

Planning Statement

For CEMineral Limited | 23-306

Proposed commercial development - Hazelcroft Garage, Tom Thorn, Fairfield, Buxton,
Derbyshire, SK17 7HP

Project: 23-306
Site Address: Hazelcroft Garage, Tom Thorn, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 7HP
Client: CEMineral Limited
Date: 06 July 2023
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement is prepared on behalf of CEMineral and supports an application for the change of use of land from a (B8) storage and distribution use to a mixed general industrial (B2) and (B8) storage and distribution use together with the construction of a building, silos, and associated equipment.
- 1.2 The silos, associated equipment and the building do not have foundations and are simply bolted to the existing hardstanding. The equipment and building could be removed in its entirety if no longer in use.
- 1.3 CEMineral is an importer and distributor of cementitious products. The site would be used in conjunction with the wider business and would contribute positively to the local economy.
- 1.4 The proposed development would comply with policies set out in the development plan and the Framework and therefore in accordance with paragraph 11 of The Framework, planning permission should be approved. There are no material considerations to indicate otherwise.

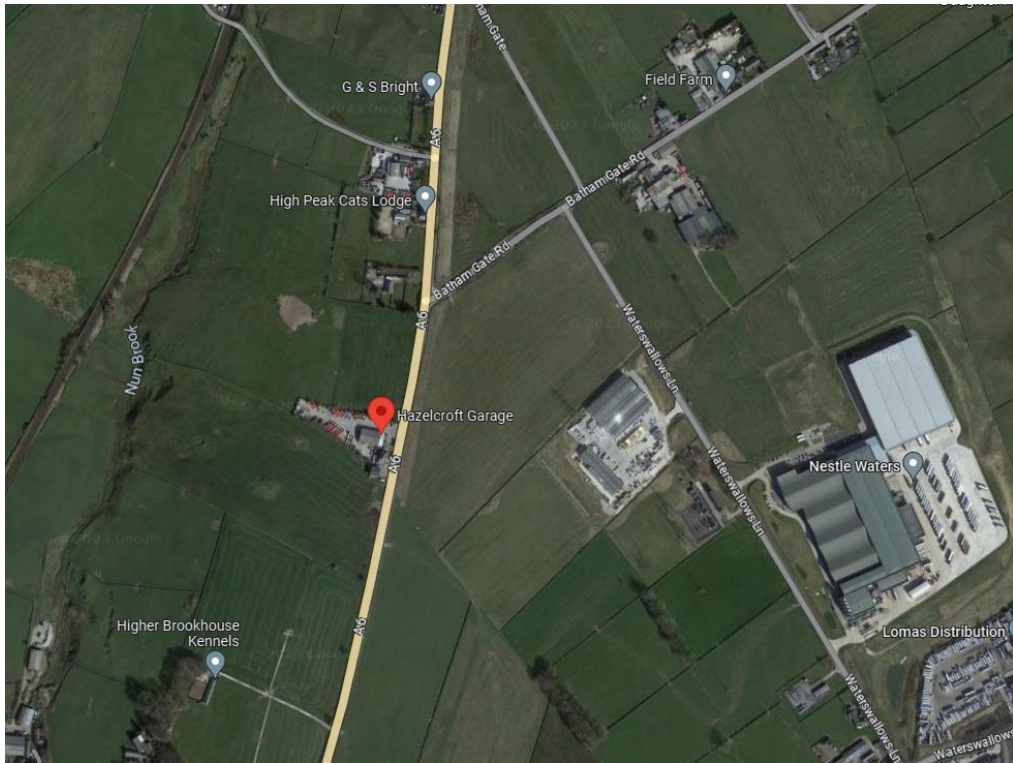


2. Context

Site location

- 2.1 The application is located on the A6 corridor, approximately 2km north of the centre of Buxton.
- 2.2 The site is situated in the open countryside as defined on the Local Plan proposals map. The character of the area is mixed with commercial, agricultural, and residential properties. The Peak District National Park boundary is approximately 1.5km to the west. The Buxton to Manchester railway line is situated 300m to the west.
- 2.3 Approximately 500m to the east is Waterswallows, a long-established industrial area and Primary Employment Zone, home to the High Peak Recycling Centre, Lomas Distribution and Nestle Water amongst others. Nestle Water bottling plant has also been extended (planning permission reference HPK/2017/0673, subject to variations) onto land primarily allocated under Policy E2 as an employment allocation, although part of the approved scheme falls within the designated open countryside.
- 2.4 Pennine Aggregates lies approximately 300m to the east. The Pennine Aggregates plant was granted planning permission in September 2016 (reference HPK/2016/0317) for the change of use of agricultural land to B2 (general industry) together with the construction of two buildings for storage and processing of sand and stone aggregate products including preparation for onward transportation. A subsequent planning permission was granted for the extension of existing buildings, the construction of four silos, hardstanding and earth mounding in November 2021 (HPK/2020/0268). This is clearly visible from the application site.
- 2.5 Other commercial enterprises within the surrounding area comprise caravan storage at Blake Edge Farm to the northwest, the electricity substation adjacent to Pennine Aggregates to the east, dog boarding kennels at Higher Brook House Farm to the south west and the golf driving range at Barms Farm to the south.
- 2.6 The extract from Google maps below shows the relationship of the site to the surrounding area:





Site description

- 2.7 The site itself extends to 0.35 hectares and is accessed off the A6. The site is laid entirely to hardstanding consistent with its lawful use as a B8 haulage yard. The boundaries of the site are characterised by trees and drystone walls.
