



ET Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Clydebridge Chemicals Ltd

7 Darwin Close

Reading, RG2 0TB

Erection of 2no. detached storage buildings

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of 2no. detached storage buildings ancillary to the operation of the site.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by Hives Architects:
 - 2821-001-P2 'Existing Site Location and Block Plan'
 - 2821-012-BP5 'Proposed Plans and Elevations'

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises a light industrial facility 3,441 sqm in size, operating as 'Clydebridge Chemicals Ltd'. The company produces specialist products for a wide range of industries, including (but not limited to) agricultural, construction, engineering, medical and pharmaceutical processes.
- 2.2 The site is located at the terminus of Darwin Close, and consist of a primary main building (the factory), 9no. existing silos sited on the northeast corner, and hardsurfacing providing parking in addition to outdoor storage and access.
- 2.3 The site forms part a wider expansive commercial and industrial corridor, within the southern part of the defined settlement of Reading, and with access to the A33 to the west.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Summarised below are previous application submissions made in respect of operations related to the industrial unit. These demonstrate that such an industrial unit has operated on site for a significant amount of time, with increasing demand for on-site facilities.
- 3.2 Application reference 210493 for '2 x additional 45,000 litre storage tanks to hold non-hazardous materials'. Approved, 30 June 2021.
- 3.3 Application reference 101583 for 'New Detached Storage Building and Lean to Covered Storage Area to side of factory'. Approved, 18 April 2010.
- 3.4 Application reference 090659 for 'Removal of old tank and installation of two new bitumen tanks with storage capacity of 60m³ each with associated pipework and fittings and extension of existing brick bund wall'. Approved, 31 July 2009.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use, Amount & Layout:** The proposal comprises the erection of 2no. detached single storey buildings of different sizes. The larger garage building would be sited on the northwestern corner of the site, with the smaller shed building on the southwestern corner.
- 4.4 The buildings would be used for storage purposes ancillary to the main use of the site as a light industrial use, and would provide sheltered cover for materials currently being stored outdoors and thus exposed to the elements.
- 4.5 No change of use of land is proposed, as the storage buildings would be ancillary to the light industrial use of the site.
- 4.6 **Scale & Appearance:** The larger ‘garage-style’ store would measure 3.0 metres in total height, and 6.0 metres in both width and depth. The smaller store would measure 2.8 metres in height, with a depth and width of 4.0 metres.

- 4.7 The two buildings would be similar in appearance, both containing dual-pitched roofs and of a square footprint. They would be built of 'juniper green' colour coated steel sheeting.
- 4.8 **Landscaping:** No changes to landscaping arrangements are proposed as part of this application.
- 4.9 **Access & Parking:** No changes to existing access or parking arrangements are proposed as part of this application.

