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PLANNING AND ECONOMIC STATEMENT

PROPOSED COLD STORE EXTENSION

**WHITBY SEAFOODS
FAIRFIELD WAY
WHITBY BUSINESS PARK
WHITBY**

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24 JUL 2010

Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement is submitted in support of an application for a full planning permission for Whitby Seafoods Ltd. The planning application is for the extension of the existing Whitby Seafoods Ltd premises at Fairfield Way, Whitby for a new cold store building in order to provide expanded provision for the frozen storage of raw and cooked products on site. The proposal will also increase and secure employment opportunities in the area.
- 1.2 The site of the extension is to the rear of the existing premises on an area which has previously been identified as expansion land for the Whitby Business Park. The application site extends to some 0.27 hectares from the overall 4 hectares within Whitby Seafoods Ltd ownership.
- 1.3 A pre-application discussion regarding the proposal has taken place including Officers from the Councils Planning Departments in June 2010 and the current planning application will be subject to the Council's consultation and determination procedures for planning applications.
- 1.4 The application is also supported by a Design and Access statement in accordance with local and national guidance and which should be read in conjunction with this Planning and Economic Statement.

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Description of the Site

- 2.1 The site comprises some 0.27 hectares of land as identified on the submitted plans.
- 2.2 The wider area at Whitby Business Park is in employment uses comprising a mix of building types and employment uses, including a concrete batching plant, transport depot and other industrial uses. There is also a proposal for a new retail store at the periphery of the site. Whitby Business Park is fully occupied and provides an invaluable and significant employment resource for Whitby being the only such location in the wider area.
- 2.3 The existing land comprises an agricultural field, although not in active use with an existing 45m high telecom mast to the north-west boundary. The site was purchased for the benefit of providing additional expansion space by and for Whitby Seafoods with the area identified in Employment Policy E8 and is shown on the Village Inset Plan 42 for Whitby Business Park as part of the North Yorks Moors Local Plan (see Appendix A).

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- 2.4 The current proposal is to extend the existing premises onto a relatively small area of the land available, to meet the current and immediate business needs of Whitby Seafoods. Future development of the remainder of the land is likely to be determined through the ongoing business needs of Whitby Seafoods and the final adopted Local Development Framework document.

Planning History

- 3.1 The premises occupied by Whitby Seafoods Ltd have a number of approved applications for extensions. These are identified below:

Planning Reference	Description	Decision/date
NYM/2010/0476	Extension and alterations	Pending
NYM/2010/0234.	New office and staff facilities	Withdrawn/PD
40330119A	Extension to factory	Approved 17/3/1982
40330119B	Alterations to existing building	Approved 25/11/84
40330119C	Liquid Nitrogen storage tank	Approved 1/11/96
40330119D	Single storey storage building	Approved 9/1/01
40330119E	Extension for refrigeration plant	Approved 22/8/01
40330119F	Advert	Approved 6/9/02
40330119G	Extension to plant room	Approved 19/3/03
2007/006	Refrigeration unit	Approved 12/2/07
NYM/2003/0512/AD	Advert	Approved 20/8/03

The Proposed Development

- 4.1 The application is for full planning permission for a cold store extension for 1260 square metres of gross external floorspace. This is to be built onto the existing Whitby Seafoods premises and is to be used to store frozen raw materials and finished food products at minus 22 degrees centigrade. The cold store is essential to facilitate the continuing growth and success of the business. Currently frozen raw materials and finished goods are stored in a public cold store in Seaham, County Durham. This development will considerably reduce the energy used to transport goods to and from Seaham.
- 4.2 The proposal is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which sets out the context for the extension in relation to size, scale and appearance.

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Whitby Seafoods

- 5.1 Whitby Seafoods Ltd produce frozen coated seafood products, The Company is the UK's largest supplier of breaded scampi. The company was founded by Graham Whittle, the major share holder, in 1985 and remains a family concern. The company was first established from the assets of the former Whitby Shellfish Company at Larpool Lane, Whitby. The company relocated in 1996 to the current site at Whitby Business Park to allow further expansion.
- 5.2 Activities at the Whitby factory include washing, grading, freezing and packing of scampi tails delivered directly from fishing vessels, some of which are Whitby registered vessels. The factory also de-shells scampi, and has a processing line that coats scampi and other seafood in batter and breadcrumbs prior to freezing and packing.
- 5.3 In 2004 the company turnover was less than £10m; in 2009 it was in excess of £20m. It is envisaged that the growth will continue. This development will provide additional capacity which is essential to and an integral part of that growth. Currently the business employs 130 staff in Whitby (10% of who walk or cycle to work). Continued growth will lead to more jobs.

