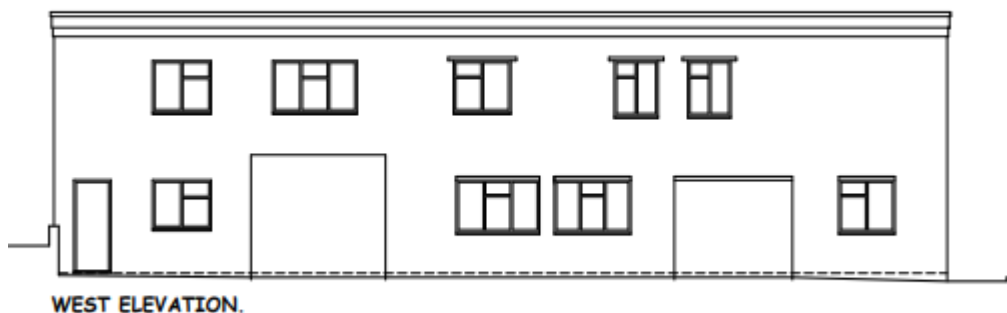
- 2.2 The A33 runs north/south and to the east is an open land belt before an established employment area, behind which moves into a residential area.
- 2.3 There are no immediate residential neighbours to the site, it is surrounded by other commercial premises.
- 2.4 The area on Boulton is generally older 1960's buildings in a wide variety of styles, scale, form with some new larger modern buildings being gradually inserted and upgraded.



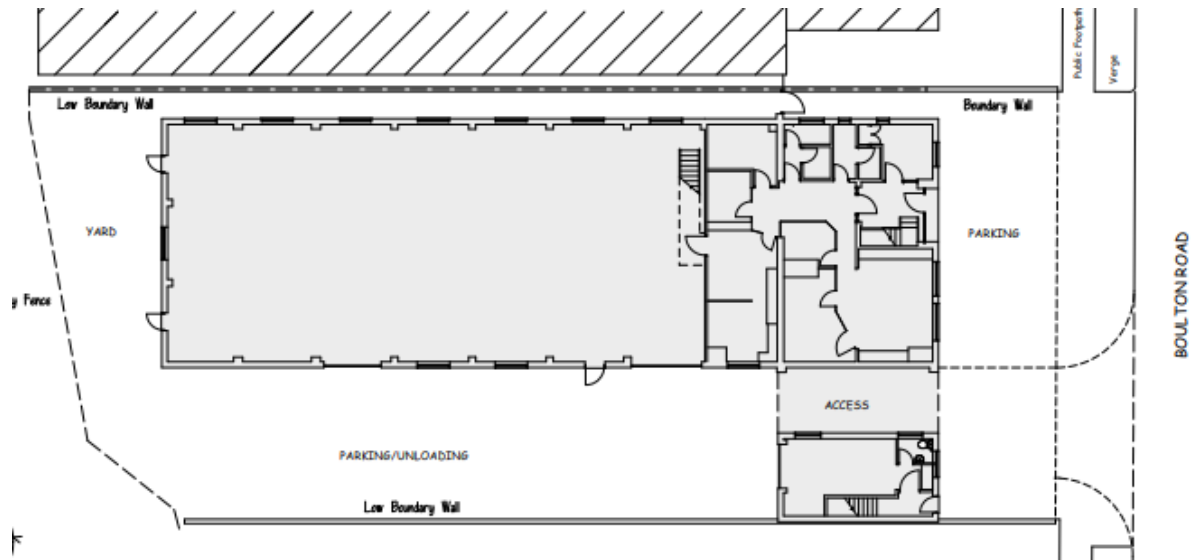


General industrial street scene

- 2.5 The building comprises an existing two storey front office building with a tunnel to access the rear and a rear warehouse area.



- 2.6 The site has a direct crossover area for frontage parking from the pavement. But the tunnel entrance to the rear is unsuitable for larger vehicles.
- 2.7 The site is used by two companies – Courtman offices at the front right hand side, and the left hand offices and warehouse by a tenant.



