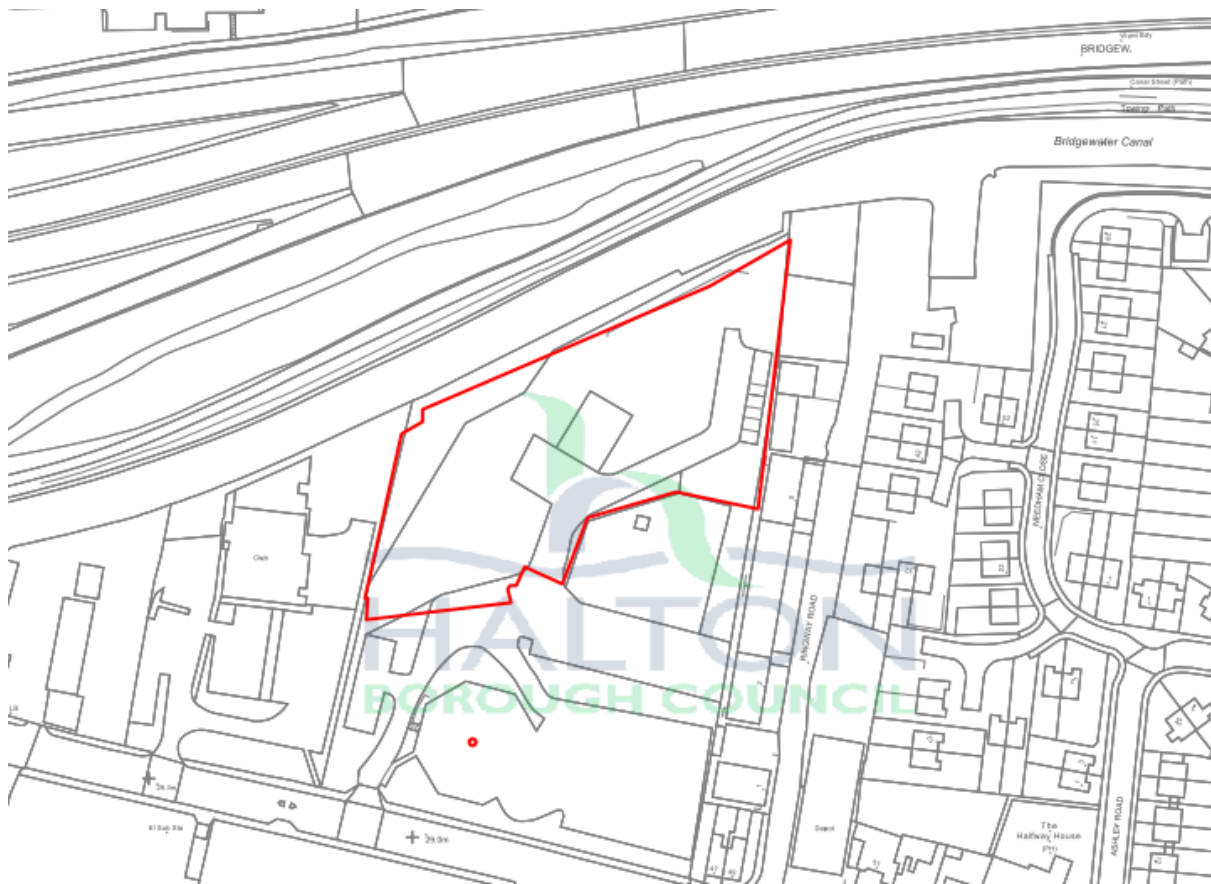


APPLICATION NO:	18/00616/FUL
LOCATION:	Former National Grid Depot, Halton Road, Runcorn.
PROPOSAL:	Proposed extension to the existing storage facility comprising an additional 171 containers, access arrangements, 2.6 metre high palisade fencing and gates and CCTV cameras mounted on 5no. 8 metre high towers.
WARD:	Halton Brook
PARISH:	None
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	Richard Lee Project Planning Mr M Roberts, U LOCK IT, Chapel St, Wincham, Northwich.
DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Halton Core Strategy (2013) Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (2013)	ALLOCATION: Primarily Employment Area
DEPARTURE	No.
REPRESENTATIONS:	One representation received from the publicity given to the application.
KEY ISSUES:	Primarily Employment Area, Design, Access, Relationship to the Bridgewater Canal.
RECOMMENDATION:	It is requested that delegated powers are given to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning & Transportation in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Development Control Committee to make the decision once clarification on the drainage observations have been received. The application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions suggested and any additional conditions required following the submission of further information.
SITE MAP	



1. APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The Site

The site subject of the application is the Former National Grid Depot located on Halton Road in Runcorn. The site is currently vacant. The site is 0.75ha in area.

Located to the south of the site is land within the same ownership/control which is operated as a U LOCK IT storage facility. The surrounding area is mixed use in nature where both residential and commercial uses can be found. Located to the north west of the site is the Bridgewater Canal with the Bridgewater Expressway located beyond this.

