Doncaster Local Plan Examination

Mr Don Parkinson, Mr Kim Parkinson and Wilton (Thorne) Ltd (ID05293) and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Statement of Common Ground

September 2020
Contents

1.0 Introduction 1
2.0 Approach to Site Selection of Site 001: J6, M18 Thorne North 2
3.0 Availability, Suitability, Achievability and Deliverability of Employment Allocation 001: J6, M18, Thorne North 4
   Availability 4
   Suitability 4
   Achievability 5
   Deliverability 5
4.0 Summary 7
   Appendix 1: Illustrative Masterplan 8
   Appendix 2: Environment Agency Letter dated 8th September 2020 9
   Appendix 4: Phasing Plan 11
1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (“SoCG”) has been jointly prepared by Lichfields, acting on behalf of Mr Don Parkinson, Mr Kim Parkinson and Wilton (Thorne) Ltd, and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (“DMBC”).

1.2 Don and Kim Parkinson are the majority landowners of draft employment allocation 001: J6 M18, Thorne North and Wilton (Thorne) Ltd are their development partner.

1.3 The Thorne North site (which is the subject of draft employment allocation 001: J6 M18, Thorne North) (hereon referred to as “the site”) comprises 73.63ha of land and is located off Selby Road to the north west of Thorne, to the west of the M18 and to the north of M18 Junction 6.

1.4 The site also is the subject of a pending outline planning application (ref. 16/02136/OUTM) for the development of employment uses. A comprehensive suite of updated plans and documents was submitted to DMBC in April 2020. This information is currently undergoing assessment and the application remains before DMBC for consideration.

1.5 This SoCG has been prepared to provide information to assist the Doncaster Local Plan Examination in relation to draft employment allocation 001: J6 M18, Thorne North where up to 73.63 hectares of employment uses including light industrial / research and development, general industrial and storage and distribution are considered appropriate under draft Policy 4: Employment Allocations (Strategic Policy).

1.6 The purpose of the SoCG is to set out the matters which are agreed between the land owners and their development partner and DMBC in relation to the robust site selection process that has been undertaken in allocating the site for employment purposes and the ability of this allocation to deliver the strategic requirements of the emerging Local Plan. The SoCG also addresses the availability, suitability, achievability and deliverability of the site for employment purposes.

1.7 The following documents are appended to this SoCG:

- Appendix 1: Illustrative Masterplan
- Appendix 2: Environment Agency Letter dated 8th September
- Appendix 4: Phasing Plan

1.8 The SoCG has been agreed between all parties.

Date: 18.09.2020

(Lichfields) on behalf of Mr Don Parkinson, Mr Kim Parkinson and Wilton (Thorne) Ltd

Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster, on behalf of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Date: 21.09.2020
2.0 Approach to Site Selection of Site 001: J6, M18 Thorne North

2.1 This section sets out the agreed position regarding the robust approach to site selection undertaken by DMBC in allocating the site for employment uses in the Doncaster Local Plan.

Spatial Distribution of Employment Land

2.2 It is agreed that the allocation of the site accords with the spatial strategy set by Local Plan strategic policies 2 and 3 in proposing major employment development suitable for logistics, manufacturing and light industrial uses adjoining the Main Town of Thorne and Moorends and its resident population/workforce, in an area which is attractive to the market, can accommodate large buildings, and has direct access to and visibility from the M18 at Junction 6. It is agreed that no other available site provides such locational benefits.

2.3 It is agreed that the site provides the most appropriate opportunity to deliver the strategic requirements established by Local Plan Policy 3, and in particular the sustainability and regeneration benefits of locating strategic employment land accessible to the available workforce within the north of the Borough.

Site Selection Process

2.4 It is agreed that DMBC applied a robust and detailed approach in selecting the site as a draft employment allocation to meet its identified employment land requirement. This process is summarised below.

Doncaster Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2019)

2.5 It is agreed that the Doncaster Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment independently assessed the potential of the site to meet DMBC’s identified employment requirement. Both parties agree that the site was robustly considered as part of this process and that it passed the preliminary tests and was found to be suitable, available and deliverable to accommodate strategic employment development over the plan period.