Need for the proposal

- 5.4 The cold store extension is needed to facilitate the expansion of the business and reduce energy costs per unit of production by reducing the number of journeys to and from a public cold store in Seaham, County Durham and present a more sustainable development.
- 5.5 The production operates 6 days a week over 24 hours in a shift system but this is dependent upon supplies and orders. The operating hours will remain unchanged.
- 5.6 Deliveries and collections are made during the normal working day. The extra storage space created by the development will lead to less vehicle movements overall per unit of production than at present.
- 5.7 The proposal together with the associated internal alterations represents a £1.5million capital investment with support for this being sought from the European Fisheries Fund.
- 5.8 The cold store is essential for the future growth of operations in Whitby. If the cold store was not built in Whitby the growth would be transferred to a subsidiary company in Kilkeel Northern Ireland. Currently the business employs 130 staff and the cold store will give rise directly to a further 6 jobs whilst the increased production capacity resulting from this could result in further on site employment opportunities.

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National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements

- 6.1 The planning policy context in which the application should be considered is provided by national policy guidance together with policies of the Development Plan which, in this case, comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the North York Moors LDF of which the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD was adopted in 2008.

National Planning Policy/Statements

- 6.2 The guidance which is particularly relevant to the proposed development is set out in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) and PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth).

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005 and 2007)

- 6.3 PPS1 sets out the Government's commitment to promoting high quality and sustainable development including the following elements:
- Social cohesion and inclusion;
 - Protection and enhancement of the environment;
 - Prudent use of natural resources;
 - Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and development;
 - Adaptation and mitigation of climate change
- 6.4 In order to deliver sustainable development through planning, local authorities are advised to
- make suitable land available for development
 - contribute to sustainable economic development
 - protect the natural environment
 - ensure high quality and inclusive design
 - ensure development supports and contributes to creating sustainable communities
- 6.5 The guidance at paragraph 27 also sets out that Local Planning Authorities through the development plans process should seek to:
- provide a positive framework for sustainable economic growth
 - promote urban and rural regeneration to secure the wellbeing of communities, including mixed use developments
 - bring forward sufficient land or a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for housing and industrial development, taking into account accessibility, sustainable transport needs, flood risk and other natural hazards and reduce the need to travel
 - promote more efficient use of land through higher density developments

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- considerations of the causes and implications of climate change

PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009)

6.6 The proposal for industrial (economic) development would fall to be considered under PPS4 which supports economic development. Of particular relevance for the planning application is Policy EC10.1 which states:

“Local Planning Authorities should adopt a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development. Planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably”.

6.7 Additionally, policy EC10.2 states that:

“All planning applications for economic development should be assessed against the following impacts:

“a. whether the proposal has been planned over the lifetime of the development to limit carbon dioxide emissions and minimise vulnerability and provide resistance to climate change

b. the accessibility of the proposal by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling etc and the effect on local traffic levels and congestion...

c. whether the proposal secures a high quality and inclusive design which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions

d. the impact on economic and physical regeneration in the area including the impact on deprived areas and social inclusion objectives

e. the impact on local employment.”

6.8 Policy EC11 sets out criteria for determining planning applications for economic development (other than main town centre uses) where these are not in accordance with an up to date Development Plan. Policy E11.1 requires LPAs to:

“a. weigh market and other economic information alongside environmental and social information

b. take full account of the long term benefits as well as the costs of development such as job creation or improved productivity including any wider benefits to national, regional or local economies; and

c. consider whether those proposals help meet the wider objectives of the development plan”.

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Other regional plans and strategies

Yorkshire and Humber Regional Economic Strategy 2003-2012

- 6.9 The RES recognises the importance of key regional clusters – advanced engineering and metals, bioscience, chemicals, digital industries and food and drink as well as the need to prioritise development on brownfield sites and locations that minimise traffic generation and maximise accessibility (such as existing urban centres, including market towns). Its key objectives are:
- Grow the region's businesses, focusing on key clusters and enhancing productivity;
 - Higher business birth and survival rates;
 - More private and public investment;
 - Improved education, learning and skills;
 - Connecting communities to economic opportunity; and
 - Enhanced infrastructure and environment.

