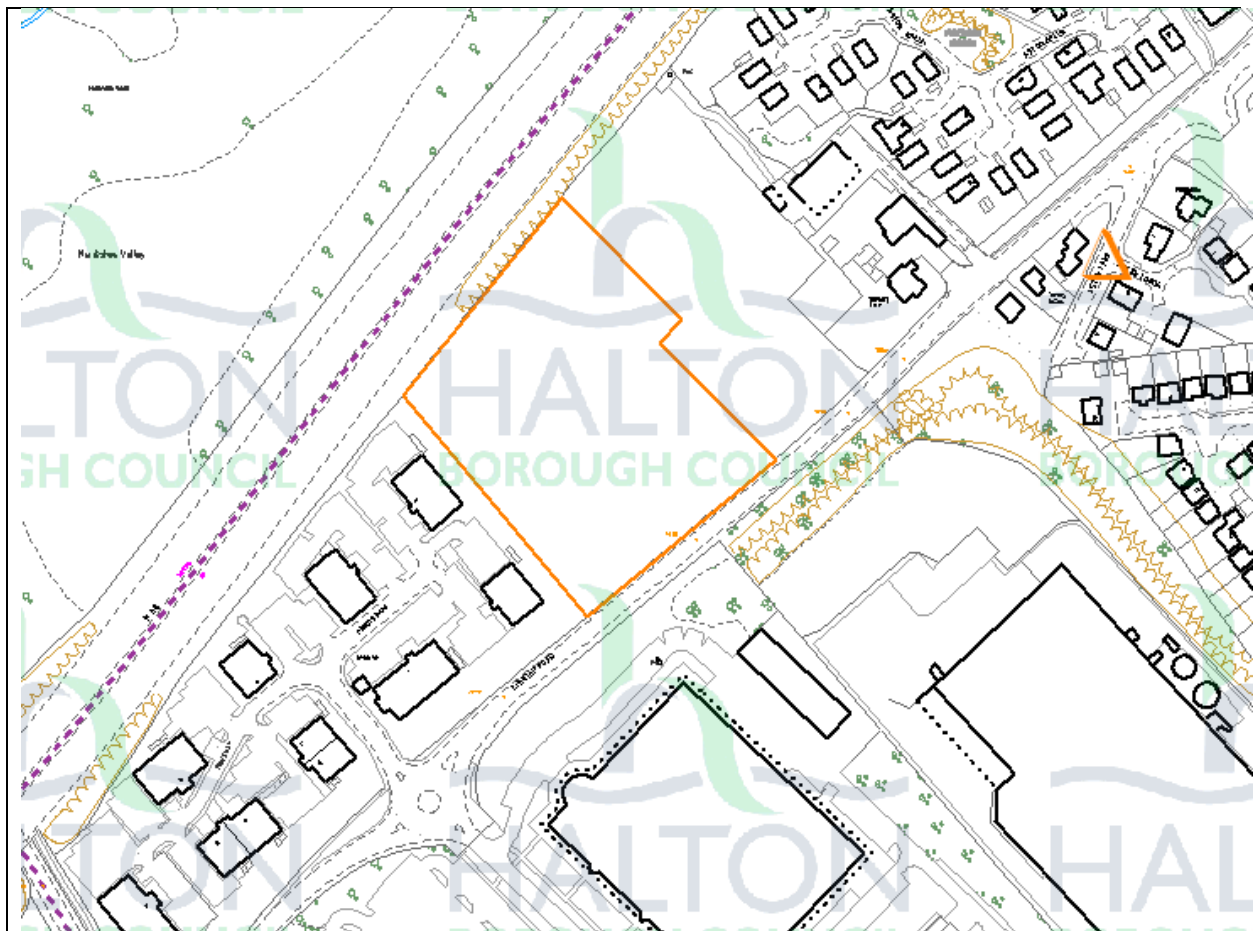


<b>APPLICATION NO:</b>	16/00024/FUL
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Land to the North East of Abbots Park and bounded by the M56 and Chester Road, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire.
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Proposed development of 34 no. dwellings comprising mews, semi-detached and detached properties with associated access, parking, garages and construction of acoustic bund.
<b>WARD:</b>	Daresbury
<b>PARISH:</b>	Preston Brook
<b>AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):</b>	Morris Homes
<b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:</b>	Greenspace.
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	
Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005)	
Halton Core Strategy (2013)	
Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)	
<b>DEPARTURE</b>	Yes
<b>REPRESENTATIONS:</b>	No representations received from the publicity given to the application.
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>	Principle of Residential Development, Development on a designated greenspace, Design, Amenity, Affordable Housing, Open Space, Access.
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	Grant planning permission subject to conditions and an up-front payment in lieu of on-site open space provision.
<b>SITE MAP</b>	



## **1. APPLICATION SITE**

### **1.1 The Site**

The site subject of the application is part of an agricultural field which is located adjacent to the M56 and Chester Road (A56) in Preston Brook, Runcorn.

