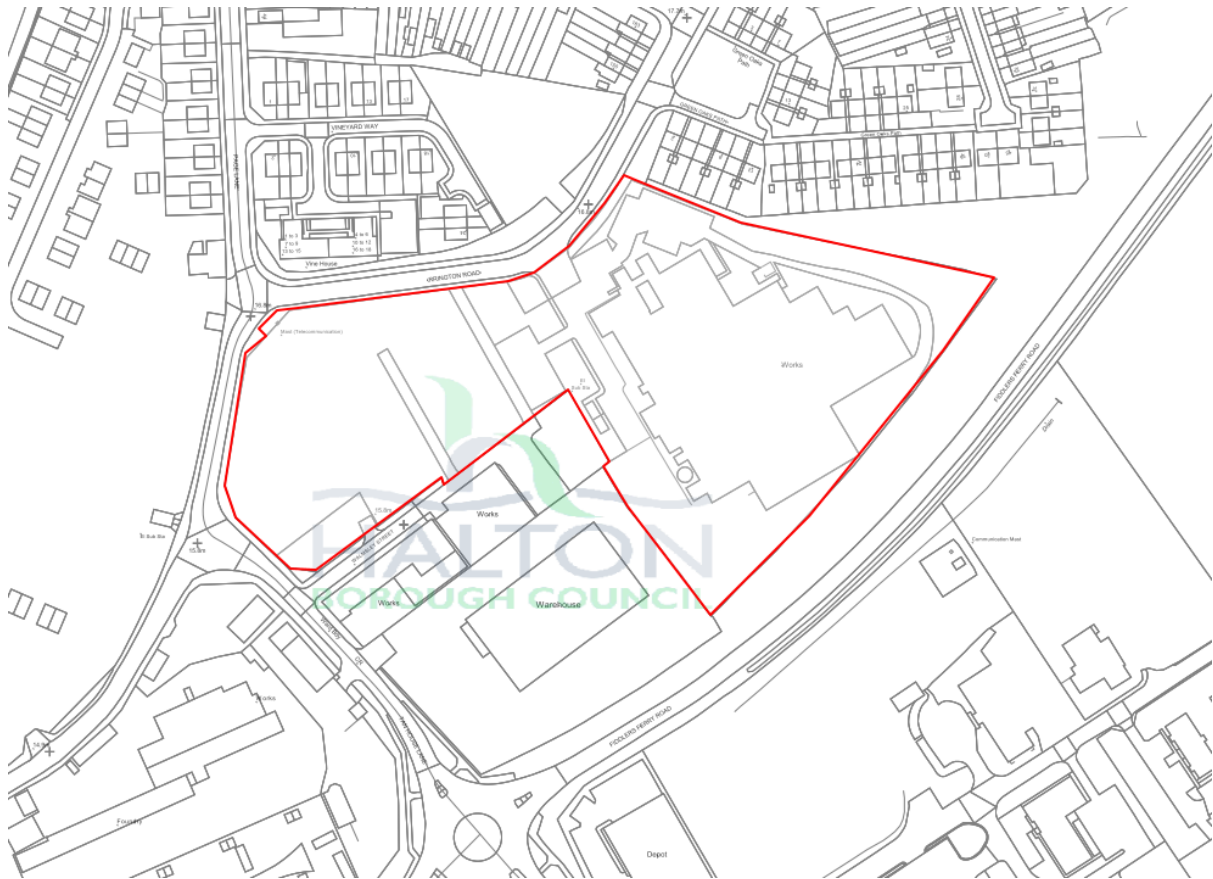


APPLICATION NO:	17/00504/FUL
LOCATION:	Former BPI Site Off Warrington Road, Widnes, Cheshire.
PROPOSAL:	Proposed development of 118 dwellings (including affordable housing) together with associated works including access and landscaping.
WARD:	Halton View
PARISH:	None
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	Russell Homes (UK) Ltd, BPI Ltd, and Halton Housing Trust.
DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:	Primarily Employment Area
National Planning Policy Framework (2012)	
Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005)	
Halton Core Strategy (2013)	
Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)	
DEPARTURE	Yes
REPRESENTATIONS:	No representations received from the publicity given to the application.
KEY ISSUES:	Principle of Residential Development in a Primarily Employment Area, Design, Amenity, Affordable Housing, Open Space, Access, Ground Contamination.
RECOMMENDATION:	Grant planning permission subject to conditions.
SITE MAP	



1. APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The Site

The site subject of the application is bounded by Warrington Road, Tan House Lane and Fiddlers Ferry Road in Widnes. The site is currently vacant with the eastern part of the site having previously been occupied by British Polythene Industries (BPI) plc and the western part being previously developed residential land. The site is 2.9ha in area.

Located to the north and west of the site are residential development some of which are well established and others which have been recently completed.

Located to the south east of the site is Fiddlers Ferry Road which is a main route linking Widnes to Warrington.

Located to the south west of the site are industrial buildings accessed from Tan House Lane.

The site is located within the Primarily Employment Area as designated by the Halton Unitary Development Plan. In the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan, the application site falls within the South Widnes Key Area of Change.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 The Proposal

The application proposes the development of 118 dwellings (including affordable housing) together with associated works including access and landscaping.

Of the 118 dwellings proposed, 69 would be open market, 31 would be affordable and 18 would be rented.

2.2 Documentation

The planning application is supported the following documents/plans:

- Design and Access Statement (including Affordable Housing and Open Space Requirements);
- Employment Land Statement;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage;
- Ground Contamination;
- Ecology Report;
- Transport Assessment;
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Construction Management Plan.

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 Primarily Employment Area in the Halton Unitary Development Plan. The following policies within the adopted Unitary Development Plan are considered to be of particular relevance;

- BE1 General Requirements for Development;
- BE2 Quality of Design;
- BE22 Boundary Walls and Fences;

- 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;
- H3 Provision of Recreational Greenspace;
- E3 Primarily Employment Areas.

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;
- CS4 Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities;
- CS9 South Widnes;
- CS12 Housing Mix;
- CS13 Affordable Housing;
- CS18 High Quality Design;
- CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- CS20 Natural and Historic Environment;
- CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk.

3.4 Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)

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

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

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Highways and Transportation Development Control

Layout/Highway Safety

- For clarity the following plans have been considered to formulate the highway officers comments; 17013-01-Rev K, 2201-01-GA101A, 2201-01-GA102A, 2201-01-GA103A,
- The developer and their representatives have engaged in pre-application and continued dialogue throughout the process and on the

whole the highway officer considers the site and access arrangements to be suitable for a development of this size and nature.

- It is considered that the turning areas provided will cater for the current vehicles used by the authority for refuse collection.
- It is noted that the private drives serve in excess of the usual standard of 3 dwellings but none exceed the maximum of 5 dwellings.
- Tactile crossing points have been shown to the new junction and within the development to ensure DDA accessibility and pedestrian links are considered suitable.
- Drawings 2201-01-GA101A, 2201-01-GA102A, 2201-01-GA103A show offsite highway works which result in a change of character to the length of Warrington Road fronting the development which will promote a reduction in vehicles speeds. These indicative layouts should be incorporated into the required S278 and may be subject to change on agreement with the Highway Authority.
- Provision has been made for pedestrians to cross Warrington Road linking to the adjacent development via a safe route.
- On the whole the development offers suitable off street parking provision although some of the dwellings have poorly laid out driveways that could be improved (see parking comments).
- Visibility splays from driveways and the access road junction should be to MFS (MFS2) standard, no physical obstructions over 600mm in height should be permitted within these splays
- Works will be required to close up the redundant car park access to Walmsley Street, this work will be on adopted highway and should be included into the required S278
- It is noted that there is provision for a future access to an adjacent site. To reduce risk of ransom strips for future connectivity we would request that the area be secured by being included within the area offered for highway adoption (continuation of footways either side we a 600mm strip abutting the site boundary).