- 2.8 The red edge area for this application is confined to the west part of the site commensurate with the lease on the land. The east part of the original Hazelcroft Garage site is host to the industrial building previously used by Hazelcroft Garage. This remains in commercial use but is outside the application site. Also to the east, fronting onto the A6 are a pair of semi-detached dwellings.
- 2.9 The lawful use of the site is B8 storage and distribution. The previous occupiers, Hazelcroft Garage Limited specialised in the haulage of aggregates and blocks and we understand had a fleet of approximately 80 heavy goods vehicles. We are not aware of any restrictions in terms of hours of operation on the lawful B8 use. The previous use would have generated a large number of vehicle movements with the garage site being the start and end destination of the journeys. Drivers would also have returned to the site throughout the day for refuelling and for administrative purposes.
- 2.10 It is estimated that there could have been in the order of 500 vehicle movements each day as a result of the lawful use. The Hazelcroft HGVs have been purchased by Lomas Distribution located at Waterswallows industrial estate and now operate as part of the Lomas Distribution fleet.



Background

- 2.11 CEMineral is an importer and distributor of cementitious products. Formed in 2016, the company is the largest independent cementitious producer in the UK, and its principle products aim to decarbonize the cement industry providing environmentally friendly alternatives. The business currently operates from Immingham Docks, Humberside; Glasgow; and Tilbury, London. The company head office is in Brierley Hill, West Midlands. The company has over 40 employees, either directly or indirectly across these sites. Three operatives are now employed at the Hazelcroft site and an additional three jobs have been created to sell and administrate the products. An additional 6 jobs would therefore be created by the Hazelcroft site.
- 2.12 CEMineral works closely with Pennine Aggregates and Lomas Distribution, local businesses situated in close proximity to the site, in the production and distribution of the cementitious products. It will also purchase limestone quarried in the local area.

Relevant planning history

- 2.13 The planning history for the site is set out below:
- Proposed solid fuel distribution centre (HPK/0001/7501) – Refused (date unrecorded)
 - Extension to commercial garage (HPK/0003/6092) – approved 9th April 1997
 - Lorry parking (HPK/0003/2003) – approved 30th October 1992
 - Change of use of land from agricultural land to area for storage of implements and machines (HPK/0002/4581) – approved 18th November 1986
 - Improvements to existing vehicular crossing (HPK/0002/5486) – approve 9th July 1986



3. The application

- 3.1 The application proposes the the change of use of land from a (B8) storage and distribution use to a mixed general industrial (B2) and (B8) storage and distribution use together with the construction of a building, silos, and associated equipment. The development is situated on the western portion of the site.
- 3.2 The silos are 10m in height (excluding handrail) and are painted in a dark grey colour in keeping with industrial development in the surrounding area as shown on the photograph below. Neither the silos, associated equipment or the modular building have foundations, the structures are bolted to the ground and would be fully removable should the process no longer take place in the future. There is no increase in hardstanding or loss of trees as a result of the proposals.
- 3.3 Externally the equipment comprises Euromec silos and blending pod together with a weighbridge. The building comprises sheet metal walls with a polythene roof and encloses a bagging machine, dust extractor and air compressor.



