

Planning Statement (incorporating SCI)

Change of use from Class B8 to Class E (d) for an indoor
adventure park with associated external works

Unit 1, Brooklands Way, Boldon Business Park, Boldon NE35 9LZ

DLA Ref: 25/752

April 2026

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background

1.1.1 This report relates to a change of use from Class B8 to Class E (d) for an indoor adventure park with associated external works at Unit 1, Brooklands Way, Boldon Business Park, Boldon NE35 9LZ.

1.2.0 Scope

1.2.1 This document comprises an overarching Planning Report. Sections 2 to 4 consider the physical, economic, social and historical context of the site, identifying the relevant local, regional and national planning policy framework; Section 5 sets out the details of the proposal. All these sections inform the evaluation of the proposal in Section 6 against the identified planning policy framework. The overall conclusions are set out in Section 7 and which are summarised below at paragraph 1.3.0.

1.3.0 Summary

- The proposal complies with Criteria C, D and E of Policy DM2, as the site is no longer viable for employment use and the proposed leisure development would deliver significant economic and social benefits.
- The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy DM1(A).
- The development would not result in a significant impact on the local transport network and accords with relevant national and local policies.
- No suitable alternative premises have been identified. It is thus considered that the proposal is sequentially acceptable, satisfying the requirements of the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan.

2.0 SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1.0 Location

- 2.1.1 The application site is located on the southern side of Brooklands Way within Boldon Business Park. The business park lies close to the recently upgraded Testos Junction, which provides connectivity between the A19 and the A184 in South Tyneside.



Figure 1: Location of the Application Site

2.2.0 Application Site

- 2.2.1 The rectangular-shaped site extends to approximately 1ha and contains a detached warehouse building. The building was originally constructed in 2000 and was recently extended to create an enlarged warehouse. It is of steel portal-frame construction with insulated profiled steel cladding and cavity brickwork to the external walls. Eight sectional loading doors are located along the front elevation. The roof is double-pitched and constructed of insulated profiled steel sheeting, incorporating double-skin translucent rooflights.
- 2.2.2 The building is divided into two principal sections. The first comprises a ground-floor warehouse with an internal height of approximately 6 metres and a floor area of 3,930 sq m. The second is a two-storey office block providing a total floor area of 501 sq m.
- 2.2.3 There are three separate vehicular access points into the site from Burford Way. The two northern access points serve the existing car parking area. The southern access leads to the service yard for deliveries and collections, which is enclosed by a palisade security fence.

2.3.0 **Context**

2.3.1 To the north, south and west, the site is bounded by further industrial units within Boldon Business Park. To the east, on the opposite side of Abingdon Way, lies Boldon Leisure Park. The nearest residential development is located approximately 90 metres to the north-west of the site.

2.4.0 **Proposals Map Notation**

2.4.1 The Site is located within a Predominantly Industrial Area as identified within the Local Development Framework Site Specifics Allocations Document

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.0 Application Site

3.1.1 The relevant history of the application site is summarised in Figure 3.1.0 below.

LPA Ref	Proposal	Outcome
ST/0636/20/NMA	Application for a non-material amendment to previously approved planning application ST/0027/18/FUL for an extension to the South of the existing building, with associated enlargement of an external hard standing area and new palisade fencing. Amendment now sought to include four new roller doors within western elevation.	Approved – 22/09/2020
ST/0027/18/FUL	Extension to the South of the existing building, with associated enlargement of an external hard standing area and new palisade fencing. The use of the proposed extension would fall within Use Class B2 or B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).	Approved – 18/06/2018

3.2.0 Other Relevant Sites

3.2.1 The Council recently approved applications for changes of use to a veterinary practice and an education/training centre, both of which are uses typically resisted within the PIA. However, planning permission was granted on the basis that the proposals would deliver long-term benefits which were considered to significantly outweigh the loss of land for employment purposes.

