



Design and Access Statement

On Behalf of:
Industrials REIT Ltd

In Respect of:
Rose Kiln Court,
Rose Kiln Lane, Reading



Date:
February 2022

Reference:
MA/IND/001-4/ROO2

The Team

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement pertains to a full application to redevelop an area in established use for offices with associated parking, to provide modern format flexible employment units. These are designed to meet multi-let employment requirements from light industry and general industry through to logistics.
- 1.2 The planning background for the Rose Kiln area is intrinsically linked with the construction of the A33 and since the early 1990s this corridor has been in intensive economic use. Prior to the construction of the A33, the site was in general employment use. The subject site was developed out for office use in the early 1990s and that building has now fallen vacant and has moved beyond its economic life.
- 1.3 These proposals deliver the opportunity for economic development on this established site for a scheme which reflects market signals. Early engagement with market advisers has been influential, resulting in a scheme that is deliverable and maximises opportunity for early investment and employment.
- 1.4 This application will ensure the accelerated delivery of 11 units across 2 blocks supporting flexible employment uses including B2/B8 but also light industry (Class E g iii). Site access will utilise the existing all movements junction onto Rose Kiln Lane.
- 1.5 The scheme delivers two blocks of built form, the majority of which will back on to the A33 boundary. The application site covers 0.64 hectares and following clearance it will support 11 double-height units within 2 blocks.
- 1.6 These new units would range from 256m² – 526m² individually, delivering aggregate 4080m² flexible employment floorspace with space available for

turning and parking. By consequence of the clearance of the existing 3420m² office building, the net additional floorspace will be 660m².

- 1.7 Details of parking layout and provision in terms of cycle and EV parking meet applicable local standards.
- 1.8 Whilst the scheme delivers additional floorspace and investment, this is consistent in character with the type and scale of employment uses supported upon it in the past. It represents a positive use of an accessible brownfield site in the urban area. It is also clear that the new facilities will provide high quality space both in terms of the buildings themselves but also with regard to facilities for staff including cycle parking and other amenities where feasible.
- 1.9 By consequence of sensitive design and given the justification material which has been provided, it is clear that the scheme will create no real planning issues that would approach the threshold where the presumption for sustainable economic development on an allocated site in the urban area should be impeded. The NPPF supports economic development, stating *‘significant weight should be place on the need to support economic growth through the planning system’*.
- 1.10 The application seeks to accelerate delivery of employment uses upon a highly established employment site which has the benefit of a Development Plan allocation. Indeed, the wider site has had a Development Plan allocation for an extended period and prior to that the site supported a textile factory.

2.0 The Site

- 2.1 The site covers 0.64 hectares and consists of a two-storey office building towards the north-eastern edge as well as parking, hardstanding, plant and landscaping.



- 2.2 The building (3420m²) was designed for hybrid use, but occupied by a single tenant for office use. Thames Water held the entire building for a considerable period but it has recently fallen vacant as the tenant has decided to relocate. The building is laid out to adjoin the western boundary with parking and access to its south.



- 2.3 In addition to the main office building, there are associated structures including an emergency generator and air handling equipment. By consequence of the office use, the extent of parking is considerable.

- 2.4 We also understand from archive information that the site was developed during the 1950s for employment use which was cleared during the 1970s. The office building was planned and latterly approved during the period that the A33 was constructed in the early 1990s.
- 2.5 The building which is proposed for clearance has fallen beyond its economic life and now represent poor quality accommodation that is not competitive in the marketplace and not economically unviable to put into a market-facing condition.
- 2.6 The site has an existing access onto Rose Kiln Court taken from the south-western corner of the site. The western boundary is formed by the A33 and the eastern boundary is largely governed by a watercourse (Holy Brook). Land to the south has been in established employment use and the land to the north (beyond the watercourse) is comprised of a small development of family housing that would appear of a similar age to the commercial developments to the west of the A33.



