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THE UK DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Planning Statement

Erection of Biomass Boiler and Fuel Storage Buildings at Water Royd Care Home

June 2022

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June 2022

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Terms of reference

1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong LLP has been instructed by The UK Development Group, on behalf of Maria Mallaband Care Home Group Limited, to prepare and submit an application for full planning permission to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) for the erection of a biomass boiler and fuel storage buildings at Water Royd Care Home, Locke Road, Barnsley, S75 3QH. The applicant for this planning application is Maria Mallaband Care Group Ltd and the proposed biomass boiler building would be installed by The UK Development Group.

1.1.2 A former iteration of the proposed development was submitted to BMBC on 4 October 2021. This application (reference: 2021/1352) was withdrawn on 6 June 2022 in response to concerns regarding overshadowing. The application which this Planning Statement details presents a revised proposal that has taken into consideration comments and concerns raised by BMBC and local residents.

1.1.3 A suite of documents and drawings support the planning application and should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement.

1.1.4 The structure of this document is as follows:

- Section 1 (Introduction): provides background information and outlines the purpose and structure of this Planning Statement.
- Section 2 (The Site and Surrounding Area): Provides a brief description of the site and surrounding area, including planning history and sensitive receptors.
- Section 3 (Proposed Development): Provides a detailed description of the proposed development.
- Section 4 (Planning Policy Context): Outlines the planning policy context which the site and proposed development would be assessed against.
- Section 5 (Planning Policy Assessment): Assesses the site and proposed development against the planning policy outlined in Section 4.
- Section 6 (Conclusion): Summaries and concludes the matters discussed in this Planning Statement.

2 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site

2.1.1 The site is located entirely within the administrative boundary of BMBC within the village of Gilroyd, to the west of the M1 (Junction 37).

2.1.2 In terms of building layout, the Care Home broadly reflects a horseshoe shape, formed by the main Care Home building to the north and east with Brookdale Heights to the west. A car parking area is located in the centre, with access to and from Locke Road to the south. The remaining site area comprises grassed garden areas with soft landscaping, as well as a bin storage area. The curtilage of the Care Home is enclosed by metal fencing with the addition of hedgerows to the east and north. The site is not located in the Green Belt.

2.1.3 The land subject to the proposed development is currently an area of the bin storage located to the south of the Care Home, positioned between a black metal access gate and raised footway. Two small areas of grassed space, to the east and west of the bin storage area, would also occupy part of the developable area and are both parallel to the fenced boundary.

2.1.4 The location of the site is shown on NT15521-001B Location Plan and the existing site layout shown on NT15521-02A Existing Site Plan.

2.2 Planning history

2.2.1 The planning history for the site is detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Planning history

Application reference	Development description	Decision date
B/78/0393/DO	Erection of fire escape	03/03/1978 (decision date unknown)
B/82/0680/DO	Erection of fire escape	17/06/1982 (decision date unknown)
B/99/0390/DO	Erection of extensions to nursing home	13/05/1999 (decision date unknown)
B/99/1191/DO/AD	Display of non-illuminated, free-standing sign	10/11/1999 (decision date unknown)
B/99/1374/DO	Outline for residential development of two-story close-care retirement apartments	17/01/2000 (decision date unknown)
B/01/1167/DO	Erection of two-storey extension to nursing home	18/10/2001 (decision date unknown)

B/02/0008/DO	Residential development of 16 close-care retirement apartments (Reserved Matters)	11/02/2002 (decision date unknown)
B/02/1563/DO	Erection of new 60 bed nursing home and 21 close-care apartments	14/01/2003 (decision date unknown)
B/04/0106/DO	Erection of second floor (10 additional apartments) to close-care development (amendment to planning consent B/02/1563/DO)	06/04/2004 (decision date unknown)
2021/1352	Erection of biomass boiler building and associated works	06/06/2022 (withdrawn)

2.3 The surrounding area and sensitive receptors

2.3.1 The Care Home is bound by Locke Road to the south and Green Lane to the east. There are areas of green space located beyond the north and east boundary of the site, with the green space to the east being located within the Green Belt. Residential properties are located to the north east of the site boundary, with further properties located to the south and west of the site, beyond Locke Road and Green Lane, respectively.

2.3.2 The nearest environmental designation to the site is Worsborough Country Park, a local nature reserve, approximately 1.9km south east of the site.