Located south west of the application site is Abbots Park which a relatively recent office development. Located to the north east of the application site is the remainder of the agricultural field which is connected to Tannery Farm.

The site is 1.23 ha in area.

The entire site is washed over with a Greenspace designation in the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

## **2. THE APPLICATION**

### **2.1 The Proposal**

Proposed development of 34no. dwellings comprising mews, semi-detached and detached properties with associated access, parking, garages and construction of acoustic bund.

## 2.2 Documentation

The planning application is supported the following documents/plans:

- Planning Statement
- Topographical Survey
- Landscape Structure Plan
- Boundary Details
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report
- Tree Survey
- Arboricultural Method Statement
- Hedgerow Survey
- Phase I Site Investigation Report (Desk Study)
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
- Transport Statement
- Tracking for refuse vehicles.
- Acoustic Report
- Viability Appraisal

## **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 a Greenspace 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;
- GE6 Protection of Designated Greenspace;
- GE8 Development within Designated Greenspace;

- GE21 Species Protection;
- GE27 Protection of Trees and Woodlands;
- PR4 Light Pollution and Nuisance;
- PR8 Noise Sensitive Developments;
- PR14 Contaminated Land;
- PR16 Development and Flood Risk;
- TP6 Cycle Provision as Part of New Development;
- TP7 Pedestrian Provision as Part of New Development;
- TP12 Car Parking;
- TP14 Transport Assessments;
- TP15 Accessibility to New Development;
- H3 Provision of Recreational Greenspace;

### 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;
- CS3 Housing Supply and Locational Priorities;
- CS12 Housing Mix;
- CS13 Affordable Housing;
- CS18 High Quality Design;
- CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- 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

No objection to the proposed development is raised subject to the attachment of a number of conditions and informatives.

### 4.2 Lead Local Flood Authority

The submitted FRA does not fully consider the SUDS hierarchy set out in NPPF which states:

Generally, the aim should be to discharge surface run off as high up the following hierarchy of drainage options as reasonably practicable:

1. into the ground (infiltration);
2. to a surface water body;
3. to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
4. to a combined sewer.

It is noted that the proposal is in Flood Zone 1 and therefore at low risk of fluvial flooding. Minor surface water flooding is identified but this appears to be outside of the current developable area. It should be confirmed by the developer and that no part of the development is expected to flood in the 1 in 100 year (plus 30% climate change scenario). It is also noted that there is negligible risk from groundwater.

The developer has bypassed items 1 & 2 in the hierarchy above and proposes a strategy whereby surface water is discharged to existing surface water sewer, but discharge rate be attenuated to greenfield run off rate (6l/s). Crate tanks are recommended for attenuation. It should be pointed out that such a feature would not be acceptable within an adopted highway boundary and in any event a sustainable management arrangement would need to be put in place, for the maintenance of such measures, preferably secured by S106 agreement. The Highway Authority is also aware of flooding incidents downstream of the proposed site. There is no confirmation from United Utilities that it accepts the proposed strategy. The strategy also does not address surface water quality issues.

Given that the report suggests that the site may be suitable for infiltration and recommends further investigation, but this has not been carried out, and the feasibility of incorporating a surface water body into the development has not been addressed, the LLFA would object to the application as it stands, particularly as the development layout and/or number of dwellings may need to be adjusted to accommodate such measures.

Should the application be approved it is recommended that a condition which secures the submission of a Surface Water Regulatory Scheme should be applied.

#### 4.3 Open Spaces – Trees

There are no trees afforded Statutory Protection at this location, although several trees from TPO 017 are situated on the adjacent Tannery Farm. The site is not situated within a Conservation Area.