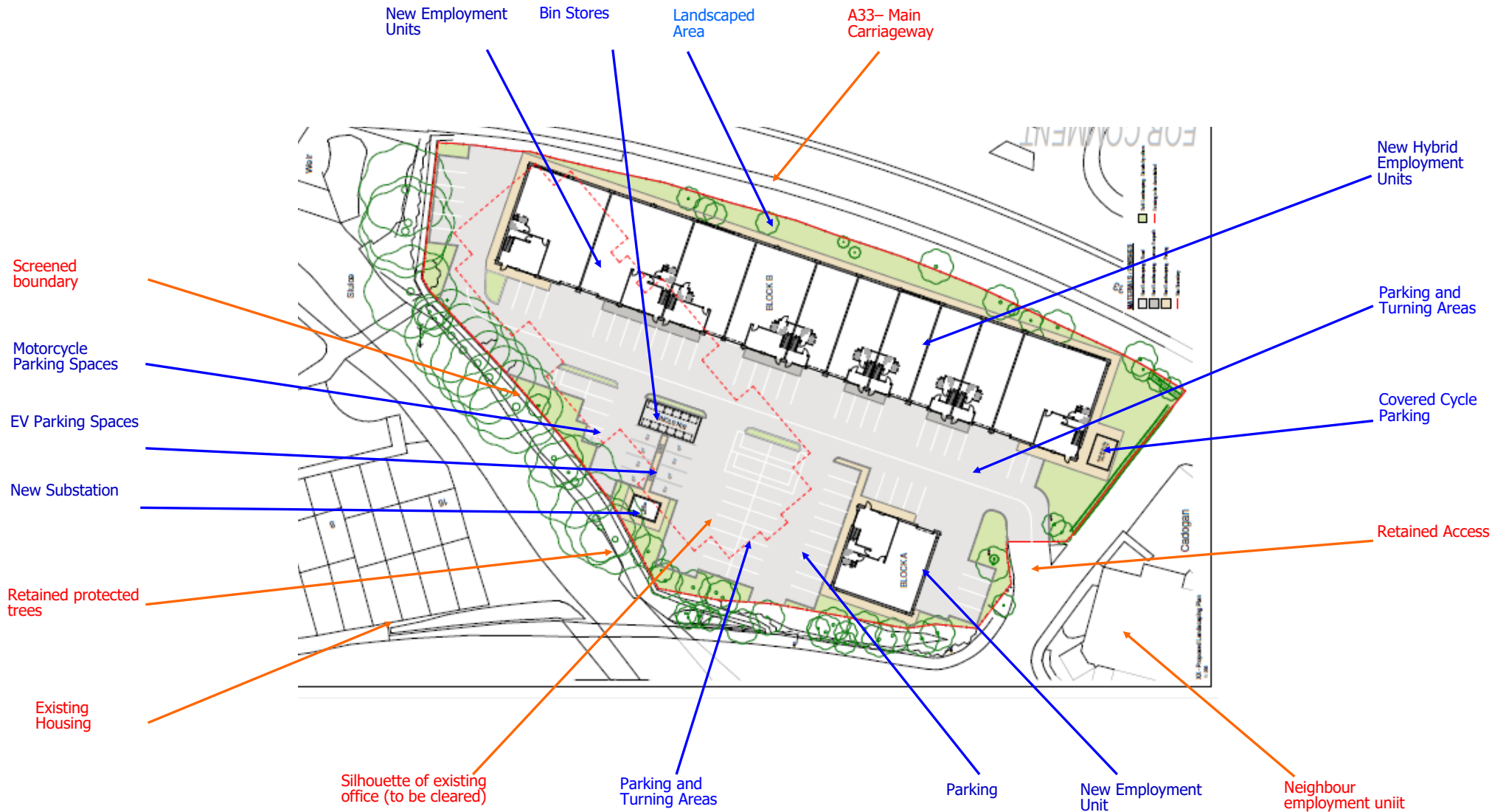
- 2.7 In terms of planning designations, the site is in established employment use. The eastern boundary to the A33 forms part of an AQMA and there are trees to the western boundary that have the benefit of a group Tree Preservation Order.