Looking from rear



Access to rear through front offices, often blocked and too small for goods vehicles



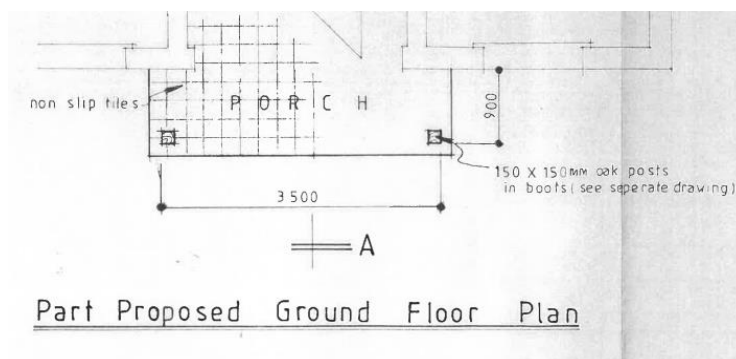
Rear warehouse

### 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The existing site has a lawful use as primarily storage and distribution (Use Class B8) along with offices (Use Class E[g]), toilets, kitchen, reception.

3.2 The planning history online comprises

|        |                                                                                                                                    |      |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 90100  | Internally illuminated fascia sign                                                                                                 | 1990 |
| 980305 | Alterations to porch and new roof                                                                                                  | 1998 |
| 021248 | Acrylic sign                                                                                                                       | 2002 |
| 040216 | Enlargement of archway with new pitched roof to provide office space in the roof                                                   | 2004 |
| 041234 | New enlarged access area, new pitched roof with room in the roof and offices over (re-submission of planning application 04/00188) | 2004 |

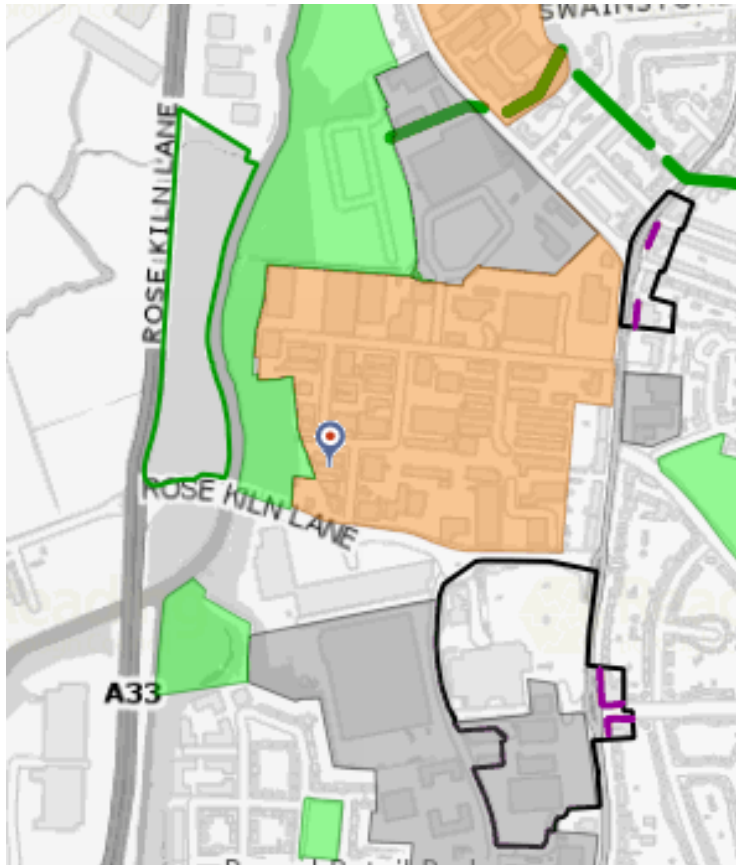




- 3.3 This roof enlargement has not been implemented, but was approved in 2004 with references to factory storage at the rear.