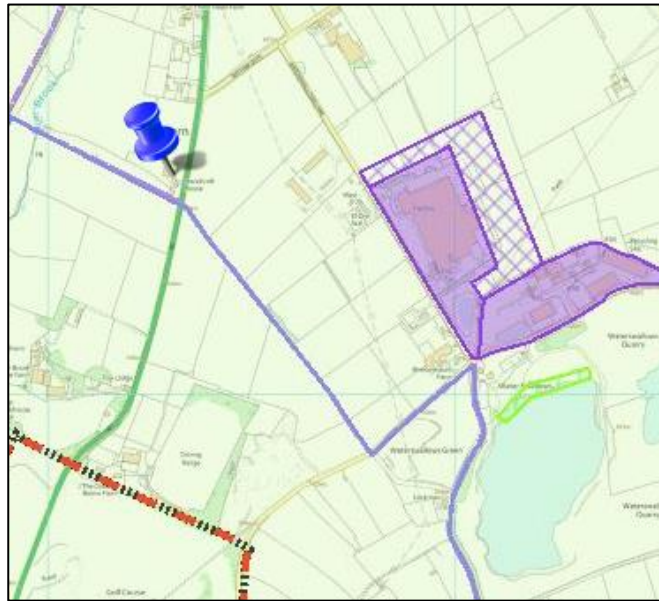
- 3.4 The silos and cement packing line would be used for the production of cementitious products which would then be distributed off site. To describe the main process taking place on site in very simple terms, silo 1 would store cement with limestone powder stored in silo 2. The two products are mixed in the blending pod to create a higher performing cement product before being transferred into the building and packaged into bags internally. These bags are stored on pallets and transferred to the HGVs for delivery.
- 3.5 The second process that takes place on site is the production of cements in bulk. Here the process is identical as the above, with the end product transferred straight into a tanker rather than into bags.
- 3.6 The internal plant and external plant would not run concurrently. The external plant would be used less frequently than the internal plant. All equipment is electric ensuring that noise is kept to a minimum.
- 3.7 There would be approximately 6 to 8 deliveries of cement a week and 2 to 3 deliveries of limestone powder. Around 4 to 5 loads of the finished cementitious products would be dispatched from the site each day (either packaged or in bulk). The vehicle movements would be considerably reduced in comparison with the lawful use of the site for B8 storage and distribution.
- 3.8 The products are blown into the silos at high pressure ensuring that dust cannot escape on delivery. The internal packing line machinery includes dust extractors and filters. Similarly, the filters on the equipment ensure that there is no dust escape when the powder is transferred into tankers. The production would not lead to unacceptable impacts in terms of dust.
- 3.9 We estimate that the production of these high performance cementitious products at Hazelcroft will remove approximately 18,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the cement supply chain per year as well as purchasing significant volumes of limestone from local producers.



4. Policy context

High Peak Local Plan (2016)

4.1 The development plan for the purposes of this application comprises the High Peak Local Plan 2011-2031. The Proposals Map for the adopted local plan shows that the site is within the 'Open Countryside'. The site is shown on the extract from the Local Plan proposals map below in the context of the surrounding area:



4.2 Relevant policies comprise:

- S1: Sustainable Development Principles.
- S1A: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
- S2: Settlement Hierarchy.
- S4: Maintaining and Enhancing and Economic Base
- S7: Buxton Sub-area Strategy.
- EQ2: Landscape Character.
- EQ3: Rural Development.
- E1: New Employment Development.
- E2: Employment Land Allocations.
- CF6: Accessibility and Transport.