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 This application seeks to clear and redevelop an existing office block and introduce two new blocks, the larger of which backs onto the A33 boundary. The access strategy is unaffected by the proposals. The main building is located against the hard edge of the A33 to mitigate environmental nuisance and

allowing appropriate space for circulation and parking as well as shared facilities. The protected trees on the eastern boundary are retained and unaffected.

3.2 The annotated image (below) shows the proposed layout of the development, supporting information relating to the different elements of the scheme can be found on the following pages. The text highlighted red refers to contextual matters, whilst blue text pertains specifically to this application.



- 3.3 This application will provide a key block of new flexible employment units that flank the A33 boundary, facing into the site. There is an additional smaller block closer to the retained access. The extracted plan identifies 11 new employment units, alongside associated parking and servicing.



- 3.4 The scheme will provide the following within the redlined area:
- 11 no. employment units;
 - All units providing full mezzanine cover;
 - Units ranging from 256m² – 526m²;
 - Overall floorspace of 4080m²;
 - 76 parking spaces including accessible provision, plus cycle parking;
 - Space for turning movements and deliveries by commercial vehicles;
 - No material adverse impact on adjoining occupiers;
 - No adverse impact on protected trees; and
 - Other associated works.

- 3.5 The proposed units will support flexible employment uses and the design approach has sought to ensure no adverse impact on other tenants who will also benefit from improved shared facilities.

- 3.6 The scheme provides 11 employment units designed to provide flexible accommodation to meet modern requirements. Each unit has the benefit of demised car parking and straightforward facilities for servicing by commercial vehicles, as well as access to facilities for secured cycle parking and bin storage.

Engagement

- 3.7 The applicant secured approval for the conversion of the office building to residential apartments (under the Class O Prior Approval regime) in 2021 and preserves the opportunity to implement those works. At this point in time, market signals suggests that it is prudent to take forward a wider redevelopment of the subject land.

- 3.8 The applicant did enter formal pre-application dialogue with officers in connection with a residential development but this proposal is not being progressed currently. Through the officer dialogue it was confirmed that as an

allocated employment site that an economic development use would be supported in principle.

Consideration of Earlier Permissions and Uses

- 3.9 We understand that prior to the construction of the A33, the site had long-established employment uses. The character of the site and surrounding area fundamentally changed upon construction of the A33, and it is now the case that the majority of built development that adjoins the A33 and Rose Kiln Lane is of commercial character and provides larger buildings and areas of hardstanding.
- 3.10 The existing building was developed in the early 1990s pursuant to a planning approval and its design demonstrates a flexible approach where it could accommodate a range of economic uses (both by type of use and with potential for sub-division) subject to market demand.
- 3.11 In practice, the building was taken on by Thames Water and used entirely as an office until they vacated during last year. In addition to the main building which is a 2 storey structure with a pitched roof, there are ancillary structures including an emergency generator and air handling equipment.
- 3.12 The parking demand for an office use for the current 3420m² building is considerable and reflects the current layout. It is worth noting that the marketplace for office uses has changed markedly since the building was designed, now driven towards town centre accommodation or business park locations. In reality, the office building on this site does not align with either of those market sectors so its future use is impeded.
- 3.13 During occupation by Thames Water, the site supported valuable employment for the local area. Regrettably by virtue of site layout, the extent of screening to the key A33 boundary was limited. The proposed new build will continue the

design philosophy to provide flexible employment space but it will better serve market requirements to provide good quality accommodation likely to sustain considerable employment. Careful siting provides, there is much better screening to the A33 and ensures no impact to the protected trees on the Rose Kiln Court boundary close to Holy Brook.

