

**MONCKTON COKE WORKS,
ROYSTON, BARNSELEY**

**PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT
FOR REINSTATEMENT OF RAILWAY
SIDING**

On Behalf of Monckton Coke & Chemical Company Limited

May 2013

**BARTON
WILLMORE**
Planning · Design · Delivery

Monckton Coke Works, Royston, Barnsley
Planning, Design and Access Statement for Reinstatement of Railway Siding
On Behalf of Monckton Coke & Chemical Company Limited

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Monckton Coke & Chemical Company Limited (hereafter referred to as 'The Applicant') and provides background information in support of a full planning application to obtain planning consent for the reinstatement of a railway siding associated with the Monckton Main Colliery and the Royston Drift Mine which closed in the 1980s. The proposal also includes the introduction of an unloading facility to allow for the transportation of coal by rail at Monckton Coke Works.

About Hargreaves

- 1.2 Hargreaves was established in 1994 as a specialist bulk haulier and has grown to be a major force in the supply, movement and management of mineral resources and the provision of support to the energy and waste industries. The Hargreaves Group is a fully integrated business which sources, produces, processes, handles and transports a wide range of bulk materials across the UK.
- 1.3 It is important to highlight that Hargreaves is the:
- Largest independent importer of coal in the UK;
 - Leading importer of coke and refractory minerals in Europe; and
 - Largest bulk haulage transport fleet in the UK.

Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.4 As part of the preparation for the planning application, pre-application consultation has been undertaken with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.5 As part of the pre-application process a Screening Opinion Request under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 was submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on the 1st May 2013 in respect of the potential requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed development. A formal Screening Opinion was issued by the LPA on the 10th May 2013 confirming that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

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2.0 The Site and Its Surroundings

The Site

- 2.1 The Application Site (hereafter referred to as the 'Site') is approximately 2.9 hectares in size and comprises of a linear strip to the north of the existing Monckton Coke and Chemical Works (hereafter referred to as the MCCW Site). The Site stretches from an existing spur off the Monk Bretton branch line to the west to the eastern boundary of the MCCW Site adjacent to the B6428.
- 2.2 The Site is bound by the following land uses:
- To the north by a high embankment, extensive woodland area, a coal yard area, sewage works and some open land;
 - To the east by the B6428;
 - To the west by the Monk Bretton branch line; and
 - To the south by Monckton Coke Works.
- 2.3 The MCCW Site had historically benefited from a rail network connection that served the site, the Monckton Main Colliery and the Royston Drift Mine enabling the transportation of coal and coke to their markets. The extensive local rail network was operational from the late 19th Century up until the late 1980's, however over the last forty years the tracks have undergone a staged removal process, apart from the initial spur off the Monk Bretton branch line.

Site Surroundings

- 2.4 The surrounding area is predominantly characterised by the MCCW Site which entails 14 hectares of land primarily to the south of the Site. It provides coke and by products operating on a 24 hour basis 365 days a year.
- 2.5 There is an extensive woodland area to the north of the site which forms part of a local wildlife site and lies within the Green Belt as well as falling within the administrative boundary of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council. Also to the north, is an existing sewage treatment plant, some open land and a coal yard area with existing palisade fencing providing security to the existing MCCW Site. There are some properties further north adjacent to the B6428 which are of a residential nature with the nearest property located approximately 125 metres from the northern boundary of the Site.