2.3.3 The nearest heritage assets to the site are located at Dodworth Bottom, 600m southwest of the site, comprising 'Saville Hall' (Grade II), 'outbuilding approximately 10 metres east of Saville Hall' (Grade II) and 'barn approximately 60 metres south east of Saville Hall at east end of farmyard' (Grade II). The site is not located within or near a Conservation Area.

2.3.4 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 with the nearest area of flood risk located to the north east of the site associated with Dodworth Dike.

2.3.5 The nearest Public Right of Way is footpath 278, located north of the site, beyond Keresforth Road (B6099).

2.3.6 The site is located within a Coal Mining Reporting Area and Development High Risk Area. The planning application has been supported by a Phase 1 Coal Mining Risk Assessment (Appendix 5) which concludes that the presence of recorded workings would present a negligible risk to the stability of the site.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Description of development

3.1.1 The proposed description of the development is the following:

'Erection of biomass boiler and fuel storage buildings with associated works'

3.2 Purpose of development

3.2.1 The proposed development would provide two biomass boilers that would replace existing gas boilers and create a renewable source of heat and hot water to Water Royd Care Home.

3.2.2 The UK Bioenergy Strategy 2012 defines biomass as *"…material of recent biological origin, derived from plant or animal matter such as wood, agricultural crops or wastes, and the biological component of municipal wastes"*. Biomass technology uses the energy contained within this organic matter, in this instance wood pellets, to produce heat. The CO_2 released into the atmosphere is the same CO_2 that the vegetation absorbed originally, and which would then be recaptured by further vegetation growth. Accordingly, biomass technology is arguably a carbon-neutral alternative to gas and oil, and when biomass is sought from a sustainable source, it is also considered to be a renewable source of energy. Since the publication of the Strategy, bioenergy has been deployed more extensively, costs have reduced, and the issues around sustainability are better understood and managed. The UK Government is due to release a revised Strategy in 2022, detailing how this resource could be best utilised across the economy to help achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

3.2.3 The proposed development would substantially lower the carbon footprint of the Care Home and reducing operational costs in the long term. As is common with care homes, Water Royd Care Home has high energy requirements to help provide a high standard of living to its residents. Currently, the Care Home is heated using gas but by using biomass technology instead, the Care Home would be able to significantly reduce its carbon footprint to the benefit of the environment. The existing gas boilers require replacing and extensive maintenance is currently required to keep the boilers running.

3.2.4 The proposed development would also assist the Care Home operator to reduce operating costs and to better assist in forecasting future operating costs. This is partly due to the fact that the UK energy grid is highly dependent on foreign fuel imports and is susceptible to fluctuations in wholesale energy prices. Even when wholesale energy prices dip, these savings are seldom and passed on to the consumer market by the

energy suppliers. Furthermore, market prices have seen significant increases in price with this trend likely to continue over time. By contrast, biomass fuels are less exposed to cost fluctuations in the energy market and enjoy greater price stability.

3.3 Development layout

3.3.1 The boiler building would occupy part of the existing bin storage area. The bin storage area is considered suitable for the building due to being located near to the boiler room inside of the Care Home, minimising the length of the pipe connection from the building to the Care Home. This location allows for the use of the existing access to the bin storage area from Locke Road to access the building for maintenance, in addition to the double doors of the proposed building. The abundance of windows, steep topography, and the distance to the boiler renders other locations within the Care Home curtilage less suitable.

3.3.2 The fuel storage building would store the fuel to power the boilers. As a result of the confinements of the bin storage area, the fuel storage building would be located to the east of the bin storage area on a grassed space, positioned between the metal fenced boundary and wooden fence. This area is considered suitable due to the proximity to the boiler building allowing for convenient powering of the boilers, near to a layby allowing fuel delivery vehicles to access the building, and a wooden fence backdrop which is divided from the communal greenspace of the Care Home.

3.3.3 In order to accommodate the boiler building in the bin storage area, the storage area is proposed to be extended to the west within a grassed space and adjacent to a small services building. This area is already used for overflow bin storage and is regularly occupied by two waste containers.

3.3.4 The proposed site plan is shown on NT15521-03C Proposed Site Plan.

3.4 Development design

3.4.1 The boiler building would measure 4.6m(l) x 3m(w) x 2.4m - 3.4m(h). The roof of the boiler building would slope downwards from a height of 3.4m near the Care Home to 2.4m near the streetscape. The bin storage area measures 11m x 3m. The boiler building would comprise two 60kW Windhager BWE600 (BioWIN) and be erected on a concrete base.

