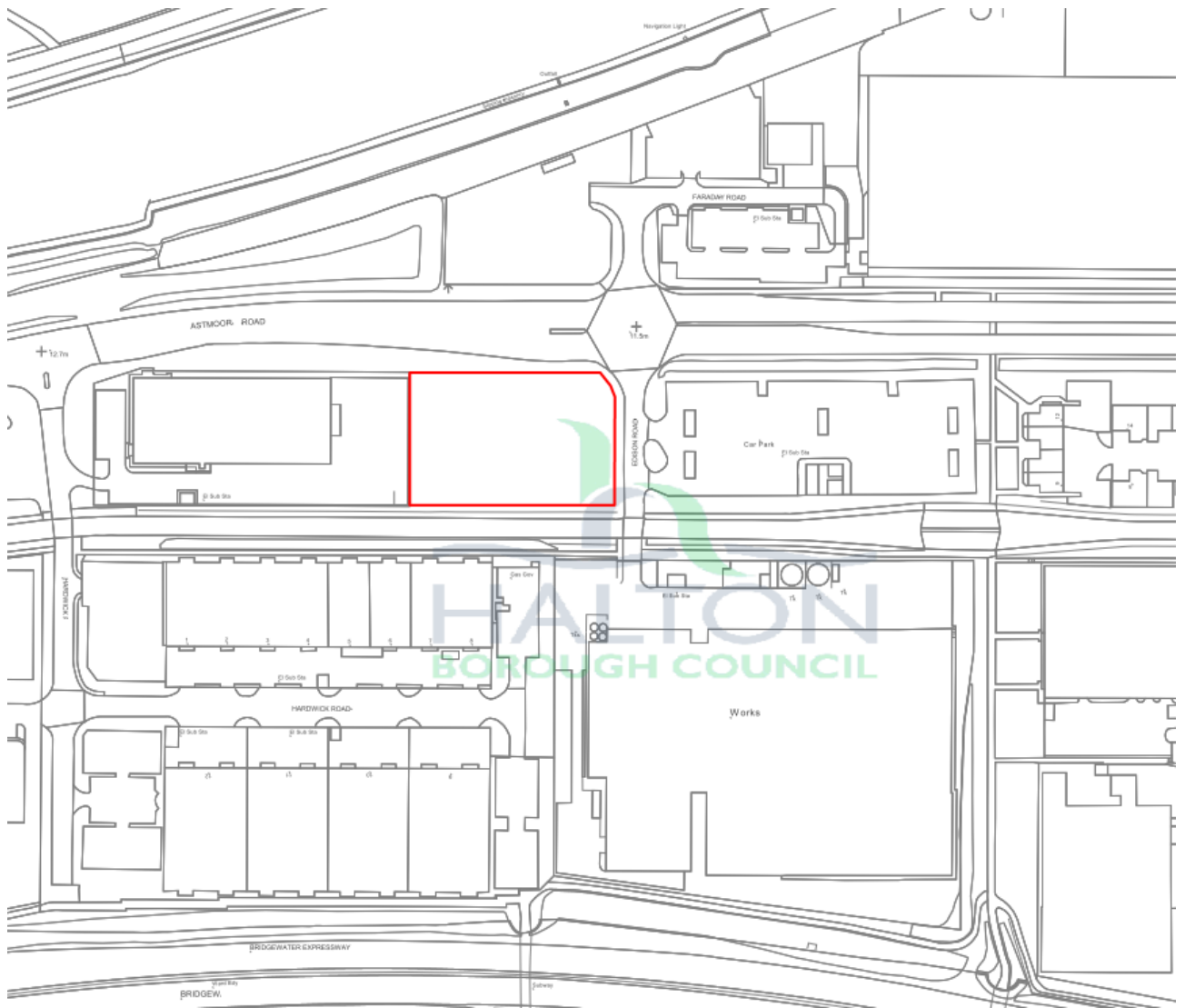


APPLICATION NO:	19/00080/FUL
LOCATION:	Land at Edison Road, Astmoor Industrial Estate, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 1PT.
PROPOSAL:	Proposed erection of storage warehouse (Use Class B8) adjacent to existing unit.
WARD:	Halton Castle
PARISH:	None
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	<p>Mr Simon Hairsnape, Socio Building Surveying Consultancy, Suite F, Rainford Hall, Crank Road, Crank St Helens, WA11 7RP.</p> <p>Mr Matthew Dyal, Thompson and Capper Ltd, 1-12 Hardwick Road, Astmoor Industrial Estate, Astmoor, Runcorn, WA7 1PT</p>
DEVELOPMENT PLAN:	ALLOCATIONS:
<p>Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005)</p> <p>Halton Core Strategy (2013)</p> <p>Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)</p>	Primarily Employment Area
DEPARTURE	No.
REPRESENTATIONS:	No representations have been received from the publicity given to the application.
KEY ISSUES:	Location within a Primarily Employment Area, Parking and Servicing and External Appearance/Design.
RECOMMENDATION:	Grant planning permission subject to conditions.
SITE MAP	



1. APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The Site

The site subject of the application is vacant parcel of land located at the junction of Edison Road and Astmoor Road on the Astmoor Industrial Estate in Runcorn.