- 2.6 The eastern boundary of the Site adjoins the B6428 which is a very popular and well used route between Baurgh Green in Barnsley and Featherstone in Wakefield.
- 2.7 The western edge of the Site adjoins the Monk Bretton branch line which is currently in use by no more than three trains per week to deliver sand to the glass factory at Monk Bretton which lies to the west of the MCCW Site.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposed development seeks to reinstate part of a former railway siding which ceased use in the 1980s. The railway siding proposed will comprise of a single track railway line starting from the existing spur off the Monk Bretton branch line and will run towards to the western boundary of the Site into the current operational area of the MCCW Site. The single track railway will then separate into two separate parallel single tracks where unloading will take place within the existing MCCW Site. The proposed railway siding seeks to accommodate a locomotive visiting the MCCW Site up to five times a week with no more than one visit per day.
- 3.2 The proposal also includes unloading infrastructure such as a loading pad area and a mobile crane. Fencing is proposed around the unloading area with a gate proposed across the track for security and safety reasons.
- 3.3 In summary the proposed development involves the screening and relaying of a remaining ballast line left in situ, the reinstatement of a single track railway line from the spur off the Monk Bretton Branch Line to the MCCW Site and the development of associated unloading infrastructure.
- 3.4 The reinstated railway track would have a strategic significance by linking the site to the rail network and enable the Applicant to move bulk products (namely coal) to the Monckton Site from Redcar Ore Terminal at Teesport. Presently, the majority of coal transported to the Monckton Site is from Teesport and constructing this facility would severely reduce the number of daily transport movements on the local and strategic road network between Yorkshire and the North-East.
- 3.5 It is expected coal would arrive at site and be unloaded during daytime operating hours of the MCCW Site (7am to 7pm) via a mobile crane onto the loading pad. The Coal would then be transported from the loading pad across the site using the existing site dedicated wheel loaders.

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4.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (hereafter referred to as the 'Framework') was published on 27th March 2012. At the heart of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 4.2 One of the key core planning principles in the Framework is to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and another is to focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.
- 4.3 Paragraph 30 of the Framework stipulates that encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. The following paragraph goes on to say that local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development such as rail freight interchanges.
- 4.4 The Framework supports opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods such as accommodating the efficient delivery of goods and supplies.
- 4.5 Chapter 9 of the Framework seeks to ensure that Green Belt land is protected. It sets out that the Green Belt serves the following five purposes:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighboring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.6 Paragraph 81 says that:

“Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes; visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.”

4.7 Paragraph 90 says that:

“Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- **Mineral extraction;**
- **Engineering operations;**
- **Local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;**
- **The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and**
- **Development bought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.**

Local Planning Policy

Barnsley Core Strategy (adopted 2011)

4.8 At the outset of the Barnsley Core Strategy, the document portrays the challenges that the borough will face over the plan period. The key challenge is to promote sustainable development and reducing the borough's impact on climate change which are overriding principles of the Core Strategy. Another challenge with regard to transport is that poor air quality is recognised as a growing problem with 6 Air Quality Management Areas having declared as a result of traffic pollution.

- 4.9 Eight strategic objectives are identified within the document including the following:
- Objective 2: To improve access, movement and connectivity with sustainable travel by a variety of measures including reducing transport emissions of green house gases in order to tackle climate change and minimising other pollutants to improve air quality; and
 - Objective 4: To make efficient use of land and infrastructure including making the best use of existing and proposed infrastructure.
- 4.10 Policy CSP1 (Climate Change) sets out that development will be expected to reduce and mitigate the impact of growth on the environment and carbon emissions.
- 4.11 Policy CSP19 (Protecting Existing Employment Land) seeks to protect existing employment land in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs.
- 4.12 Policy CPS24 (Safeguarding of Former Railway Lines) stipulates that the Council will look to safeguard land within and adjacent to existing and historical rail alignments to accommodate the potential reinstatement of former strategic railway lines. Where it is not possible to use the original alignment, the Council will work with delivery partners to identify any appropriate alternative routes. The supporting text to this policy on page 109 of the Core Strategy specifically states that reinstatement would increase the opportunity for the borough's freight to be transported by rail. It specifically makes reference to the current railhead at Monk Bretton, used by the glass industry and identifies it as the only dedicated freight link in Barnsley.
- 4.13 Policy CSP28 (Reducing the Impact of Road Travel) looks to reduce the impact of road travel by working with our sub regional partners, fleet and freight operators to improve the efficiency of vehicles and goods delivery, and reduce exhaust emissions.

