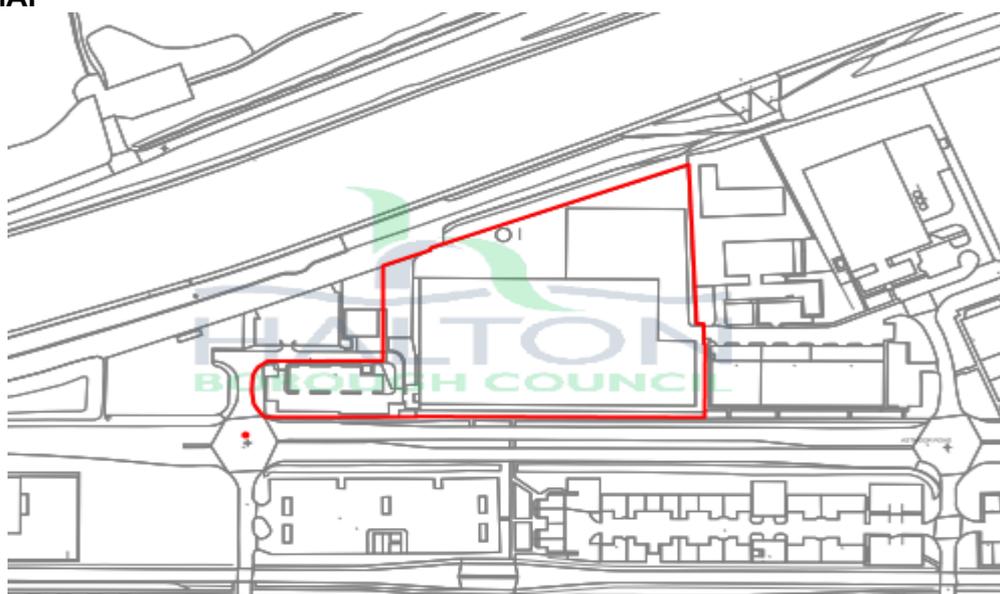


<b>APPLICATION NO:</b>	19/00382/FUL
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Ventcroft Ltd, Faraday Road, Runcorn WA7 1PE
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Proposed extension to light industrial unit together with ancillary works
<b>WARD:</b>	Halton Castle
<b>PARISH:</b>	
<b>AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):</b>	Ventcroft Ltd, Faraday Road, Runcorn, WA7 1PE
<b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:</b> Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) Joint Waste Local Plan ( 2013)	Primarily Employment Area
<b>DEPARTURE</b>	No
<b>REPRESENTATIONS:</b>	No comments received as a result of the public consultation.
<b>KEY ISSUES:</b>	Principle of development, highway and traffic issues; use of employment land; drainage.
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	Approve Subject to Conditions

**SITE MAP**



## **THE APPLICATION SITE**

### The Site

The application site is an existing commercial unit located at on Faraday Road, within the Astmoor commercial area of Runcorn. The site is bounded by Astmoor Road to the south, Faraday Road and other commercial units to the west, Goddard Road and other commercial units to the east and a landscaped area and Manchester Ship Canal to the north

The site is currently occupied by an industrial unit with a gross floor area of 9097 sqm which is owned and occupied by Ventcroft Ltd and used for the manufacture of fire cable and security alarm cable. Ancillary office accommodation is provided within the south western part of the site.

### Planning History

The site's planning history is associated with the commercial use of the site since the area was built as part of the Commission for New Towns remit in the late 1960's. The earlier planning history relates to the occupant from that time until 2006, Lions Foods:- 88/22597 – single storey extension for offices; 88/22598 – single storey extension for laboratory; 89/25394 – extension for laboratory and kitchen; 89/24086 – refurbishment of warehouse. Following the purchase of the site by Ventcroft Ltd, a further planning application was approved – 10/00063/FUL for the demolition of the existing warehouse and the erection of a 9206sqm warehouse.

## **THE APPLICATION**

### The proposal and Background

This proposal seeks permission to extend the current warehouse to form a triangular 2950sqm extension on the northern side of the existing commercial unit, with a canopy over the delivery area cover 522sqm.

The proposed extension will be constructed with powder coated metal sheet panels to match the existing building and have an overall height of 15m at its ridge.

The site will continue to provide for deliveries and servicing at the north eastern corner of the site and the car parking provision for staff and visitors to the east will remain unchanged.

### Documentation

The applicant has submitted a planning application, drawings and the following reports:

- Design and Access Statement
- Preliminary Ecology Appraisal
- Preliminary Drainage Strategy

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

### 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.

Paragraph 47 states that “Planning law requires that applications for planning permission 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.”

Paragraph 11 and paragraph 38 state that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that local planning authorities should work in a positive and creative way, working pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that will improve economic, social and environmental conditions of their areas.