Employment Land Review (February 2018 and amendments June 2019)

2.6 It is agreed that the Employment Land Review independently assessed the site and concluded:

- The site represents a good distribution based development opportunity;
- The site is well located relative to the strategic road network;
- The site is able to draw on the employment catchment of Thorne and Moorends;
- Thorne North train station is nearby as are restaurants, hotels and supermarkets;
- Thorne is an established distribution location;
- The site would represent a new large-scale distribution location, closer to the Humber Ports than most of the other sites under consideration, and with good proximity to the West Yorkshire conurbation;
- The three land owners have appointed Wilton (Thorne) Ltd as their development partner;
- There is a planning application for B2/B8 development pending;
- The landowners and their development partner expect the site to be available for development in 0-5 years; and
• There are no known specific constraints other than drainage (site is in Flood Zone 3).


2.7 It is agreed that the site was subject to independent Sustainability Appraisal to identify any significant positive or negative effects as well as appropriate mitigation that would need to be addressed if it was subsequently put forward for allocation. It is agreed that following this independent assessment, the site progressed for further consideration.

**Flood Risk Sequential and Exceptions Test**

2.8 It is agreed that DMBC has undertaken a robust flood risk sequential assessment of potential employment sites as part of the site selection process. It is agreed that following this detailed assessment, there are no other sequentially preferable sites in flood risk terms and as such, the sequential test is passed and it is appropriate that the site is allocated for employment use in the Doncaster Local Plan.

2.9 It is agreed that as the draft employment allocation proposes 'less vulnerable' uses, there is no requirement to demonstrate accordance with the Exception Test in relation to the site.

**Viability Testing and Technical Assessment of Highway and Access Issues**

2.10 It is agreed that whole plan viability testing has been undertaken and no viability issues have been identified in relation to the delivery of strategic warehouse or manufacturing buildings on the site.

2.11 It is agreed that DMBC’s Highway Team did not identify the site as having any unsurmountable technical issues associated with creating a safe and satisfactory access into the site.

**Overall Conclusions on Site Allocations**

2.12 It is agreed that following the above robust process and taking into account feedback received from the 2018 Local Plan consultation, DMBC selected the site as an employment allocation.

2.13 On this basis, it is agreed that the site is an appropriate location to meet DMBC’s strategic employment objectives set out in the Doncaster Local Plan including to:

• provide at least 481 ha of employment land within the Borough over the plan period (policy 3);

• accommodate growth in the logistics, light industry and manufacturing sectors in locations that can accommodate large buildings with good access to the M18/M180 motorways and strategic road network (policy 2), with large scale employment sites focused along the M18 (paragraph 4.29 of the reasoned justification to policy 3);

• distribute growth to the Main Towns, including Thorne and Moorends in the north, to ensure that regeneration benefits are spread across the Borough (paragraphs 4.28 and 4.31 of the reasoned justification to policy 3); and

• Provide employment opportunities close to a local workforce (paragraph 4.27 of the reasoned justification to policy 3).

2.14 Both parties agree that the approach adopted by DMBC to the selection of the site as an employment allocation is justified, effective, positively prepared and consistent with national policy, and is therefore sound.
3.0 Availability, Suitability, Achievability and Deliverability of Employment Allocation 001: J6, M18, Thorne North

3.1 This section sets out the matters which are agreed between the parties in relation to the availability, suitability, achievability and deliverability of draft employment allocation 001: J6, M18, Thorne North to deliver economic development.

Availability

3.2 Both parties agree that the site is available for immediate development.

3.3 The land ownership position is agreed as follows. The site falls within the ownership of three parties, all of whom actively support the proposed allocation and future development of the site. It is agreed that all landowners have contractually appointed Wilton (Thorne) Ltd (“Wilton”) as their development partner to bring the site forward for development in accordance with the proposed allocation. Wilton (Thorne) Ltd is a subsidiary of Wilton Developments Ltd and comprises a reputable delivery partner with a long established track record in the delivery of large-scale employment sites within the region. It is agreed that Wilton is committed to bringing forward development of the site at the earliest opportunity.

3.4 The parties agree that the landowners and their development partners have been active in promoting the site for development for some time, including making submissions to earlier versions of the Doncaster Local Plan and submitting the current outline planning application.