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (1998)

- 4.14 The Site is allocated in the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (1998) as being part within an Employment Policy Area and part within the Green Belt. The disused Barnsley Canal to the south-west of the site is designated as a Nature Conservation Area. Land to the north of the Site comprises of a Local Wildlife Site, a Wildlife Habitat Network Area and land within the Green Belt as shown in the adopted Wakefield Allocations DPD.

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5.0 Design & Access

- 5.1 This chapter provides a statement on the design concept and principles to fulfil the validation requirements for the provision of a Design and Access Statement.

Land Use

- 5.2 The development will be used to assist with the transportation of Coal to the MCCW Site and includes the reinstatement of part of a previous railway siding which was in situ up until the 1980s.

Amount and Scale

- 5.3 The proposed development is for a railway siding comprising predominantly of a single track railway line which separates in to two separate tracks to allow unloading to take place from both tracks within the existing MCCW Site. The railway siding will accommodate a locomotive up to five times a week. With the exception of fencing up to 2.4 metres in height, the loading pad and railway track, the proposed development contains little built development. The height or vertical scale of the development can be constituted as low level.

Layout

- 5.4 The proposed development involves the part reinstatement of a previous railway siding and the layout is dictated by the requirement to connect the new track with the existing spur off the Monk Bretton branch line and with the proposed unloading pad within the northern part of the MCCW Site. It has been designed to provide a facility that offers a safe and efficient method to unload coal for transportation across the wider site area. Removal and realignment of the existing fence line and inclusion of new fencing of up to 2.4 metres in height fence is being proposed around some perimeter sections of the site to prevent unauthorised access and to provide a safe working area (all within land designated within the Barnsley LDP for employment purposes) No fencing has been proposed within the Green Belt.
- 5.5 The proposed layout is illustrated on the accompanying proposed site plan.

Landscaping

- 5.6 The existing sloped topography to the north and semi-mature woodland to the north and east along the existing freight rail line provide screening to much of the operations. A large vegetated bund adjacent to the northern site boundary provides immediate screening of the proposed track and unloading area from views to the north.

- 5.7 The new rail line will run on an existing ballast track retained from previous rail activity through a belt of colonised scrub and trees. Vegetation removal will be required to facilitate the works, however, the thinning will be limited to a narrow corridor either side of the rail track and an area adjacent to the former rail bridge on the B6248.
- 5.8 In order to mitigate the vegetation loss and provide additional screening to the development a number of native tree and shrub mix belts are proposed within the application boundary in the following locations:
- Adjacent to the B6248 to augment the existing vegetation retained including the corner of the access track along the northern boundary;
 - Infilling along the existing bund to the north of the site where earthworks have been carried out; and
 - To the fence line adjacent to the reservoir and sump.
- 5.9 The planting mix is based on existing species found in the location and includes transplants, feathers and standard trees to provide a mix of maturity and add value to the biodiversity of the site. Thorny shrub species have been specified in large quantities to improve security to the site boundaries and enhance the biodiversity with flowering shrubs and berries attractive to birds and insects. Below is the list of species and percentage mixes:

Name	Common name	Height	Form	Mix (%)
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	1.2-1.8m	Feather	10
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	40-60cm	Transplant	5
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	40-60cm	Transplant	20
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	40-60cm	Transplant	5
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	30-40cm	Transplant	5
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	40-60cm	Transplant	20
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	Sessile Oak	40-60cm	Transplant	10
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog Rose	40-60cm	Transplant	15
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	1.2-1.8m	Feather	5
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Geulder Rose	40-60cm	Transplant	5

- 5.10 The larger tree species have been specified to provide some height to the planting along the B6428 and the northern boundary, the species are as follows:

Name	Common name	Height (m)	Girth (cm)	Form
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	4.25-6.0	14-16	EHS
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild Cherry	4.25-6.0	14-16	EHS
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	4.25-6.0	14-16	EHS

- 5.11 In addition to the mitigation planting, the cut wood and branches from the tree and scrub thinning will be retained on site where possible or provided in agreement with neighbouring land owners as habitat piles for invertebrates to aid foraging bats and birds.