National planning policy and guidance

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2021. Relevant sections are:

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development.
- Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy.
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport.
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Other material considerations

4.4 Other material considerations comprise the Landscape Character SPD.



5. Planning considerations

National policy

- 5.1 Section 6 of the Framework, building a strong, competitive economy, explains at paragraph 81 that planning 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, considering both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 5.2 It goes on to state at paragraph 84 that planning decisions should enable the growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. In the case of this application, the proposals would re-use the existing previously developed haulage yard and provide an opportunity for growth in this sector.

Strategic policies

- 5.3 Local Plan Policy S1a reiterates Section 38 (6) and sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Framework.
- 5.4 Policy S1 of the Local Plan sets out the sustainable development principles of the plan, requiring all new development to make a positive contribution to the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment and mitigate the process of climate change. The proposal would contribute to the sustainability of the community by reusing an existing employment site.
- 5.5 Policy S2 sets out the development hierarchy. Buxton is defined as a market town. Market towns are to be the main focus for housing, employment and service growth, consistent with maintaining and where possible enhancing their role, distinctive character vitality and appearance. The site itself lies outside the settlement boundary within the open countryside but it is on an existing employment site. It would constitute the re-use of an existing employment site consistent with policy.
- 5.6 Policy S4 states that the council will maintain and where possible enhance the economic base of the plan area. The proposal would certainly accord with this and particularly with the policy objective to support the appropriate improvement, enhancement, and expansion of existing businesses.
- 5.7 Policy S7 relates to the Buxton Sub-area Strategy which encourages the growth of local employment opportunities by, amongst other things, safeguarding existing employment sites for industrial and business use unless specifically allocated for an alternative use. The proposal would re-use an existing employment site with clear economic benefits resulting from the re-use of the site for employment purposes.



5.8 In summary, the proposal would support the strategic aims of the plan.

Policy EQ3

5.9 Policy EQ3, Rural Development, seeks to ensure that new development outside of settlement boundaries is strictly controlled to protect the landscape's intrinsic character and distinctiveness including character and appearance whilst also facilitating sustainable rural community needs. In relation to employment provision, it states that this will be achieved by:

- Supporting the redevelopment of a previously developed site and/or the conversion of existing building for employment use provided it does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the rural area.
- Supporting rural employment in the form of a commercial enterprise where a rural location is justified.

5.10 The proposal is compliant with Policy EQ3 insofar as it is a previously developed site. The site is an established employment site and the silos and temporary building are not out of keeping with their context. In terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the silos will be partially visible, but this will be consistent with the character along the A6 corridor Road which is characterised by open countryside with interspersed commercial and other development. The character of the wider area includes the recent expansion of Pennine Aggregates. Pennine Aggregates also has silos which are comparable in appearance to the proposed silos.

5.11 In summary, although the site is situated within the open countryside, the silos and temporary building are proposed within the boundaries of an established employment site which is previously developed. The requirements of Policy EQ3 are met.

Other planning considerations

Landscape

5.12 Policy EQ2, Landscape Character states that new development should be sympathetic to landscape character and protect or enhance the character and appearance and local distinctiveness of the landscape. The landscape character SPD identifies distinctive landscape areas. The site falls within the White Peak Plateau Pastures Landscape Character Type.

5.13 The SPD describes the landscape character of the Plateau Pastures designation as a gently rolling, upland limestone plateau characterised by nucleated limestone villages, dry stone walls, a pastoral land-use and open and expansive views.



5.14 The guidance for new development in this area comprises:

- New buildings should be kept as small as is practically possible and reflect the scale, proportions and form of existing traditional farm outbuildings;
- Buildings should be durable and easy to repair;
- Prefabricated metal buildings do not weather well and remain obtrusive within the landscape. For this reason, materials that do weather well and are sympathetic to the landscape are preferred. Examples include vertical slatted boarding, coloured concrete to blend with existing buildings or reclaimed stone;
- Larger developments should use small plantations of trees in groups around the property area whereas individual trees are more appropriate around small or isolated developments;
- Limestone dry stone walls around properties connect development with the wider landscape, and,
- The impact of hardstanding and other surfaces should be considered, including the colour, brightness, reflectivity of the surface and how it would appear in the landscape from a distance.