3.2.2 LPA Ref: 250566 – 2 Brooklands Way, Boldon Business Park – Change of use of from Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 to Use Class E veterinary practice. Approved on 24/10/2025.

3.2.3 LPA Ref: 250479 – 55 Aidan Court, Jarrow – Change of use of from Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 to Use Class F1 to allow the premises to be used as a non-residential education and training centre. Approved on 02/10/2025.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1.0 National Policy / Guidance

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The following sections are considered directly relevant:

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4: Decision-making
- Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places

4.1.2 On 16th of December 2025, the Government published proposed reforms to the NPPF. The consultation period until 10th March 2026. Only very limited weight is afforded to this consultation document.

4.1.3 The National Planning Policy Guidance contains detailed guidance on the application of the NPPF. Account is also taken of the National Design Guide - Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places, which aims to illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

4.2.0 Development Plan

4.2.1 The statutory development plan comprises the Council's adopted Local Development Framework (LDF) development plan documents. Those LDF documents of relevance to this application comprise of the Core Strategy (2007) and Development Management Policies (2011).

Policy No.	Title
DM1	Management of Development
DM2	Safeguarding Employment Uses
SA3	Economic Development Opportunities
E1	Delivering Economic Growth and Prosperity

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1.0 The proposal is for the change of use of the building from Class B8 to Class E (d) for an indoor adventure park with associated external works including parking, servicing, refuse storage and cycle parking.
- 5.1.1 The proposed development will reconfigure the ground-floor internal layout to accommodate the Class E (d) use, including a range of indoor activity zones, party spaces and supporting staff and customer facilities.
- 5.1.2 Externally, the proposals will result in the provision of 94 customer parking spaces (including 3 disabled spaces), 22 staff parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces), a dedicated delivery/servicing area, a refuse and recycling storage area and secure cycle parking.
- 5.1.3 New glazed entrance doors will replace existing roller shutters on the front (west) elevation, providing a dedicated customer access point. There will be AirHop branding and signage positioned at various locations along the length of the front elevation, reflecting its proposed leisure use.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Based on the analysis set out in Sections 2 to 5, I consider that the application proposal raises the following issues, which I will consider in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Layout & Design
3. Highway Safety & Access
4. Retail Sequential Test & Impact Assessment
5. Statement of Community Involvement

6.1.0 Issue No 1: Principle

6.1.1 Policy Context

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF sets out that decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

6.1.2 Policy DM2 relates to Safeguarding Employment Uses and states that non-employment uses will only be approved where, only in exceptional circumstances, the proposal provides benefits that significantly outweigh the loss of employment land. Policy DM2, C, D and E set out the exception criteria:

- Criterion C – the employment use of the site or premises is no longer viable, by the same or any other employment user (use Classes B1, B2 and B8): and
- Criterion D – the site or premises would not make a significant contribution to the borough employment land supply over the next 10-15 years in meeting RSS Employment land requirements: or
- Criterion E – the proposal provides long-term benefits that would significantly outweigh the loss of land for employment use.

6.1.3 Supporting Paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 state that:

“Alternative uses (to B1, B2 and B8 employment uses) will only be considered where evidence is provided that the site has been actively and effectively marketed for employment use, and this has shown that there is no longer any realistic market interest and viability in reusing or redeveloping the site for employment use. Public consultation on this matter has suggested that the length of time required for marketing of a site should be informed by current market conditions. The assessment of the viability of a site should also consider the potential for redevelopment for other employment uses, and the sites short and long- term prospects in order to ensure that the borough’s overall employment land supply is not prematurely or inappropriately eroded.

