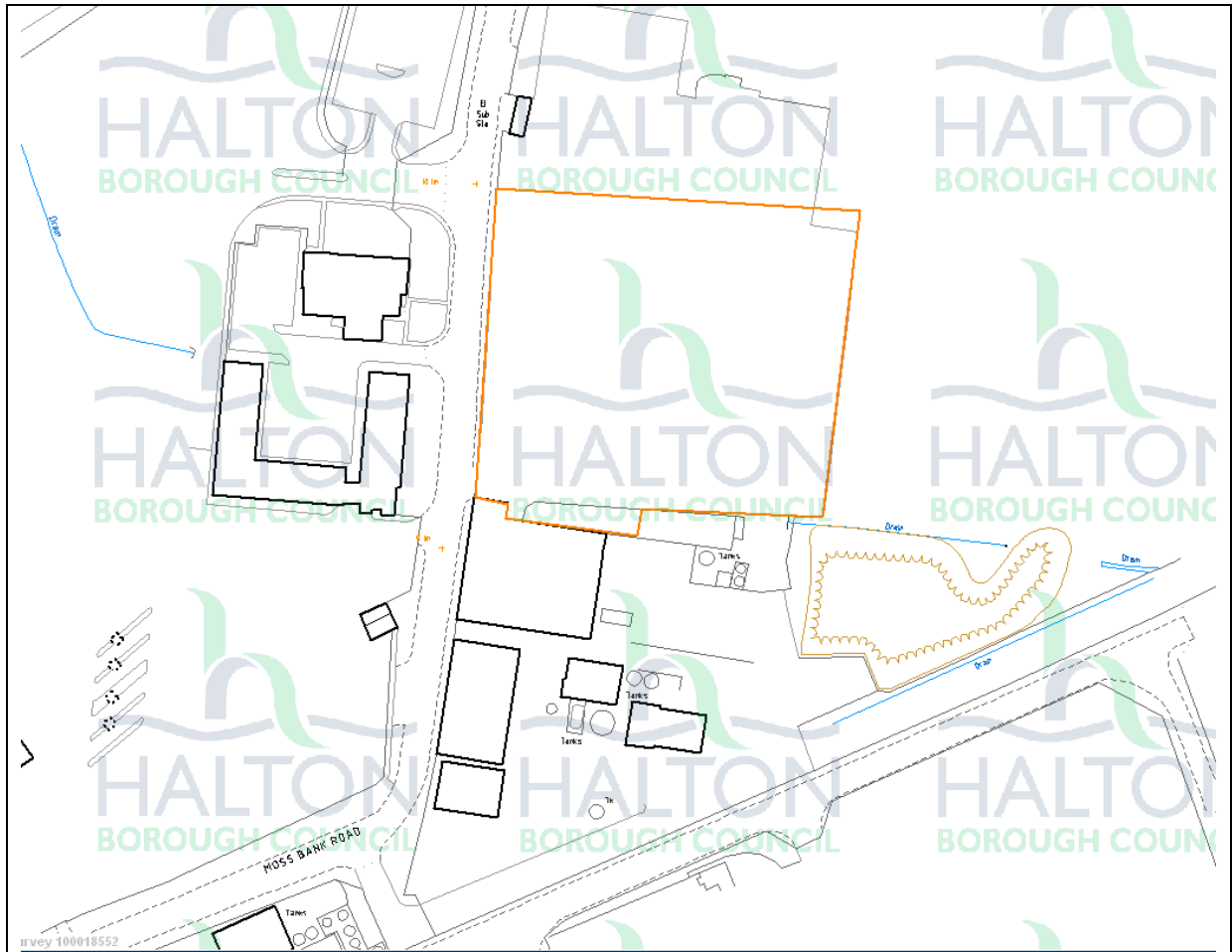


<b>APPLICATION NO:</b>	14/00658/FUL
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Land North Of Bowmans Chemical Works Gorse Lane Widnes Cheshire WA8 0YZ
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Proposed construction of industrial / storage building (Use Classes B2 and B8) associated parking, servicing areas, plant and bunds, fencing, landscaping and ancillary works
<b>WARD:</b>	Riverside
<b>PARISH:</b>	None
<b>CASE OFFICER:</b>	Rob Cooper
<b>AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):</b>	Lawson Planning Partnership Ltd 882 The Crescent Colchester Business Park Colchester Essex CO4 9YQ
<b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:</b>	Widnes Waterfront Regeneration Area Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) National Planning Policy Framework (2012) Halton Core Strategy (2013)
<b>DEPARTURE</b>	No
<b>REPRESENTATIONS:</b>	One
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>	Principle of Development Access Design
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Approve
<b>SITE MAP</b>	



## **1. APPLICATION SITE**

### **1.1 The Site**

The Bowmans Chemical Works site is located within the defined town boundary for Widnes, to the east of Widnes town centre and is accessed from Gorsey Lane, which is located to the south of the A562 which links to the town of Warrington to the east. The river Mersey Estuary is approximately 200m to the south of the site.