#### 4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 The site is located within Reading Borough Council administrative area.
- 4.2 The adopted Development Plan comprises
- Local Plan (adopted Nov 2019)
  - Proposals Map (adopted Nov 2019)
- 4.3 The site is shown in the policies map as below as “Core Employment Area policy EM2” it is within settlement, a sustainable location close to district centres with good transport links.
- 4.4 The new Local Plan to 2036 is not yet adopted so cannot be afforded any significant weight, but no changes are likely to the employment zone given the established commercial area, with ever increasing buildings being approved.



## EM2: LOCATION OF NEW EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Major office development will take place in the centre of Reading and along the A33 corridor. Office development will also take place in the other centres in the network set out in Policy RL1, but should be of an appropriate scale to those centres.

Other major employment uses, including industrial and storage and distribution will be located in the A33 corridor or in the Core Employment Areas. Non-employment uses that would support the area's economic function may be located in the Core Employment Areas where they do not result in a loss of employment land.

The Core Employment Areas are shown on the Proposals Map and set out below:

- EM2a: Green Park
- EM2b: North of the M4
- EM2c: South of Basingstoke Road
- EM2d: Bennet Road
- EM2e: North of Basingstoke Road
- EM2f: Elgar Road
- EM2g: Richfield Avenue
- EM2h: Portman Road
- EM2i: Wigmore Lane
- EM2j: Bridgewater Close
- EM2k: Sterling Way
- EM2l: Marcus Close
- EM2m: Paddock Road

**EM4: MAINTAINING A VARIETY OF PREMISES**

*A range of types and sizes of units should be present in the Borough, and proposals should maintain or enhance this range. In particular, the overall level of start-up and grow-on space should be maintained and, where possible, increased, and any loss of small units should be offset by new provision. Proposals should maintain the overall level of storage and distribution uses in the South of Basingstoke Road (EM2c).*

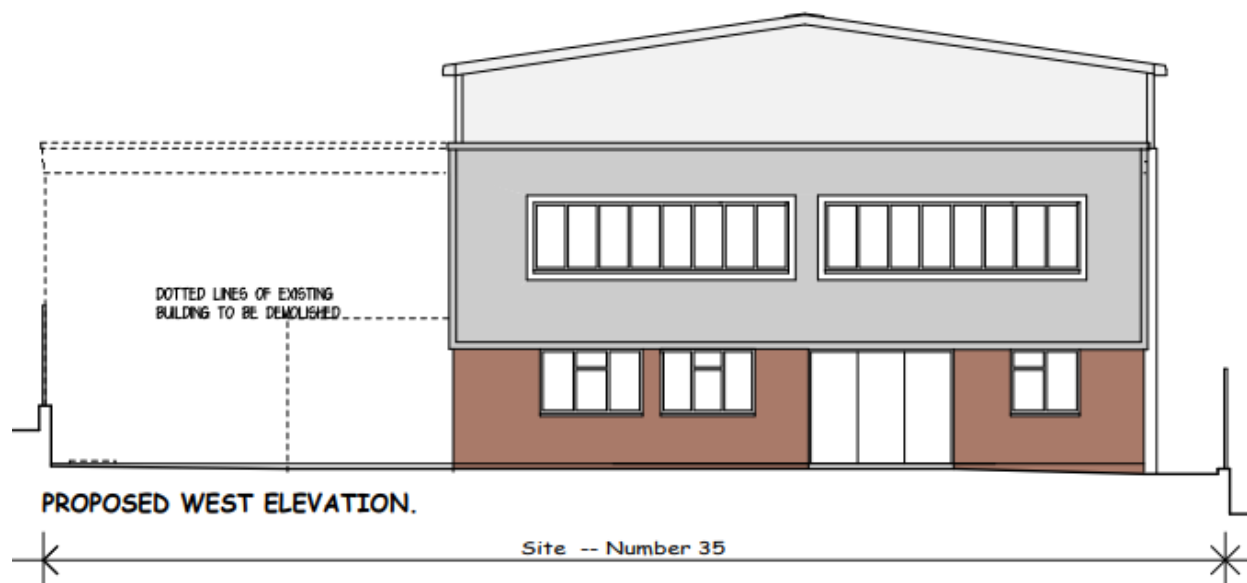
*Subject to these considerations, proposals for redevelopment of older industrial units for more flexible employment premises will be acceptable.*

- 4.5 Policy EM2 allows employment development and growth on the site.
- 4.6 Policy EM3 seeks to avoid employment land losses
- 4.7 Policy EM4 specifically support redevelopment of older industrial units. Paragraph 4.3.17 of the Local Plan reasoned justification text gives further guidance.