Wider economic development uses, or alternative uses may be considered if it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of employment use (B1, B2, B8) being delivered on the site during the 10-15 year plan period. In some circumstances, a development proposal may deliver significant long-term benefits that outweigh the loss of employment land. Here, consideration may be given to a proposal that would support the

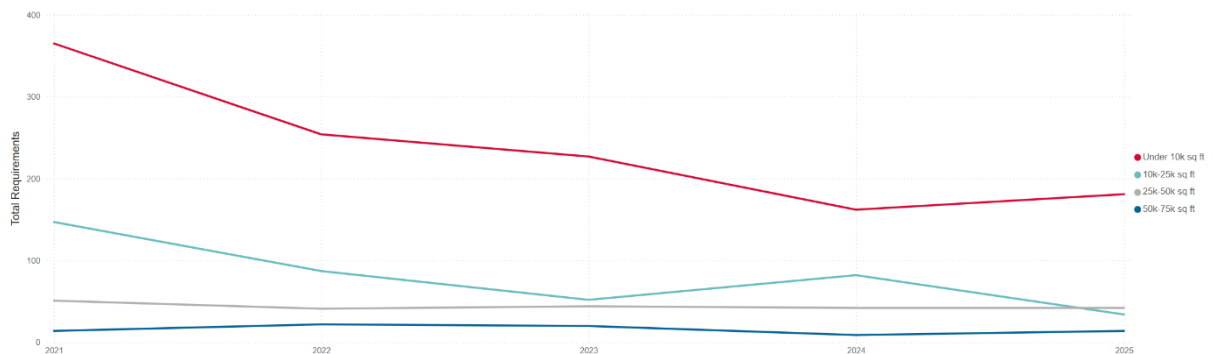
wider regeneration of the local economy or assist with the delivery of our overall spatial strategy for the borough.”

6.1.4 Market Overview

Knight Frank’s Newcastle division provided the applicant with an overview of the commercial property market in the North East. This includes information on demand and supply across the region, with specific reference to industrial premises and marketing of the application site.

6.1.5 Demand

Knight Frank records every occupier enquiry received for commercial property, including the size of unit required. The chart below presents this data across the North East from 2021 to date.



6.1.6 Knight Frank receives the fewest enquiries for larger units, as there are fewer companies operating at a scale requiring such space, or with the financial capacity to meet associated rental, business rates, and other property-related costs. More specifically, within the size band of 40,000 sq ft to 55,000 sq ft, Knight Frank recorded a total of 36 enquiries since January 2021. This equates to an average of just over seven enquiries per year, with only a small proportion converting into completed lettings.

6.1.7 The application site measures 47,704 sq ft and therefore falls towards the upper end of the 25,000–50,000 sq ft size band, and just below the 50,000–75,000 sq ft band. In practice, demand is therefore likely to align more closely with the 50,000–75,000 sq ft range (blue line), rather than the 25,000–50,000 sq ft range (grey line).

6.1.8 Take up

Demand in the market is illustrated by levels of take-up. Knight Frank has collected data on transactions of 50,000 sq ft and above from agents operating within the logistics and industrial sector across the North East, which is presented in the table below. It should be noted that the data is weighted towards units larger than the subject property. However, it remains informative in demonstrating wider market trends and demand for larger-scale accommodation.

Transactions of 50 - 75,000 sq ft: 2022 - 2025				
Address	Tenant/Purchaser	Deal type	Size (Sq Ft)	Date
L5 Intersect 19, Tyne Tunnel Estate, North Shields	IBSL Limited	Letting	57,707	Jul-25
Connect 63, Integra 61, Bowburn, Co Durham	Connection Flooring	Letting	63,396	May-25
1 Millennium Way, Newton Aycliffe	Molekula	Letting	52,048	Jun-25
Forrest Park, Newton Aycliffe	DPD	Letting	63,000	Nov-24
Littleburn Industrial Estate, Durham	Confidential	Sale	61,482	Nov-24
Malleable Way, Stockton	Confidential	Letting	62,251	Nov-24
Unit S2 Tyne Tunnel Estate, North Shields	Lookers plc	Letting	65,173	Sep-24
Unit 2 Hillthorn, Washington	AESC	Letting	66,872	May-24
Princesway, Team Valley	DHL	Letting	59,902	May-24
Unit 70 Teesside Industrial Estate, Thornaby	LV Shipping	Letting	70,000	Feb-24
Unit 1 5/5A Mill Hill, North West Industrial Estate, Peterlee	Impact Recycling	Letting	71,548	Feb-24
Dodsworth Street, Darlington	Furniture 365	Letting	60,867	Jun-23
Hurworth Road, Newton Aycliffe	Confidential	Letting	54,105	May-22
Former KNDL, Concorde Way, Stockton	LWC Drinks Ltd	Sale	62,763	Mar-22
TOTAL			871,114	

