Whitebirk Depot - Proposed New Training Centre

Design + Access Statement

September 2012
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1.0 Introduction

Background

Electricity Northwest Limited was formed in 2007 following the purchase of the North West’s distribution network from United Utilities (UU). Since 2010 it has also taken the responsibility of operating and maintaining the network.

The business of ENWL includes training its members of staff at all levels from professionals to apprentices. Currently the training is located across various sites in the North West with the main site being at Hoscar in Lancashire which is owned by UU. This site includes workshops, classrooms and outdoor training but there is a need for a new training facility to meet ENWL business needs.

Previously a scheme for a training facility within the Whitebirk Depot site was submitted to Hyndburn Borough council on 5th April 2012 Reference 11/12/0128 and approved on 31st May 2012. The scheme was based on adapting an existing UU building within the Depot to provide the facility. ENWL business needs have now necessitated an independent ENWL training facility within the site to which this application relates. The proposed new training facility is not dissimilar to that in previous application with respect to size, floor areas and use of the facility albeit with the inclusion of an outdoor training facility to the side and rear of the proposed new building.

The proposed project now falls within two Boroughs (Hyndburn Borough Council HBC and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council BDBC) and hence will form a separate planning application to each Council with the mains application being to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.
Location plan

The outline of the application site is shown below edged in red.
2.0 Site Land Use

**Existing Use**
Eastern side of the Whitebirk depot is used for vehicle maintenance, workshop and training facilities including support offices. The part to which the application relates is the vacant land to the west. It has generally been vacant although its sometime used for small elements of outdoor storage. Part of the vacant land has tarmac finish with part faded car park markings.

**Proposed Use**
The proposed scheme is to develop the vacant part of the site to form a training facility comprising of a purpose built training centre building together with external training area, car parking and landscaping and access road linked to other parts of the site. The development also includes provision of outdoor training facility.
Site Constraints

Although the site is vacant, it has constraints which includes a high pressure gas main with a 15 metre easement to either side of it. It also has high voltage underground electric power cables which run through the south east corner. Taking this into consideration the location of the building including the car parking, out door training area and transformer compound have been carefully planned to make best and efficient use of the site.
3.0 Site Approach & Access

Site Access
The main site access to the existing depot is off Whitebirk Drive, the A6119 road in Blackburn. Vehicular and pedestrian access at this point is controlled from a security gatehouse located adjacent the main gate. Proposals are under discussion to upgrade the gatehouse in line with Electricity Northwest corporate image.

The site has a secondary access point at the end of Dyneley Road which is off Blakewater Road. This entrance will form the main access to the Training facility. Currently it has some palisade gates with fencing. This would be upgraded to steel gates to the main road and a pedestrian side gate. The access road from this gate would lead back into the main depot and connect onto the Whitebirk Drive entrance. CCTV and control systems would also be linked back to the security gatehouse located at the main entrance.

Site Accessibility
A transport statement report has been produced by TTHC Ltd ref:M12019-02 which forms part of the planning submission. Please refer to the document details relating to accessibility to the site.
4.0 Design Proposals

Development Aims
To provide a building and outdoor training area that will be fit for purpose as a training facility meeting the requirements of Electricity Northwest's training programme. The design of the building is intended to compliment ENWL ambitions to be the leading energy delivery business. The proposed development is also aimed at increasing the profile of Whitebirk site.
The design of the building aims to enhance the character of the site and be compliment of the corporate stature of Electricity Northwest. The elevations incorporate horizontally laid flat steel cladding panels in metallic silver to all elevations giving it a clean, crisp appearance.

The elevation is topped off with a continuous eaves solid line with a darker grey. This strong horizontal element serves to visually tie the whole frontage together. The Rear elevation is retained as a gable end to allow for easy alterations for future expansion.

The main entrance incorporates a glazed entrance screen and doors facilitate easy access as well as provide a corporate feel. The rotated L shape glazing gives the building a unique identity, defines the main entrance location and enhances the front appearance. Generally the ribbon glazing to the other elevations compliment the overall design ethos.
Scale & Massing
The form and massing of the proposed new building is in line with the existing structures and buildings both within the site and adjacent to the site. The adjacent business park to the west of the site also has two storey buildings which have a similar massing and scale.

Typical unit on Greenbank Business Park which neighbours to the west of the site

Existing building on site located adjacent the main entrance

Existing office block on site

Existing Police Station neighbouring the site S.E.