3.5 On this basis, the parties agree that the entirety of the draft employment allocation is immediately available for development in order to deliver Doncaster’s objectively assessed needs for employment land, and there are no ownership issues which would prevent development of the site.

Suitability

3.6 The parties agree that the site is suitable for the development of employment uses as proposed by the draft employment allocation.

3.7 There is agreement that the pending outline planning application is supported by advice from commercial agents which confirms that there is demand for the type and scale of development proposed. There is agreement that the site provides a number of significant and site-specific advantages, specifically its level nature and its direct access to and visibility from the M18. The site is also well located relative to the strategic road network in the “triangle” of the M18/M62/A1, all of which give tachograph single trip access to approximately 80% of the UK population. It is agreed that these factors will help to ensure the timely delivery of the draft employment allocation and the associated investment, job creation and regeneration.

3.8 There is agreement that the development of the site for employment uses comprises sustainable development in social, economic and environmental terms, and will deliver a number of significant and site-specific benefits, not least in terms of job creation, local training opportunities and associated regeneration. As such, it is agreed that development of the site will stimulate employment opportunities and regeneration in the Thorne area of the District as identified by the Local Plan.

3.9 An illustrative masterplan reflecting a wider development parameters plan has been prepared for the site as part of the pending outline planning application and this is appended to this
Statement (Appendix 1). It is agreed that this shows how a mix of light and general industrial and storage and distribution uses and unit sizes can be appropriately accommodated on the full extent of the allocation alongside known site constraints and required mitigation measures.

3.10 It is further agreed that there are no technical constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for development.

3.11 A significant amount of technical assessment work has been undertaken as part of the current planning application on the site (including the production of an Environmental Impact Assessment). Considerable progress has been made in agreeing all technical and environmental issues with DMBC and other relevant statutory consultees.

3.12 There has been close dialogue between the applicant, the Environment Agency and DMBC on flooding and drainage matters, including on the scope and content of an updated Flood Risk Assessment taking account of the most up to date flood modelling for this part of the River Don (The Upper Humber Flood Risk Mapping Study 2018). The Environment Agency has confirmed its agreement with the proposed mitigation measures set out in that assessment, subject to planning conditions, in a letter dated 8th September 2020 and enclosed at Appendix 2.

3.13 Highways England have confirmed by way of a letter dated 15th September 2020 that they do not object to the proposals and are in dialogue with the applicant and DMBC to agree the wording of any planning conditions needed to secure any necessary mitigation measures to the Strategic Road Network. This letter is enclosed at Appendix 3.

3.14 It is further agreed that there are a number of other detailed matters that are relevant to the Development Management process which will be dealt with through the application of Local Plan polices when the application is determined. It is agreed that none of these detailed matters pose a constraint to development.

3.15 Overall, it is agreed that draft employment allocation 001: J6, M18, Thorne North is suitable for the development of employment uses within the plan period in line with allocation of the site as proposed by the Doncaster Local Plan.

**Achievability**

3.16 The parties agree that the development of the site is achievable over the plan period.

3.17 It is agreed that the site is straightforward to develop. It is agreed that there are no technical difficulties which would make development of the site excessively expensive, and no significant abnormal costs which would impact on the viability or deliverability of the proposals; this includes creating the required finished floor levels to meet the requirements of the Environment Agency. There is agreement that the absence of any major upfront infrastructure costs prevents any potential uncertainty or delay to delivery.

3.18 It is agreed that the site is attractive to commercial occupiers and, importantly, can accommodate a wide range of market requirements, including those for increasingly large floorplates and cross-docked facilities, UK-wide footloose requirements and local SMEs.

**Deliverability**

3.19 It is agreed that delivery of the site is able to occur early in the plan period.

3.20 There is agreement that the entirety of the site is immediately available for development and there are no ownership issues which would prevent its development. The three land owners are supportive of the proposed allocation and future development of the site by Wilton.
It is agreed that Wilton comprises a reputable developer with a track record in the delivery of large-scale employment developments in the region.

As set out above, it is agreed that the site is straightforward to develop and there are no technical difficulties or abnormal costs which would impact on its viability or deliverability.