Located to the north of the site is Astmoor Road which is the main vehicular route through the Astmoor Industrial Estate.

Located to the south of the site is the Busway with units located on Hardwick Road located beyond this.

Located to the west of the site is a unit located at the junction of Astmoor Road and Hardwick Road. Vehicular access to this unit is gained from Hardwick Road.

Located to the east of the site on the opposite side of Edison Road is a site which is used for car parking by an adjacent business.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 The Proposal

This application seeks permission for the erection of a storage warehouse (Use Class B8) adjacent to the existing unit.

2.2 Documentation

The application is accompanied by Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Site Assessments along with the planning drawings.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

Members are reminded that planning law requires for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1 Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)

The site is designated as Primarily Employment Area in the UDP and Policy E3 is applicable.

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;
- GE21 Species Protection;
- 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;
- E3 Primarily Employment Areas.

3.2 Halton Core Strategy (2013)

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

- CS1 Halton's Spatial Strategy;
- CS2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development;

- CS4 Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities;
- CS18 High Quality Design;
- CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk.

3.3 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 of New Development.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The majority of material considerations are identified in the analysis section of this report but because of the importance of national policy, this section looks at the National Planning Policy Framework

3.4 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 to set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that *the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Paragraph 8 states that *achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

*a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 9 states that *these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.*

Paragraph 10 states so that *sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.* As set out in paragraph 11 below:

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Paragraph 11 states that *for decision-taking this means:*

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Decision-making

Paragraph 38 states that *local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.*

Determining Applications

Paragraph 47 states that *planning law requires for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on application should be made as*

quickly as possible and within statutory timescale unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

3.5 Other Considerations

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a persons rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the Convention of the same Act which sets out his/her rights in respect for private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposed development would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles in respect of the human rights of surrounding residents/occupiers.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Highways and Transportation Development Control Response

"PARKING AND HIGHWAY SAFETY

- *After reviewing this application I would agree that the parking arrangement appears to be satisfactory for a development of this size and nature*
- *There is clear evidence of the ability for the larger vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear though there is some confusion over parking being located within the area designated for turning as this parking appears that it could be accommodated elsewhere.*
- *The access to the unit appears to be blocked by the provision of disabled parking bays, can we have a clearer indication of how this access works and if indeed this is the main access or if HGV's enter by the other side of the unit. If this is the case we would require tracking details for this area.*
- *Vegetation clearance would be necessary in order to create the necessary visibility splay, once vegetation is cleared there appears to be no visibility issues. Visibility splay of 42m from a set back of 2.4 metres would be necessary.*
- *We would like to see the inclusion of 2 EV charging points as part of the development.*
- *There is no mention of cycle parking. We would require a provision of secure, covered and secure cycle parking as part of the application. Astmoor is subject to a new cycle infrastructure investment and works are underway, we are keen that provision within business supports the use of the new and improved routes.*

DRAINAGE

The application proposes that surface water to be discharged into the main sewer. This site comprises of a new floor space of in excess of 1000sqm and as such the proposal for drainage would not be acceptable. It will be necessary for the applicant to seek an agreement from the Lead Local Flood Authority for discharge of surface water.

CONDITIONS

- *Agreement to be reached between the applicant and LLFS on drainage for the site*
- *Details of the access points into and out from the unit*
- *Cycle parking provision to be included.”*

4.2 Contaminated Land Officer Response

*“Further to your consultation I have considered the contaminated land implications and would make the following comments;
The application is supported by the following documents;*

- *Phase I geo-environmental site assessment, ref 10-710-r1, E3P Ltd, July 2015.*
- *Phase II geo-environmental site assessment, ref 10-710-r2, E3P Ltd, October 2015.*

The reports present the findings of a desk study and preliminary risk assessment and a follow up site investigation and detailed risk assessment. The site was open land up until the western portion was included within the curtilage of an adjoining alum works, specifically the land appears to have been used for the storage of process wastes. The plot was then part of the development of the current day Astmoor Industrial Estate although the site has not been subject to redevelopment.