The proposal will potentially require the loss of a significant amount of trees, most of which will be associated with the construction of the acoustic bund that is to surround the northern edge of the site. There is a replanting plan associated with the proposal, and the selection of trees chosen is acceptable however it will take some time to establish these new trees and mitigate the loss of what is already on site.

The section of tree group G2 (Drawing Title Tree Protection Plan of Arboricultural Method Statement by We Know Trees We Know Ecology) that

lies south of the proposed acoustic bund will receive significant tree removal and pruning works and it is difficult to visualise exactly how much of the current vegetation will be retained and the condition that it will be in following such work. Also, the tree protective fencing does not seem to be offset from the actual edge of those trees to be retained in both this location and on group G3? The property at plot 1 will still be very close to the retained vegetation and it is questionable whether this can actually be built without encroachment into the Root Protection Area. Severing roots to trees this close to a property is never a good idea.

The Hedgerow Survey by We Know Trees We Know Ecology states that the hedgerows on site are not subject to hedgerow regulations and the loss of the section to create access into the site will be mitigated for by additional planting adjacent to the entrance.

The 1 in 2 banks that will form the acoustic bund will require specialist bank mowing equipment to maintain the grassed areas.

#### 4.4 Environmental Health

The acoustic report assesses the internal noise environment of the proposed houses in line with BS8233:2014 to identify whether the noise levels contained within the standard (extrapolated from WHO guidance) can be met. It also looks at the predicted noise levels in the gardens.

The report demonstrates that without boundary treatment the noise levels in the garden and inside the houses will exceed the levels in BS8233. Therefore a 4m high bund together with a 2.3m acoustic fence is proposed along the boundary closest to the M56. This reduces the levels in the gardens to an acceptable level. The report further identifies a number of the properties where the internal levels will still fail to meet the BS8233:2014 standards. In these properties further noise mitigation is required. The report therefore recommends that air tight standard double glazing should be installed in those facades where BS8233:2014 will not be met.

Therefore based on the above information provided by the acoustic report Environmental Health would have no objection in principle to the application subject to the bund and acoustic fence being provided to the specifications outlined in the report and the glazing and mechanical ventilation in the properties as identified within the report. This can be secured by condition.

#### 4.5 Contaminated Land

I have reviewed the following report submitted in support of the application;

- Phase 1 Site Investigation Report (Desk Study), Land at Chester Road, Preston Brook, August 2015

Having reviewed the report I feel it provides a good initial assessment of the potential pollutant linkages. As the site has remained undeveloped agricultural

land there are unlikely to be any significant contamination constraints. The phase 1 report has identified a number of localised potential contamination sources however including a number of off-site historical ponds and the potential for made ground on site. Outline recommendations for phase 2 investigation have therefore been made however I do have a number of minor comments which are outlined below;

- The historical review makes reference to a field boundary running NW to SE throughout the site. However there is a further field boundary running broadly SW to NE along the northern boundary that hasn't been referenced.
- The aerial imagery held by the Council indicates what appears to be a possible pond on site on the 1945 photograph. This isn't identified in the historical map review as the mapping doesn't cover this period. The feature is at the approximate position where the two field boundaries meet. A copy of the photograph can be forwarded to the environmental consultants if this would be of assistance.
- It is possible that the field boundaries will have been drainage ditches and are therefore potential sources of filled ground. I would therefore suggest that the potential contaminant sources listed in section 5.2.2 should include heavy metals, PAH's etc. associated with any fill materials that may be present.
- The proposals for further investigation seem sensible however I would welcome the opportunity to comment on a more detailed scope of works in due course. It has been suggested that window sampling will suffice but that trial pitting may be required if the window sample holes indicate any requirement for further investigation. Given the potential for filled ground within the possible field drains however I would suggest that trial pitting/ trenching perpendicular to the line of the historical field boundaries would be worth considering as part of the first phase of investigation as it may be difficult to successfully target these features via window sampling alone.

The phase 1 study has not identified any significant contamination constraints therefore I am happy for the phase 2 investigation to be undertaken post determination and can be secured by condition.

#### 4.6 Ecological Advisor

##### **Ecology**

The applicant has submitted an ecological survey report in accordance with Local Plan policy CS20 (Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report, Ecology Services Ltd, July 2015, version 1). I advise the survey is acceptable and will be forwarded to Cheshire Record via Merseyside BioBank.