Proposed Building:

Front view of proposed building

Rear view of proposed building
Layout Design
The proposed building, which has a gross internal area of 1929m2, is laid out on a structural grid which comprises of five workshops, classrooms, office space as well as associated amenity spaces such as wc, showers, breakout and dining spaces and plant rooms. Some of the workshops have part or full double storey space and high sectional overhead doors.
Materials

Roof Construction
Built up steel roof system with insulation. Roof pitch 5 degrees. Roof colour light grey.

Roof drainage
Gravity fed water disposal system with eaves hidden gutter system and internal Rain water pipes.

External Wall Construction
Steel wall cladding system with insulation. Red Brick plinth 300mm above ground level. Panels horizontally laid with Smooth flat profile and silver colour.

Windows
Ribbon glazed window systems comprising of polyester powder coated aluminium framing with double glazed units. Frame colour dark grey.

Entrance doors & curtain wall glazing
Polyester powder coated aluminium framing with double glazed units. Frame colour dark grey. Some glazed panels blacked out where they cross structural members.

Doors
Fire escape doors: Steel door light grey colour with dark grey steel frame.
Sectional overhead door: light grey colour with dark grey frame

Structure
Steel frame structure system.
Landscaping

Soft landscaping has been introduced to complement the car parking and main entrance to enhance the character and appearance of the area. The main access roads will consist of tarmac finish with concrete kerbs leading onto concrete flag paving around the building access areas including the footpaths. All access points from the access road onto the paving will incorporate dropped kerbs and slope to provide level access.

The site has a boundary fence on the west side of the site includes mature trees which shall be retained along the boundary edge. The outdoor training area surface will be retained as existing.
Vehicle and Cycle Parking

The scheme has incorporated car parking comprising of 36 spaces 4.8 x 2.4m standard bays as well as 2no. accessible parking bays which have a 1.2m strip zone to the rear and side. There are also 2no. motorcycle bays located adjacent to the accessible bays.

Also included are 3no. cycle hoops which are designed to accommodate 6no. cycle spaces. They are conveniently located adjacent the building together with the accessible & motorcycle bays. A drawing of their location is shown below.
Existing Site Photos

View looking from west into proposed site

View looking from Dyneley Road into proposed site

Small elements of storage on the land

View looking towards Police Station from proposed site

View looking from proposed site towards Dyneley Road entrance

View looking North East from proposed building site
5.0 Crime Avoidance Statement

The crime rates in the area sourced from www.ukcrimestats.com

The typical security risks for this type of development are generally acts of theft and criminal damage which are a smaller proportion in relation to other acts of crime in the area. However, the Client and development team will still undertake measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of persons for both during the construction period and operation of the facility. Crime within the site will be mitigated by:

1. The site is security manned 24hrs
2. The security system includes CCTV closed circuit television monitoring and recording.
3. Signage
4. The site is directly adjacent the Police Station
5. The site is protected by a perimeter security fence

Other Secured by design principles incorporated into the design / operation of the facility

The new entrance to the Training facility will be linked to the security gatehouse at the main entrance. Access to the site includes site record of all persons entering / exiting the site.

Careful consideration will be given to securing the site during construction to prevent unauthorised access and theft of equipment.

Generally all ground floor windows will be certificated to BS7950. All external doorsets are to be certified to BS PAS 24 or LPS 1175 (SR)2.

External lighting will be provided to the front, rear and sides of the building as well as the car park. This will be operated by photo-electric cell as well as linked to the operation of the premises.

Generally there are no hidden pockets relating to the building design and layout.
6.0 Environmental Statement

Key strategies employed

The approach to sustainability is to minimise the energy demands of the building, use renewable energy sources where possible including maintaining a low carbon footprint through the use of sustainable materials. Also the general well being of persons and consideration for the landscape has been taken into account. Strategies employed are listed below:

- The Building’s thermal performance measured using u-values for the building fabric which are set higher than the Building Regulation Requirements. Please see the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Building Regulation limiting fabric U values (W/m2K)</th>
<th>Proposed Building U values (W/m2K)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground Floor</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Walls</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof lights (7% of roof area)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main entrance door &amp; glazing</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External steel doors</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectional overhead</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The Building has been designed to provide an air tightness compliant with BS EN 13829:2001 to be a minimum of 5m³/hr/m² @ 50 Pa. The current Building Regulations requirement is 10.