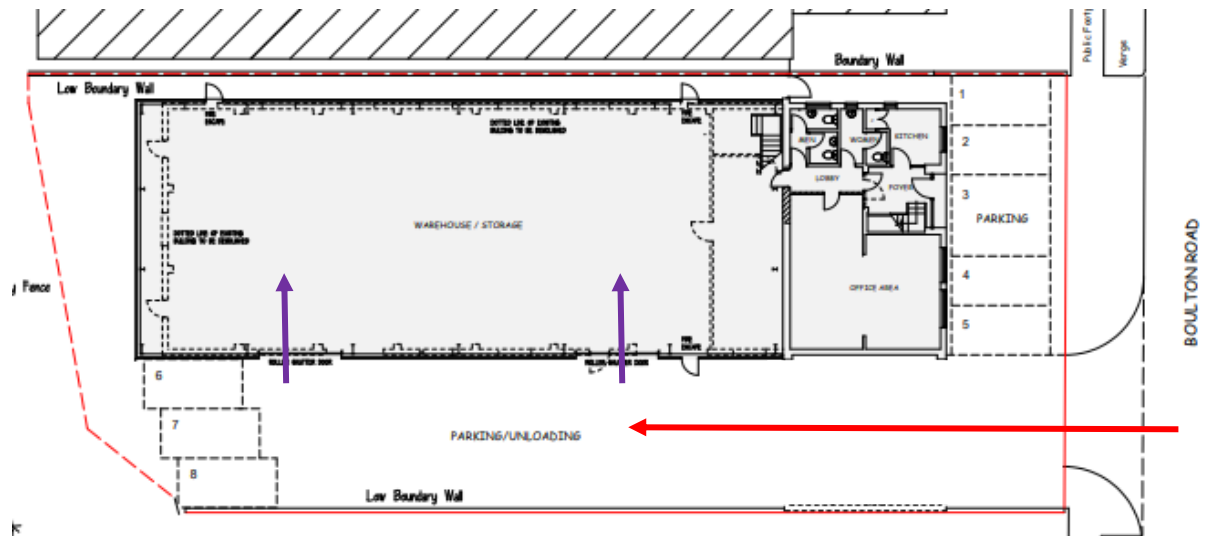
In order to ensure a healthy and balanced local economy, we need to make sure that a variety of sizes and types of employment premises are available. This variety of premises should be widened, including seeking more modern and flexible employment space in the designated industrial areas, as well as flexible office buildings in the centre and elsewhere that can easily be subdivided to provide spaces for small and growing businesses. Development should not therefore reduce the range of sites and space available, and this applies in all locations, not merely the Core Employment Areas. In particular, the South of Basingstoke Road, as defined in policy EM2, is an important location for storage and distribution uses, with good access to the major road network, and is a major contributor to the local economy. There should not be a net loss of B8 use in this location.