The site is bounded to the west by Gorsey Lane followed by Suttons Logistics, by vacant brownfield land (formerly occupied by a number of chemical operators) to the south beyond Bowmans works, by grassland and two former waste disposal lagoons to the east and by a commercial vehicle servicing and repair centre to the north.

## **2. THE APPLICATION**

### **2.1 The Proposal**

The current Bowmans Works site is operated by Industrial Chemical Ltd (ICL) and operates 24 hours a day throughout the year and currently employs 37 staff

operating from the site. The site manufactures a range of products which are supplied to the plant food, water treatment and chemical industries.

ICL needs to offer their customers the opportunity to purchase products in smaller packages. The proposed development would provide an additional 1504m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, in which products would be stored, then diluted (as required) and packaged into smaller containers. The finished product would then be stored on pallets within the building and await distribution to customers. Other than the diluting of some products and small container re-packaging, no other industrial process would take place within the building.

The proposed building will operate 24/7 (subject to demand) in line with the existing chemical plant, which has no planning restrictions on hours of use and enjoys 24 hour unrestricted working.

ICL propose to use the building for the B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage) purposes, as follows;

- Storage of products;
- Dilution of products (if required) and packaging into containers varying in size; and
- Storage of packaged products, awaiting distribution and delivery to customers.

No chemicals will be manufactured within the building which will continue to be manufactured on the adjacent Bowmans Works site or by other ICL manufacturing sites in the UK.

In development terms, the main components of the proposals comprise:

- A single portal frame, steel clad building of approximately 1504m<sup>2</sup> floor space, measuring approximately 60.165m x 25m x 9.144m in height to eaves and 12.517m to ridge;
- Provision of associated plant comprising storage tanks (up to 12m in height and up to 4.1m in diameter) and associated reinforced concrete bund areas (up to 1.2m in height);
- Provision of servicing areas, new fencing (2.4m in height) and landscape buffer adjacent to the existing public footpath;
- Provision of 27 car parking spaces including 3 disabled spaces, 4 secure and covered cycle stands and unloading/loading bays for HGV's; and
- Use of existing vehicular access off Gorsey Lane to serve the proposed building.

## 2.2 Documentation

The application has been submitted with the requisite planning application form, a complete set of plans and supporting information including a design and access statement, and a ground investigations report and ecology report.

### 2.3 History

There is no recent relevant planning history

## **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

### 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 to set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

Paragraph 196 states that the planning system is plan led. Applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per the requirements of legislation, but that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. Paragraph 197 states that in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### 3.2 Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)

The site is designated as the Widnes Waterfront Regeneration Area in the Halton Unitary Development Plan. The following policies within the adopted Unitary Development Plan are considered to be of particular relevance;

- BE1 General Requirements for Development
- BE2 Quality of Design
- BE22 Boundary Walls and Fences
- RG3 Action Area 3 Widnes Waterfront
- PR5 Water Quality
- PR14 Contaminated Land
- TP6 Cycle Provision as Part of New Development
- TP7 Pedestrian Provision as Part of New Development
- TP12 Car Parking
- TP15 Accessibility to New Development

### 3.3 Halton Core Strategy (2013)

The following policies, contained within the Core Strategy are of particular relevance:

- CS2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CS9 South Widnes Key Area of Change
- CS15 Sustainable Transport
- CS18 High Quality Design
- CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk

### 3.4 Joint Waste Local Plan 2013

WM8 Waste Prevention and Resource Management  
WM9 Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New Development

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

The application has been advertised by a press notice and a site notice posted near the site. All adjacent occupiers have been notified by letter.

Externally, the Environment Agency and United Utilities have been consulted.

The Environment Agency has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions in relation to contaminated land. United utilities has confirmed that it has no objection subject to conditions relating to the approval of drainage details.

Internally, the Council's Highways and Drainage Engineers, Environmental Health Officer and Contaminated Land Officer, and ecologist have been consulted. Their observations have been incorporated into the assessment section below.

#### **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

One representation has been received from a ward Councillor seeking clarification on the use class. This was confirmed as B2 'General Industry' and B8 'Storage & Distribution'.

No representations have been received from local residents or neighbouring business.

#### **6. ASSESSMENT**

##### **6.1 Policy**

The site is located within an area defined as as Primarily Employment Area, in Policy E3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan. Policy E3 states that use classes B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis industrial uses are considered to be acceptable within this area. Furthermore, the previous use of the site was B2 'general industry' as the land previously sited buildings used in the manufacturing and processing of chemicals. Therefore, the proposed use is consistent with the established previous use and policy E3 and is considered to be acceptable in principle.

Policy E5 requires new industrial and commercial developments to be compatible with existing and proposed surrounding uses. Outside storage areas must be screened and open storage of loose materials will not be permitted.

UDP saved policy E3 states that B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis industrial uses will be permitted in primary employment areas. Core Strategy policy CS1 also supports the prioritisation and re-use of previously developed land for new

development. The site's location, proposed use and the form of the development proposals comply with both these policies and the proposals are in keeping with the use, scale and character of existing premises adjacent to and near to the site. The application proposal comprises a sustainable extension of an existing employment site, which has the general infrastructure to accommodate the proposed extension. The site is fully serviced with adequate access, utility connections and drainage infrastructure.