3.4.2 The fuel storage building would measure 5m(l) x 1.4(w) x 2.4m – 2.6m(h). The roof of the fuel storage building would slope downwards towards the streetscape from a height of 2.6m to 2.4m. The height of the wooden fence backdrop is 2m with hedging

reaching over the peak. The building would have a storage capacity of 9.5 tonnes and its foundations would consist of wooden sleepers.

3.4.3 Both of the buildings would be cladded in a high quality brick skin to reflect the building materials of the Care Home, including slated roof materials. The boiler building would have steel double doors on the southern elevation and the fuel storage would have steel doors on the western elevation.

3.4.4 Two flues would extrude from the roof of the boiler building, travel towards the Care Home, and then run up the side of the wall until reaching the eaves of the building. The flues would extend circa. 7.5m above ground level and 2m above the raised walkway. The diameter of flue would be 150mm. The flues would be black to reflect existing piping on the Care Home. However, as is the case with the building designs, the applicant is open to suggestions on design and colour.

3.4.5 The bin storage area extension would be constructed out of concrete and be approximately 8m x 2m. A wooden fence, similar in design to the adjacent fencing, would be erected around the storage area, but to a lower level in order to not obstruct any resident views.

3.4.6 A single bat box would be erected under the eave of the southern elevation of the Care Home to encourage and support local biodiversity in the area.

3.4.7 The proposed elevations and floor and roof plan are shown on NT15521-04D Proposed Elevations and NT15521-05A Proposed Floor and Roof Plan, respectively. In addition, further details on the boiler type are shown in Appendix 1: Boiler Brochure.

3.5 Fuel type, delivery and maintenance

3.5.1 The biomass boilers would use wood pellets to ensure that high quality heat and hot water is produced. No other fuel would be used in the combustion process, as other fuel types may not be in compliance with existing regulations or could damage the feeding and burning system. The boiler building would be periodically fed pellets from the fuel storage via a small underground pipe connecting both buildings. This reduces the amount of disruption caused by manual fuelling.

3.5.2 Delivery of the pellets would take place, on average, once every six weeks with periodic maintenance site visits taking place either once or twice a year. Each delivery is likely to take approximately 30 minutes. Delivery times would usually occur between 9:00 - 17:00. Access would only be required into the fuel store and boiler building for maintenance which would be undertaken by fully trained personnel.

3.5.3 Delivery vehicles would use the adjacent layby on Locke Road to gain convenient access to the buildings.

3.6 Emissions and waste

3.6.1 An Emissions Certificate has been completed to demonstrate that the biomass boiler meets air quality requirements of the Renewable Heat Incentive. For more detail, see Appendix 2: Emissions Certificate.

3.6.2 The biomass boiler is also able to legally operate within Smoke Control Zones, as exempt by the Clean Air Act 1993. For more detail, see Appendix 3: Exempt Appliances.

3.6.3 An Odour Statement supports the application (Appendix 4) stating that the ETA biomass boiler range (similar to those used in the proposed development) do not create any odours as long as the specified fuel is used, and the plant is operating as intended.

3.6.4 The planning application has also been accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment for the previous design iteration of the proposed development (Appendix 6). The assessment shows that the development would produce emissions below official threshold rates, concluding that there would be no unacceptable impacts in relation to air quality. This was confirmed by the Technical Officer (Pollution Control), but they favoured the option of the flues running up the Care Home building and terminating above the eaves, which has been proposed here.

3.6.5 A Noise Impact Appraisal (Appendix 7), supported by SoundPlan noise modelling software, accompanies the planning application. It has been found that the proposed boiler building would be inaudible at the identified Existing Sensitive Receptors, including the Care Home and nearby residential properties.

3.6.6 Biomass boilers have been designed to create the required conditions for very efficient combustion to take place. Therefore, minimal ash and other waste would be produced.

4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The adopted Development Plan

4.2.1 The site is located entirely within the administrative area of BMBC. The adopted Development Plan document (DPD) pertinent to the site and proposed development is the Barnsley Local Plan (2019). The site is understood to not be located within a designated neighbourhood planning area.

4.3 Other material considerations

National planning policy and guidance

4.3.1 Other material considerations considered relevant to the determination of any future planning application regarding the proposed development comprise the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

4.3.2 The NPPF, as revised and updated to July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a key material consideration in the determination of any application for planning permission. The NPPG is a web-based resource which provides planning guidance on a range of subject areas relevant to the NPPF.