Quantum

- 3.14 The proposed development effectively comprises 5 key elements, these being:
- Clearance of existing 3420m² office building;
 - Total new floorspace of 4080m²;
 - Main block providing 10 hybrid employment units flanking the A33;
 - Additional smaller block closer to the site access; and
 - Areas for parking (76 spaces) and servicing.
- 3.15 Whilst there is an increase of floorspace as compared to the existing, it is of similar magnitude and there is no substantive change in height. The new build provides separation from housing and screening to/from the A33 gateway.
- 3.16 The scheme will provide 4080m² of floorspace which will be laid out over 11 new units and the proposed layout shows 76 parking spaces (including accessible).
- 3.17 Comparative to the existing, this represents an increase of 660m², largely through the new build unit in the southern part of the site. As mentioned, this site has established employment use and we understand that the historic use (prior to the construction of the A33) supported more intensive employment.
- 3.18 It is also important to note that the extent of parking needed is much lower than the existing, which also reflects the transport analysis which shows a reduction in the number of vehicular trips associated with the new use.

Access principles

- 3.19 In terms of vehicular access, the site benefits from having an existing point of access that provides an all movements junctions onto Rise Kiln Lane and this is retained and unaffected.
- 3.20 This is a highly established employment site, close to other similar uses with good proximity to local amenities and pedestrian facilities. The scheme provides level access from all parking areas including designated disabled parking spaces to new units. Whilst planning for commercial traffic and car-borne staff is important, strong access solutions promote pedestrian and cyclist uses.
- 3.21 Access for staff movements and servicing are demonstrably fit for purpose. The arrangements for servicing and parking are set out in more detail in the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 3.22 The application site has been found accessible by a range of transport modes and acceptable in transport terms. The proposal would result in an effective servicing regime, adequate parking and increased provision for non-car modes (such as secured cycle parking) and new facilities for EV parking.
- 3.23 The transport statement concludes that there could be no clear evidence of any significant adverse impact upon the operation of the highway network that would warrant refusal, and the improvements to facilities for non-car modes weigh in favour of the development.

Choice of Materials

- 3.24 The scheme provides a consistent design language predicated upon the use of a limited palette of quality materials. The concept drawing shows a quality flexible space meeting occupier needs and an improved aspect for adjacent occupiers.



Landscaping Approach

- 3.25 The development will ensure the retention of the strongly landscaped boundary to Rose Kiln Court including protected trees.
- 3.26 The application is accompanied by a Landscape Scheme and this takes the opportunity to soften the development edge through landscaping and boundary treatments. The new build provides effective screening to the key A33 gateway..



4.0 Planning Policy

- 4.1 The submitted Planning Statement sets out in greater detail the planning policy context for the application site and the proposals at national, regional and local level. This document therefore concentrates on the Design and Access policies relevant to this proposal.

Policy	Requirement	Proposal
National Policy		
NPPF	Requires sustainable development which is accessible and integrated into the urban form.	Development is accessible by a variety of means of transport and combines a multitude of uses within close proximity of a large residential population. Intensifies the use of a underused brownfield site that is currently in a poor state and is poor visually. Will upgrade site visually and improve the streetscene.
	Sustainable transport principles	Development is accessible by a variety of means of transport, with bus stops located along Springfield Way. The scheme provides for cycle parking, pedestrian routes into and the site and car parking for staff inclusive of accessible parking.

5.0 Design Analysis

- 5.1 Industrials REIT has held this land since 2018. The applicant recognises that there is no straightforward route to reusing the existing vacant building for viable employment uses and therefore its redevelopment becomes the most obvious option to ensure that the site provides positive contribution to the local economy.
- 5.2 Through engagement with market advisers it has become clear that there is latent requirements for a range of occupiers and that an emerging sector is space for businesses that require hybrid space that provides for production and office uses, as well as storage with associated staff areas. The scheme proposes double height spaces that will deliver high quality flexible space that meets these existing requirements and this emerging demand.
- 5.3 Whilst the recent and more historic use of the site has been more intensive in terms of numbers of employees and parking demand, this proposal seeks to marry the need to provide local people opportunities for employment whilst ensuring that the development is sympathetic and acceptable in planning terms.
- 5.4 This scheme should be recognised as the positive outcome which can catalyse significant investment and deliver more than 115 jobs and substantial boost to the local economy on this site with a longstanding Development Plan allocation.
- 5.5 This section describes the key design issues and processes which have informed the proposal subject of this application.