Parking

- The required maximum UDP car parking standard has been met with each property being served by 2 spaces.
- There are several of the property level driveways that we consider to be poor in design, namely those serving plots, 32-35 and plot 43.
- It is also noted that several dwellings have parking to the rear which is considered impractical and may lead to residents parking in alternative locations.
- Side by side driveways between adjacent dwellings should have a minimum width of 3m.
- Standard driveways should be off a minimum size 5m (preferably 6m) x 2.5m.
- Property level cycle storage should be considered to promote alternative modes of transport to private cars.
- Provision should be made to encourage the use of electric vehicles, Further guidance on EV charging points can be found in the document

produced by the Liverpool City Region <http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transport-delivery/documents/e-mobility-strategy.pdf>. Specific regard should be paid to 3.2.2 Table 3 “Min. provision of parking bays and charging points in new developments.

Fra/drainage

- Agreement from the Lead Local Flood Authority would be required.

Levels/Highway sections/retaining walls.

- No proposed levels or long sections have been provided.
- The street scene sections suggest the site is relatively flat therefore no significant level issues are expected.
- Full details of highway levels and slab levels should be submitted prior to commencement.

Access by sustainable modes

- The site is on a bus route with stops within walking distance.
- Improvements are proposed to encourage walking and cycling namely provision of a 3m wide shared use cycleway/ footway and additional uncontrolled crossing points to Warrington Road.

Construction Phase Considerations

- A full construction management plan should be submitted prior to commencement of works. All construction related vehicle parking should be accommodated on site and deliveries to site be suitably managed. Wheelwash facilities and a road sweeper regime should be provided as appropriate, with winter management/gritting plan. Details of how underground services will be dealt with should also be included.

Transport Assessment/Traffic Impact

- The supporting information illustrates that the proposed junction will adequately serve the development traffic and that there will be no severe impact of the surrounding highway network.
- The TA also provides traffic details of internal roads and turning heads to demonstrate that suitable space is given to turn a large refuse vehicle.

Recommended conditions

- A full construction phase management plan is required for the proposed development prior to commencement.
- Development shall not commence on site until the scheme of offsite highway works is approved by local planning authority.

- These offsite works should be completed prior to first occupation of dwellings.
- A scheme of EV charging provision should be submitted for approval prior to occupation.
- Details of property level cycle parking should be submitted for approval prior to occupation.
- Highway and slab levels should be submitted for approval prior to commencement.

Informative

- The main highway will need to be reconstructed to highway authority satisfaction following any offsite highway works or drainage and utilities connections

Other offsite works/S278 inc making good of site frontage, access measures etc.

- A S278 or similar agreement would be required to carry out works on adopted highway including the development access junction, vehicle access crossings, 3m wide cycleway/ footway, central islands, tactile crossing points, road markings and any associated carriageway works.

4.2 Lead Local Flood Authority

The Flood Risk Assessment is satisfactory in that it identifies the flood risks, considers the drainage hierarchy and the chosen method of drainage (to SW sewer) has been agreed with United Utilities. Therefore, I have no further comments to make at this stage.

4.3 Contaminated Land

No objection to the proposed development is raised. A completed ground gas assessment is expected to be submitted before a decision is made and a subsequent remedial strategy can be conditioned.

4.4 Environmental Health

The applicant has provided a noise report to support the application.

The report recommends a close boarded acoustic fence is installed to the plots adjacent the expressway (Fiddlers Ferry Road) and the commercial unit and enhanced glazing and trickle vents to the windows overlooking these areas.

It is therefore suggested that any condition require that noise mitigation be provided to the site in line with the measures outlined in the noise report P17-032-R01v1 and dated April 2017.

4.5 Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

Habitats Regulations Assessment

The development site is near to the following European and national designated sites and Core Strategy Local Plan policy CS20 applies:

- Mersey Estuary SPA;
- Mersey Estuary Ramsar; and
- Mersey Estuary SSSI.