6.1.9 Total take-up over the period 2022–2025 was 871,114 sq ft across 14 units, equating to an average annual take-up of approximately 217,778 sq ft (around 3.5 units) per annum. Of these transactions, 446,000 sq ft across seven units occurred within a 20-mile radius of Boldon Business Park. This represents a realistic geographical search area that an occupier would be likely to consider when undertaking a property shortlisting exercise. These transactions are shaded in the table below and equate to an average annual take-up of approximately 111,500 sq ft, or fewer than two units per year.

6.1.10 Supply

In terms of supply, the table below identifies available premises as at Q3 2025. These units are of a comparable size to the application site, although many are more modern and better suited to the operational requirements of contemporary B2/B8 occupiers.

6.1.11 Unit 5, Didcot Way, Boldon Business Park (50,913 sq ft) is currently undergoing comprehensive refurbishment and is expected to be ready for occupation by Q1 2026. The unit benefits from dedicated parking to the front and yard space to the rear, with access provided via both ground-level and dock-level loading. These features are increasingly important to B2/B8 occupiers. The building also provides 360-degree vehicular circulation,

which enhances operational flexibility and improves on-site safety. This is particularly attractive to occupiers who prefer to implement one-way routing for delivery vehicles.

Address	City/Town	Sq ft	FH / LH
Unit 5 Cowley Road	Blyth	57,983	LH
Unit 1 Didcot Way	Boldon	62,893	LH
Unit 5 Didcot Way	Boldon	50,913	LH
Unit 2, Connect 62	Durham	51,408	LH
Centralway 65, Team Valley	Gateshead	65,092	LH
Former DHL Trade Team premises, Wagonway Road	Hebburn	69,193	FH
Planet Place, Killingworth	Killingworth	64,899	FH
MP52, Merchant Park, Millennium Way	Newton Aycliffe	52,500	LH
Aycliffe Point, St Cuthbert's Way, Newton Aycliffe	Newton Aycliffe	55,703	LH
Unit C Merlin Way, Hadrian Industrial Park, Shiremoor	North Tyneside	52,972	LH
L7 Intersect 19, Tyne Tunnel Estate, North Shields	North Tyneside	72,898	LH
Glass House, Mill Hill, North West Industrial Estate	Peterlee	56,266	LH
Unit 3 Admiralty Way, Foxcover Business Park	Seaham	62,531	LH
Unit 5 Hillthorn Business Park	Washington	71,200	LH
TB 51 Turbine Business Park	Washington	51,376	LH
TB 68 Turbine Business Park	Washington	68,458	LH
		966,285	

- 6.1.12 Units at Hillthorn and Turbine Business Parks (within Sunderland Local Authority) remain vacant almost three years post practical completion, despite providing the full range of features expected of modern logistics and industrial warehousing. Similarly, Unit 2 at Connect, Integra61, Bowburn remains vacant almost 18 months following completion of construction.
- 6.1.13 TB51 (51,000 sq ft) at Turbine Business Park was completed in February 2023. While the smaller units (TB20 and TB29) were let relatively quickly, the larger units have remained vacant. The units are competitively priced within the market and provide high-quality, high-specification Grade A accommodation, with a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'. They benefit from a 10 m eaves height, generous yard areas and dock-level loading, and are therefore market-leading in terms of specification.
- 6.1.14 Knight Frank has been marketing TB51 for almost a year, having taken over from Avison Young and jointly marketing the unit with HTA. Despite a range of marketing initiatives, including the targeted approach to occupiers with upcoming lease events, levels of demand have been extremely low. The marketing brochure for the site is provided in Appendix A.