Design Evolution

- 5.6 The applicant could straightforwardly have decided to look to remodel the existing buildings for employment use, rejecting the opportunity to deliver higher quality employment space that would provide better environmental performance and more closely align to occupier requirements to maximise their outputs.

- 5.7 That approach would have essentially modernised the existing building and try to sub-divide it to deliver multi-let employment uses. This would have inevitably delivered a reduced quantum of space and no contribution to any other planning objectives. In reality, such an approach would deliver poorer quality accommodation that we know would not meet emerging tenant requirements.
- 5.8 Whilst market signals for employment uses in this location have previously been poor, demand levels are now strong and this is an ideal opportunity to take forward these uses and bring modern flexible units to the market.
- 5.9 Another sub-option could have been to redevelop the existing office building and replace it with new hybrid units in broadly the same location. That would have been straightforward to some degree by way of precedent but would inevitably deliver less overall employment floorspace than is now proposed.
- 5.10 However, the design team has concluded that the “re-creation” of the existing layout does not reflect modern requirements and would mean that these new employment units would have been impeded by way of:
- Lack of available space for turning and loading of commercial vehicles;
 - Lack of choice in terms of unit sizes;
 - Open aspect to the busy A33 gateway;
 - Inevitable pressure on TPO trees to the boundary; and
 - Proximity to residential uses and potential for constrained operation.
- 5.11 As set out earlier, the applicant did engage with the Council in terms of a potential residential redevelopment of the site and it was evident that there was a strong preference for the site to support economic development. This application therefore responds to this advice, as well as market-facing advice.
- 5.12 The scheme proposes economic development and the siting of the new buildings

create greater separation from residential uses and provides valuable screening to the A33 to the immediate east. The new build provides much better quality accommodation more likely to sustain considerable employment, whilst providing the screening function. The view below shows the building from the A33 travelling south, but the screening effect in the opposite direction would be very effective.



5.13 The proposed layout provides a range of small and mid-format units well aligned to market requirements. The scheme is designed to maximise flexibility to reflect occupier requirements, both by way of internal sub-division and also the potential to use the large first floor aperture for either glazing or direct shuttered access.

5.14 The images below show the same part of the building, with the image to the right showing an option where a given unit would have first floor loading access using a roller shutter. This innovative solution could optimise the economic potential for these units for small-scale distribution and its attractiveness to tenants.



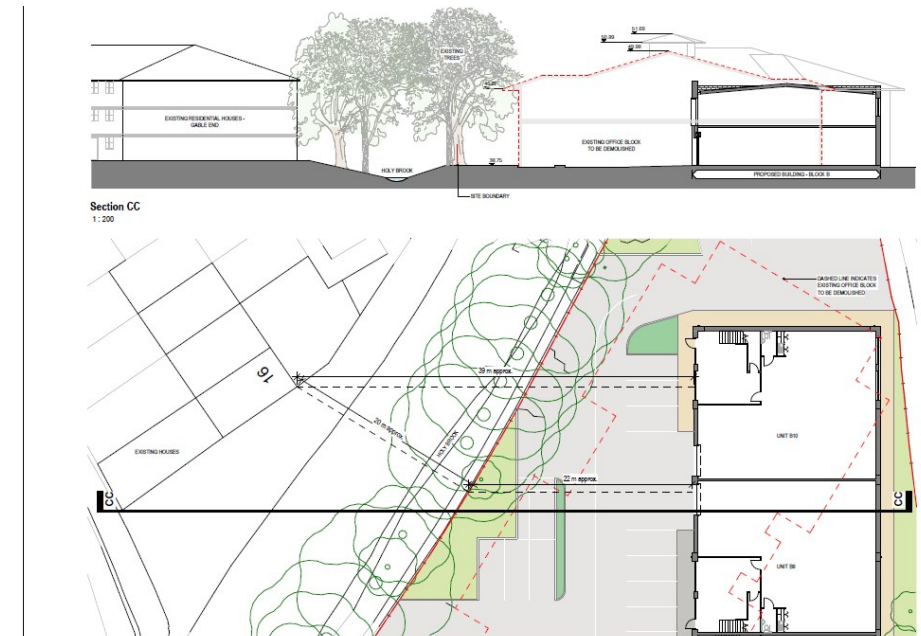
5.15 Early focus on providing high quality adaptable units provides the opportunity for early occupation and greater contribution to the local economy. Sustainable economic development aligns directly with planning objectives.