The proposed development will result in the loss of an area of semi-mature broadleaved woodland plantation and a length of hedgerow habitat. The applicant has submitted a hedgerow survey report (We Know Trees We Know Ecology, 16 June 2015, 15/00054) which is acceptable and will also be

forwarded to Cheshire Record via Merseyside BioBank. The survey report demonstrates that the hedgerow on the site does not qualify as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. However, the affected hedgerow and woodland habitat are still of local value and mitigation will be required for their loss in line with Local Plan policy CS20.

The submitted Landscape Structure Plan (Barnes Walker, July 2015, M2590.01A) illustrates that mitigation for habitat loss will be achieved through native hedgerow and tree planting upon the proposed acoustic bund. I advise that the proposed mitigation is acceptable and that the Landscape Structure Plan is secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

A habitat management and maintenance plan, which has a duration of at least 5 years, is required for the proposed development which includes management and maintenance prescriptions. The management plan must be comprehensive, integrated and incorporate ecological principles, landscape and other objectives. The plan should be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

In order to protect the retained trees and hedgerow upon the site, I advise that the recommendations set out in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement (We Know Trees We Know Ecology, 16 June 2015 (updated 11 August 2015), 15/00054) are secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

Vegetation on site may provide nesting opportunities for breeding birds, which are protected and Local Plan policy CS20 applies. No tree felling, scrub clearance, hedgerow removal, vegetation management and/or ground clearance is to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then all trees, scrub and hedgerows are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected would be required. This can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

## **Waste**

The proposal involves construction activities and policy WM8 of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (WLP) applies. This policy requires the minimisation of waste production and implementation of measures to achieve efficient use of resources, including designing out waste. In accordance with policy WM8, evidence through a waste audit or a similar mechanism (e.g. site waste management plan) demonstrating how this will be achieved must be submitted and can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition. The details required within the waste audit or similar mechanism is provided in Part Two.

The applicant has not provided sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with policy WM9 of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan. I advise that the information set out in policy WM9 of the Waste Local Plan is required and can be secured by a suitably worded condition.



#### 4.7 National Grid

No objection to the proposed development. Their observations in relation to the pipelines in the area should be attached as an informative.

#### 4.8 Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is a statutory consultee for certain developments within the Consultation Distance of Major Hazard Sites/pipelines. This consultation, which is for such a development and is within at least one Consultation Distance, has been considered using HSE's planning advice web app, based on the details input on behalf of Halton.

HSE's Advice: Do Not Advise Against, consequently, HSE does not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission in this case.

#### 4.9 Preston Brook Parish Council

Our observations/comments are as follows:

- We need to ensure that the management company put in place to manage the estate is robust and sustainable for those residents for the future. The parish council will not accept any liability or responsibility for maintaining the area or dealing with any fallout that may arise in respect of this development. We wish to be kept informed of the progress of this, who the company are and key contacts
- The commuted sum: we would like this to be reserved and passed to the parish council to assist in introducing features that will improve the amenities for local residents.
- We need reassurance that hedging/fencing as described by Gary (Morris Homes) on access into the site is as described and does not affect those accessing the highway from the development
- The parish council will not undertake any responsibility for management/maintenance of the 'bund', this has to form part of the estates responsibility
- Morris homes advised of their support in the extension of the bund (with potential use of commuted sum) for affected residents near this development. We would like to have written confirmation of that support (if approved) when the development is in progress
- There was concern raised following the highways report, that a proposed right turn into the estate be considered. Whilst this is not mandatory, would like written assurance that this won't create any future highway issues

Overall, following lengthy discussions and as a result of the vote undertaken by residents, coupled with comments from those residents present, the application is principally supported and welcomed.

## **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by a press advert in the Widnes & Runcorn Weekly News on 28/01/2016, two site notices posted on 25/01/2016 on Chester Road and 15 neighbour notification letters sent on 21/01/2016.
- 5.2 Following the receipt of amended plans, 15 neighbour notification letters were sent on 07/04/2016.
- 5.3 No representations have been received from the publicity given to the application.

## **6. ASSESSMENT**

### **6.1 Development on a Designated Greenspace**

The site is designated as Greenspace on the proposals map of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

This development proposal needs to be tested against Policy GE6 which relates to the protection of designated greenspace.

The proposal would inevitably result in the loss of an area of Greenspace. There are exceptions where the loss of amenity value which led to the designation of the site as Greenspace is adequately compensated for set out in the policy.