The site is located within the Primarily Employment Area as designated by the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

1.2 Site History

10/00132/FUL – (Application site and the land to the south adjacent to Halton Road) - Proposed engineering works to facilitate the remediation of (part of) the site – Granted 16/06/2010.

13/00161/FUL – (Land to the South of the application site) - Proposed siting of steel shipping containers for self storage, site office, internal access roads, gates, palisade fencing, CCTV cameras mounted on 5 no. 8m high towers and associated signage – Granted – 28/06/2013.

2. THE APPLICATION

2.1 The Proposal

The application proposes an extension to the existing storage facility (located to the south of the application site adjacent to Halton Road) comprising an additional 171 containers, access arrangements, 2.6 metre high palisade fencing and gates and CCTV cameras mounted on 5no. 8 metre high towers.

It is noted that part of the extended storage facility subject of this application has already been implemented on site.

2.2 Documentation

The planning application is supported the following documents:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Transport Statement;
- Post Remediation Verification Report.

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 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;
- E3 Primarily Employment Area;
- GE24 Protection of Important Landscape Features;
- 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.

3.2 Halton Core Strategy (2013)

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

- CS2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development;
- 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 for New Development.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.4 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 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.*

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.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Highways and Transportation Development Control

Having reviewed the above Planning Application I would advise that Highways would not have any objections to the application. The site access and safe circulation were dealt with in 2013 and therefore its access and highway safety aspects are not in doubt. We would, however, require some clarification on the details of the soakaway advised in the application and how this works.

4.2 Lead Local Flood Authority

Whilst it is a critical drainage area and we would normally ask for a minimum 50% reduction in runoff, for a brownfield development, I would question whether there is an engineering operation proposed here which affects drainage (ie new surfacing etc) and therefore the Authority may be unable to insist on this being delivered.

I notice UU have asked for a drainage hierarchy condition. I have spoken to UU and they would still request that this be considered, particularly as the application form states that soakaway will be used for surface water drainage (although documentation describes an outfall to sewer). I would recommend that clarification is sought regarding the developers intentions. Ultimately, if we are unable to condition this, UU have confirmed that they would accept this as it would not affect the current sewer operation.

4.3 Contaminated Land

The application site was formerly the location of the Halton Road gasworks. It was sequentially investigated, risk assessed and remediated, with works being completed in 2012. Those works identified a number of contamination risks associated with the former landuse and a significant volume of impacted soils and tarry wastes were removed. The site has been assessed as being suitable

for open storage use. This work is summarised in the report submitted with the application;

- National Grid Property Holdings Ltd, Halton Road, Runcorn (Location code 42A), Post remediation verification report – final, Entec UK Ltd, July 2012.

The application proposals make very limited changes to the site, with minimal excavation required. Therefore it is reasonable to accept the above report as demonstrating that the site is suitable for the proposed use and that no further assessment nor remedial activities are required.

Therefore, I have no objection to the application.

4.4 Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

The HSE is a statutory consultee for certain developments within the Consultation Distance of Major Hazard Sites / Pipelines. The HSE's Advice is Do Not Advise Against, consequently, HSE does not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission in this case.

4.5 Cheshire Police

Please see below for positive points for the development and items that need consideration:-

- UDP policy BE22 requires that any boundary fences and walls that require planning permission be attractive, high quality and durable. - The existing 2.4 metre fence is to be retained and similar is to be installed across the site. This will not have a negative impact on the appearance of the site.
- I agree that the development agrees with the principle set out in the National Planning Policy Framework as developing the site increases sustainability in the area and there are already good access routes
- The Porta cabin provides natural surveillance. I would like some clarification as to whether there is any CCTV proposed.
- Attention needs to be given to the North side of the site to ensure that the positioning of the trees next to the fence and storage units does not provide any climbing aids or easy access on to the site. While the trees improve the aesthetics of the environment a plan needs to be put in place to ensure they do not limit natural surveillance.
- There is no clarification regarding the levels of lighting to be used. The lighting needs to comply with BS 5489:2013 and time taken to ensure that the distribution of lighting does not create any pools or shadows.

4.6 United Utilities

United Utilities will have no objection to the proposed development provided that the following conditions are attached to any approval:

Foul Water

Condition 1

Foul and surface water shall be drained on separate systems.

Reason: To secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

Surface Water

Condition 2

Prior to the commencement of any development, a surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The surface water drainage scheme must be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no surface water shall discharge to the public sewerage system either directly or indirectly.

The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution. This condition is imposed in light of policies within the NPPF and NPPG.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The application was publicised by eighty neighbour notification letters sent on 20th December and a site notice posted on Halton Road on 21st December.

5.2 One representation has been received from the publicity given to the application. This representation is from the Bridgewater Canal Company Limited and a summary of the issues raised is below:

- Protecting against pollution of the canal;
- The use and setting of the Bridgewater Canal;
- Retention of the vegetation adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal;
- Implications for the gas pipeline that crosses the site.

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 Principle of Development

The site is located in the Primarily Employment Area as designated by the Halton Unitary Development Plan. Policy E3 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan states that development falling within Uses Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industry), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and Sui Generis industrial uses will be permitted in the Primarily Employment Areas identified on the Proposal Map.