5.15 The site is relatively flat and covered in its entirety with hardstanding. It would previously have been characterized by external storage of heavy goods vehicles and trailers. There is an existing industrial building on the east of the site (outside of the red edge boundary). The boundaries of the site are reinforced by trees. The site is visible from the surrounding area, it is however, seen in the context of the buildings around it, the A6 corridor and the commercial and industrial development which is a feature of the open countryside in this location. In this context it is not considered that the visual impacts would be significant.

Highways

5.16 Local Plan Policy CF6 requires the site to be accessed safely and seeks to minimise the need to travel particularly via unsustainable modes of transport.

5.17 The site has a lawful use for storage and distribution. As set out above, we understand that Hazelcroft had a fleet of approximately 80 heavy goods vehicles. The previous use would generate a large number of vehicle movements with the garage site being the start and end destination of the journeys. Furthermore, the drivers would return to the site throughout the day for refuelling and for administrative purposes.

5.18 In comparison, there would be approximately 6 to 8 deliveries of CEM1 a week and 2 to 3 loads of limestone powder. Around 4 to 5 loads of the finished produce would be dispatched from the site each day. The vehicle movements would be considerably reduced in comparison with the lawful use of the site for B8 storage and distribution.



5.19 The proposals are considered acceptable in terms of highways.

Amenity

- 5.20 Local Plan Policy EQ6 requires new development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent occupiers to ensure that the amenity of neighbouring occupiers will not be compromised. There is a pair of semi-detached properties to the east of the site. Planning permission was also granted for the conversion of the garage at the southernmost property, Thorneycroft, into two semi-detached dwellings in 2020 (HPK/2019/0497).
- 5.21 The site would operate from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday and this could be secured by condition, in comparison with the previous use which we understand was unrestricted. The nearby properties have historically been situated in close proximity to an established employment site and any consideration of residential amenity must be assessed in that context. The machinery on site would generate low levels of noise and its use would be confined to weekdays during the daytime only. There would be a reduction in vehicle movements in comparison with the last use of the site.
- 5.22 Having regard to the lawful use of the site. It is considered that the proposal would comply with Policy EQ6 of the Local Plan.



6. Sustainable development

- 6.1 Paragraph 8 of the Framework sets out the three objectives of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. The proposals are considered against each of these in turn below.

Economic

- 6.2 The development would create further local employment opportunities. CEMineral currently employs 40 people, either directly or indirectly. The proposals have created 6 new jobs. In addition, CEMineral works closely with other businesses in the local area particularly Pennine Aggregates and Lomas Distribution, as well as purchasing significant volumes of limestone from the local area. The business contributes positively to the economy and has a proven track record of investing back in the community at its other operating units.

Social

- 6.3 The existing site is accessible to the local workforce in Buxton and the High Peak and supports skilled jobs.

Environmental

- 6.4 The proposal would make efficient use of a previously developed site and is a logical re-use of an existing employment site.
- 6.5 CEMineral are committed to reducing the carbon footprint of the operation. Last year the company removed 75, 000 tonnes of CO₂ from the supply chain by substituting cement with other materials. The company's ambition is to be the first UK zero carbon cementitious supplier and it continues to invest heavily in R&D and technology as a result.



7. Summary and conclusions

- 7.1 This planning statement is prepared on behalf of CEMineral and supports an application for the change of use of land from a (B8) storage and distribution use to a mixed general industrial (B2) and (B8) storage and distribution use together with the construction of a building, silos and associated equipment.
- 7.2 The silos, modular building and associated equipment do not have foundations and are simply bolted to the ground. The equipment and building could be removed in its entirety if no longer in use.
- 7.3 The site is a previously developed established employment site. The principle of employment development on this established site is acceptable. The visual impact of the silos and temporary building would not be significant. There are no detrimental highways impacts and the proposal would be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.
- 7.4 This statement demonstrates that proposed development complies with the development plan as a whole and would comprise sustainable development. Planning permission should therefore be granted without delay.