## 5.0 PROPOSED SCHEME

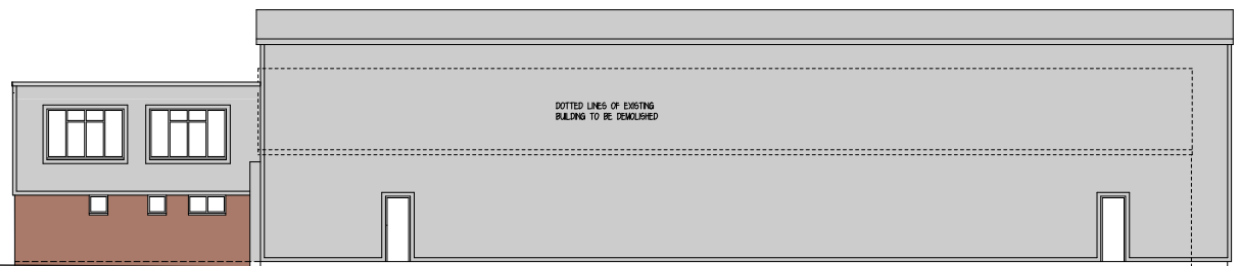
- 5.1 The scheme is to demolish the left hand side offices and gunnel to open up access to the rear.
- 5.2 The current gunnel crates significant problems for the site –
- It is too small for larger vehicles to access the rear.
  - It means servicing has to take place on the highway.
- 5.3 This will then retain the remaining front office two storey element.



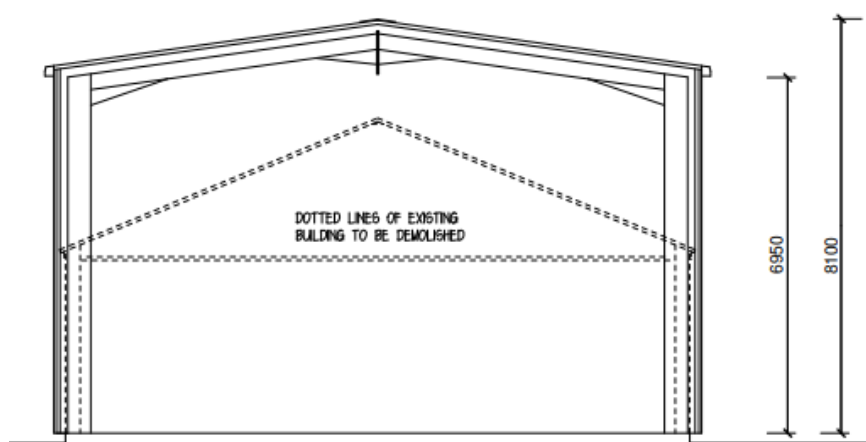
- 5.3 This will then allow a re-organised parking layout to increase spaces by 2 and allow full reversing access for lorries to the rear warehouse.



- 5.4 The other key element is to then demolish the rear warehouse which is old and not fit for purpose, with a very low roof height for modern factory/warehousing needs and replace it with a larger new warehouse (eaves 6.950m ridge 8.1m).



PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION.



WAREHOUSE -- TYPICAL SECTION A - A

## 6.0 KEY ISSUES

### Principle of development

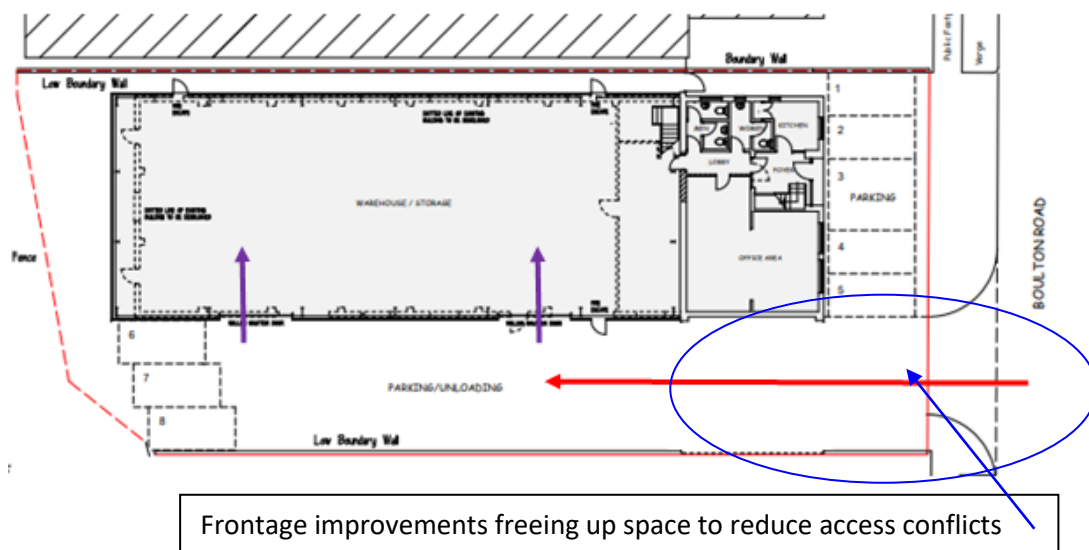
- 6.1 The site is within a safeguarded employment area and the scheme is to enhance the storage capacity for the existing building.
- 6.2 It aids economic development and prosperity and meets the aims of the Local Plan.
- 6.3 It is an existing previously developed site which is being put to full and efficient use meeting NPPF objectives.
- 6.4 The proposal will result in an increase in warehouse floor space and height, with reduced offices.
- 6.5 The proposal is fully in accordance with policies EM1, EM2, EM3, and EM4.
- 6.6 The proposal will improve modern employment floor space provision improving an old industrial site in line with policy EM4.
- 6.7 The proposed will improve parking and servicing for the employment use.
- 6.8 The proposals will significantly improve the value of the site within the employment stock for the area.
- 6.10 The overall conclusion is that the principle of development for employment provision is acceptable.