Appearance

- 5.12 Apart from the unloading infrastructure, the majority of the proposed development comprises of a railway track which will sit at ground level and will be well screened by existing vegetation. It has a minimal and industrial appearance resulting from **the nature** of the operations taking place. A 2.4 metre high fence will be erected around part of the site such as the loading pad and existing operational part of the site to prevent unauthorised access. Gated access will be installed across the relevant section of track to provide security when the track is not in use. A significant part of the track to the west (between the site and the spur connection to the Monk Bretton Branch Line) will not be secured by fencing as this is not considered necessary and will minimise the overall visual appearance of the proposed development.

Access

- 5.13 Locomotives will enter the rail siding from the west along the reinstated stretch of single track which connects to the Monk Bretton branch line. Due to the nature of the operations access to the rail siding by unauthorised visitors and members of the public will not be allowed. As a result, there are no pedestrian specific or way marked access routes to the rail siding. Vehicular access to the site can be achieved through the existing Monckton Coke Works site. Unrestricted truck movements across the MCCW Site will continue to allow internal movement of materials.

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6.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The principle of promoting sustainable development is a golden thread which runs through the Framework and is at the heart of the Government's planning agenda. This requirement to promote sustainable development applies to all developments and a whole range of policies contained in the NPPF provide guidance on how to assess the overall sustainability of a proposed development. The Framework sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. For the environmental role, the Framework specifically states that there is a requirement to mitigate and adapt to climate change including the move to a low carbon economy. One of the core principles in the Framework echoes this by saying that planning should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate.
- 6.2 The proposed development is in itself clearly sustainable in principle as it proposes to reduce the volume of HGV's on the strategic road network by removing circa 50 HGV trips on a daily basis. It seeks to utilise the nearby Monk Bretton branch line by reinstating a former railway siding to significantly reduce the amount of coal which is imported to the site by road.
- 6.3 With regards to the location of development, the proposed development requires an area of land in between the Monk Bretton branch line and the MCCW Site to accommodate the proposed development. Therefore this location should not prejudice the principle of development, as invariably this type of development has severe restrictions as to where it can be sited to fulfil and serve its purpose. In order to make the proposed development viable, the site needs to be in close proximity to the operational site so that it can work in conjunction with existing operations which take place. Furthermore, it needs to link to the existing rail network connection including the existing spur connection already in place.
- 6.4 A large proportion of the Site is currently brownfield land designated within a wider employment area and outside of the Green Belt. A small proportion of the application site falls within the Green Belt, however, it is important to note that this area of land within the Green Belt has been previously developed having served a former railway siding up until the 1980's.

Employment

- 6.5 As stated above, the majority of the site lies within a designated employment area forming part of the wider site for the MCCW Site. It is also within this area where the loading pad will

be situated to unload coal from locomotives. The proposed development seeks to help the existing MCCW Site to continue to operate but in a much more sustainable manner to help reduce carbon emissions on a daily basis.

Green Belt

- 6.6 As a small proportion of the Site falls within the Green Belt, Green Belt policies at national and local level apply.
- 6.7 The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and therefore the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 6.8 In paragraph 90 of the Framework, it says that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt and these include engineering operations and local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location. As the proposed development comprises of engineering works and is to provide a local transport link between an established large employment site on the edge of the Green Belt and an existing branch line with a low visual impact, it is judged that the proposed development is appropriate development in the Green Belt. The element of the proposal within the Green Belt will have a minimal impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposed development does not conflict with the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- 6.9 Paragraph 80 of the Framework sets out the following five purposes upon which Green Belt serves:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.10 With regard to the above five purposes, it is considered that the application site does not conflict with any of the above five purposes given that the only part of the proposed development that falls within the Green Belt is the reinstatement of a single track railway line which will retain the openness of the Green Belt.