Criterion c states that “No proposal should result in a loss of amenity for local residents by forcing them to travel to a less convenient location” and the applicant has sought to demonstrate that this is not the case.

In respect of this policy, one of the first points made is that the site is low value as a Greenspace due to its current and active use as agricultural land, that it is disconnected from any other greenspace or greenways and the lack of public access.

The applicant argues that this site is isolated from any Greenspace system. They also allude to the fact that the site is used for agriculture and is private land, making it both unavailable and inaccessible for a recreational use.

The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report submitted with the application concludes that the site contains habitats of varying ecological value. Habitats considered to be of low ecological value include arable and semi-improved grassland. Habitats of greater ecological value included scattered trees, plantation woodland and hedgerows. The report concludes that the submitted landscape proposals would ensure that there is no net loss of habitats of ecological value and recommendations to ensure biodiversity gain are set out.

The only amenity value which the applicant acknowledges that this site benefits from is the visual break which the site currently provides, however views of the site are screened by trees and hedgerow limiting its ability to enhance the attractiveness of the area.

In conclusion, the development would result in the loss of a site which is of a low amenity value, however would provide much needed housing in the Borough. Based on this, it considered that the proposal meets exception criterion c within Policy GE6 and is acceptable.

## 6.2 Housing Supply and Locational Priorities

Policy CS3 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan states that a minimum of 9,930 new additional homes should be provided between 2010 and 2018 to ensure an adequate supply of suitable housing for the Borough's existing communities and to accommodate projected growth in the Borough's population.

The proposal for much needed housing would contribute to the Borough's housing requirements.

The proposal would be in compliance with Policy CS3 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

## 6.3 Principle of Residential Development

Based on the above considerations, the development would result in the loss of a Greenspace which has limited amenity value, however would provide much needed housing.

The land uses within Preston Brook are a mix between residential and employment uses with those being to the north-east and east being predominantly residential with those to the south-west and south being predominantly employment uses (office, industrial and warehousing uses) . It is considered that the proposed development would form some relationship with existing residential properties in Preston Brook and would also be compatible with the adjacent office development.

The proposal seeks to develop part of the Greenspace allocation and questions have been asked of the applicant in terms of comprehensive development. The application site is defined by the option that Morris Homes currently have on the land and no further land (i.e. the remaining agricultural land) is not available at this current time. The proposed layout makes provision for access to the adjacent parcel of land should the site come forward for residential development at a later date.

The proposal would make a contribution towards attempting to ensure that there is an adequate supply of suitable housing for the Borough's existing communities and to accommodate projected growth in the Borough's population.

The principle of residential development on this site is considered to be acceptable.

#### 6.4 Highway Considerations

The application site is located within the urban area with the surrounding area having a wide range of facilities and attractions to serve residents needs with walk and cycle distance. It is inevitable that the development would have some impact on traffic levels in the locality, however the Transport Statement which accompanies the application demonstrates that the highway impact of the development would not be severe.

The observations from Preston Brook Parish Council raise the issue that a right turn lane into the proposed development from Chester Road should be considered. The applicant has demonstrated that the junction on Chester Road would cater for the volume of traffic which would likely result from the proposed development and that a right turn lane cannot be insisted on in this case.

Based on there being no right turn lane provision into the site, Preston Brook Parish Council were of the view that a vehicle waiting to turn right into the development would cause problems back to Preston Brook and suggested that a right turn could be prohibited. It is not considered that the impact of vehicles turning right would be significant and it would not be practical to design the access to prohibit vehicles from being able to turn right into site, any signage could only be advisory and may well lead to confusion and problems. If a regular problem was to occur then it could be reviewed by the Highway Authority in the future.

It is considered appropriate to attach a condition ensuring that the required visibility splay as shown on the submitted plans is implemented and subsequently maintained.

The internal road network within the site has demonstrated that there is sufficient space for the Council refuse vehicle to enter and exit the site in forward gear.

In terms of car parking, there is sufficient provision across the scheme. The proposed dwellinghouses have at least two in curtilage car parking spaces (some of which are located within garages which are 6m in length and 3m in width). Amendments have been secured during the processing of the application to ensure that all parking provision within the scheme is of a usable dimension.