Paragraphs 80-82 states the need for planning policies and decisions to be made to create conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. It encourages an adaptive approach to support local and inward investment to meet the strategic economic and regenerative requirements of the area.

#### National Planning Policy for Waste

The National Planning Policy for Waste sets ambitious aims to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management through positive planning in delivering sustainable development and resource efficiency including through the provision of modern infrastructure and by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy and by securing the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health or harming the environment.

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

The following Unitary Development Plan policies and policy documents are relevant to this application: -

BE1	General Requirements for Development
BE2	Quality of Design
GE21	Specie Protection
PR1	Air Quality
PR2	Noise Nuisance
PR3	Odour Nuisance
PR4	Light Pollution and Nuisance
PR14	Contaminated Land
PR16	Development and Flood Risk
TP6	Cycling Provision as Part of New Development
TP7	Pedestrian Provision as Part of New Development
TP12	Car Parking
TP15	Accessibility to New Development
TP17	Safe Travel for All
E3	Primary Employment Redevelopment Area

#### Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (2013)

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

CS1	Halton’s Spatial Strategy
CS2	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CS4	Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities
CS15	Sustainable Transport
CS18	High Quality Design
CS19	Sustainable Development and Climate Change
CS20	Natural and Historic Environment
CS23	Managing Pollution and Risk
CS24	Waste

#### Joint Waste Local Plan 2013

##### Strategic Objectives

WM0	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
WM8	Waste Prevention and Resource Management

#### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Design of New Industrial and Commercial Development SPD

### CONSULTATIONS

The application has been advertised via the following methods: site notices posted near to the site, press notice, and Council website. Surrounding residents, landowners and Ward Councillors have been notified.

The following organisations have been consulted and any comments received have been summarised below in the assessment section of the report where appropriate:

Environment Agency – No comments received.

#### Council Services:

HBC Contaminated Land – No Objection or recommended conditions.

Local Highway Authority – No Objection subject to conditions – outlined in report below.

Lead Local Flood Authority – No Objection subject to conditions – outlined in report below.

Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service – No Objection subject to conditions – outlined in report below.

BID team – No comments received.

Mersey Gateway – No comments received.

Mersey Gateway Environmental Trust – No comments received.

### REPRESENTATIONS

No representations have been received as a result of the public consultation process.

## ASSESSMENT

### Principle of Development

The site is designated as a within a Primarily Employment Redevelopment Area (E3); in the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP). Policy E3 indicates a series of uses which it states will be acceptable within these areas, including B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and Sui Generis uses. This proposal is consistent with the existing use of the site.

Policy CS4 has the aim of making land available for employment purposes within the borough and will be made up from a variety of sourced, including 'Regenerating and remodelling opportunities within existing employment areas'. The proposal provides development within an existing site and retains its employment use.

It is on this basis that the principle of the development, within the designated and continued use of the site, is acceptable and complies with UDP Policies E3 and CS4 subject to conditions, which are outlined in the Assessment chapter of this report.

### Design and Character

The proposed extended building is intended to complement the existing building in terms of material types and colour. Whilst the height of the proposed building will be 4m higher than the existing, this is designed to meet the unit's functional requirements. The extended element will be screened in part by the existing building when viewed from the south and from the north it will be screened by the existing landscaped area.

The materials used will match those of the existing structure to minimise any visual intrusion than may result from the extension height.

There are no alterations to the boundary treatment as a result of the proposal.

On this basis it is considered that the proposed extension to the built form on the site are consistent with UDP Policies E3 and the Design of New Industrial and Commercial Development SPD.

### Highway Safety

The Local Highway Authority initially raised an objection to the proposal which has since been addressed through the submission of an amended drawing 1129.P.002(A) as follows:-

Initial comments:-

*"The current site has a square footage of 9097m<sup>2</sup> with 47 off road parking spaces serving the site. The UDP requires that for a site this size a maximum parking standard of 1 space per 40sqm which provides for a maximum parking capacity of 227 spaces. The application proposes an increase in the square footage of 3472sqm but does not look to provide any additional parking as part of the application. Whilst the site may operate sufficiently under the current occupation the application is assessed to protect the future use of the site and ensure suitable parking provision is made for the unit size and use class. Given that the present site has a significant under provision of parking, the Highway Authority would object to the*

*application based on the under provision of parking. (UDP TP12). In order for the Highway Authority to lift its objection it will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate a significant increase in the available parking capability on site as well as providing any mitigation against the under provision of parking based on the UDP standards.*

*Subject to satisfying an acceptable level of parking provision, it will be necessary for the applicant to provide good quality, covered cycle parking located in a secure and visible location. This would have the additional benefit of providing as a mitigation against the under provision of parking. The area is currently subject to a cycling and walking improvement scheme at present with good links for staff to the premises. It would also be beneficial in this case to include a staff travel plan to encourage more sustainable travel choices*