Character

5.16 This is a proposal to intensify the employment use on an allocated site, but the general magnitude of usage is similar to existing and lower than the historic use. We note the existing building could support sub-division and other uses so the concept of multi-let industrial is not new. There is no significant change to general character and the principle of employment uses is well established.

5.17 The proposal seeks consent for these new units to support uses ranging from light industry to small-scale storage and distribution. By virtue of changes to the Use Classes Order we now need to refer to Use Class E (G) (iii) as well as B2 and B8.

5.18 Through careful consideration of layout and building orientation, the proposal provides the opportunity for the job-creating development at Rose Kiln Court to



occur with greater separation to residential uses and to screen the site (and the residential areas beyond) from road noise displaced from the A33.

Enclosure

- 5.19 The siting of these units has tended towards the eastern periphery of the site, and this provides stronger enclosure against the very open and dominant A33 corridor. The revised layout also moves the building south which minimises the impact of the northern edge of the site close to residential uses and by virtue of its irregular shape presents challenges in terms of servicing and parking.
- 5.20 As shown below, the interface distances between the proposed buildings and the residential uses is virtually doubled, making this a much more comfortable relationship. With this alongside the suppression of highway noise, this will provide benefits to residential amenity.
- 5.21 On a site management level, it is also intended that the site will benefit from active uses and natural surveillance to further deter potential crime or anti-social behaviour, and give reassurance to site users.
- 5.22 The above measures, alongside lighting and CCTV, result in a trading environment which is attractive, and is likely to reassure those using the site and minimise the prospect of anti-social behaviour.

Ease of Movement

- 5.23 Accessibility for service vehicles has been designed to ensure that it does not impede access for other site visitors and minimise conflict with other vehicles.
- 5.24 The scheme provides shared facilities for accessible parking, secured cycle parking and a commitment for passive infrastructure for EV charging points. Cycle parking will be provided through the site and located to ensure accessibility and security.

Adaptability

- 5.25 In terms of the physical composition of proposed units, these provide a range of unit types and sizes which allow for the myriad requirements of potential end occupiers now, and with scope for them to grow both in that unit, or to decant into other units as their business requirements change.
- 5.26 The scheme is designed to maximise flexibility to reflect occupier requirements, both by way of internal sub-division and also the potential to use the large first floor aperture for either glazing or direct shuttered access. This innovative solution optimises the economic potential for these units for small-scale distribution. Early focus on providing high quality adaptable units facilitates early occupation. Sustainable economic development aligns directly with planning objectives.

Waste Management

- 5.27 The tenants will segregate their waste into refuse and recyclables which will be stored in shared bin storage areas on the site until it can be collected (to be a lease obligation) under a commercial collection contract

Servicing Routes

- 5.28 The approval assumes that servicing movements will continue to use the existing access, with adequate space within the site for turning so that they can complete their visit and then leave in forward gear. This is shown in detail within the submitted Transport Statement and tracking analysis undertaken accordingly.

Other Matters

- 5.29 The submission material shows that there is no requirement to consider acoustic mitigation or any other controls in terms of matters such as air quality, ecology, site drainage and sustainable design.