I welcome that the applicant has provided further details regarding recreational pressure effects upon the Mersey Estuary (Email from Thomas Relph, 28 November 2017). This has assisted me in updating my advice regarding the mitigation of recreational pressure effects on Natura 2000 sites and I advise that no further information on this matter will be required.

I attach a Habitats Regulations Assessment report (Appendix 1) which concludes that there are no likely significant effects upon Natura 2000 sites (including those within the wider Liverpool City Region).

Ecology

Following my previous comments of 7 November 2017, the applicant has provided a revised Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report (Initial Ecology Ltd, 22 November 2017, unreferenced) in accordance with Core Strategy Local Plan policy CS20. The revised report now provides surveyor details and further information regarding the bat roosting potential of affected trees. The revised report can therefore be accepted and will be forwarded to Cheshire Record.

Built features or vegetation on site may provide nesting opportunities for breeding birds, which are protected and Core Strategy 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.

The proposed development will result in the loss of bird breeding habitat and Core Strategy Local Plan policy CS20 applies. To mitigate for this, the applicant must provide details of bird nesting boxes (e.g. number, type and location on an appropriately scaled plan, along with a timetable for implementation) that will be erected on the site for agreement with the Council. This can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

Priority Habitat

The woodland strip adjacent to the southern site boundary is Priority Habitat which is a material consideration. Details of the measures which will be undertaken during development to ensure the woodland Priority Habitat is protected are required and can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition or included in the CEMP.

Invasive species

Japanese knotweed is present within the site boundary. The applicant is required to submit a method statement for approval that includes the following:

- A plan showing the extent of the plant;
- What method will be used to prevent the plant spreading further, including demarcation; and
- What method of control will be used, including details of monitoring.

This statement can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition or included in the CEMP.

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

Landscaping

Details of a landscaping scheme have not been provided in support of the application. Landscaping with the use of locally native species will be required in order to mitigate habitat losses within the site. Details of a suitable landscaping scheme can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

I welcome that the applicant has provided a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) in support of the application (*Construction Management Plan, 22 May 2017, unreferenced*). However, the CEMP does not provide details of ecological mitigation measures which will be adopted during construction. Ecological mitigation measures will therefore be required in a full detailed CEMP which can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition.

Waste

The proposal involves significant construction activities and policy WM8 of the Merseyside and Halton Joint 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 provided sufficient information (paragraphs 11.6 and 11.7 of the submitted Design and Access Statement (*MPSL Planning and Design Ltd, July 2017, 17013 DAS 01*) to demonstrate compliance with policy WM9 of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan.

4.6 Environment Agency

The Contaminated Land Team has reviewed the following reports with respect to potential risks to controlled waters from land contamination:

- Phase I Geo-Environmental Assessment report. British Polythene Industries (BPI). Warrington Road. Widnes. Prepared by E3P. Report Ref: 11-096-r2. Date: March 2016.
- Phase 2. Geo-Environmental Executive Site Summary. British Polythene Industries (BPI). Warrington Road. Widnes. Prepared by E3P. Letter Ref: 11-096-l1. Date: 2nd November 2016.
- Phase II Geo-Environmental Assessment. British Polythene Industries (BPI). Warrington Road. Widnes. Prepared by E3P. Report Ref: 11-096-r1. Date: December 2016.

Based on the information provided to date the report does not indicate that the site is likely to pose a significant risk to controlled waters. Therefore, we have no requirements for additional works at this time or recommendations for planning conditions to be imposed in respect of controlled waters.

4.7 United Utilities

United Utilities will have no objection to the proposed development provided that the suggested drainage conditions are attached to any approval.

5. **REPRESENTATIONS**

5.1 The application has been advertised by a press advert in the Widnes & Runcorn Weekly News on 26/10/2017, two site notices posted on 25/10/2017 on Warrington Road and 207 neighbour notification letters sent on 19/10/2017.

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

6. **ASSESSMENT**

6.1 Residential Development in a Primarily Employment Area

The site is allocated in the Halton Unitary Development Plan as a Primarily Employment Area in which development falling within Use Classes B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis industrial uses will be permitted. This proposal for residential development in this location is a departure from the development and has been advertised as such.