*If the planning application was approved the Highway Authority would require details of how pedestrians and cyclists are catered for when entering and existing the site safely to access the premises. We would require a plan which illustrates how this would be accommodated within the proposal.*

Final comments:-

*“The applicant has demonstrated an additional parking capacity of 38 spaces which would be deemed acceptable given the increased floor area. It would not be necessary as a condition to formally mark out the spaces but to keep the area available since the present staff numbers do not require the additional parking capacity at this time.*

*The cycle parking is located in a good position to encourage usage. The Astmoor Masterplan proposes a significant alteration to the pedestrian and cycle provision in this area and the cycle parking is welcomed in promoting its use by staff to encourage more sustainable travel choices.*

*The site is well served in terms of links to sustainable travel especially in terms of access to bus services.*

*The Highway Authority do not have any objections to the application.”*

On the basis of the amended layout drawing, the Local Highway Authority is satisfied that the access can fully accommodate the movement of vehicles and the provision of car and cycle parking both within the site. As such the Local Highway Authority raise no objections, no significant transport or highway safety issues are raised and the proposal is acceptable based on NPPF, and UDP Polices TP6, TP7, TP12, TP15 and TP17.

### Ecology

The Council's retained adviser has confirmed that the submitted information within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for their assessment.

Their comments are as follows:-

*“The development site is close to the following designated sites and Local Plan Core Strategy policy CS20 applies:*

- *Wigg Island LNR; and*
- *Wigg Island LWS.*

*On this occasion, the development is unlikely to harm the features for which the sites have been designated for the following reasons:*

- The site is separated from the designated sites by the Manchester Ship Canal and a strip of woodland planting; and*
- The proposed industrial unit extension will be a prefabricated metal structure, the construction of this will not require heavy engineering works which would be likely to result in the transfer of construction-related pollutants into the designated sites.*

*The application site is also near to the Runcorn Sands and Astmoor Saltmarsh BTO WeBS Core Count Area. However, adverse impacts to habitats and bird species within the Core Count Area can also be discounted for those reasons which are set out above.*

*The applicant has submitted a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report in accordance with Local Plan Core Strategy policy CS20 (Etive Ecology Ltd, November 2018, unreferenced) which does not meet BS 42020:2013 as a desktop study, with data acquired from Record LRC, was not completed. However, this is not considered to be a significant limitation on this occasion, as due to the limited nature of habitats present on the site, a desktop study would be unlikely to alter the conclusions of the report. The survey is therefore acceptable.*

*Habitats located immediately off-site to the north were considered to provide potential opportunities for foraging and commuting bats. A lighting scheme can be designed so that it protects ecology and does not result in excessive light spill onto the adjacent habitats in line with NPPF (paragraph 180). This can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition. It would be helpful for the applicant to refer to Bat Conservation Trust website <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2018/09/new-guidance-on-bats-and-lighting>*

*Vegetation on site may provide nesting opportunities for breeding birds, which are protected. The following condition is required.*

#### **CONDITION**

*1 No tree felling, scrub clearance and/or vegetation management 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 vegetation 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 are required to be submitted for approval.*

*2 Japanese knotweed and cotoneaster (Cotoneaster sp) are present within the site boundary. The applicant should submit a method statement, prepared by a competent person, which includes the following information:*

- A plan showing the extent of the plants;*
- The methods that will be used to prevent the plant/s spreading further, including demarcation;*
- The methods of control that will be used, including details of post-control monitoring; and how the plants will be disposed of after treatment/removal.*

*The method statement should be submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of any works on site. The method statement can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.*

*3 A validation report is then required confirming the remediation treatment carried out and that the site has been free of the Japanese knotweed for 12 consecutive months for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.”*

On this basis the proposal is acceptable and complies with development plan policies GE21 (UDP), CS20 and the NPPF.

### Flood Risk and Drainage

The Lead Local Flood Authority(LLFA) initially required further information from the applicant and following those submissions the LLFA final comments on this application are as follows:-

*“After reviewing 19/00382/FUL planning application which included the ‘Preliminary Drainage Strategy LLFA found the following:*

- The site is 1.97ha, with low flood risk to the site.*
- The drainage strategy provides the drainage concept, but further detail is needed.*
- The strategy provides SuDS options using the SuDS hierarchy.*
- The existing storage at the site for the Q100 with climate change (additional 40%) is 484m<sup>3</sup>. This involves: 280m<sup>3</sup> porous stone and pipe attenuation; 40m<sup>3</sup> storage capacity within piped network; and the carpark attenuating the remaining of 164 m<sup>3</sup> during surcharge, which is slowly released into the surface water drainage network which outfalls into the canal.*
- The proposed drainage strategy is to extend the surface water drainage system upstream with additional storage, this will connect to the existing system which outfalls into the canal.*
- The proposed scheme increases the impermeable surface by 2330m<sup>2</sup>, with 548m<sup>3</sup> attenuation storage needed to accommodate the Q100 with climate change design event. The proposed additional storage is from the drainage network and cellular attenuation. The remaining volume of 111m<sup>3</sup> will be attenuated within the car park. Therefore the proposed scheme is shown to provide a betterment to the existing scenario.*