6.0 Sustainability

- 6.1 This section outlines how the scheme incorporates consideration of sustainable building design and operation. Whilst the detailed design of mitigation measures is subject to resolution of future Building Regulations applications and the specific needs of end operators, it does set out how such measures can contribute towards the delivery of these broader objectives set out in planning policy, as well as the corporate objectives of end occupiers.
- 6.2 The commercial development is designed to deliver environmental performance in excess of that required by current Building Regulations. This is of course an evolving discipline, responding to myriad sources of pressure (from the environmental movement, to the public and their elected representatives, which then feeds through to policy).
- 6.3 Specifically, these objectives direct developers to minimise the use of resources through the construction and operational phases of development, and in so doing maximising the efficiency of all materials and plant used. The construction will minimise the use of wet trades and the development's appearance will be modern with roof lights to reduce the need for artificial lighting.
- 6.4 The proposal fully complies with the applicable requirements of the NPPF. It is recognised that the planning system needs to support the delivery of the timetable for reducing carbon emissions from domestic and non-domestic buildings. The NPPF places importance upon ensuring that tackling climate change becomes a key objective of the planning system.

Industrial's REIT Policy on Sustainable Development

- 6.5 Industrials REIT recognises the role it can play as a leading developer and its policy on sustainable development will ensure that all new developments will be built to

meet Building Regulations and place a landlord requirement upon their end occupiers to comply with emerging and more stringent requirements.

- 6.6 The new units proposed will use considerably less carbon than an equivalent standard development built under the original planning consent, both in terms of construction and into operation. Measures to minimise energy use include using insulated materials and passive infrastructure for EV charging. The scheme also includes measures to reduce reliance on the private car by providing secured cycle spaces plus renewable measures to reduce net energy demand.
- 6.7 We also confirm that the developer would intend to complete the development such that it could demonstrate compliance with BREEAM Very Good.

Measures

- 6.8 Whilst the detailed design of measures will be key matters for future Building Regulations applications, Stenprop Industrials is committed to ensuring that its energy demand aspirations can be achieved. These will of course be a combination of active physical measures, more passive measures and behavioural responses.
- 6.9 At this stage, we envisage that the scheme will provide PV panels on the roofspace of new units subject to viability and alignment with operator needs.
- 6.10 Additional measures can be agreed at detailed design stage, and these further mitigation measures will be informed by operator requirements. Nonetheless, it is important to set out that these provide opportunities to accrue substantial reductions in net energy demand.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 Having set out the key principles underpinning the development, the section below considers whether the development responds to them. In reality, these remain sound and indeed reinforced by the changes had through design evolution.

Provide employment uses that meet an identified need.

7.2 The historic use of the site supported considerable built form and provided traditional employment. Following construction of the A33 and associated clearance of the buildings in its immediate corridor, the site was developed out with the existing building and used by a single occupier for office purposes.

7.3 The tenant decision to relocate at the end of their lease, alongside structural change in the economy has meant that demand for these types of space have fallen and local economies have had to grasp the opportunity to provide new facilities to meet identified needs and emerging opportunities.

7.3 The building which currently occupies the Rose Kiln Court site is of mixed quality and well beyond its economic life. It must be replaced to respond to the latent demand for good quality space in this location. There is strong market demand and this character of use is approved.

7.4 The scheme will provide 4080m² of flexible employment space and we estimate that this will support 115 FTE net additional permanent jobs; and 67 construction jobs over a 12 month build period.

Regenerative Boost

7.5 In terms of the monetary impact of this development it will comprise:

- £4.5 million per annum permanent boost to the wage economy;
- Multiplier benefits for local businesses;

- Reduction in Benefits payments by putting claimants into work;
- Business Rates income estimated at £272k per annum.

Provide for effective movement, accessible to occupiers and site users.

7.6 The development provides a logical layout which provides adequate space for commercial units and their associated parking and servicing. Facilities are also provided for cycle parking. The site is highly accessible by foot, cycle, bus and car.

Ensure that development does not result in harmful impact on amenity.

7.7 Careful consideration has been given to the siting of proposed units and uses, servicing arrangements and car parking. This has sought to minimise adverse impact in terms of noise nuisance or light spillage to protect residential amenity.

Allow for design that incorporates materials, techniques and technology to minimise energy consumption and promote sustainable principles.

7.8 Industrials REIT design principles ensure that the materials chosen are sustainable and that opportunity has been taken to minimise energy use and support renewable technologies. The scheme provides cycle parking and infrastructure for EV charging.