| Use element               | EXISTING             | PROPOSED          |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| B2/B8 warehouse / factory | 314.5m <sup>2</sup>  | 372m <sup>2</sup> |
| Offices E(g)              | 350.25m <sup>2</sup> | 264m <sup>2</sup> |
| TOTAL                     | 664.75m <sup>2</sup> | 638m <sup>2</sup> |

Whilst there is a small loss of floor space, it is the overall **quality** of provision delivered that is significant and delivers employment benefit.

## Transport

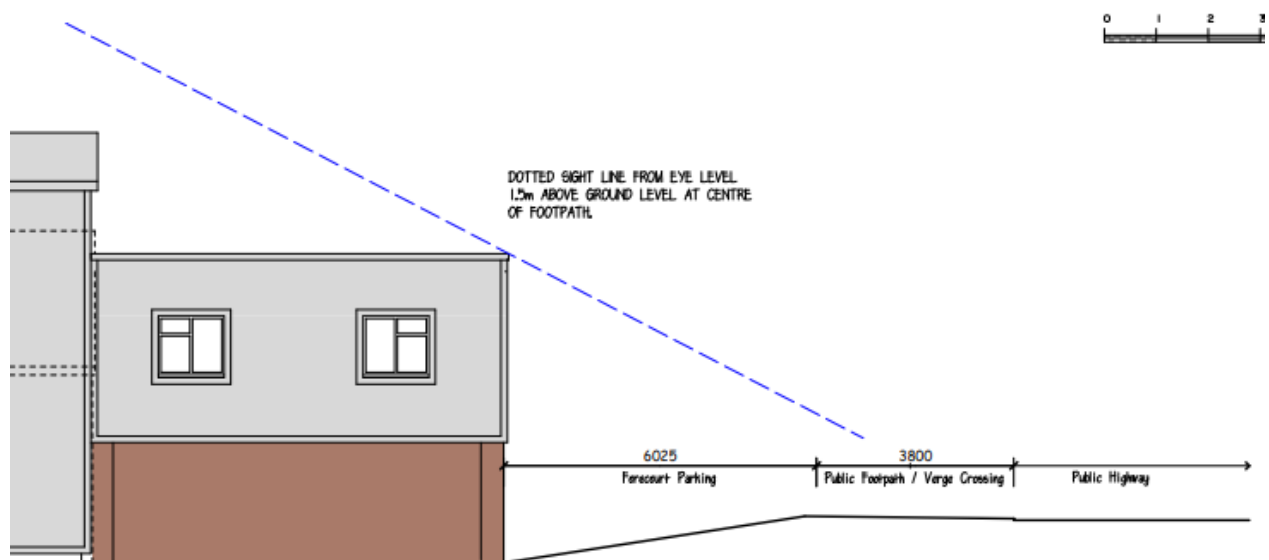
- 6.11 The site is within the existing urban settlement area and close to strategic highway routes linking the A33 to the A4.
- 6.12 The improved warehouse is well located to the strategic highway network.
- 6.13 There are existing conflicts at the site between car parking and servicing access to the rear. This scheme will open up the frontage and allow larger vehicles to service the building off road, currently not possible.
- 6.14 Whilst there is a net loss of overall floor space, the warehouse is increased and the scheme allows car parking spaces for 2 extra vehicles whilst also freeing up the access to the Highway. The minor loss of forecourt area will not adversely affect servicing of the site.
- 6.15 This delivers much improved legibility and separation at the front from parking, pedestrians and deliveries.