No cycle parking is proposed for the houses, however there is sufficient space within the curtilage of each property to provide such provision if the occupier of the dwelling requires this with a number of the properties also having garaging provision which is of a dimension to accommodate some domestic storage as well as the storage of private car.

To ensure the development is carried out in an appropriate manner, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition which secures the submission of a construction management plan and its subsequent implementation.

Based on all the above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable from a highway perspective compliant with Policies BE1, TP6, TP7, TP12 & TP 14 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

## 6.5 Noise

Noise is a constraint to development at this site given the site's relationship with the M56 which is a significant noise source. The report assesses the internal noise environment of the proposed houses in line with BS8233:2014 to identify whether the noise levels contained within the standard (extrapolated from WHO guidance) can be met. It also looks at the predicted noise levels in the gardens.

The report demonstrates that without boundary treatment the noise levels in the garden and inside the houses will exceed the levels in BS8233. Therefore a 4m high bund together with a 2.3m acoustic fence is proposed along the boundary closest to the M56. This reduces the levels in the gardens to an acceptable level. The report further identifies a number of the properties where the internal levels will still fail to meet the BS8233:2014 standards. In these properties further noise mitigation is required. The report therefore recommends that air tight standard double glazing should be installed in those facades where BS8233:2014 will not be met.

Therefore based on conditions which secure the implementation and maintenance / management of the bund and acoustic fence and the glazing and mechanical ventilation in the properties as identified within the report, no objection is raised from a noise perspective.

This would ensure that the proposed development is compliant with Policy BE1 and PR8 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

## 6.6 Layout

The site layout has been designed having regard for the key site constraints which in this case are noise which has resulted in the provision of the bund and acoustic fence referred to above and the National Grid Gas Main which runs through the site frontage which has a Building Proximity Distance of 3m on each side of the Gas Main resulting in the houses being setback further in the site. This setback allows for an attractive soft frontage to the development to be created.

The scheme has generally been designed having regard for the privacy distances for residential development set out in the Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document. There are a few points within the scheme where privacy distances are below this guidance, however

the applicant has looked for innovative solutions to design out any associated privacy issue and the resultant relationships are considered to be acceptable in terms of both light and privacy.

With regard to private outdoor space, the Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document states that houses having 3 bedrooms shall have a minimum private outdoor space of 70sqm per unit with 4 bedroom houses having a minimum private outdoor space of 90sqm per unit. The scheme has been designed so that it generally accords with this standard and would ensure that each house has a usable private outdoor space.

The scheme generally provided dual aspect properties on corner plots to provide interest in the respective streetscenes and create active frontages, however further work has been done during the processing of the application to further enhance the appearance of the scheme through its layout.

In terms of Housing Mix, the proposal seeks to deliver a range of property sizes including 3 and 4 bedroom houses with there being a mix between mews, semi-detached and detached properties. In terms of tenure, all the properties would be market housing and the requirement for affordable housing is to be considered at paragraph 6.10.

The layout of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and compliant with Policies BE 1 & BE 2 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS18 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan. In terms of Housing Mix, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy CS12 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

### 6.7 Scale

The scheme comprises of two storey buildings which is characteristic of other residential developments in Preston Brook and is considered to be acceptable.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of scale and compliant with Policy BE 1 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

### 6.8 Appearance

The proposed elevations show that buildings would be of an appropriate appearance with some variety in materials to add interest to the overall external appearance. Details of the precise external facing materials to be used are shown on the submitted plans and their implementation should be secured by condition.

This would ensure compliance with Policies BE 1 & BE 2 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS18 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

## 6.9 Landscaping & Trees

There are no trees afforded Statutory Protection at this location, although several trees from TPO 017 are situated on the adjacent Tannery Farm. The site is not situated within a Conservation Area.

The proposal will potentially require the loss of a significant amount of trees, most of which will be associated with the construction of the acoustic bund that is to surround the northern edge of the site. There is a replanting plan associated with the proposal, and the selection of trees chosen is acceptable however it will take some time to establish these new trees and mitigate the loss of what is already on site. The implementation of the submitted soft landscaping scheme should be secured by condition.

Further clarification has been sought on the retention of vegetation on the boundary with the office development at Abbots Park. The retention of some vegetation to act as a buffer between the proposed residential development and the existing office development is logical, however the suitability of this in relation to one of the proposed dwellinghouses is being considered by the applicant.