In order to address Policy CS4 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan, the applicant has produced an Employment Land Statement. This examines the wider employment land situation in the Borough as well as the suitability of this site for employment uses and relationship to other uses.

The report concludes that the loss of employment land resulting from the application proposal is negligible in relation to the overall supply of employment land in the Borough and that the proposed residential development provides a more suitable and sustainable use of the site than for employment uses which are shown to be no longer viable through marketing due to the location of the site and its relationship with the surrounding residential area to the north.

It is acknowledged that whilst the site is allocated as part of the local employment area, it is now peripheral to and divorced from the main section of the Widnes Waterfront employment area. The area has now become more residential in character by virtue of the recent residential development which has delivered over 200 new homes.

The content of the Employment Land Statement is acknowledged and is considered to form a justification for the development of the site for residential purposes in compliance with Policy CS4 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.2 Key Area of Change – South Widnes

The application site is located within the South Widnes Key Area of Change with Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy Local Plan being relevant. The policy indicates that a mix of uses including a combination of employment, retail, leisure and residential development will be achieved across South Widnes over the Core Strategy period.

This application would deliver 118 residential dwellings which would provide a significant contribution towards the delivery of 400 residential dwellings across South Widnes, diversifying the current housing offer as set out in Policy CS9. It is therefore considered that the granting of a residential development on this site would not conflict with Policy CS9 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.3 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.

This site within the South Widnes Key Area of Change has the potential to increase housing supply where there is a housing opportunity.

The proposal would deliver a significant number of dwellings on a previously developed site in a sustainable location.

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

6.4 Principle of Residential Development

In terms of the South Widnes Key Area of Change in which the application site is located, there is a requirement for residential development in this area and the Employment Land Statement provided indicates that there are better quality locations for the delivery of employment, retail and leisure opportunities which would be more attractive to the market than this particular site which is evident from the marketing undertaken.

Based on the market not considering the site suitable for employment uses, the active character of the area is residential especially given the relationship to the predominantly residential area of Halton View directly to the north, the recently granted planning permissions for in excess of 200 dwellings adjacent to Page Lane and Warrington Road, the majority of the new dwellings would be adjacent to either existing or proposed residential development and further affordable homes would be delivered, it is generally considered that the proposed residential use would be sympathetic to surrounding land uses.

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.

Issues in terms of relationships to the south west and south east of the site (Fiddlers Ferry Road and the adjacent industrial units) will be considered in more detail in the noise section of the report at paragraph 6.11 to ensure that residential amenity is not unduly harmed.

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

6.5 Highway Considerations

The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment which concludes that the 118 dwelling development would not have a detrimental impact upon the highway/transport network. The Highway Officer agrees with this statement and does not object to the application on traffic grounds.

The application proposes the remodelling of the existing access point from Warrington Road to be of a scale suited to a residential development. The Highway Officer raises no objection to the proposed access from a highway safety perspective and is satisfied with the available visibility.

With regard to vehicle speeds on Warrington Road, the existing highway is industrial character and some lane narrowing is proposed to make it feel more residential in character and would limit vehicle speeds.

The implementation of the necessary off-site highway works reflecting the highway observations made at section 4.1 should be secured by condition.

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, each dwellinghouse would have 2no. car parking spaces either within curtilage or very close to the curtilage of the property to which it relates in accordance with the Council standards.

No cycle parking is proposed, however there is sufficient space within the curtilage of each property to provide such provision if the occupier of the dwelling requires this. It is not considered reasonable to secure additional cycle parking provision by planning condition in this case.

A construction management plan has been provided to accompany the application. Some changes need to be made to the document in order for it to be acceptable. The submission an implementation of an appropriate updated construction management plan can be secured by condition.

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.

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.

6.6 Layout

The proposed site layout is considered to provide active frontages, appropriate relationships between the proposed dwellings and sufficient parking provision.

