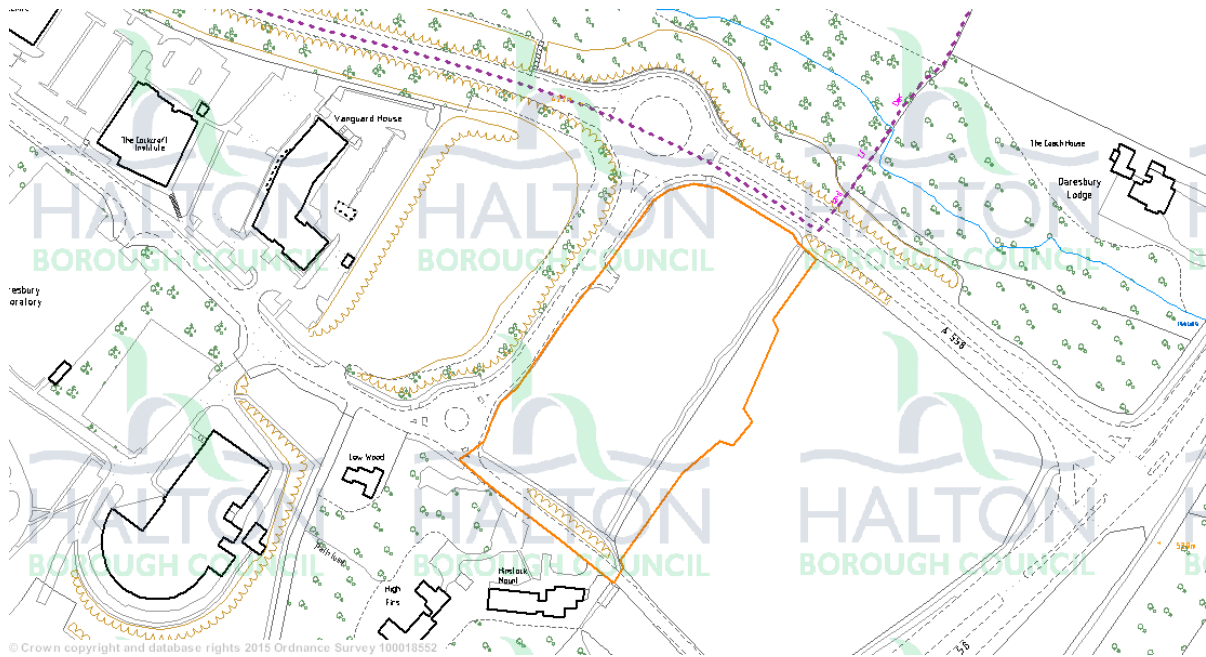


APPLICATION NO:	15/00059/FUL
LOCATION:	Daresbury Science Park, Keckwick Lane, Daresbury, Runcorn WA4 4FS
PROPOSAL:	Proposed excavation and earthworks to form development plot including construction of retaining wall; construction of a new vehicular and pedestrian access into and throughout the site including lighting; drainage and; soft landscaping works to form extension of site connectivity works approved under previous planning permission.
WARD:	Daresbury
PARISH:	Daresbury
CASE OFFICER:	Pauline Shearer
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	Daresbury SIC LLP, Sci-Tech Daresbury, Keckwick Lane, Daresbury, Runcorn WA4 4FS
DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION: National Planning Policy Framework (2012) Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Halton Core Strategy (2013) Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)	East Runcorn Key Area of Change
DEPARTURE	No
REPRESENTATIONS:	No neighbour responses
KEY ISSUES	Highway Safety, Design and layout, Connectivity, Ecology.
RECOMMENDATION:	Grant planning permission subject to conditions
SITE MAP	



1. APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The Site

The site which is the subject of the application is located between Innovation Way to the north; Keckwick Lane to the west and; Daresbury Expressway to the east; with remaining undeveloped land to the south between the site and A56 Chester Road. The site, herein referred to as the eastern plot, is currently vacant aside from the public footpath which crosses it from Keckwick Lane to Daresbury Expressway. The site benefits from an earlier outline planning permission 01/00785/OUTEIA (science park comprising office buildings and incubatory building). The site is designated as the East Runcorn Key Area of Change in the Halton Core Strategy.