- 6.1.15 In addition to the above, a schedule of new B2/B8 schemes and sites is provided in Appendix B. While not exhaustive, this schedule offers an overview of the scale of available development land across the region, together with the level of development readiness (i.e. sites with detailed planning consent, outline consent, or allocated employment land without consent).
- 6.1.16 Occupiers typically assess locations based on geographical catchments rather than Local Authority boundaries, taking into account travel distances and potential physical or logistical barriers. As such, occupiers who may consider Boldon Business Park are also likely to include sites within Gateshead, Sunderland and County Durham Local Authority areas as part of their search area.
- 6.1.17 As evidenced by the schedule, there is a substantial supply of development land with either detailed or outline planning consent. Of the sites listed, approximately 2.6 million sq ft of B2/B8 floorspace benefits from detailed consent. This includes Phase 2 at Hillthorn Business Park, Washington, which provides 227,800 sq ft across three buildings, including a 61,000 sq ft unit. In addition, there is a further circa 2.16 million sq ft of B2/B8 floorspace with outline consent. This includes land adjacent to the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP), owned by Town End Partnership, which benefits from hybrid consent for up to 872,000 sq ft.
- 6.1.18 *Marketing of the Application Site*
Evri vacated the application site in February 2024. However, Knight Frank commenced soft marketing of the property in August 2023, having been made aware of Evri's intention to vacate. Full online marketing commenced on 24 November 2023, when a brochure and full property details were published on [Knight Frank's website](#). The property has also been advertised on [Rightmove Commercial](#) and Kato, the latter being a dedicated agent-led marketing platform.
- 6.1.19 Furthermore, details of the property have been circulated to regional agents to ensure awareness of the availability for any potential occupier clients. The property details have also been shared with South Tyneside Council's Economic Development Team. More recently, a site tour was arranged and undertaken with Richard Fishwick and Gren Irving on 11 June 2025, to showcase the available accommodation at Boldon Business Park.
- 6.1.20 An enquiry schedule for the application site is provided in Appendix C. This lists all requirements (with company names redacted) by Use Class and includes details of each requirement, including whether it progressed or was satisfied elsewhere. The schedule not only include companies who enquired specifically about the application site, but also occupiers seeking space within the Sunderland / South Tyneside / Gateshead area (and in

some cases more footloose requirements) where Knight Frank considered it appropriate to circulate details of, or discuss, the application site.

- 6.1.21 Some enquiries relate to slightly smaller or larger units. However, occupiers may reconsider their preferred unit size where the premises and location are suitable in other respects, although size and location remain the key determining factors. As shown within the enquiry schedule, there are several repeated requirements relating to specification, including high eaves height, large yard areas and dock-level loading. These are now standard features in newly built industrial units of 50,000 sq ft and above. As a result, none of the occupiers (or agents acting on their behalf) have progressed their interest or demonstrated commitment to the application site
- 6.1.22 The application site has been comprehensively marketed for over two years, which has resulted in no firm commitment from any occupier falling within the property's existing use class. The only meaningful interest received has been from indoor sports and leisure operators, with two companies providing a firm commitment to progress on this basis.
- 6.1.23 Assessment
The proposal is considered to comply with the requirements of Policy DM2 of the Local Plan for the following reasons.
- 6.1.24 *Criterion C*
The supporting text to Policy DM2 requires applicants to undertake a marketing exercise to establish the level of market interest in, and the viability of, the property for continued employment use. In this case, Knight Frank have extensively marketed the property for a period in excess of two years, including a period of soft marketing. This represents a more than reasonable marketing duration in any market conditions. Despite this, there has been no firm interest or commitment from occupiers within the appropriate use classes, primarily due to the physical constraints of the building.
- 6.1.25 The subject property was extended and adapted before Evri leased the property; however, they have since vacated the premises. Knight Frank's market overview indicates that the property no longer reflects current market requirements for storage and distribution accommodation. In this context, it would be unreasonable and unviable to expect the freeholders to undertake further refurbishment, particularly given the evidence of low demand and limited take-up of comparable-sized premises over the past 4–5 years (see Figures 2 and 3).