The layout generally provides separation in accordance with the privacy distances for residential development set out in the Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document. There are some minor shortfalls in separation (distance between front elevations across the street, properties located at angles to each other etc.) but these are not considered to be to the significant detriment of residential amenity which would warrant the refusal of the application.

With regard to private outdoor space, the Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document states that houses having 1-2 bedrooms shall have a minimum private outdoor space of 50sqm per unit with properties

with 3 bedrooms having a minimum private outdoor space of 70sqm 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.

It is noted that the scheme generally comprises of semi-detached houses with parking provision located to the sides of properties which allows space for soft landscaping to the front of properties which improves the overall appearance of the scheme.

In terms of Housing Mix, the proposal seeks to deliver a range of property sizes including 2 and 3 bedroom houses. In terms of tenure, there would be a mix of private sale, open market rented units, and affordable rented units. There is considered to be properties to meet a variety of needs on site.

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 houses proposed are two storey in height and would not be dissimilar in height to the many of the existing residential properties in the surrounding area and are considered acceptable in respect of scale.

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 elevations show that buildings proposed would be of an appropriate appearance with some variety in materials to add interest to the overall external appearance. Precise external facing materials are detailed on the submitted plans and implementation in accordance with these submitted details 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 Tree Preservation Orders in force at this site and the site does not fall within a designated Conservation Area.

The application is accompanied by a tree survey which gives all the groups of trees located on site a tree quality rating of C2 and are noted as being poor quality groups.

Detailed landscaping and boundary treatments plans have been provided to accompany the application.

In respect of the soft landscaping scheme proposed, it is considered that the proposed scheme would compensate for the loss of the existing trees on site. A condition securing the implementation and maintenance of the soft landscaping scheme is suggested.

The boundary treatments plan submitted 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 an engineering appraisal which is based on an earlier layout prior to the planning application being submitted. Based on the site's topography, it is considered that appropriate relationships can be achieved in terms of light, privacy, appearance and relationships to existing roads.

It is considered reasonable to attach a condition which secures the submission of 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 Noise

The application is accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment. This considers the impact of road traffic noise and nearby commercial / industrial premises.

The report identifies that mitigation measures are required in the form of a close boarded acoustic fence being installed to the plots adjacent to Fiddlers Ferry Road and the commercial unit and enhanced glazing and trickle vents to the windows overlooking these areas.

The attachment of conditions securing the implementation of the noise mitigation measures is considered reasonable and would ensure that residential amenity is not unduly harmed.

The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy PR 8 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.12 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.

A mix of tenures is proposed on this site including market sale, market rent and affordable rented units. 31 of the 118 dwellings proposed would be affordable which would be in excess of the 25% of units sought by the policy. These affordable rented units would be managed by one of the borough's main Registered Providers – Halton Housing Trust.

The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy CS 13 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan and the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

6.13 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, Natural & Semi Natural, Amenity Greenspace, Provision for Children and Young Persons and Allotments in this particular neighbourhood.

The application proposes the creation of a public open space which would be 922sqm in area. It is also noted that a public open space 1855sqm in area with a 400sqm Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) located at its core was secured on a neighbouring development by the same applicant.

It is considered that the implementation of an open space on this site coupled with that secure on the adjacent site would be a significant benefit for persons residing in the locality. The implementation and subsequent maintenance should be secured by condition.

In terms of allotment provision, the developer is not looking to make this provision on site which is understandable given the relatively low requirement in terms of area. In terms of off-site provision, a commuted sum is not being sought for this requirement based on there not being a facility in the locality in which this could be invested or the commuted sum would not fund the creation of a new facility.

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal would provide sufficient residential greenspace to meet the local needs of the people living there in compliance with Policy H3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.14 Ground Contamination

The application is accompanied by a Phase I Geo-Environmental Site Assessment and a Phase II Geo-Environmental Site Assessment.

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 ground gas assessment, remediation strategy and appropriate validation to ensure that any ground contamination is dealt with appropriately.

The Environment Agency have confirmed that based on the information provided to date, the report does not indicate that the site is likely to pose a significant risk to controlled waters. Therefore, they have no requirements for additional works at this time or recommendations for planning conditions to be imposed in respect of controlled waters.