- Where applicable timber used in the building will be FSC Certified to ensure the wood is from certified sustainable sources.

- Paints to be used shall be specified with Low VOC (Volatile organic compound) to ensure that the finishes have minimal environmental impact in production and application as well as health and well being of occupants of the building.
Key Environmental strategies continued

• The damp proof membrane will be specified made from 100% recycled product.

• The project has employed the use of air source heat pumps. The hot water system has been assumed operating from the air source heat pump(s) with a Generator Seasonal Efficiency of 600%.

• Natural Daylighting has been maximised through the use of insulated rooflights and ribbon glazed windows has been incorporated in the design. Not only does this reduce C02 emissions by using of less artificial lighting but it also provides occupancy comfort.

• The Building has also employed the use of openable windows where applicable to aid in natural ventilation & cooling

• The scheme is encouraging the use of cycle by the provision of cycle spaces as well as shower/changing facilities.

• Improve the community and well being by contributing to a strong, diverse and stable economy with rewarding employment opportunities open to all.

• Consideration for the landscape which adheres to the tree and ecological survey proposals.

Details of the drainage, flood risk assessments and land surveys are separately detailed on the Civil Engineers documents by Thomasons Ltd.

Additional environmental and sustainable principles which involve carbon reduction strategies have been included in the Energy Statement Report by Crookes Walker Consulting Ltd.
7.0 Supporting Planning Statement

The Supporting Planning Statement based on the Blackburn with Darwen Core Strategy as Adopted, January 2011. (Part of the Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Local Development Framework)

- The project is in line with Policy CS1 of a targeted growth strategy. The business of Electricity Northwest Ltd establishes an agenda for economic growth for Blackburn. The need for a new Training facility to meet ENWL business needs is a requirement for the business and the company is taking advantage of opportunities for investment.

- The Policy CS4 also addresses the need for making the most efficient use of existing employment land. This is demonstrated on the careful planning of the vacant site which is constrained by gas pipe easement zone and high voltage power cables (see page 6). The new development is linked with the depot operational site which also is in line with CS3 7.19 to ensure continual supply of land for employment development. The proposed scheme is improving the employment viability in the Borough through its business expansion.

- As per Policy CS2 7.11, The project site Whitebirk, has been designated by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) as a Strategic Regional Site to provide a premier employment site for East Lancashire with a focus for high quality job growth and investment by businesses requiring good access to the primary road network.

- The form and design of the new development is in line with Policy CS16 which aims to create a high standard of design and in keeping with the character of the area.

- The new development is in line with Policy CS3 where provision of approximately 105 hectares of land has been allocated for employment development. In particular, no7.19 is addressed by the project ensuring an ongoing supply of land by utilising the vacant area within the Whitebirk depot site.

- Policy CS4 is addressed by the development as it ensures increased employment opportunities both directly at the site and indirectly by support services and through the eventual employment of trained students in the facility.
Supporting Planning Statement continued.

- With Electricity Northwest Ltd choosing the Whitebirk Depot as the main centre for its Training facilities, it greatly contributes to the Vision of the Borough to be a centre of Regional Importance by 2026 as defined in the Core Strategy Document.

Supporting Planning Statement based on the Hyndburn Core Strategy as Adopted, January 2012.
(Part of the Hyndburn Local Development Framework)

- The scheme is complimentary to the Hyndburn sustainable community strategy as defined in 1.19 & 1.2 to be a place with thriving local economy, high levels of educational attainment through its training programme.

- Hyndburn also recognises that Whitebirk area is a strategic regional employment site. 3.16 highlights the need to provide sufficient land for growth of existing business as well as attract new higher employment to the borough.

- 4.6 highlights Policy E1 (future employment provision) which sets out to provide approximately 58 hectares of land identified for employment to meet the requirements of the Borough for the period 2011-2026

- Policy E2: Protection, Modernisation and Development of Employment Sites - Existing business parks, major industrial estates and other good quality employment sites will be retained for employment uses.

- Policy ED1: New and improved educational facilities - The Council will support proposals for accessible, high quality educational facilities that improve basic and higher level skills and qualifications.

- The development has Incorporated renewable & low carbon energy technology to provide at least 10% of predicted energy demand which is in line with Policy Env4: Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

- The Borough’s vision of being a distinctive, prosperous and vibrant area by 2026 with sustainable growth with more skilled local and specialist jobs as well as higher level of level of opportunities is in line with ENWL business growth and training programme.