The Hedgerow Survey by We Know Trees We Know Ecology states that the hedgerows on site are not subject to hedgerow regulations and the loss of the section to create access into the site will be mitigated for by additional planting adjacent to the entrance.

Details of hard landscaping and boundary treatments have been submitted. This includes a number of different boundary types according to the location within the site and is considered to ensure that satisfactory levels of privacy and appearance. A condition securing the implementation of the approved scheme and implementation thereafter is considered reasonable.

This would ensure compliance with Policies BE 1 and GE 27 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

## 6.10 Site Levels

The application is accompanied by a topographical survey of the site and a plan showing finished floor levels for the buildings. There is not a significant land level difference across this site with levels increasing as you move in a south-westerly direction with the difference being a maximum of 1.5m over a distance of in excess of 100m. The conclusion is that the resultant relationships would be acceptable (both within the scheme and also in relation to the adjacent agricultural land and office development) and it is considered reasonable to attach a condition which secures the submission of full proposed site levels for approval and their subsequent implementation.

This would ensure compliance with Policy BE 1 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

#### 6.11 Affordable Housing

Policy CS13 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan states that affordable housing units will be provided , in perpetuity, on schemes including 10 or more dwellings (net gain) or 0.33 hectares or greater for residential purposes. It also states that affordable housing provision will be sought at 25% of the total residential units proposed.

The applicant is not proposing that any of the units would be affordable and has submitted information to demonstrate that the inclusion of affordable housing provision would make the development unviable in line with the policy wording.

The assessment submitted has been reviewed by the Council's Surveyor and the conclusion is that it is reasonable and it would not appear to be viable for affordable housing provision to be included within the scheme.

This would ensure compliance with Policy CS 13 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan and the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

#### 6.12 Open Space

The requirements for the provision of recreational greenspace within new residential developments are set out in Policy H3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

The Open Space Requirement Calculator has identified that there is a deficit of Parks & Gardens and Formal Playing Pitches in this particular neighbourhood.

As the open space requirements for the proposed residential development in relation to Parks & Gardens are not being proposed to be met on site, the policy indicates that a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision is required. The applicant has agreed to make this payment upfront in advance of any subsequent grant of planning permission. This would be used for the enhancement of an existing greenspace in the locality which would ensure compliance with Policy H3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

#### 6.13 Ground Contamination

The application is accompanied by a Phase 1 Site Investigation Report (Desk Study).

The report provides a good initial assessment of the potential pollutant linkages. As the site has remained undeveloped agricultural land there are unlikely to be any significant contamination constraints. The phase 1 report has identified a number of localised potential contamination sources however



including a number of off-site historical ponds and the potential for made ground on site. Outline recommendations for phase 2 investigation have therefore been made in the report. The phase 2 investigation to be undertaken can be done post determination of this application and can be secured by condition.

This would ensure that the proposal is compliant with Policy PR14 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

#### 6.14 Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk from flooding. The application is accompanied by a joint Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy. This document has been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority and their initial comment was that it does not fully consider the SUDS hierarchy set out in NPPF. A further submission has been made in this regard which is currently being reviewed.

Should the application be approved a condition which secures the submission of a Surface Water Regulatory Scheme and its subsequent implementation should be applied.

This would ensure compliance with Policy PR16 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS23 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

#### 6.15 Biodiversity

The application is accompanied by an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report.

The proposed development would result in the loss of an area of semi-mature broadleaved woodland plantation and a length of hedgerow habitat. The applicant has submitted a hedgerow survey report which is acceptable. The survey report demonstrates that the hedgerow on the site does not qualify as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. However, the affected hedgerow and woodland habitat are still of local value and mitigation will be required for their loss.

The submitted Landscape Structure Plan illustrates that mitigation for habitat loss will be achieved through native hedgerow and tree planting upon the proposed acoustic bund. The proposed mitigation is acceptable and that the implementation of the Landscape Structure Plan and its subsequent maintenance should be secured by condition.

A habitat management and maintenance plan, which has a duration of at least 5 years, is required for the proposed development which includes management and maintenance prescriptions. The management plan must be comprehensive, integrated and incorporate ecological principles, landscape and other objectives. The plan should be secured by condition.

In order to protect the retained trees and hedgerow upon the site, the recommendations set out in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement should be secured by condition.