Regional Planning Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy

- 6.10 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for Yorkshire and Humber was published in May 2008. A recent Government announcement (6 July 2010) has revoked the RSS therefore this no longer forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. For background purposes it should be noted that the main aim of the RSS was to promote sustainable patterns of spatial development including more diverse and competitive urban and rural areas creating more and better jobs including the coastal areas

Local Planning Policies

- 6.11 The area of Whitby Business Park falls within the two administrative areas of Scarborough Borough Council and North York Moors National Park Authority. The site of the proposal is within the administrative area of North York Moors National Park Authority and to which the policies of that authority prevail. The relevant policy considerations are set out below:

North York Moors Local Development Framework

Core Strategy and Development Policies

- 6.12 The Core Strategy and Development Policies were adopted in November 2008 and replace the policies of the North York Moors Local Plan and form the delivery and long term spatial vision of the National Park area. In relation to the proposed development the relevant policies are set out as:

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6.13 **Core policy A** seeks to encourage a more sustainable future for the Park and sets out that priority will be given to:

1. *Providing a scale of development and level of activity that will not have an unacceptable impact on the wider landscape or the quiet enjoyment, peace and tranquillity of the Park, nor detract from the quality of life of local residents or the experience of visitors.*
2. *Providing for development in locations and of a scale which will support the character and function of individual settlements.*
3. *Maintaining and enhancing the natural environment and conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity.*
4. *Conserving and enhancing the landscape, settlement, building features and historic assets of the landscape character areas.*
5. *Applying the principles of sustainable design and energy use to new development.*
6. *Enabling the provision of a choice of housing that will meet the needs of local communities in terms of type, tenure and affordability.*
7. *Strengthening and diversifying the rural economy and providing tourism based opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities.*
8. *Enabling access to services, facilities, jobs and technology whilst minimising the environmental impacts of transport."*

6.14 **Core Policy D** states that:

"Activities in the National Park will address the causes of climate change and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by:

1. *Reducing the use of energy and the need to use energy.*
2. *Generating energy from renewable sources where these are of a location, scale and design appropriate to the locality and which contribute towards meeting domestic, community or business energy needs within the National Park*
3. *Requiring residential developments of 5 or more houses and other uses 200 sq m or more to generate energy on-site from renewable sources to displace at least 10% of predicted CO2 emissions.*

The impacts of climate change on the National Park will be mitigated by:

4. *Directing development away from flood risk areas.*
5. *Facilitating necessary coastal and flood protections works.*
6. *Addressing the management of upland areas to assist in flood storage and carbon retention*
7. *Encouraging enhancements for biodiversity to buffer, extend and connect habitats."*

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- 6.15 The policy requirement at point 3 of Core Policy D is further developed through the development and publication of a Supplementary Planning Document "Renewable Energy" adopted in April 2010.
- 6.16 **Development Policy 1** deals with environmental protection to "conserve and enhance the special qualities of the North York Moors National Park, development will only be permitted where:
1. *It will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on surface and ground water, soil, air quality and agricultural land.*
 2. *It will not generate unacceptable levels of noise, vibration, activity of light pollution.*
 3. *There will be no adverse effects arising from sources of pollution which would impact on the health, safety and amenity of the public and users of the development.*
 4. *Land stability can be achieved without causing unacceptable environmental or landscape impact*
 5. *There is or will be sufficient infrastructure capacity to accommodate the demand generated by the development".*
- 6.17 **Development Policy 3** deals with design and states:
- "To maintain and enhance the distinctive character of the National Park, development will be permitted where:*
1. *The siting, orientation, layout and density preserves or enhances views into and out of the site, spaces about and between buildings and other features that contribute to the character and quality of the environment and will not result in the loss of an open space which contributes to the amenity, character and setting of a settlement.*
 2. *The scale, height, massing, proportion, form, size, materials and design features of the proposal are compatible with the surrounding buildings, and will not have an adverse effect upon the amenities of adjoining occupiers.*
 3. *A high standard of design detailing is used whether traditional or contemporary, which reflects or complements that of the local vernacular.*
 4. *Provision is made for adequate storage and waste management facilities*
 5. *Good quality sustainable design and construction techniques are incorporated in the development including measures to minimise energy use and where possible energy from renewable sources.*
 6. *A satisfactory landscaping scheme forms an integral part of the proposal.*

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7. *The design takes account of the safety, security and access needs for all potential users of the development and provides car parking provision in line with the standards adopted by the Authority.*

6.18 This policy is further set out in the Park Authorities adopted Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (April 2010).