The surrounding area is a mix of Green Belt; employment uses and some residential use. The site is served primarily by vehicular access from the A558 Daresbury Expressway.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 The Proposal

The application proposes engineering works to an area of land which has previously received outline permission for employment uses. The works include: excavation and earthworks to form a development plot including: construction of a retaining wall; construction of new vehicular and pedestrian access into and throughout the site including lighting, drainage and amendments to Keckwick Lane; hard and soft landscaping works to form extension of site connectivity works approved under previous planning permissions.

The detailed scheme includes:

- The re-alignment of Keckwick Lane from the Innovation Way/Keckwick Lane roundabout and widening to 7.3m. This new arrangement will include new landscaping and art features which will create a new gateway to the campus;
- The creation of a new vehicular access from Keckwick Lane into the eastern plot through the formation of a new three armed priority junction;
- An access stub to the land owned by Lord Daresbury (between the site and A56 Chester Road) is also included;
- The creation of new pedestrian footways within the eastern plot connecting Keckwick Lane and the A558 linking to the existing pedestrian footways throughout the site;
- The construction of a retaining wall between the eastern plot and the plot owned by Lord Daresbury to support and protect the United Utilities water main;
- Earthworks within the plot in line with detailed levels scheme; landscaping works along Innovation Way and Keckwick Lane;
- Relocation of existing utilities on Keckwick Lane (high voltage electricity cables and BT communication cables).

A concurrent planning application has also been submitted for cabling works alongside the A558 Daresbury Expressway. This application has resulted in no objections from the Council's highway engineers providing that the cable is not placed within the highway embankment, and it does not interfere with maintenance of existing or placing of proposed drainage at the toe of the embankment.

2.2 Documentation

The planning application is supported by a Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, a Contaminated Land Report, Transport Assessment, Ecology Report, Ecological Appraisal, Tree Assessment Report, Flood Risk Assessment and Technical Note Enabling Works for the Eastern Plot. In addition, the suite of submitted drawings set out the proposed works diagrammatically.

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 allocated as a Primarily Residential 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;
- GE21 Specie Protection;
- PR14 Contaminated Land;
- PR15 Groundwater;
- PR16 Development and Flood Risk;
- TP6 Cycle Provision as Part of New Development;
- TP7 Pedestrian Provision as Part of New Development;
- TP12 Car Parking;
- PR14 Contaminated Land

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;
- CS4 Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities;
- CS11 East Runcorn;
- CS15 Sustainable Transport;
- CS18 High Quality Design;
- CS20 Natural and Historic Environment
- CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk.

3.4 Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)

The following policies, contained within the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan are of relevance:

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

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Highways and Transportation Development Control

There are no objections, in principle, to the proposal.

4.2 Environmental Health – Ground Contamination

The submitted site investigation is acceptable and there is no objection to the proposed development and no requirement for further conditions.

4.3 Open Spaces Officer – Ecology

The recommendations and mitigation contained in the Ecological Appraisal (ECUS) are acceptable. Conditions to be attached to the planning permission are recommended in relation to this. The applicant has been requested to review the scheme to seek retention of the more mature trees on the site. Clarification is also sought on the composition of the wildflower area were native species offer more ecological value.

4.4 Environment Agency

No objections have been raised, but a condition recommended on the submission and approval of a soakaway drainage system prior to the commencement.

4.5 United Utilities

No objections but suggest the developer outlines the hierarchy to be investigated when considering a surface water drainage strategy.

4.6 Sandymoor Parish Council

No comments received at the time of writing this report.

4.7 Moore Parish Council

No comments received at the time of writing this report.

4.8 Health & Safety Executive

Does not advise against the proposal.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The application has been advertised by a press advert in the Widnes & Runcorn World on 11/02/2015, a site notice was posted on the Innovation Way/Keckwick Lane roundabout footway on 09/02/2015 and 22 neighbour notification letters sent on 26/02/2015.

5.2 At the time of writing this report the Council had received no representations resulting from the publicity given to the application.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Design and Layout

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle with further detailed requirements for the future buildings on the site to be the subject of a further planning application and the detailed materials and landscaping of this proposal subject to condition. The proposal is therefore compliant with

Policies BE1, BE2 and TP17 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and CS11 of the Halton Core Strategy.