It is agreed that the commencement of development is not reliant or dependent upon infrastructure being delivered by third parties which could otherwise result in uncertainty over delivery and/or potential delays.

As set out above, it is agreed that the site is commercially attractive and can accommodate a wide range of market requirements.

**Timescales for Delivery**

It is agreed that the site is subject to a live outline planning application which is currently under consideration by DMBC and is likely to be determined upon conclusion of the Local Plan examination process.

Given the commercial attraction of the site, Wilton expects to proceed with detailed proposals for a first phase of development within a period of six to 12 months of obtaining outline planning permission. Wilton have appointed a full design team with extensive track record in delivering manufacturing and logistics. Whilst the phasing of development will be dependent upon the exact nature of occupier interest, an indicative phasing plan has been submitted with the outline planning application and anticipates the delivery of the main access into the site within such a first phase, which would then open up the remainder of the site to development in subsequent phases. The phasing plan is appended to this statement (Appendix 4). This position is agreed.

Whilst subject to specific occupier interest and future market interest, based on the current indicative masterplan, it is anticipated that the site will be developed over an approximate 10–15 year period, with the majority, if not all, the site developed out during the plan period. There is confidence that at least 51.54 hectares of the draft employment allocation can be delivered during the plan period as set out in Policy 4; this position is agreed.

Overall, it is agreed that draft employment allocation 001: J6, M18, Thorne North is available for immediate development; is suitable for the development of employment uses as proposed by the allocation; and comprises a viable development site for which there is evident commercial interest and market demand. There is agreement that the development of employment uses on the site is deliverable within the plan period in line with the employment allocation of the site as proposed by the Doncaster Local Plan.
**Summary**

4.0  

4.1  
It is agreed that the site has been thoroughly assessed as part of a robust site selection process and is a suitable employment allocation to deliver the strategic employment requirements of the Doncaster Local Plan.

4.2  
It is agreed that the allocation of Site 001: J6, M18, Thorne North is justified on the basis of the strategic spatial strategy (Policy 2) and identified priorities for the location and distribution of growth (Policy 3).

4.3  
It is agreed that Site 001: J6, M18, Thorne North is **available** for immediate development; is suitable for the development of employment uses as proposed by the allocation; and comprises an **achievable** development site for which there is evident commercial interest and market demand.

4.4  
It is agreed that the site is therefore wholly **deliverable** in order to meet Doncaster’s objectively assessed employment needs in the forthcoming plan period and thus comprises an effective and deliverable policy in accordance with the tests of soundness set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.5  
Overall, it is agreed that Local Plan Policy 4 and the allocation of Site 001: J6, M18, Thorne North for the delivery of employment uses are:

1  **Positively prepared** – in allowing for the delivery of objectively assessed needs;

2  **Justified** – in providing an appropriate strategy and site specific allocation which accords with the spatial strategy and priorities for the location and distribution of growth identified in strategic policies 2 and 3, including the delivery of employment allocations across the Borough, including in the defined Main Towns and in locations that can accommodate large buildings with good access to the M18/M180 and wider strategic road network;

3  **Effective** – in comprising a site which is deliverable over the plan period; and

4  **Consistent with national policy** – in facilitating the delivery of sustainable development in environmental, social and economic terms.
Appendix 1: Illustrative Masterplan
Masterplan Principles

- The concept layout indicates up to 285,700m² footprint of commercial space (excluding ancillary offices, mezzanines, etc), with a range of building sizes, scale, and orientation. The buildings could be designed for a range of uses, such as logistics, storage, manufacturing, including ancillary offices.

- The material palette would be simple, reflecting materials sympathetic to the rural location, whilst being mindful of delivering high quality, practical and sustainable working environments. The palette would be consistent throughout, to produce a harmonious development, whilst cleverly playing with the materials to create interesting identities.