6.19 With regard to the rural economy, **Core Policy H** identifies:

"The rural economy will be strengthened and supported by providing local communities with a range of opportunities for entrepreneurship, education and training. This will be achieved through:

1. *New employment development in the Local Service Centre of Helmsley, Whitby Business Park, Service Villages and the Local Service Villages".*

6.20 Paragraph 8.5 of the supporting text sets out the context of Whitby Business Park and the historical commitment. Due to the location of the Park within both the National Park boundary and Scarborough Borough Council boundaries the future development of the Business Park is being dealt with in a separate Development Plan Document as an Area Action Plan.

Whitby Business Park Area Action Plan

6.21 The preparation of the Whitby Business Park AAP is being taken forward by both the National Park Authority and Scarborough Borough Council having regard to the location of this site within both administrative areas. The AAP is based upon the former proposals of the Local Plan which allocated land to the north of the existing business park for expansion for employment purposes (see Appendix A) and the importance of the site to the economy of the area and employment.

6.22 The AAP has been the subject of a topic paper and recent publication of a feasibility study which includes expansion opportunities as well as rationalisation and improvement of the existing business park. This is to ensure that the business park contributes to Whitby's role as a Principal Town and is dealt with as a 'whole' and that planning applications are dealt with in a consistent way. The site is within a larger area identified for expansion in site 3 development plot.

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Assessment and Appraisal of Proposal

National Policies

- 7.1 The proposal is in accordance with issued national planning policies and statements PPS1, PPS4 and PPG13.
- 7.2 The proposal will bring further employment and investment opportunities to the community and the area. The proposal is fully supported and in accordance with the guidance within PPS4 as detailed in paragraphs 5.6 to 5.8.

Development Plan Policies

- 7.3 In respect of the Core Strategy and Development Policies, for ease of assessment, the consideration of the proposal against the relevant and emerging LDF policies and documents is set out as follows:
- Design
 - Transport and access
 - Renewable energy
 - Employment and economic issues

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Design

- 7.4 The rationale for the design and layout of the proposed development is also included in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. The design has been formulated having regard to;
- The location of the site and its relationship and context to the existing industrial and commercial area
 - The location of the site in the wider context of the expansion area of Whitby Business Park and the ongoing development of the Area Action Plan proposals and Coast and Coastal Hinterlands Landscape Character Assessment
 - The commercial activity and use (cold store) which need to be accommodated
 - Site constraints including existing access points and the operational requirements of Whitby Seafoods.
- 7.5 As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the height, size, design and external appearance of the proposal are fundamentally linked to its specific operational and thermal requirements of its purpose and function as a cold store facility. The site identified is the only area in which such an ancillary cold store facility can be constructed and which links to the internal production areas of the existing building. Materials have been chosen to give a high

quality appearance and visual interest to the site and also to meet the specific requirements of the cold store and are compatible with the surrounding uses, buildings and environment.

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Transport and access

- 7.6 The proposal will use existing staff car parking and existing main vehicular access arrangements with a new service yard and manoeuvring space to the front of the proposed extension.
- 7.7 The site is accessible by a number of existing transport modes; e.g. bus, cycle and walking from adjacent areas. Due to the changes in operation that will result from the proposal (amalgamation of deliveries, increased on site storage of raw and cooked products), the proposed development will not give rise to additional trips and will reduce the number of HGV journeys to and from the site and a public cold store in Seaham, County Durham and as such the proposal will not have any material adverse impact on the highway network.