## Design

6.16 The proposed new rear building will increase in height, but will be barely visible behind the existing offices.

6.17 The sight lines from Boulton Road sets the increased ridge with no impact on the street scene. The new building will be appropriate new sheet industrial cladding.



6.18 The frontage will be improved by the demolition element and greater sense of space to the site frontage. The increase to the rear is reflective of the needs to upgrade older industrial units and is in context with nearby sites.

6.19 The rear building will not be dissimilar to existing heights variations between existing adjoining sites.



height larger at rear of adjoining site.



Height variations



Similar new schemes uplift the area.

- 6.20 The design is industrial and employment in nature, reflecting the existing character of the area without any adverse visual harm.
- 6.21 A full height context assessment has been prepared which shows the variety in the area and previous permissions. This is set out at Appendix A. 8.1 metres height is not out of context with the surrounding area.

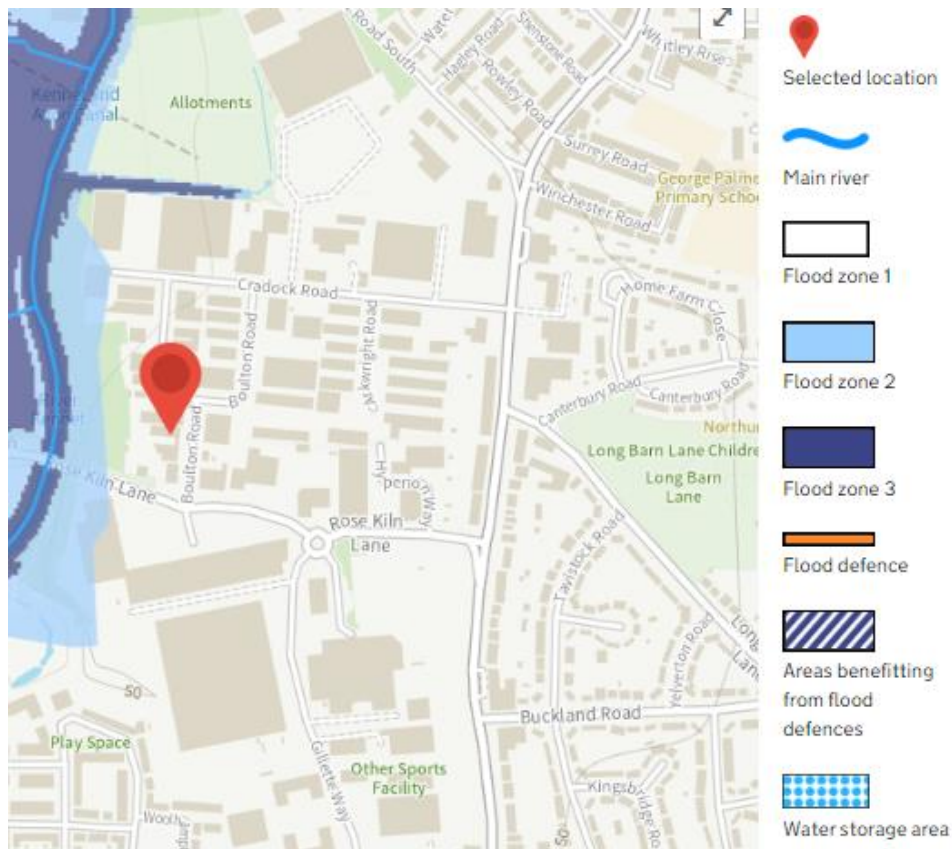
### **Ecology**

- 6.21 There is no green space or plants on site, but the existing building has the potential for bats confirmed by a phase 1 survey.
- 6.22 The phase 2 survey July 2022 identified two species on all three dusk surveys. The conclusion was the existing roof supports a small roost of Soprano pipistrelles. Therefore the works will require a mitigation strategy and low-impact license.

- 6.23 Once the permission has been issued as acceptable, a condition can ensure prior to any works that a mitigation strategy is prepared for the site, which could include new bat roost boxes within the new building and works timed for construction to avoid sensitive times.

## Drainage

- 6.24 The site is within flood zone 1 so there is low risk. The existing site is fully built upon or hard surfaced.



- 6.25 The new warehouse will not include any new additional toilets, sinks, and provides storage floor space. There are no adverse drainage implications.

## **Amenity**

- 6.26 There will be no adverse amenity impacts to adjoining neighbours as they are all commercial uses, and the site is not close to any residential properties.
- 6.27 Access to the property is from the A33 avoiding any direct contact with residential areas.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The site is a highly sustainable location within the existing urban settlement area.
- 7.2 The site is within an existing safeguarded area for economic development.
- 7.3 The new rear building will significantly improve employment stock