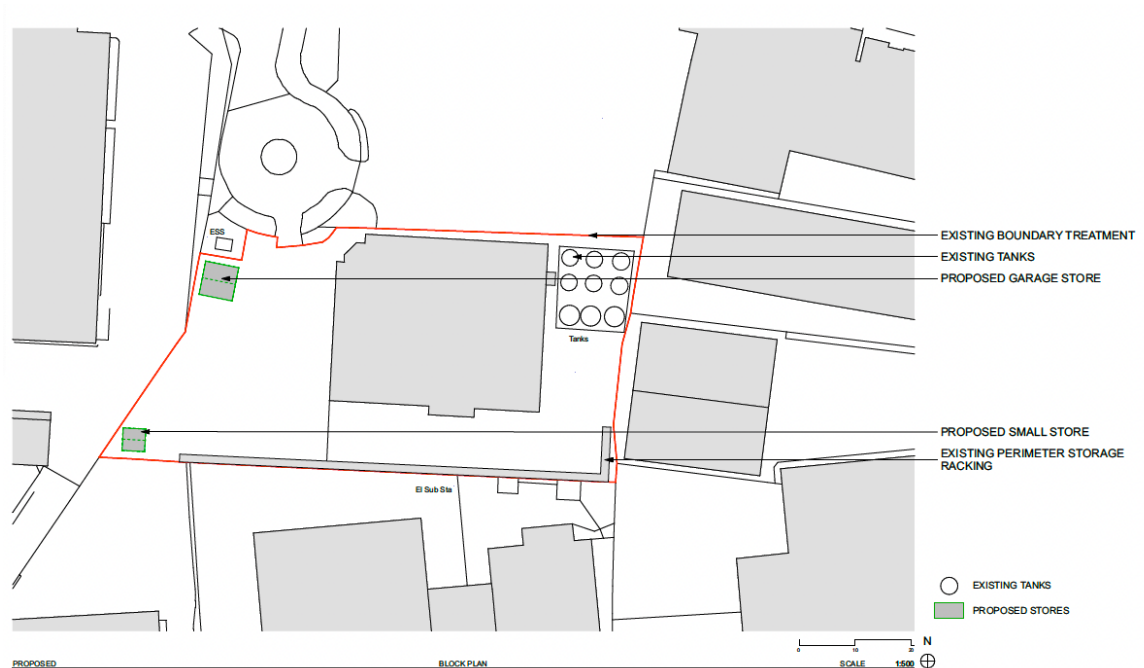


Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.3 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and "at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible". Paragraph 123 of the NPPF comments that planning should "make effective use of land" in "meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions".
- 5.4 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.5 Paragraph 131 identifies that "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities".
- 5.6 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and sets out that "New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use" (para 109).
- 5.7 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 5.8 Reading Borough Council's Development Plan relevant to the proposal comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) ('LP') alongside the associated Policies Map.
- 5.9 The site is located within the defined settlement of Reading. Additionally, it lies within a 'Core Employment Area' as identified on LP Policy EM2 and the Policies Map.
- 5.10 LP Policy CC1 establishes that a positive approach will be taken to considering development proposals, in accordance with the remainder of the Development Plan and national policy (the NPPF).
- 5.11 LP Policy EM3 states that within Core Employment Areas, the overall level of employment land shall be maintained, and that proposals which would result in the loss of such land will typically be resisted.
- 5.12 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should encourage the conditions to enable businesses (of all types) to invest, expand and adapt. It goes on to state that significant weight is to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, both for local businesses and wider development opportunities.
- 5.13 The proposal would provide secure and covered storage for materials connected to the industrial works undertaken on site. These materials are currently stored outdoors and thus unsecure and open to the elements. The existing factory building does not have the space to store these materials.
- 5.14 By providing secure, indoor storage, the proposal would support the continuing operation and productivity of the premises, as well as contributing towards the long-term economic sustainability of the business.

- 5.15 In turn, the above demonstrates that the proposal would provide a contribution towards the ongoing employment of staff within the site. The proposal would therefore fully comply with LP Policy EM3.
- 5.16 In view of the proposal meeting employment and economic objectives, combined with the siting of the proposal and site within an established industrial area, the proposal is presented to be comprehensively acceptable in principle. Therefore, remaining matters for review relate to impact upon the character of the area, and amenities of neighbouring occupants, etc. These are reviewed below.
- 5.17 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** LP Policy CC7 states that all development must be of high design quality, which maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The policy goes on to state that this is in regard to a number of measures, including layout, density, scale and architectural detail.
- 5.18 The site and its surroundings are characterised by a dense, industrial pattern of development and style of building design, with minimal soft landscaping, as is typical for such a land use. The nearest residential properties to the site lie to the north beyond Commercial Road, and are not considered to have a character influence on the site itself.
- 5.19 The proposals would be sited within the northwestern and southwestern corners of the site. These provides an ideal location for the garage building that is in close vicinity to both the entrance to the factory building, as well as to the site access. The shed building would then be sited in the far southwestern corner of the site, where existing outdoor storage is focused. Furthermore, these positions would avoid any loss of parking; currently within these locations are open air storage.

5.20 The proposed buildings would be subordinate to the main factory building – as demonstrated by their proposed height and overall scale. They would be of a straightforward design, and this is deliberate in the context of the industrial surroundings, where a more detailed style would potentially visually jar with the surroundings.

5.21 The proposed dual-pitched would reflect that of the main roof of the factory building, and the proposed material finish is intended to be sympathetic to the electrical sub-station bordering the garage development to the immediate north.