*LLFA would recommend the following conditions, should the planning authority be minded to approve on this basis:*

*No development shall take place until details of the implementation, maintenance and management of a SuDS for the disposal of surface water in accordance with the SuDS hierarchy have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Those details shall include:*

*i. A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for i) drainage to attenuation, including*

*calculations and arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime and ii) connection to any system adopted by, any public body or statutory undertaker.*

*ii. Interceptors, attenuation structures and calculations to demonstrate a reduction in surface water runoff rate to greenfield runoff rates for the new hardstanding areas as a minimum, with additional improvements for existing runoff where practical. Calculation should demonstrate no flooding to buildings in the NPPF design event (1 in 100 year + climate change allowance).”*

On this basis, subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal will comply with the drainage hierarchy and thereby satisfy UDP Policy PR16 and the NPPF.

## Other Waste Issues, Sustainable Development and Equality

The applicant has provide the following information in relation to waste from construction:-

*“The proposed extension will be of portal frame construction and clad with coated metal sheeting. In addition, very little ground excavation work will be involved. As a consequence, the construction of the proposed development is unlikely to generate significant quantities of construction waste. Any construction waste that does arise will be separated out into metals (and other recyclable materials) that will then be removed off-site for recycling. Any non-recyclable waste arisings will be removed from site for disposal at a licensed landfill site.*

*As a Company, Ventcroft seeks to minimise waste generation and, for example, encourages electronic communication which helps to reduce the quantities of wastepaper produced. Ventcroft’s operations generate little waste, however, separate bins will be provided within the building for recyclables and non-recyclable materials.”*

The applicant has provide the following information in relation to sustainable development:-

*“The proposed extension will satisfy current Building Regulations, in full, including requirements for carbon efficiency. Ventcroft has provisionally selected a contractor, well experienced in developments of this nature, to undertake the proposed development. This selection has been made not only on the grounds of cost but also having regard to build quality.”*

The applicant has provide the following information in relation to equality:-

*“Ventcroft complies, in full, with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. At a practical level, the Company makes provision for disabled parking spaces, disabled toilets and level access within the building.”*

Officers can confirm that the building does have disabled spaces and has level access. This will be considered as part of Building regulations.

On this basis, the proposal satisfies the aims of the Council’s Core Strategy, Waste Local Plan appropriate conditions are recommended to secure this. The above information also satisfies the local authority obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

### Conclusions

The application seeks permission for proposed extension to an existing unit in Astmoor totalling 3,472sqm; (2950sqm sqm portal frame building and 522sqm canopy delivery area).

Core Strategy Policy CS2, WLP Policy WM0 and NPPF paragraphs 11 and 38 set out the presumption in favour of sustainable development whereby applications that are consistent with national and up-to-date local policy should be approved without delay.

The proposals are considered appropriate to the character of the existing unit and wider area.

The Local Highway Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Environmental Health Officers and the Council’s retained ecological advisers have confirmed that they raise no objections.

The proposal will provide an improved facility without resulting in significant impacts on the surrounding area. The applicant has demonstrated compliance with the Council’s

development plan and NPPF and members are requested to support the recommendation of approval.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the application is approved subject to conditions relating to the following:

1. Standard 3 year timescale for commencement of development
2. Specifying approved and amended plans
3. Matching materials condition(s) (BE2)
4. Condition requiring submission of a method statement for the control of Japanese Knotweed (GE21)
5. Condition requiring submission of a verification report on completion of treatment of Japanese Knotweed (GE21)
6. Condition requiring submission and agreement of cycle parking details (TP6)
7. Condition restricting surface water run-off onto the adopted highway (TP17)
8. Condition requiring submission; agreement; implementation; of a sustainable drainage scheme (BE1 and PR5)
9. Submission and agreement of Site Waste Management Plan (WM8)
10. Submission and agreement of a lighting scheme (BE1)
11. Submission and agreement of site and finished floor levels (BE1)
12. There shall be no external storage (BE1)

Informatives will be added to advise that Building Regulation approval is required and for compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in relation to bird nesting protection.

## Background Papers

The submitted planning applications and the Council's standard conditions are background papers to the report.

Other background papers specifically mentioned and listed within the report are open to inspection at the Council's premises at Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes, WA8 7QF in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

## SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

As required by:

- The National Planning Policy Framework;
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012; and

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.