Transport

- 6.11 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF acknowledges the need for providing a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment for all developments that generate significant amounts of movement, confirming that in assessing any such submissions development should only be prevented “*where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe*”. It is considered that one to two locomotive trips per week would not generate a significant amount of movement. However, due to the number and capacity of rail trucks that would be associated with each trip, the proposed development would result in a significant reduction of daily HGV movements.
- 6.12 The MCCW Site currently imports circa 260k tonnes of coal per annum and exports circa 200k tonnes of coke per annum, all by road. The importation of coal to the site has changed in recent times and up until 2013 MCCW took its coal from Maltby Colliery, however due to serious geological and safety problems at Maltby the site is mothballed.
- 6.13 Presently coal of equally high standard is being sourced and imported to Redcar Ore Terminal at Teesport, North Yorkshire. This is then being transported by road to the MCCW Site which is approximately a 100 mile trip for HGV's.
- 6.14 Based on 2012 coal import figures (260k tonnes) and by continuing to import coal on weekdays only (excluding weekends and bank holidays) there are 254 days available for transportation. Using Hargreaves' own HGV fleet, it is calculated there are approximately 35 one way HGV coal delivery trips to the site per day.
- 6.15 The exportation of coke goes directly to markets across Europe including businesses in the UK such as Tata Chemicals Soda Ash manufacturing plant in Cheshire.
- 6.16 The proposed development seeks to reduce the volume of HGV's used to import coal to the site to help reduce company costs as well as congestion and carbon emissions on the road. By reducing circa 35 one way HGV trips to the site on a daily basis, the proposed development would not result in an increase in HGV trip generation.
- 6.17 Vehicular traffic will continue to be used for the distribution of coke produced on site to the various destinations across Europe out of the existing site access at MCCW Site, on to the B6428 to the strategic highway network. The proposed development will not lead to an increase in vehicle trip generation when compared with the existing site operations.
- 6.18 Consequently it is considered that the proposed development would not discernibly or materially worsen the existing operation of the highway network.

Ecology

- 6.19 A walkover survey of the site was completed in March 2013 with further surveys undertaken in May 2013. From this, a Phase 1 Habitat Survey was produced in May 2013 by AES Ltd. Further surveys and evaluations were undertaken in May due to the potential for habitats and species of ecological importance to occur.
- 6.20 As the majority of the application site comprises of land within the existing Coke Works and the ballast area which has been a rail siding previously, there is limited ecology consisting of a disturbed environment and area of hardstanding. The ballast area is bordered either side by regenerated scrub which will need to be lopped as part of the proposed development. The botanical ecological value of the habitat 'unimproved' grassland is diminished due to the encroachment of scrub which constituted approximately 65% of the area, however due to the translocation of a Great Crested Newt (GCN) population in the adjacent Rabbit Ings Country Park, this area, which includes a pond, may be of value to GCN and further survey is being undertaken. No characteristic signs of badgers or their activities were recorded during surveys, however a checking survey will be carried out prior to construction. There may be a low risk to breeding birds, therefore it has been recommended that any tree felling or ground level vegetation clearance will take place outside the breeding period (March to August).

Noise

- 6.21 Following the construction stage, the noise generated from the proposed development will be associated with a locomotive arriving at site up to five times per week and no more than once a day, the unloading of coal and the transportation of coal from the unloading pad to the stockpiling area. The principles of unloading and transportation of coal within the existing site is already established and it is considered the altered activities are not considered to be a significant change to the existing sources or levels of noise.
- 6.22 Furthermore, the realignment and regrading of the northern soil mound will maintain a noise attenuation barrier between the sources of noise generation and the nearest properties to the north of the site which are located approximately 125 metres away.
- 6.23 Therefore any noise associated with the proposed development is not expected to be above and beyond what is already experienced at the site.