Vegetation on site may provide nesting opportunities for breeding birds, which are protected. No tree felling, scrub clearance, hedgerow removal, vegetation management and/or ground clearance is to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then all trees, scrub and hedgerows are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected would be required. This can be secured by condition.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policy GE21 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

#### 6.16 Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Policy CS19 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan outlines some principles which will be used to guide future development.

One of these principles is Code for Sustainable Homes. It would be desirable for all properties to be built to the standard set out in the policy; however this is something which is encouraged rather than a requirement.

Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that developments should be located and designed as to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. To further enhance the opportunities for sustainable development, the applicant has confirmed that all integral garages will be provided with a double socket power supply up to 32A. This provision should be secured by condition.

The proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

#### 6.17 Waste Prevention/Management

Policies WM8 and WM9 of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan are applicable to this application. In terms of waste prevention, a construction management plan will deal with issues of this nature and based on the development cost, the developer would be required to produce a Site Waste Management Plan. The submission of this can be secured by condition. In terms of waste management, there is sufficient space for the storage of waste including separated recyclable materials for each property as well as access to enable collection and a condition securing the submission of a detailed scheme is suggested.

### 7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the development would result in the loss of a Greenspace which has limited amenity value, however would provide much needed

housing as well as securing an upfront payment which would be used for Greenspace enhancements in the locality. On this basis, the development on this designated greenspace is considered to be acceptable.

The Transport Statement which accompanies the application demonstrates that the highway impact of the development would not be severe. The internal road network within the site has demonstrated that there is sufficient space for the Council refuse vehicle to enter and exit the site in forward gear. In terms of car parking, there is sufficient provision across the scheme.

The residential layout is considered to be appropriate in terms of separation for both light and privacy and each property would have an appropriate amount of private amenity space.

The proposal is considered to be of an appropriate design with active frontages and the elevations indicate a mix of materials to add interest and result in well designed properties.

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and the upfront payment to be used for Greenspace enhancements in the locality.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Grant planning permission subject to conditions and the upfront payment for Greenspace enhancements in the locality.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

1. Time Limit – Full Permission.
2. Approved Plans.
3. Submission of Proposed Site Levels (Policy BE1)
4. Implementation of Facing Materials Detailed (Policies BE1 and BE2)
5. Implementation of Landscape Structure Plan - (Policy BE1)
6. Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan – (Policy BE1)
7. Implementation of Recommendations in the Arboricultural Method Statement – (Policy BE1)
8. Implementation of Submitted Hard Landscape and Boundaries Layout and subsequent maintenance - (Policy BE1)
9. Breeding Birds Protection – (Policy GE21)
10. Hours of Construction – (Policy BE1)
11. Removal of Permitted Development – All Dwellings – (Policy BE1)
12. Implementation of the noise bund and acoustic fence and subsequent maintenance – (Policies BE1 and PR8)
13. Implementation of the glazing and mechanical ventilation as identified in the acoustic report – (Policies BE1 and PR8)
14. Submission of a Construction Management Plan - (Policy BE1)

15. Provision & Retention of Parking for Residential Development (Curtilage) – (Policy BE1)
16. Provision & Retention of Parking for Residential Development (Not in Curtilage) – (Policy BE1)
17. Retention of Garages to Dwellings – (Policy BE1)
18. Implementation of Access and Servicing Provision – (Policy BE1)
19. Implementation of Off Site Highway Works (Site Access Point from Chester Road, Dropped Crossing at the Tannery Farm Access Point, Closure of Existing Farm Access, Bus Stop Alterations) – (Policy BE1)
20. Visibility Splay (2.4m x 55m at Site Access with Chester Road) – (Policy BE1)
21. Submission of Electric Vehicle Charging Point Scheme, subsequent implementation and maintenance – (Policy CS19)
22. Submission of a Surface Water Regulatory Scheme for approval and subsequent implementation – (Policy PR16)
23. Ground Contamination – Site Investigation, Remediation Strategy and Site Completion Report – (Policy PR14)
24. Submission of a Waste Audit– (Policy WM8)
25. Submission of a Sustainable Waste Management Design – (Policy WM9)

#### Informatives

1. Highway Informative – S38 / S278/184 – Above Ground Apparatus Requirements.
2. National Grid Response
3. Ecology Informative
4. Waste Informative

### **10. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

As required by:

- Paragraph 186 – 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015; and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2015.

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.