Figure 2: The proposed storage buildings

5.22 Additionally, the height and overall footprint of the buildings is intended to provide minimum building sizes to meet their required purpose, whilst also avoiding the creation of a visually dominant form in the streetscene of Darwin Close, particularly in the context of the aforementioned electrical substation.

5.23 In achieving the above, the proposal would therefore maintain the appearance of the character of the area, and provide a modern and sympathetic appearance and scale of development to complement

the site. The proposal would therefore accord with both LP Policy CC7 and the NPPF's policies on achieving high quality design.

- 5.24 **Trees and Landscaping:** The site does not contain any trees or soft landscaping, with the site being fully hardsurfaced.
- 5.25 However, it is acknowledged a narrow strip of planting is located beyond the western boundary of the site, in vicinity to the garage building development. This being noted, as the proposal would be sited on existing hardsurfacing it would not result in any material impact upon this planting.
- 5.26 **Amenities of Surrounding Occupants:** As also noted above, the nearest residential properties are located approximately 150 metres to the north of the site boundary, beyond Commercial Road. Given this distance and the presence of intervening industrial units, the proposal would have no material impact upon the amenities of residential occupants.
- 5.27 The immediate neighbours to the application site comprise industrial units. Given the nature, scale and siting of the proposal, it would not have any adverse impact upon the operation of these neighbouring sites or their occupants. This includes with regard to noise, given established levels and activity.
- 5.28 Whilst the proposals would be located close to the western boundary of the site, neighbouring another industrial unit, given the scale of the proposals combined with the separation distance to the neighbouring building, there would not be any materially harmful impact.
- 5.29 **Transport and Parking:** LP Policy TR3 states that proposals will only be permitted where they would not have a detrimental impact upon the functioning of the transport network. LP Policy TR5 sets out that

development should provide appropriate car and cycle parking, taking into account the accessibility of locations.

- 5.30 The proposals would not have any impact upon existing parking and access arrangements. The existing site is located in an established highly sustainable location in the context of transport connectivity – given the vicinity of the A33 highway which in turn connects to the M4 motorway to the south (as acknowledged in LP Policy EM2).
- 5.31 The proposals would not result in a material increase in traffic movements. Rather, it would provide secure and covered storage for materials which are already stored on site.
- 5.32 The proposals would result in the creation of an additional 52 sqm of floorspace. LP Policy TR5 and the Council’s Parking Standards seek one parking space per 100 sqm of floorspace for a light industrial use within Zone 3 of the Borough (where the site is located). As the proposed additional floorspace falls under this threshold, no requirement for additional parking provision is triggered.
- 5.33 In any case, the site is considered to have ample parking arrangements.
- 5.34 Refuse collection arrangements would remain unaltered.
- 5.35 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site lies within Flood Zone One, and a Flood Risk Assessment is not required with this application.
- 5.36 The proposals would be sited on areas of existing hardstanding, and in view of the addition of 52 sqm of floorspace, it is not considered that any additional Drainage measures are required to be demonstrated.
- 5.37 **Ecology:** The site has minimal (if any) ecological value, given its location and absence of any soft landscaping. No demolition works

are proposed as part of this application, and the proposal would not have any ecological implications.

- 5.38 The requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment is not triggered as it would meet the exception of impacting less than 25 sqm of on-site habitat or 5 metres of on-site linear habitat (as the impacted habitat would be zero).
- 5.39 **Environmental Health/Contamination:** No toxic materials would be stored within the proposed buildings. Furthermore, the proposal would accommodate storage of materials already present on site, and would be subject to the established maintenance and management plans.
- 5.40 **Building Sustainability and Energy:** The design and materials used for the proposed buildings would be proportionate and appropriate to their nature and scale.
- 5.41 **Archaeology:** The site is not located in area of known Archaeological significance.
- 5.42 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** The proposal would result in an increase in floorspace of 52 sqm. However, the Council's CIL Charging Schedule confirms that the proposal's use class (light industrial) is not CIL Liable.