The site investigation was targeted at characterising the shallow sub-surface with respect to soil and ground water contamination, ground gases and geo-technical design issues. The investigation and subsequent assessment identified elevated concentrations of arsenic and widespread occurrence of asbestos within the soils. The ground gas monitoring recorded elevated concentrations of carbon dioxide but minimal gas flow.

The report makes a number of recommendations for further work / mitigation measures that include a Materials Management Plan and a Remediation and Enabling Works Strategy. Of particular focus for the MMP is the need to effectively manage the asbestos present in soils. As part of that there is a need to further quantify the extent and significance of the asbestos impact, i.e. additional sampling with laboratory quantification of the asbestos concentration. The ground gas assessment has determined that the development should be constructed with gas protection measures accordant with CS2 as per guidance contained in CIRIA published document C665. However, this is based on upgrading the level of protection due to carbon dioxide concentrations in excess of 5%, which is something the guidance stipulates may be considered but is not necessarily compulsory. Given the nature of the source, lack of gas flow and the development proposed, I think that some consideration could be given to re-assessing the gas risk, i.e. removing the need for gas protection measures.

I have no objection to the scheme in principle, but recommend that if approved there are conditions attached requiring the submission of a remedial strategy, which includes further assessment of the asbestos in soil and an asbestos

management plan, a scheme of gas protection measures (or a revised gas risk assessment indicating no measures required) and a verification report.”

4.3 Lead Local Flood Authority

No observations received at the time of writing this report.

4.4 United Utilities

They have requested that foul and surface water shall be drained on separate systems and that a surface water drainage scheme be secured by condition. Their other observations should be attached as an informative on the decision notice.

4.5 Cheshire Police

“My main concern with this development is that it is easily accessible due to the road network. I would recommend the following:-

- *Minimum 2.1 metre Weld mesh security fence*
- *Fencing needs to be reinforced with posts on outside to reduce opportunity of fence being attacked and someone driving through the gap*
- *The Unit should be fitted with an alarm and CCTV. I would strongly recommend that all hardware complies with the guidance set out by Secured by Design which is included in the attached document.”*

5. REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The application was advertised by a press advert in the Widnes & Runcorn Weekly News on 07/03/2019, a site notice posted on Edison Road on 01/03/2019 and 14 neighbour notification letters sent on 28/02/2019.

5.2 No representations have been received from the publicity given to the application.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Suitability of the proposed use

The site is located in a Primarily Employment Area and this proposal seeks permission to erect a storage warehouse. The proposed use falls within Use Class B8 of the Use Classes Order which includes Storage and Distribution. Policy E3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan states that development falling within Use Class B8 will be permitted in a Primarily Employment Area. The principle of erecting a storage warehouse on the site subject of the application is considered to be acceptable.

It should be noted that this proposal would bring back into use a site which has been vacant for many years as supported by the Brownfield Focus in Policy CS1 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.2 Highway Implications

The Highway Officer has commented that once the vegetation is cleared at the proposed site entrance point, no visibility issues would exist and it therefore represents an appropriate access point to the site from Edison Road. The clearance of the vegetation and the maintenance of an appropriate visibility splay should be secured by condition.

In respect of parking and servicing, the Highway Officer considers the parking arrangement to be satisfactory for a development of this size and nature and there is clear evidence of the ability for the larger vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear from Edison Road which shows the versatility of the building should it be operated as a standalone unit in the future rather than in conjunction with the adjacent unit as currently shown. The implementation of the parking and servicing proposed should be secured by condition.

The proposed site plan shows 4no. cycle parking spaces. It is not clear whether this is secure and covered provision. The applicant is to be given the opportunity to provide a detailed scheme up front to accompany the application, however it would be possible to secure the submission of a detailed cycle parking scheme and its subsequent implementation by condition.

In relation to pedestrian provision within the development, the applicant has sought to separate the large vehicles accessing the site from the remainder of the parking provision which would allow satisfactory pedestrian provision within the site. It is also noted that the site is adjacent to the Busway giving access to services which serve the Runcorn area.

The Highway Officer would like to see the inclusion of 2 Electric Vehicle charging points as part of the proposed development. This request is to be put to the applicant and it would be possible to secure the implementation of a suitable scheme by condition.

In conclusion, the proposal is acceptable from a highway perspective in compliance with Policies BE1, TP6, TP7 and TP12 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.3 External Appearance

The elevations show that the building proposed would be of an appropriate appearance with some variety in materials to add interest to the overall external appearance. The submission of precise external facing materials and their subsequent implementation should be secured by condition.