Supplementary Planning Documents

4.3.3 Those Supplementary Planning Documents considered relevant to the site and proposed development are Residential Amenity, the Siting of Buildings (2019) and Biodiversity and Geodiversity (2019), and House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations (2019).

UK Government targets

4.3.4 On 20th April 2021, the UK Government announced the ambitious new target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels in the sixth Carbon Budget, with the goal of becoming net-zero by 2050 and complying with the legal obligation in the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended).

4.3.5 Documents such as the Energy White Paper (2020) should also be given some weight in the determination of planning applications. The Energy White Paper clearly states that *"biomass is unique amongst renewable technologies in the wide array of applications in which it can be used as a substitute for fossil-fuel based products and activities, from power generation to hydrogen production and even new forms of plastics. Along with its ability to deliver negative emissions, this makes biomass one of our most valuable tools for reaching net zero emissions".*

5 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

5.1 Principle of development

5.1.1 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Gilroyd and is not designated or allocated for any specific purpose. An area of Green Belt is located to the immediate east of the site, outside of the settlement boundary. The Green Belt would not be affected by the proposed development.

5.1.2 Policy CC1 seeks to reduce the causes of and adapt to the future impacts of Climate Change by, inter alia, promoting and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. In addition, Policy RE1 states that development that produces renewable energy will be allowed as long as there is no material harm upon the following:

- The character of the landscape and appearance of the area;
- Living conditions;
- Biodiversity, geodiversity and water quality;
- Heritage assets, their settings and cultural features and areas;
- Key views of, from or to scenic landmarks or landscape features;
- Highway safety, or
- Infrastructure including radar.

5.1.3 Policy GD1 also sets out a number of general requirements that new development should meet in order to be approved. The proposed development consists of a renewable energy system which would reduce the existing Care Home's demand for gas, thereby resulting in a reduced carbon footprint. This would support the transition to a low carbon future, as supported in paragraph 152 of the NPPF. Paragraph 158 of the NPPF also states that it should be recognised that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The proposed

development is also seen to be in accordance with the principles of Policy RE1 and relevant criteria of Policy GD1 as it is considered to generate no unacceptable environmental or amenity implications, as discussed in the following sections.

5.2 Design and visual impact

5.2.1 Policy D1 encourages design to respect and reinforce the distinctive local character, including scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form.

5.2.2 The proposed boiler building would be largely screened within the existing bin storage area from the streetscape with only the sloped roof being partly visible alongside the flues. The building would be constructed with in similar design to the Care Home (unless another option is more favourable) in order to not distract from the quality of the existing Care Home and character of the street scene. The boiler building would also not overshadow the Care Home and nearby properties by being located away from windows.

5.2.3 The fuel storage building would be more visible from the street front, but set back slightly against a wooden fence. The building would also only slightly extrude over the top of the fence, but this extrusion would mostly be covered by tall hedges and a tree on the other side of the fence, limiting views of the building from those within the Care Home. Similarly to the boiler building, the storage building would be designed with complementary materials in order to not distract from the quality of the surrounding built environment.

5.2.4 Although the proposed development is not a domestic property, due to being located near the street front, the adopted design principles are considered to follow the guidance provided in the House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations SPD and not affect living conditions.

5.2.5 The location of the buildings are also located within a more functional part of the site; partly within the bin storage area and near a services building to the west, thereby having a lower amenity value than other spaces within the site.

5.2.6 The internal configuration of the building has been designed to have the biomass boilers closest to the Care Home, meaning the flues can protrude from the northern side of the sloped roof. This design consideration means that the flues are furthest away from the streetscape and create minimal visual intrusion into the air space. When viewed from the nearby properties, the flues would be seen against the backdrop of the Care Home, thereby also helping to minimise appearance.

5.2.7 The extended bin storage area would also not result in a loss to visual amenity due to the existing use of the grassed area as an extended bin storage for a small number of waste containers. The storage area would be positioned on a concrete foundation and enclosed by similarly designed wooden fencing as the original storage area, but lower in order to not unacceptably obstruct views of the streetscape and overshadow residents on the ground floor of the Care Home. The extension area would also formalise the waste containers already used in that area and present the site as tidier when viewed from Locke Road.