- 6.1.26 In addition, Figure 4 identifies a number of industrial and warehouse premises within the wider area that remain vacant despite meeting modern occupier requirements. It is also noted that Unit 5 at Boldon Business Park is currently undergoing comprehensive refurbishment and is expected to return to the market in Q1 of this year. Once this unit becomes available, the likelihood of Unit 1 securing an occupier is further reduced.
- 6.1.27 *Criterion D*
The adopted Local Plan is now beyond its intended 10–15-year plan period and is based on a superseded Regional Spatial Strategy. As a result, reduced weight should be attributed to this element of Policy DM2. Notwithstanding this, the subject property represents only a very small proportion of the overall supply of employment floorspace within the local authority.
- 6.1.28 Furthermore, there is clear evidence of vacant employment premises locally, alongside a pipeline of new employment development coming forward across the wider region. This evolving supply context is likely to render the application site less attractive to occupiers, particularly as the existing accommodation does not meet modern operational requirements.
- 6.1.29 It is accepted that not all new development coming forward is located within South Tyneside, however potential occupiers do not typically confine their search to Local Authority boundaries. Instead, location decisions are generally informed by geographical catchments, accessibility and potential barriers. Consequently, occupiers considering Boldon Business Park are also likely to include sites within Gateshead, Sunderland, and County Durham within their search area.
- 6.1.30 In approving both applications 55 Aidan Court and 2 Brooklands Way (see Planning History), the Council found that:
- “In the context of the current and foreseeable economic climate it is not anticipated that the loss of the industrial unit would have a notable detrimental impact on the availability of industrial accommodation within the Borough and where it is noted that the Council’s Business Investment manager raised no objection.”*
- 6.1.31 Having regard to the information set out in this report, together with advice from the Council’s Business Investment Manager, there is no justification for treating the application site differently. This is particularly the case given that the prevailing economic circumstances have not materially changed in the 3–4 months since those permissions were granted.

6.1.32 *Criterion E*

AirHop estimates this site will create approximately 70–80 jobs, comprising a mix of full-time and part-time positions jobs (equivalent to 30-40 FTE). Roles would include general staff, supervisors, operations managers, a general manager, and a regional manager. Given the nature of the proposed leisure activities and peak operating hours falling outside of standard school and working hours, the development is expected to provide a range of youth employment opportunities. All employees would benefit from a structured training and development programme, combining in-house training with university-recognised courses and qualifications, supporting skills development and career progression.

6.1.33 AirHop parks support regular physical for a wide range of age groups – particularly children and young people – promoting cardiovascular fitness, balance, coordination and strength. AirHop sites frequently become local hubs for families, school visits, Special Educational Needs sessions and organised community events. For example, the Group’s Borehamwood site accommodates regular bookings from a substantial number of local schools and community organisations, alongside inclusive activities such as fitness classes, toddler sessions and group events. This would reflect the requirements of Paragraph 96 of the NPPF, which seeks to promote healthy, inclusive places and opportunities for social interaction.

6.1.34 Boldon Leisure Park is located immediately opposite the site and comprises a cinema, restaurants, and an Asda supermarket. The introduction of a sport-related leisure use would complement and strengthen the existing leisure offer by enhancing its overall attractiveness and supporting linked trips. This would generate economic benefits for neighbouring occupiers through increased footfall and associated expenditure.