Employment and Economic Issues

- 7.8 Information relating to the operation of Whitby Seafoods Ltd is given at paragraphs 5.1 to 5.8 above.
- 7.9 The proposal is to create specialised cold storage facilities which have particular design and energy considerations for on site frozen storage of raw and finished seafood products allowing Whitby Seafoods to capitalise on its existing successful business. The proposal is essential for the future growth of operations in Whitby which provides significant local employment opportunities.
- 7.10 The proposal in terms of its relationship to the envisaged overall expansion of the Whitby Business Park as well as the current site ownership and control of the land adjacent the current Whitby Seafoods site will not be detrimental to any future adjacent proposals. The expansion of the site will retain the company in the area and contribute to the creation of further job opportunities on the Business Park in accordance with Core Policy H (1). Without the extension, the expansion and growth required will instead take place at the alternative Whitby Seafoods site at Kileel, Northern Ireland
- 7.11 These employment and economic considerations are a significant factor and in view of the national policies of PPS4, should be considered an over riding material consideration in favour of the approval of the application.

Renewable energy

- 7.12 The extension for a cold store facility has particular internal requirements for the viable use of a cold store. The temperature of the internal space has to be maintained at minus 22 degrees. Spaces within the building and in the internal storage arrangements and in operation of the store (including management and loading and unloading) have to be minimised to reduce the energy requirements of the plant used to regulate the temperature.
- 7.13 The external choice of material and colours and specialised insulation within the building assist in reducing the internal temperature of the building to reduce energy requirements. Refrigeration is designed specifically for each application and which considers environmental issues, energy efficiency, type of refrigeration and availability of components.
- 7.14 Use of on-site renewable energy sources have been considered however the energy requirements of the building are to keep it cold at all costs with an overriding need to ensure the continuity of energy supply due to the storage of food and the effect on the company should there be any failure of the cold store.
- 7.15 The use of wind turbines is not considered appropriate having regard to the continuous movement these would give and the future of the remaining land as part of the Whitby Business Park. Ground and air source heat pumps and solar panels can be used to produce energy in the form of heat or for generation of electricity. However, such plant or equipment is not available which could assist in maintaining the extreme cold temperature required and there is no requirement for hot water or heating.
- 7.16 Under the supporting text to Core Policy D at paragraph 6.24 it is stated that "in some exceptional circumstances the Authority may consider that the requirement cannot be met without unacceptable visual or other impact and in such cases the requirement may be relaxed". Whilst recognising the aims of the policy and the need to reduce to impacts on energy and climate change, due to the particular nature of the cold store proposal, the construction and materials of the proposed building, internal and operational measures taken and the energy requirements of the cold store, it is considered that the proposal represents development that should be considered as an exception to the policy requirements of Core Policy D part 3.

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Other material considerations

- 7.17 The existing premises operate without any issue regarding impacts on noise or amenity. There are no residential properties in close proximity to the proposed site and therefore no noise or amenity issues are likely to occur. The application will be subject to consideration

of Environmental Health and should any issues be raised or expressed through the planning application process, these can be discussed and conditions on any planning permission agreed.

- 7.18 The site is not within an area known to be at risk of flooding from any source. The proposal will utilise sustainable urban drainage solutions to ensure that any risk of surface water run off is minimised.
- 7.19 There is no known land contamination or stability issues nor does the site lie within any designated area such as a Conservation Area.
- 7.20 Accordingly, these comply with the requirements of Development Policy 1.

Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 The application seeks full planning permission for extension to the existing Whitby Seafoods site to enable expansion to increase cold storage of raw and processed food products on site. This also reduces transport movements to and from external cold storage facilities outside of the control of the company and allows greater control over stock and processing. In tandem this allows expansion of the company to meet current and longer term business demands further increasing the market share of the company, local employment prospects and assists in ensuring its continued success.
- 8.2 The site was identified for employment purposes as part of a larger area for the expansion of Whitby Business Park in the Local Plan. This work is being continued through the progression of the Whitby Business Park Area Action Plan. The development is consistent with the aims and aspirations of this and the site is located within a wider area that is characterised by industrial and commercial uses.
- 8.3 Paragraphs 5.1 to 5.8 and 7.2 to 7.16 above clearly demonstrate that the proposed development is in accordance with national, regional and local planning policies for which there is a clear economic need and is therefore acceptable.
- 8.4 Additionally, paragraphs 7.17 to 7.20 above set out that all other planning material considerations have been taken into account and for which the proposal represents acceptable development.

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8.5 For the reasons set out in this Planning and Economic Statement, and the planning application which is also supported by a Design and Access Statement, the principle, nature and scale of the proposed development are appropriate to the location of the site and the economic considerations relating to the proposed development.

S J Swift MRTPI on behalf of Whitby Seafoods Ltd

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