5.2.8 There are no heritage assets near to the site, so the proposed development is not considered to result in any adverse impact on the historic environment.

5.2.9 Policy RE1 states proposals for low carbon and renewable energy will be expected to include information regarding the efficiency of the proposal. Further detail regarding the specification of the biomass boiler type is included in Appendix 1: Boiler Brochure.

5.2.10 The proposed development is small scale, and the buildings would not require advanced construction techniques to be completed.

5.3 Local amenity

5.3.1 Poll1 states that development will be expected to demonstrate that it is not likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in air, noise, smell or dust pollution. Policy GD1 also requires all development to not have an adverse impact on residential amenity and ensure any pollution is minimised and mitigated.

5.3.2 The proposed development would include two high specification biomass boilers in order to achieve a very high rate of combustion, largely as a result of precise oxygen intake and high temperatures. The low moisture quantity of the fuel type also significantly reduces water vapour emissions. The high-end specification of the biomass boilers, together with periodic maintenance, would ensure that emissions are kept to a minimum and below what would be emitted by either oil or coal fired boilers. Consistent monitoring would take place to promptly rectify any problems in the unlikely event of an issue occurring.

5.3.3 A Noise Impact Appraisal (Appendix 7) which supports this application concludes that the boiler building would be inaudible at the identified Existing Sensitive Receptors which include the Care Home and nearby residential properties. It is anticipated that noise levels would be 9dBA at the nearest residential property on Locke Road and 21dBA at the Care Home. This is far below the surrounding background noise climate.

Further to this, residents would be indoors, and noise attenuation of the building frame and surrounding buildings would reduce noise further. The appraisal shows that the site would be able to accommodate the proposed development within the surrounding local noise climate and not present an unacceptable impact on local amenity.

5.3.4 Also, the previous design iteration of the proposed development was closer to the Care Home with less surrounding noise attenuation (no bin storage area) and the Environmental Health Officer (Pollution Control) stated that *"the development is unlikely to have an adverse impact on health and the quality of life of those living and/or working in the locality".* It is concluded therefore that the biomass boiler is unlikely to generate unacceptable impacts on living conditions.

5.3.5 The planning application has also been accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment for a previous design iteration of the proposed development. The assessment shows that the development would produce emissions below official threshold rates, concluding that there would be no unacceptable impacts in relation to air quality. This was confirmed by the Technical Officer (Pollution Control), but they favoured the option of the flues running up the Care Home building and terminating above the eaves, which has been proposed here.

5.3.6 Due to the small number of fuel delivery and maintenance visits the proposed development would require, no unacceptable impacts on local amenity from vehicle movements are anticipated.

5.3.7 There are two areas of designated green space, located to the north (open space) and east of the site (natural area). Policy GS1 states that green spaces and valuable for amenity. The proposed development would not result in the loss of green space or loss in amenity value and so would comply with the requirements set out in Policy GS1. The proposed development is also not anticipated to impact the character or function of PROWs or greenways.

5.3.8 The proposed development would not result in any issues regarding vibration. Due to the efficiency of the boilers, there would also not be any odour emitted. Appendix 4 includes a brief statement from a manufacturer of a similar model providing additional assurance that this is indeed the case.

5.4 Biodiversity

5.4.1 The proposed development is not anticipated to have any adverse impact on

biodiversity as the site is considered to be of low ecological value. However, due to the proximity of the site to the countryside and a natural green space, it is proposed to include a bat box below the eaves of the southern elevation of the Care Home. This supports the aims of Policy BIO1, which encourages new development to consider opportunities for biodiversity opportunities. This would provide a biodiversity enhancement and small gain through a minor development.

5.5 Summary

5.5.1 The principle of the proposed development is considered to be in accordance with national and local renewable energy planning policies. The location of the biomass boiler building is considered to be within a suitable location to supply Water Royd Care Home with heat and hot water from a renewable energy source. The proposed development is therefore considered to constitute sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, which is also referenced in Policy SD1.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the erection of a biomass boiler building encompassing two biomass boilers that would supply Water Royd Care Home with heat and hot water from a renewable energy source. The boiler proposed to be used is of high specification and would produce lower emissions than other conventional boilers. The proposed development would be located adjacent to the Care Home and has been designed to not result in any unacceptable environment or amenity issues. The proposed development supports the UK's target to reduce CO_2 emissions and is considered to constitute sustainable development when assessed against national and local planning policy documents.

APPENDICES

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