6.1.35 As such, the proposed use would support long term employment opportunities that are currently not available at the application Site and that would significantly outweigh the loss of the land for a specific, designated employment use.

6.1.36 *Suitability of Town Centre Locations*

Indoor trampoline parks typically require large, open-plan accommodation with significant clear internal heights to safely accommodate trampoline courts and associated equipment. Many town centre buildings, particularly former retail units, are constrained by limited ceiling heights, structural columns, split floor levels and restricted loadings, reducing their suitability for this type of use. High visitor numbers also require generous circulation space, clear sightlines for supervision, and compliant fire and building services arrangements, which can be difficult to achieve within constrained town centre premises.

6.1.37 This type of use typically attracts families and groups, many of whom travel by car. Town centre locations often have limited on-site parking and rely on short-stay or paid public car

parks, with restricted opportunities for safe drop-off and pick-up. As a result, peak arrival and departure periods can place additional pressure on surrounding streets, an issue that is generally less pronounced in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations with dedicated parking provision.

6.2.0 **Issue No 2: Layout & Design**

6.2.1 Policy Context

Policy DM1 (A) of the Local Plan states that development, including new buildings, extensions and alterations to existing buildings, is designed to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and where possible enhance its local setting and reinforce local identity, having particular regard to scale and proportions, alignment, form, use of materials and architectural detailing.

6.2.2 Assessment

The proposal includes only minor alterations to the external elevations. Two existing front shutters will be replaced with a principal entrance, alongside the installation of new signage on the same elevations. These changes are considered to result in an acceptable visual impact when assessed against the surrounding context.

6.2.3 The existing yard area will be formalised for use as visitor car parking. As this area is already laid to hardstanding, the proposal would not give rise to any adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

6.2.4 Conclusion

The proposal will therefore have an acceptable visual impact on the character and appearance of the area in accordance with the requirements of Policy DM1 (A) of the Local Plan.

6.3.0 **Issue No 3: Highway Safety & Access**

6.3.1 A Transport Assessment has been prepared by EAS in support of the application, which makes the following conclusions:

- The site lies within convenient walking and cycling distance of key local facilities, shops, leisure facilities and community services.
- Alternative modes of transport including walking, cycling, buses and metro offer a realistic alternative to private car use.
- Car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with operational requirements and within the bounds of adopted South Tyneside Council standards.
- The level of trip generation associated with the development is expected to be similar to the existing land use; however, the type of vehicles using the site is expected to change from goods vehicles to cars.

6.3.2 In addition, a Travel Plan has been prepared to ensure that future users have access to suitable information about local transport infrastructure and are provided with suitable on-site facilities to allow them to make sustainable travel choices

6.4.0 Issue No 4: Retail Sequential Test & Impact Assessment

6.4.1 A Retail Sequential Test has been prepared by DLA Town Planning, which concludes that:

“A search of all vacant commercial premises able to provide suitable accommodation for an indoor trampoline adventure park to meet the requirements of the applicant - as agreed with the LPA - in town and edge of centre locations, within South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead Districts has been undertaken.

Due to the characteristics of the premises required for such a use – a large open plan space of at least 2,787m², with a height of at least 5.5m – no such alternative premises have been identified.

With regard to the NPPF requirement that preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre, as detailed in Section 7.3.0 below, the proposal would clearly meet this requirement, utilising as a very well related, edge of centre location, well served by public transport services and safely accessible from the adjacent residential area.

In all the above circumstances, it is considered that the proposal is sequentially acceptable, satisfying the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 91 to 92 and Policies SP20 and 27 of the emerging Local Plan.”