The use of the site falls within the acceptable uses outlined in Policy E3 and the principle of using the site for a storage facility is considered to be acceptable.

6.2 Highway Considerations

The proposal demonstrates the provision of both an appropriate site access and sufficient safe circulation space. The implementation of the parking and servicing provision should 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.

6.3 Layout

The site is located to the rear of the existing U LOCK IT storage facility on Halton Road and would therefore not be particularly visible from Halton Road itself. The proposal is consistent with the existing development fronting Halton Road.

As noted in the site location description, to the north west of the site is the Bridgewater Canal which is designated as an Important Landscape Feature. The one representation received makes reference to the retention of the vegetation adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal. It is noted that there was previously soft landscaping along this boundary which has been removed a number of years ago. The applicant has however agreed to plant a hedgerow along the north western boundary of the site to form an improved relationship with this Important Landscape Feature which is considered to be acceptable and would not result in the proposal having an unacceptable effect on the visual or physical characteristics.

The boundary fence along this boundary of the site is existing and whilst there are other boundary treatments which may be visually more attractive, it is not considered that a refusal on this basis could be sustained.

The layout makes provision for sufficient circulation space for vehicles to access the respective storage containers as well as an appropriate turning provision.

The layout of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and compliant with Policies BE 1, BE 2 and BE 22 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS18 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.4 Scale

In terms of scale, the storage containers would be a maximum of 2.6m in height, would not be stacked. It is considered that they would respect the scale of development located adjacent to the application site.

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

6.5 Appearance

The application proposes the siting of 171 storage containers on the site. These storage containers are considered to be functional in appearance and would not be to the significant detriment of the appearance of the locality. The application indicates that the storage containers would be dark green in colour and it is considered reasonable to attach a condition which secures this.

The proposal also includes 5no. 8m high towers to which CCTV cameras would be mounted. They are considered to be of a functional appearance which would be acceptable in the proposed locations as well as providing the necessary security measures sought by the applicant.

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.

6.6 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 site is currently clear of soft landscaping and trees, however as set out in the layout section of the report, the applicant has agreed to plant a hedgerow along the north western boundary of the site to form an improved relationship with the Bridgewater Canal. It is considered reasonable to secure the implementation of the hedgerow and its subsequent maintenance by condition.

This would ensure compliance with Policies BE 1, GE24 and GE 27 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

6.7 Ground Contamination

The site has been remediated and has been assessed as being suitable for open storage use. This work is summarised in the report submitted with the application.

The application proposals make very limited changes to the site, with minimal excavation required. Therefore it is reasonable to accept the report which accompanies the application as demonstrating that the site is suitable for the proposed use and that no further assessment nor remedial activities are required.

The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy PR14 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS23 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1, however it is located within a Critical Drainage Area.

In a critical drainage area, a minimum 50% reduction in runoff, for a brownfield development would ordinarily be sought, however it is questioned whether there is an engineering operation which affects drainage.

United Utilities have suggested that a drainage condition be attached. In order to ascertain the drainage requirement with the proposed development, clarification from the applicant is required as the application form states that soakaway will be used for surface water drainage (although documentation describes an outfall to sewer). The clarification would also help to address the issue in the one representation received regarding the protection against pollution of the Bridgewater Canal.

Clarification on the above point and the imposition of any conditions necessary would ensure compliance with Policy PR16 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan and Policy CS23 of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan.

6.9 Risk

Policy PR12 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan states that development on land within consultation zones around notified COMAH sites will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria can be satisfied:

- a) The likely accidental risk level from the COMAH site is not considered to be significant.
- b) Proposals are made by the developer that will mitigate the likely effects of a potential major accident so that they are not considered significant.

Whilst being within the consultation zone, the individual accidental risk level does not exceed 10 chances per million in a year. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy PR12 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan.

It should also be noted that the HSE does not advise against the granting of planning permission on safety grounds in this case.

6.10 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, the proposed storage use is unlikely to generate any significant levels of waste. In terms of waste management, there is sufficient space on site for the storage of waste as well as access to enable collection.

6.11 Site Constraints

It is noted that gas mains cross the application site. Cadent Gas have provided a response on the planning application giving details of the site constraint which should be attached as an informative.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposal would bring a vacant remediated site back into use whilst being sympathetic to surrounding land uses and its Employment Area location. In terms of external appearance, the proposal would be consistent with the neighbouring site and would result in satisfactory appearance. The applicant has agreed to plant a hedgerow on the north western boundary to soften the appearance of the development from the Bridgewater Canal which should be secured by condition.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is requested that delegated powers are given to the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Development Control Committee to make the decision once clarification on the drainage observations have been received.

The application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions suggested and any additional conditions required following the submission of further information.

9. CONDITIONS

1. Approved Plans.
2. External Facing Materials – Containers Dark Green in Colour (Policies BE1 and BE2)
3. Hedgerow planting along North Western boundary of the site (Policy BE1)
4. Implementation of parking and servicing – (Policy BE1).

Informatives

1. Cadent Gas Informative
2. United Utilities 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.