

APPLICATION NO:	19/00008/FUL
LOCATION:	SecAnim, Desoto Road, Widnes
PROPOSAL:	Proposed extension to the raw material reception building to accommodate new processing machinery and separate electrical switch room
WARD:	Riverside
PARISH:	N/A
AGENT(S) / APPLICANT(S):	SecAnim Ltd
DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION: National Planning Policy Framework (2018) Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (2013)	Primarily Employment Area Potential extent of the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park Coastal Zone Developed 3MG Key Area of Change
DEPARTURE	No
REPRESENTATIONS:	One letter of objection
KEY ISSUES:	Principle of development; waste policy; design and character; odour; drainage; contaminated land; ecology and HRA issues
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve Subject to Conditions

SITE MAP



THE APPLICATION SITE

The Site

Areas within existing SecAnim (formerly PDM Granox) industrial complex at Desoto Road, Widnes.

Planning History

Numerous earlier planning permissions granted for extensions and/ or alterations. Planning permission 17/00094/FUL was previously approved for the proposed demolition of an existing tallow farm, air lock, electrical and motor stores and replacement with a new raw materials reception building.

THE APPLICATION

Background

The application proposes a proposed extension to the recently constructed Raw Material Reception and Handling (RMH) building to accommodate new processing machinery and attached electrical switch room. The new building is part of the ongoing regeneration of the site which saw the recent completion of the new RMH. The proposed building will accommodate a new Category 1 Rendering Process which will be served by the adjoining RMH building. Crushed raw material will be pumped from the RMH directly to the new process which will consist of new drying and pressing equipment to evaporate the moisture and separate the fat and protein. The proposed process will have the flexibility to produce dry meal and fat and / or a de-fatted slurry for direct combustion in the fluidised bed combustion (FBC) plant for renewable energy generation. All is aimed at replacing existing old plant and increasing process efficiency.

The new process will require a variation to the Environmental Permit. The plant will have a processing capacity of between 2500 and 3500 tonnes per week subject to final design. There will be no increase needed to the site's permitted annual throughput.

Documentation

The planning application includes the relevant forms and plans, a Design and Access Statement and Site Investigation Report

POLICY CONTEXT

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. Paragraph 47 states that planning law requires 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.

Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)

The site is identified as a within a Primarily Employment Area, Potential Extent of the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park and Developed Coastal Zone 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;
GE30 The Mersey Coastal Zone;
PR1 Air Quality
PR3 Odour Nuisance
PR14 Contaminated Land;
E5 New Industrial and Commercial Development

Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (2013)

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

CS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CS8: 3MG
CS18 High Quality Design
CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change
CS20 Natural and Historic Environment
CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk

Joint Waste Local Plan 2013

WM7 Protecting Existing Waste Capacity for Built Facilities and Landfill
WM8 Waste Prevention and Resource Management
WM9 Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New Development
WM12 Criteria for Waste Management Development

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 Halebank Parish Council have been notified by letter.

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

Natural England – No Objections
HBC Contaminated Land – No Objections
HBC Major Projects – No Comments Received
Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service – No Objections

REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of objection has been received stating the following:

Until the Company comes up with a plan to keep odours air tight the plan should be rejected. Do you not think the people of the Borough are not suffering enough. Think about the welfare of the residents.

ASSESSMENT

Design and Character

The proposed new process building is 41m x 27m providing approximately 1107m² floor space. The process building measures approximately 15.6m in height to match and tie into the existing previously approved Raw Materials building. The applicant states that the building has been sized to give adequate space around new process equipment for forklift manoeuvre. The proposals include a new attached switch room measuring approximately 18.06m x 4.8m. The overall footprint would therefore be approximately 1197m². The proposals also include an external pre-evaporation tower which is approximately 17m high.

To accommodate the new building it is proposed to remove some external tanks and vessels and also remove part of the adjacent building then rebuilding the gable wall. The part of the building to be removed forms part of the former Raw Material Building ("The Plaza") which is now vacant.

The proposed building and plant are considered of a scale, character and materials consistent with earlier modernisation and redevelopment phases at the site. The majority of the scheme will be substantially screened by existing buildings and plant when viewed from the adjoining Mersey Estuary and from the adjoining Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park development. All will be viewed in the context of the wider industrial complex. The proposed results in the removal of existing utilitarian plant and structures and replacement with more modern buildings and plant. As such it is considered that the proposed modernisation could only be viewed as a significant improvement. Exact details of the materials can be controlled and secured through appropriate conditions.