Dust

- 6.24 The principle activities on site and their potential to generate dust emissions in the absence of mitigation measures are presented below:
- Delivery of coal;
 - Stockpiling of coal and coke;
 - Coal re-handling; and
 - Transportation (internal haulage routes).
- 6.25 The amount of dust generated by each activity depends on the size of particles and, crucially, upon their moisture content. Dust emissions are greatest when there is a plentiful supply of small dry particles.
- 6.26 These principal activities that would give rise to potential for dust emissions from the development have been previously identified through the operation of the MCCW and accepted site mitigation measures are incorporated into existing operational practices, these are:
- Rain guns (water cannons) are used to spray the coal and coke stockpiles and unmade internal haul roads;
 - A dedicated water bowser to supplement the rain guns is used on the unmade internal haul roads; and
 - The internal made roads (concrete) and external tarmac road (Lund Hill Lane) are cleaned / cleared at least twice a day by the dedicated onsite road sweeper.
- 6.27 If the proposed development is accepted, two of the principle activities are anticipated to alter. These are the delivery of coal and the areas of transportation of coal on internal haul routes. Hargreaves does not anticipate the altering of these activities giving rise to increased generation of dust emissions for the following reasons:
- The coals transported to site will have a moisture content of between 8-15% and when handled by the wheel mounted cranes from rail truck to unloading pad or by the wheel loaders moving the coal to stockpiles, the coal has sufficient moisture content to not allow fine dust particles to be emitted;
 - The crane operators will ensure drop heights are kept to a minimum when releasing the coal;
 - The location of rain guns will be reviewed to ensure the realigned internal haul roads are kept moist; and
 - The dedicated water bowser is onsite for use.

- 6.28 It is considered that the adjustment to the existing dust mitigation measure will negate any potential negative impacts of the proposed development in relation to fugitive dust being emitted from the site.

Cultural Heritage

- 6.29 The overarching guidance for determining application which impact upon the setting of a listed building or conservation area is included in s66 and s72 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, which requires that any development preserves or enhances the setting of a listed building and/or conservation area.
- 6.30 This guidance is transposed into Section 12 of the NPPF, whereby further elaboration is provided confirming that 'in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.'
- 6.31 The site is not located within a designated Conservation Area and does not include any listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments; furthermore no listed buildings are located within close proximity to the site.
- 6.32 It is therefore considered that the proposed development will not have any impact upon Heritage Assets and as such is wholly compliant with the guidance contained within the NPPF.
- 6.33 The majority of the Site forms part of the operational MCCW Site and therefore it is unlikely that any archaeological remains will be in situ. The remaining part of the site was previously used to host a former single track railway line. Similarly the site is not located within any areas of known archaeological importance and as a result of the shallow depth at which the track and associated infrastructure will be built, it is not considered that any further evidence needs to be submitted to demonstrate that the proposals will impact upon any archaeology.

Landscape

- 6.34 The immediate landscape features such as the established Coke Works and vegetated boundaries, the tree line corridors of the rail line and B6428 and woodland to the northern hillside are characteristic of a wider landscape affected by Coal mining and its associated infrastructure.

- 6.35 The proposed development is in keeping with the current function and infrastructure of the existing Monckton Coke works. It is predominantly contained within a narrow corridor within the colonised scrubby woodland and within the existing Coke working area. It can be sensitively accommodated in this location whilst ensuring the preservation of local amenity and the character of the wider landscape.
- 6.36 Due to extent of the current working areas visible and existing earthworks and vegetation to site boundaries much of the development area will have little change on the landscape and the local amenity of the area. Where the development is brought closer to the B6248 any potential receptors are likely to have slight to moderate changes in their visual amenity. A landscape mitigation planting scheme along the road corridor and to the site boundaries with a mix of species, heights and maturity will assist in absorbing the development back into the surrounding landscape and reduce any impacts to visual amenity.