## 6.2 Design and Appearance

The proposed building would have a floor plan measuring 60.165m long x 25m wide and an eaves height of 9.144m and ridge height of 12.517m. The associated storage containers would be a maximum of 12m high and approx. 4m in diameter.

The proposed building will be a steel portal frame structure providing vertical walls and low gabled roof. The walls and roof of the building are proposed to be clad in box section metal sheeting, coloured 'goose-wing grey' (with blue trim details as shown on the submitted drawings).

The general appearance, materials and details of the proposed building would be consistent with existing buildings within the surrounding area. It would represent a simple building of neat functional and durable design, appropriate to the established surrounding industrial and commercial context.

As regards the storage containers, these would be of strictly functional appearance, as vertical cylinders made of either mild steel, stainless steel or reinforced plastic (GRP). They are proposed to be set back significantly from the road frontage, with tree planting in front to soften their visual impact in the street scene.

Existing accommodation at the Bowmans Works site is insufficient to meet ICL's current floor space needs leading to some palletised goods being stored outside. The proposed building would therefore, assist in consolidating its operations by incorporating a covered storage facility within the building, which would reduce potential damage caused to products and assist in streamlining the company's operations.

The design and appearance of the proposed new warehouse is considered to be of a high quality of design that would comply with saved Policies BE2 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and CS18 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

## 6.3 Highways

The proposal is to continue to use the existing access to Industrial Chemical Ltd off the bottom of Gorsey Lane (adjacent to the blue gate), and then as part of this new scheme utilise the two existing access points on the former Bowmans site. One of these access points is located up tight against the office of Industrial Chemical Ltd, which may potentially need improving.

The Council's Highways Engineer has been consulted and has recommended that alterations are made to improve pedestrian and vehicle visibility, tracking of HGV vehicles is also required.

The applicant has been asked to provide tracking of the access and provide suitable visibility splays, and to provide improvements by widening the access as necessary. The applicant's agent has confirmed that they will be providing this information and in principle amendments by widening the access would be possible. These will be submitted prior to the committee for the highways engineer to consider, and members will be updated accordingly at Development Control Committee.

Once the site is fully operational it is estimated that an additional 5 to 8 vehicular movements per day are envisaged. An additional 27 car parking spaces are to be provided as part of the scheme. The additional parking would also provide parking for existing staff based at the Bowman's Works site. Four secure cycle parking spaces are also proposed by the applicant, a condition for full details is recommended to comply with Policies TP6.

#### 6.4 Contaminated Land

The application has been submitted with a site investigation report with associated mitigation measures. The contaminated land officer has been consulted and has advised that if the application were to be supported that any further site investigation work could be controlled by condition.

#### 6.6 Ecology

The applicant has submitted an ecology report with the application, and the Council's ecological advisor has been consulted. The ecologist has no objections but has made the following recommendations.

Works should take place outside of the bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August inclusive), unless the site has been checked for nesting birds by a qualified ecologist, this can be conditioned.

Due to the loss of potential nesting sites for birds a number of bird boxes should be provided, also shelter and hibernation in the form of bug boxes should be provided, a condition for the provision of the details to be agreed is recommended.

The have also noted that there is a possibility that amphibians may be utilising the rubble piles for hibernation. As a precautionary measure, the rubble should be removed outside the winter hibernation period (November- February inclusive).

#### 6.5 Summary and Conclusion

The principle of the development is considered to be acceptable and complies with Policies E3, RG3 and CS9. The design and appearance is acceptable and

complies with Unitary Development Plan Policies BE1, BE2. Subject to the agreed access alterations recommended by the highways engineer, the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety and sufficient car parking is provided, so in that respect complies with TP12 and TP15 of the Unitary Development Plan. The proposal is considered to be sustainable development and complies with the National Planning Policy Framework and is recommended for approval.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Grant planning permission subject to conditions

## **8. CONDITIONS**

1. Time limit on commencement of development
2. Approved Plans – (Policy BE1)
3. Materials – (Policy BE2)
4. Drainage condition (s) (Policy BE1)
5. Boundary Treatments – (Policy BE22)
6. Submission and Agreement of finished floor and site levels – (Policy BE1)
8. Construction Traffic Management Plan (BE1)
9. Condition(s) in relation to Details of off-site highways works including making good of existing vehicle access crossings, and bus stop relocation.
10. Nesting birds conditions (GE21)
11. Condition to provide details of bird and bug boxes (GE21)
12. Detail of secure covered cycle storage (TP6)
13. Condition restricting external storage (E3 and E5)
- 14 Condition(s) in relation to contaminated land and remediation (PR14 and CS23)

## **9. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

As required by:

- Paragraph 186 – 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012; and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2012.

This statement confirms that the local planning authority has worked proactively with the applicant to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of Halton.