- There is opportunity for a range of unit sizes and building heights (up to maximum ridge height approximately 39.4m AOD) which would respond to current market enquiries for new office, industrial and manufacturing space.
Appendix 2: Environment Agency Letter dated 8th September 2020
Dear Mr Morley

DRAFT REVISED FRA – OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF WAREHOUSING, DISTRIBUTION AND LIGHT MANUFACTURING UNITS AND ASSOCIATED SERVICE ROADS, PARKING AREAS, LANDSCAPING AND PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE WAYS ON APPROX. 74HA OF LAND (APPROVAL BEING SOUGHT FOR ACCESS) – LAND ON THE NORTH EAST SIDE OF SELBY ROAD, THORNE, DONCASTER

Thank you for sending us a copy of the draft revised FRA for the above site which we received on 27 August 2020.

We are satisfied with the flood mitigation for flood risk from the River Don as proposed in the flood risk assessment (Flood Risk Assessment Ref:5714-JPG-XX-XX-RP-0620-S2-P02 rev 02 Dated August 2020). We would look to condition the finished floor levels, safe refuge and the preservation of flow routes. We also support the statement that all occupants will sign up to the Environment Agency’s Flood Warnings Direct Service.

Flood resistance and resilience
We strongly recommend the use of flood resistance and resilience measures. Physical barriers, raised electrical fittings and special construction materials are just some of the ways you can help reduce flood damage.

To find out which measures will be effective for this development, please contact your building control department. If you’d like to find out more about reducing flood damage, visit the Flood Risk and Coastal Change pages of the planning practice guidance. Further guidance on flood resistance and resilience measures can also be found in the following documents:

Government guidance on flood resilient construction

CIRIA Code of Practice for property flood resilience

Environment Agency
Kings Pool Peasholme Green, York, North Yorkshire, YO1 7PX.
Customer services line: 03708 506 506
www.gov.uk/environment-agency
Cont/d..
British Standard 85500 – Flood resistant and resilient construction
https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030299686

Flood warning and emergency response – advice to LPA

We do not normally comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures accompanying development proposals, as we do not carry out these roles during a flood. Our involvement with this development during an emergency will be limited to delivering flood warnings to occupants/users covered by our flood warning network. The planning practice guidance (PPG) to the National Planning Policy Framework states that, in determining whether a development is safe, the ability of residents and users to safely access and exit a building during a design flood and to evacuate before an extreme flood needs to be considered. One of the key considerations to ensure that any new development is safe is whether adequate flood warnings would be available to people using the development.

In all circumstances where warning and emergency response is fundamental to managing flood risk, we advise local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions. As such, we recommend you refer to ‘Flood risk emergency plans for new development’ and undertake appropriate consultation with your emergency planners and the emergency services to determine whether the proposals are safe in accordance with paragraph 163 of the NPPF and the guiding principles of the PPG.

You should now submit the statement to the council and they will consult us on it in due course, at which time we can issue a formal response to the planning application.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Beverley Lambert
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor

Direct dial 020 302 57982
Direct e-mail bev.lambert@environment-agency.gov.uk
Team e-mail sp-yorkshire@environment-agency.gov.uk
Dear Anna

Land on the North East Side of Selby Road, Thorne – Proposed Employment Development Reference 16/02136/OUTM

Highways England has been consulted on the proposals for the employment site at land on the North East side of Selby Road, Thorne, planning application reference 16/02136/OUTM.

In response to this application, we have issued formal recommendations which recommend that planning permission not be granted for specified periods. The purpose of these recommendations has been to allow us to carry out a comprehensive and robust assessment of the impact of the development proposals on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in order to maintain its safe and efficient operation.

The current formal recommendation relating to these proposals was issued on 13th August 2020, and is due to expire on 12th October 2020. I understand the plans for Selby Road Thorne are due to be considered at the Doncaster Local Plan Examination, therefore I provide this letter to confirm Highways England’s current position on the Selby Road Thorne Plans for the Examination.

In principle we are happy that no objection to the plans for the employment site at Selby Road Thorne can be raised subject to appropriate controls. Highways England are working with the Local Authority and the applicant to agree appropriate wording of planning conditions to attach to any planning permission that may be granted for the development proposals and expect that the application will be able to be determined in due course.
I trust this makes our current position clear on the matter.

Yours sincerely

Elisa Atkinson
NDD Yrks & NE Asset Development
Email: elisa.atkinson@highwaysengland.co.uk
Appendix 4: Phasing Plan