It is noted that a portakabin office / toilet is shown on the proposed site plan, however no detail has been provided on this. It is considered that it is reasonable to attach a condition which secure the submission of a suitable scheme for such provision.

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

6.4 Landscaping, Trees, Ecology and Fencing

There are no Tree Preservation Orders in force at this site and the site does not fall within a designated Conservation Area.

The verge containing vegetation adjacent to Edison Road and Astmoor Road is in need of some management and the suggested condition securing the implementation of the visibility splay on Edison Road would ensure that this happens.

There is little scope for soft landscaping with the proposed layout and no details on boundary treatments have been provided. It is considered that a managed verge of vegetation would help soften the appearance of the proposed development. No boundary treatments details have been shown on the site plan which accompanies the application. It is considered that the continuation of the fencing from the adjacent unit would be a satisfactory design solution and would be in line with the observations made by Cheshire Police. A condition securing the submission of a detailed boundary treatment scheme, subsequent implementation and maintenance thereafter is suggested.

In order to protect breeding birds during the removal of vegetation necessary to implement the proposed development, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition which ensures that these works are undertaken outside of breeding bird season or have been checked by an Ecologist if works need to be undertaken during that timeframe.

The attachment of the suggested conditions would ensure a satisfactory landscaping proposal in compliance with Policies BE 1 and GE 21 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.5 Site Levels

Based on the site's topography, it is considered that appropriate relationships can be achieved in terms of appearance and relationships to existing roads. A topographical survey has been provided as part of the application submission, however a plan detailing proposed site levels has not been provided. Due to the elevated nature of the site, it is noted that there would be a sloped servicing yard on the proposed site plan, however further details are required. It is considered that the submission of proposed site levels for approval and their subsequent implementation can be secured by condition.

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

6.6 Ground Contamination

The application is accompanied by Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Site Assessments

This has been reviewed by the Contaminated Land Officer and no objection has been raised subject to the attachment of a condition which secures the submission of a remediation strategy and appropriate validation to ensure that any ground contamination is dealt with appropriately.

The attachment of the condition above will ensure compliance with Policy PR14 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.7 Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk from flooding and has a site area of less than 1ha which does not necessitate the requirement for a Flood Risk Assessment.

There is a requirement for a detailed drainage strategy for the site to be submitted.

The drainage strategy for the development should/shall demonstrate use of the drainage hierarchy, as described in Part H of the Building Regulations/ NPPF, (This is the same as the standard condition requested by United Utilities). The requirement for the submission of an appropriate drainage strategy and its subsequent implementation to satisfy both the Lead Local Flood Authority and United Utilities can be secured by condition.

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

6.8 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.

NPPF is supportive of the enhancement of opportunities for sustainable development and it is considered that any future developments should be located and designed where practical to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

The incorporation of facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles could be realistically achieved for this development and a request has been sent to the applicant regarding the introduction of 2no. electric vehicle charging points within this scheme.

Based on the above, the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.9 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 a Waste Audit should be secured by condition.

In terms of on-going waste management, there is sufficient space on site to deal with this.

The proposal is considered to be compliant with policies WM8 and WM9 of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposal would bring back into use a site within the Primarily Employment Area which has been vacant for many years into a storage and distribution use which is one of the accepted uses in this location.

An appropriate access point to site from Edison Road would be achieved as well as linkages from the adjacent site which is in the applicant's ownership / control. The layout demonstrates sufficient space for movement within the site as well as an appropriate level of car parking.

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

The application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to conditions.

9. CONDITIONS

1. Time Limit – Full Permission.
2. Approved Plans.
3. Proposed Site Levels (Policy BE1)
4. External Facing Materials (Policies BE1 and BE2)
5. Portakabin Office / Toilet Scheme (Policy BE1)
6. Boundary Treatments Scheme (Policy BE1)
7. Breeding Birds Protection – (Policy GE21)
8. Hours of Construction – (Policy BE1)
9. Visibility Splays – (Policy BE1)
10. Construction Management Plan (Highways) – (Policy BE1)
11. Provision & Retention of Parking and Servicing – (Policy BE1)

12. Cycle Parking Scheme – (Policy BE1)
13. Ground Contamination (Remediation and Validation) - (Policy PR14)
14. Drainage Strategy – (Policy PR16)
15. Foul and Surface Water on a separate system – (Policy PR16)
16. Waste Audit

Informatives

1. Highway Informative
2. United Utilities Informative
3. Cheshire Police Informative

10. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

As required by:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2018);
- 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.