6. Conclusion

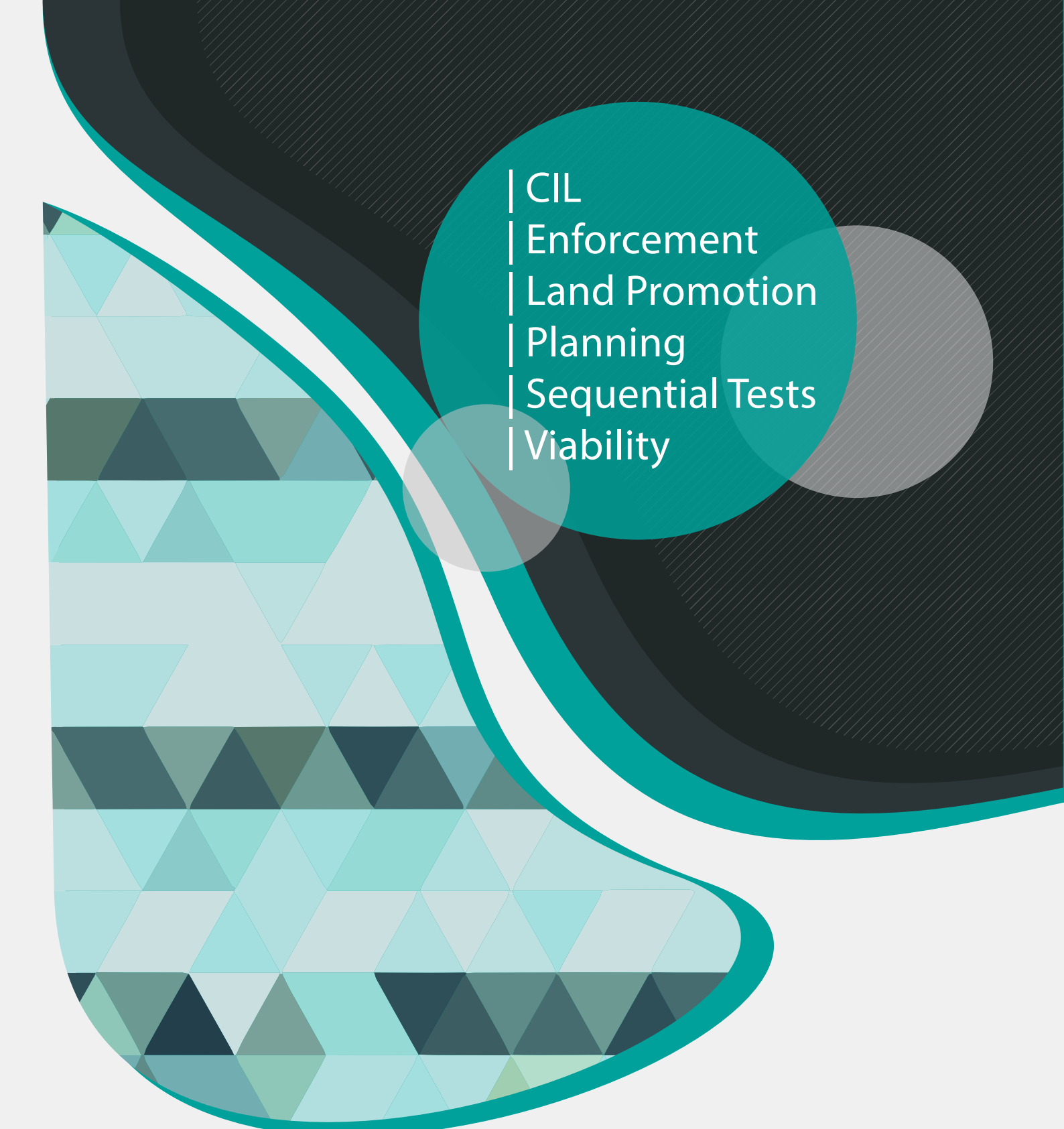
- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land, within an established industrial and employment area. The proposal would serve to assist in securing both the current and long-term economic sustainability of the site, by providing secure and covered storage facilities, where currently materials are stored outside, thereby fully complying with both Development Plan and National Policy objectives.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would maintain the appearance of the character of the area, while offering a modern and sympathetic design and scale to the site. The proposal would not have any impact upon existing traffic movements or parking requirements, and would store non-toxic materials (in the same manner as the existing open storage).
- 6.3 Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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