Trees

- 6.37 A Tree Report has been carried out by JCA Consultants and concludes that the trees surveyed were generally found to be in a good to fair condition. It recommends a root protection area for each tree or group marked on the accompanying Tree Constraints Plan and recommends that an Arboricultural Method Statement is produced prior to commencement of development.

Flood Risk

- 6.38 The site identified is located within Flood Zone 1 as per the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood map. This therefore confirms that the site itself will not be at risk from flooding and that the development of this site with further built form will not relocate flood waters to any alternative sites, thereby exacerbating flooding problems elsewhere.
- 6.39 The site exceeds 1 ha in size and therefore does require a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to be carried out. The FRA concludes by saying that the proposed development is not at significant flood risk, especially in light of the type of development proposed.
- 6.40 Furthermore as the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 it is sequentially located in an area least prone to flooding and therefore meets the sequential test as established in the NPPF and the accompanying technical guidance. Similarly as per Table 3 in the Technical Guidance to the NPPF there is no requirement to carry out an exception test to justify the development.

- 6.41 The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment proposes measures to accommodate the possibilities of flood from extreme storm or blocked sewers by recommending that external levels fall to non-critical areas, such as landscaping where the water can pond without affecting existing buildings or third party land. It is considered that appropriate mitigation measures can be achieved on site.

Drainage

- 6.42 In light of the proposed development, the runoff is expected to have a very low environmental risk and it is assumed that any foul or industrial waste created from the site's operation will not be disposed of within the Site boundary. Therefore no specific filtration or other water quality measures will be included within the proposal and the proposed development is not expected to have a negative impact on surface water quality.
- 6.43 The majority of surface water will continue to soak away naturally across the site however the run-off generated by the hardstanding area will be collected, stored and then can be used for onsite operations. A wedge pit design is being investigated for the proposed development.

Sustainability

- 6.44 It is important to highlight that many of the by-products that come from coke making at the MCCW Site are recycled and sold.
- 6.45 Furthermore, the gas from the coke ovens on the MCCW Site are used in a combined heat and power plant that can generate up to 11 megawatts of electricity. Not only does this supply all the electricity needed on site, but the applicant also sells surplus electricity to the national grid and of a quantity to provide power for more than 1,000 homes.

Socio- Economic Benefits

- 6.46 The MCCW Site is the only independent coke production plant in the UK and is ranked as one of Europe' leading producers of high quality metallurgical coke. It produces circa 200,000 tonnes of coke per year which is then used for use in glass, detergents and steel manufacturing and coke used for home heating.
- 6.47 The nature of the proposed development is such that there are a number of socio economic considerations. The reinstatement of the railway track will ensure the continuity of coal supply to Monckton Coke Works in a much more sustainable and economic manner, with the inherent economic advantages associated with that, and the removal of a significant number of HGV's from the local and strategic road network.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 National and local planning policy promotes development which results in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and reduces congestion. One of the key aims is to support the transition to a low carbon future such as the use of more sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods.
- 7.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement demonstrates the proposed development has taken into account the proposals accordance in principle with national, and local planning policies. Furthermore this statement highlights the findings of the accompanying technical reports which demonstrate how the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the built environment, surrounding landscape and the natural environment.
- 7.3 It is judged that the proposed development is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt given that the only development proposed within the Green Belt is the reinstatement of a single track railway line which constitutes local transport infrastructure where there is a strong justification for it being required in a Green Belt location. Furthermore, due to its low visual impact, this part of the proposal will preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
- 7.4 In light of the above, the principle of the proposed development is supported at both national and local policy level and no site specific constraints have been identified following submission of supporting documentation. It is therefore judged that the site is policy compliant and no material considerations exist to outweigh compliance with the Framework and development plan. It is therefore requested that planning permission is granted.