6.4.2 In terms of the Impact Assessment, it was found that:

“In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 94 of the NPPF and emerging Local Plan Policy 28, the proposal would not result in any undue impact on existing centres as follows.

a) The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment

- There do not appear to be any comparable existing uses, either within or in indeed beyond a defined centre within South Tyneside District.*
- None of the Area Action Plans prepared for the 3 town centres in the District identify a site for a comparable leisure use. Whilst leisure uses are included in some mixed use allocations therein, due to the size of the site and/or the overall mix of uses envisaged, it is highly unlikely that any would include a comparable proposal. The AAPs are in any event out-of-date, whilst no such scheme has come to fruition in these locations since their adoption.*

b) The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability It is not considered that the proposal would have any material undue impact on town centre vitality and viability in the District and rather, is likely to have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of the adjacent Boldon Colliery District Shopping Centre in the following circumstances:

- The application does not seek to provide a multi-attraction, mixed use proposal, which will draw consumers away from neighbouring centres.*
- It is very clear that it is not easily possible to accommodate a use of this nature and scale within a town centre, with those found on the wider area all situated in out of centre, employment areas.*
- By comparison, the site is located in a very well related and accessible, edge of centre location, which realistically is the optimum location for such a use. It is likely to facilitate linked trips, offering a genuine opportunity to enhance the vitality and viability of the District Centre.”*

6.5.0 **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

- 6.5.1 A separate SCI has not been prepared in support of this application. The proposed development relates to the change of use of a long-standing, vacant building within an established industrial estate, adjacent to a retail park. The surrounding area is characterised by commercial, retail and leisure uses, with the nearest residential properties located approximately 90 metres from the site.
- 6.5.2 Given the nature of the proposal, involving the re-use of an existing building with limited external alterations, and its location within an area defined by predominantly commercial/retail/leisure uses, it is not considered that the development would give rise to significant impacts on residential amenity or other sensitive uses.
- 6.5.3 The introduction of a sport-related leisure use would complement and strengthen the existing retail/leisure offer opposite the Site, by enhancing its overall attractiveness and supporting linked trips. This would generate economic benefits for neighbouring occupiers through increased footfall and associated expenditure.
- 6.5.4 In addition, the statutory consultation process undertaken by the Local Planning Authority will provide an opportunity for any interested parties to comment on the proposals should there be any concerns.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.0 Background

7.1.1 This report relates to a change of use from Class B8 to Class E (d) for an indoor adventure park with associated external works at Unit 1, Brooklands Way, Boldon Business Park, Boldon NE35 9LZ. The proposal is promoted in the following circumstances:

- The proposal complies with Criteria C and D of Policy DM2, with robust marketing evidence demonstrating that the site is no longer viable or attractive for continued employment use. In accordance with Criterion E, the Class E (d) use would deliver clear economic and social benefits that significantly outweigh the loss of employment land.
- The development would have an acceptable visual impact on the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy DM1(A) of the Local Plan.
- The proposed development would not give rise to a significant impact on the local transport network and is therefore compliant with relevant national and local transport policies.
- A search of all vacant commercial premises able to provide suitable accommodation for an indoor trampoline adventure park, to meet the requirements of the applicant - as agreed with the LPA - in town and edge of centre locations, within South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead Districts has been undertaken. No suitable alternative premises have been identified. It is thus considered that the proposal is sequentially acceptable, satisfying the requirements of the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan.
- There do not appear to be any comparable existing or planned uses, either within or in indeed beyond a defined centre within South Tyneside District. Given the clear scarcity of suitable town centre locations for the proposed use, it is not considered that the proposal would have any material undue impact on town centre vitality and viability in the District. Rather, realistically it represents the optimum location for such a use and is likely to have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of the adjacent Boldon Colliery District Shopping Centre.

8.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Knight Frank’s Marketing Brochure for Unit 1, Brooklands Way, Boldon Business Park.

Appendix B – Schedule of new B2/B8 schemes and sites across the region.

Appendix C – Enquiry schedule for Unit 1, Brooklands Way.

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DLA | Commercial

DLA | Residential

DLA | Leisure

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