Odour

The recently constructed raw material reception building includes fully enclosed hoppers with interlocked lids which will only open once high speed vehicle doors are closed. This will significantly improve odour containment and capture effectively acting as an airlock compared to the previous situation whereby raw material was tipped onto the floor. The new raw material bins and building will be vented to an odour treatment scrubber.

The process will comply with the requirements of Best Available Techniques. All processing equipment generating odours will be ducted and extracted to the existing Boilers and FBC plant for incineration. General building air will be extracted to the existing chemical scrubbers for treatment prior to discharge to atmosphere.

The proposals will not therefore exacerbate odour issues at the plant and may result in some further improvement.

Highway Considerations

The scheme proposes significant modernisation of existing plant and facilities at an existing industrial complex. The proposals are for modernisation of existing facilities and are not considered likely to result in additional vehicle movements. It is considered that adequate provision is made for parking and servicing with regards to the development site itself and on that basis it is not considered that any significant issues are raised or that objections could be sustained on Highway grounds.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The proposed development lies in flood zone 1 and is less than 1 Ha in area so a flood risk assessment is not required. The Council's Drainage Engineer acting as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) advises that the development does not lie within a critical drainage area but it is on a site that has been previously developed. Whilst NPPF would suggest attenuation to as close as possible to greenfield rate there is no absolute requirement as this is not a critical drainage area. The area in question is hardstanding at present and therefore there is not expected to be any significant increase in runoff as a result of the development.

All surface and waste water will be treated by the effluent treatment plant where required before discharge via consented outfall to the Mersey. As such the LFA advises that this would negate the need for upstream attenuation due to negligible increased flood risk.

Contaminated Land

The site is known to be contaminated and a Site Investigation Report has been submitted to support the application. The Council's Environmental Health Officers have advised that the submitted information relates to the earlier scheme and further information is required that sets out how the current application relates to this previous investigation. This has been requested from the developer. Notwithstanding that he has confirmed that, whilst additional investigation, mitigation and validation is required, no objection is raised in principle and it is considered that this can be adequately secured by condition.

Ecology

The application site is near to a number of European sites which are protected under the Habitats Regulations 2017. The Council's Retained Adviser has confirmed that there is no pathway that could give rise to likely significant effects on the European sites and it does not warrant a detailed Habitats Regulations Assessment report. It is also advised that the site is highly unlikely to provide habitat for protected species and that protected species require no further consideration with regards to the proposals.

Natural England has been consulted and also concludes that the development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites. This concurs with the above assessment.

Waste

The Council's Retained Adviser advises that, as an existing waste management activity, policy WM7 of the Waste Local Plan is supportive of the site remaining in waste use.

The proposal involves significant demolition and construction activities and policy WM8 of the Merseyside and Halton Waste Joint 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.

It is advised that sufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate compliance with policy WM12. Other Waste Local Plan policies are not applicable on this occasion.

Conclusions

The application proposes a proposed extension to the recently constructed Raw Material Reception and Handling (RMH) building to accommodate new processing machinery and attached electrical switch room. The new building is part of the ongoing regeneration of the site which saw the recent completion of the new RMH. All is aimed at replacing existing old plant and increasing process efficiency. There will be no increase needed to the site's permitted annual throughput.

The proposals will result in the removal of existing dated structures at the site and replacement with modern buildings and plant resulting in an overall visual improvement. They will not exacerbate odour issues at the plant and may result in some further improvement. The overall objectives of Supplementary Planning Guidance, the Halton Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy and other policy guidance are considered to be met within the proposed submission. The proposals are considered to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework offering a good quality of development suited to the character of the wider area and as such are recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Specifying approved plans
2. Materials condition, requiring materials to match the adjoining Raw Materials Reception and Handling Building (BE2)
3. Construction and delivery hours to be adhered to throughout the course of the development. (BE1)
4. Vehicle access, parking, servicing etc to be constructed prior to commencement of use. (BE1)
5. Requiring finished floor and site levels be carried out as approved. (BE1)
6. Conditions relating to site investigation, mitigation and validation to be submitted and approved in writing. (PR14)
7. Restriction of external lighting (PR4)

8. Submission and agreement of Site Waste Management Plan (WM8).

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
- 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.