6.2 Highway Considerations

The principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable from a highway safety perspective. Further amendments/additional information have been requested from the applicant to ensure that the detail structural arrangements of the site operate successfully. These include the following: levels of roadways; road gritting requirements; clarification of adopted highway areas; improvements in connectivity between the site and the top (south) end of Keckwick Lane.

Members will be updated regarding the submission of these amended and additional details, however, these requirements can be the subject of additional planning conditions if, by the time of the Committee, amendments are not received.

The standard requirement for a construction management plan, including the need for a wheelwash, is also recommended.

On the basis of this and on the assumption that the requested amendments and additional information are provided, the proposal is deemed acceptable and complies with Policies BE1 and TP17 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and CS11 of the Halton Core Strategy.

6.3 Flood Risk & Drainage

The application site is over 1ha in area in Flood Zone 1 and the application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.

In relation to drainage, a drainage layout plan accompanies the application. Some further details / clarifications will be needed before the drainage strategy can be agreed. The implementation of the drainage strategy can be secured by condition.

The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy PR16 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policies CS11 and CS23 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.4 Trees & Ecology

The site has several mature trees around its boundary and the application was accompanied by a Tree Survey and Constraints Report. The report has identified the condition of the trees and that several mature specimens would be lost as a result of the proposal. The applicant is providing further detail on the rationale for the loss of the trees in question. Whilst it is not optimum, the loss of these trees is an inevitable consequence of the proposal to access the site from Keckwick Lane and this route has been proposed as the most favourable in terms of the future development of the site. The applicant will provide a robust landscaping scheme which will incorporate trees with significant maturity.

The application was accompanied by an ecological appraisal. The Council's ecological advisor has agreed with the report recommendations which relate to the species identified on the site and installation of bat and bird boxes in retained trees and future control over the direction of site lighting. Although habitat has not been identified on the site, preventative actions are recommended in relation to potential badger or hedgehog visits.

The conditions to be attached to the proposal ensure that the existing habitat is not severely compromised. The loss of the mature trees on the site boundary on Keckwick Lane is justified by the wider aims of the policy CS11 and the East Runcorn Area of Change and the need for this site to be successfully incorporated into the wider highway network. The scheme is supported by a landscaping proposal which will provide connectivity to the previously approved linear corridor and enhance the appearance of Innovation Way. The proposal therefore complies with policies BE1 and GE21 of the Halton UDP.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the principle of the enabling works is acceptable and will enable further commercial development of the Sci-Tech Daresbury site in accordance with the aims of policy CS11 of the Halton Core Strategy. The application facilitates the delivery of the development of a prominent plot within the wider Daresbury Science and Innovation Centre site which will generate significant benefits for the Borough including providing quality employment opportunities; opening up a regionally important employment site; creating a further plot for science and innovation. Although the proposal will impact on several existing mature trees on Keckwick lane, through replacement planting and a robust landscaping scheme, it will provide a green connectivity to the linear corridor already approved that will serve to enhance the area overall.

On this basis the proposal is acceptable and complies with policies BE1, BE2, TP17 and PR16 of the Halton UDP and policies CS11 and CS23 of the Core Strategy.

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions.

9. CONDITIONS

1. Time Limit – Full Permission.
2. Approved Plans (Policies BE1 and BE2).
3. Details of improvements of connectivity to Keckwick Lane south (BE1 and TP17)
4. Facing Retaining Wall Materials - (Policies BE1 and BE2)

5. Landscaping Scheme and Implementation – (Policy BE1)
6. Boundary Treatments Scheme – (Policy BE22)
7. Tree Protection measures (BE1 and GE27)
8. Breeding Birds Protection – (Policy GE21)
9. Details of Bat and Bird Boxes – (Policy GE21)
10. Hours of Construction – (Policy BE1)
11. Submission of a Construction Management Plan (Highways) – (Policy BE1)
12. Drainage Strategy – (Policy PR16)
13. Submission of details of future lighting (Policy BE1 and GE21)

Informatives

1. United Utilities Informative.
2. Environment Agency standing advice

10. 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.