- 7.4 The proposals maximise and make effective use of the site to support and enhance existing business on the site.
- 7.5 The new building additional height will have no adverse impact and reflect the context of the industrial area. 8 metres is the standard prevailing height, with many larger. This proposal is 8.1m and fully in context in terms of scale.
- 7.6 The works will pose no access problems with parking and deliveries it will improve matters from the existing situation.
- 7.7 The proposal complies fully to the raft of policies in the Local Plan and there are no reasons against a presumption in favour of development.
- 7.8 The proposal specifically complies with policies EM1, EM2, EM3, and EM4.

## APPENDIX A LOCAL CONTEXT ASSESSMENT

Demonstrating variety of building design, shape and multiple instances of buildings with over 8m height within the immediate vicinity.



## **a** Brunel Retail Park, Rose Kiln Lane

Planning Permission Granted for demolition of existing retail park and erection of 2 buildings

Planning App: 201853

Full Planning Permission Granted: 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Link to Application: <https://tinyurl.com/yc6f56dp>

*Under 100m from application site*

Approved plans show a max ridge height of 15.75m, eaves 13.76m



**b** Kwik Fit & Lexus, Rose Kiln Lane

Note high eaves height

*Under 100m from application site*



## **C** 15 Boulton Road

Planning Permission Granted for construction of new build warehouse  
(Construction commenced May 2022)

Planning App: 200135

Full Planning Permission Granted: 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Link to Application: <https://tinyurl.com/2p9442ba>

*Under 100m from application site*

Approved plans show a height of 8.6m

View from 21 Boulton Road showing construction in progress



View from 10 Boulton Road showing construction in progress





## 12 Boulton Road

3 Storey Building

*Under 100m from application site*

View from 6 Boulton Road showing street scene and height of the building



**e 7 - 9 Boulton Road**

*Under 120m from application site*





## 8 Boulton Road

Warehouse height is 9.6m

Application No: 110480

Application Link: <https://tinyurl.com/56aw8mkp>

Full Planning Permission Granted: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011

*Under 120m from application site*





## Chancery Gate Business Centre, Cradock Road

*Under 200m from application site*





## Unit G, Cradock Road

*Under 200m from application site*





## Unit F, Cradock Road

*Under 200m from application site*





## Arkwright Road

Mixture of Two to Four storey buildings.

*Under 200m from application site*





## Grahams Plumbers Merchants, Craddock Road

*Under 320m from application site*