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

6.15 Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk from flooding, however based on the site area exceeding 1ha, the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has commented that the Flood Risk Assessment is satisfactory in that it identifies the flood risks, considers the drainage hierarchy and the chosen method of drainage to a surface water sewer has been agreed with United Utilities. No further observations have been made at this time. As commented in relation to site levels, the engineering appraisal is based on an earlier layout prior to the planning application being submitted. 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.

6.16 Ecology

The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which has been updated during the processing of the application. The Council's Ecological Advisor has commented that the revised report is acceptable. Conditions in relation to breeding bird protection, bird nesting boxes, protection of the Priority Habitat adjacent to the southern site boundary, eradication of Japanese Knotweed have been suggested.

The Council's Ecological Advisor has completed a Habitats Regulations Assessment report which concludes that there are no likely significant effects upon Natura 2000 sites (including those within the wider Liverpool City Region).

Based on the above, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policy GE21 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS20 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.17 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 paragraph 35 which states that to further enhance the opportunities for sustainable development 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 residential development and a condition requiring the provision of future charging points for ultra-low emission vehicles is considered reasonable.

One of the principles referred to in the policy is Code for Sustainable Homes. Whilst it is desirable to meet such a standard, given links with Sustainable Development and Climate Change, following the Government's Written Ministerial Statement in March 2015, it is no longer for Local Authorities to secure the implementation of a particular level of Code for Sustainable Homes by planning condition.

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

6.18 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. 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.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposal would deliver residential development within the South Widnes Key Area of Change for which there is requirement over the plan period. It is acknowledged that the proposal would result in the loss of

an employment site, however the Employment Land Statement provided indicates that there are better quality locations for the delivery of employment, retail and leisure opportunities which would be more attractive to the market than this particular site which is evident from the marketing undertaken.

The active character of the area is considered to be residential especially given its relationship to the predominantly residential area of Halton View to the north. The proposed residential use would be acceptable on this site from an amenity perspective as a result of the implementation of the suggested noise mitigation measures.

The proposal would deliver on-site affordable housing provision in excess of the policy requirement for which there is a significant requirement in the borough as well as on-site open space which would be of significant benefit of persons residing in the locality.

An appropriate access point to site from Warrington Road would be achieved and the layout demonstrates sufficient space for movement within the site as well as an appropriate level of car parking.

The residential layout proposed demonstrates sufficient 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 provided to Warrington Road and also within the scheme. 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.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Grant planning permission subject to conditions.

9. CONDITIONS

1. Time Limit – Full Permission.
2. Approved Plans.
3. Proposed Site Levels (Policy BE1)
4. Implementation of Facing Materials (Policies BE1 and BE2)
5. Implementation of Submitted Soft Landscaping Scheme and subsequent maintenance (Policy BE1)
6. Implementation of Submitted Boundary Treatments Scheme and subsequent maintenance (Policy BE1)
7. Breeding Birds Protection – (Policy GE21)
8. Bird Nesting Boxes – (Policy GE21)
9. Protection of Priority Habitat – (Policy GE21)

10. Implementation of Open Space – (Policy H3)
11. Hours of Construction – (Policy BE1)
12. Construction Management Plan (Highways) – (Policy BE1)
13. Electric Vehicle Charging Points Scheme (Policy CS19)
14. Implementation of Noise Mitigation Measures – (Policy PR2)
15. Removal of Permitted Development – All Dwellings – (Policy BE1)
16. Ground Contamination - (Policy PR14)
17. Off Site Highway Works – (Policy BE1)
18. Provision & Retention of Parking for Residential Development – (Policy BE1)
19. Drainage Strategy – (Policy PR16)
20. Foul and Surface Water on a separate system – (Policy PR16)
21. Waste Audit

Informatives

1. Highway Informative
2. United Utilities Informative
3. Environment Agency Informative
4. Cheshire Police 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) (Amendment No.2) Order 2012; and
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2012.

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