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Project/File: 333102819/A5/TC

FAO Mark Quinn

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Planning Services
Municipal Buildings,
Huyton,
Knowsley,
L36 9UX

Reference: Submission of Full Planning Application for the erection of plant at Unit 2 Earlsfield Park, Prescott

Dear Mark,

Introduction

We write on behalf of our client, Commercial Development Projects (CDP) ('Client') to submit a Full planning application at Unit 2 of Earlsfield Park, Prescott ('the Site'). The description of development is as below:

"Full planning application for the erection of plant comprised of: forklift truck enclosure, sprinkler tanks, ancillary sprinkler buildings, roof access ladder, access stairs, roof flues and biomass boiler facility including wood chipper enclosure, extract dust silo and boiler room at Unit 2 Earlsfield Park, Prescott."

Submission contents

This pack is submitted to respond to validation queries since original submission. For the avoidance of doubt, this application is comprised of the below plans and documentation:

- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-20003-P03-Roof Plan as Existing
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-20701-P04-Existing Elevations Sheet 1
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-20702-P04-Existing Elevations Sheet 2
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-20711-P01-Proposed Elevations Sheet 1
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-20712-P01-Proposed Elevations Sheet 2
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-90101-P05-Site Plan as Existing
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-90111-P06-Site Plan as Proposed
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-90112-P05-Aerial Perspective as Proposed
- 93803.20260420.Timber Products Facility Knowsley.NIA.rev1
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-24101-P03-Proposed External Ladder South Details
- 16367-DB3-B03-ZZ-DR-A-20026-P03-FLT Enclosure as Proposed
- 16367-DB3-B03-ZZ-DR-A-20027-P02-Fire Protection Tank as Proposed
- 16367-DB3-B02-ZZ-DR-A-20025-P04-Biomass Boiler Facility as Proposed
- MWE300 Data Sheet Rev C
- RHi Certificate (2014-TBe-02) Version 7
- 16367-DB3-B01-ZZ-DR-A-90000-P04-Location Plan as Existing

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- 16367-DB3-DR-ZZ-DR-A-20113-P03-Roof Plan as Proposed

Planning History

Outline application reference 20/00376/OUT was granted in February 2021 for:

‘OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR 30,530 SQ M OF EMPLOYMENT FLOOR SPACE (USE CLASS B1 / B8) - ACCESS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THIS STAGE (ALL OTHER MATTERS RESERVED)’

Pursuant to this, Reserved Matters application reference 23/01429/REM was granted in December 2023 for all matters reserved by the Outline application. A Non-Material Amendment (reference 23/01429/NMA) amended approved plans in February 2024 to amend other Units on the Site – Unit 2 was not impacted by this amendment.

In relation to Unit 2, two Section 73 applications (references 25/00613/FUL and 25/00614/FUL) were granted in March 2026 to amend the wording of the conditions attached to both the Outline and Reserved Matters permissions to permit a class B2 use in Unit 2 only. These permissions were granted to allow the end user is to use the building as a joinery workshop for manufacture and storage of timber products.

This planning application is linked to the proposed occupation of unit 2 and the aforementioned planning applications as granted in March 2026.

Proposed Development

This full planning application has the following description of development:

“Full planning application for the erection of plant comprised of: forklift truck enclosure, sprinkler tanks, ancillary sprinkler buildings, roof access ladder, access stairs, roof flues and biomass boiler facility including wood chipper enclosure, extract dust silo and boiler room at Unit 2 Earlsfield Park, Prescott”

Forklift truck enclosure

A forklift truck enclosure is proposed in the northeast corner of the Site. This is required to house the charging units for the electric forklift trucks, as these cannot be located within the building due to fire safety regulations associated with EV batteries. The enclosure includes a roller shutter door for forklift truck access and does not impede the existing retaining wall to the rear. The proposed materials are similar to those used for Unit 2.

Sprinkler tanks and ancillary sprinkler buildings

Sprinkler tanks and ancillary buildings are proposed in the northeast corner of the Site. These are required to ensure fire safety within the existing unit 2 building. The tanks are proposed to be constructed from hot-dip galvanised mild steel with sectional bolted construction in a mill galvanised finish. The ancillary buildings are proposed to be constructed from glass reinforced plastic and are to house the pump and associated plant required.

Roof access ladder

An access ladder is proposed on the eastern elevation of Unit 2 to provide maintenance access to the roof. The bottom portion of the ladder is proposed to be covered in anti-climb paint to deter unauthorised access. The ladder is to be designed to standard specifications and made of galvanised steel.

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Roof flues

Timber & other wood-based products are treated in spray booths, as part of the production process, with water based or solvent based lacquers and the flues are required as an integral part of the ventilation system.

Access stairs

An external staircase is proposed on the western elevation to provide maintenance access to the roof. A precedent image is submitted which shows a PPC Coated Galvanised Steel external Roof Access Stair, colour matched to existing building cladding to minimise visual intrusion.

Biomass Boiler facility

The proposed biomass boiler facility includes a biomass boiler, wood chipper and silo and extract dust silo, all technology which is common in facilities such as this.

The offcuts of timber are held in mini-skips which are located within the existing unit. These are then to be moved by electric forklifts which are auto-tipping allowing the proposed wood chipper to be gravity fed. The shredded timber is then stored in one of the proposed silos along with the wood dust waste that is collected via the integrated ventilation system and fed into the larger silo so that all the waste products go through the biomass boiler.

The biomass boiler and wood chipper are contained within an enclosure constructed from a galvanized steel and painted to match the existing building.

The proposed system also includes a back-up gas boiler that is also housed in this enclosure which will activate if required and heat the water that feeds the radiant panel heaters in the factory.

The materials proposed for the building are similar in fabric and colour to those featured on Unit 2.

Planning Policy context

For decision-taking Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purposes of this application, the adopted Development Plan comprises:

- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy ("KLPCS")
- Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan ("UDP")

Other material considerations include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 ("the Framework"), and associated Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG")
- Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents ("SPD")

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy ("KLPCS")

The Core Strategy Local Plan (CSLP) was adopted in January 2016 and sets out the vision, objectives and policies which will guide development within Knowsley up to the year 2028. The wider Earlsfield Park Site was released from the Green Belt and is allocated as a Sustainable Urban Extension. Policies SUE1, SUE2, SUE2a therefore apply to the assessment of this planning application.

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Other policies considered relevant include:

- Policy CS1 (Spatial Strategy for Knowsley)
- Policy CS2 (Development Principles)
- Policy CS4 (Economy and Employment)
- Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development)
- Policy CS22 (Sustainable and Low Carbon Development)

Remaining saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan ("UDP")

The Replacement Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2006. Whilst the Core Strategy replaced many of the policies, a number of policies were 'saved' and remain relevant considerations. Relevant policies include:

- Policy ENV2 (Noise and Vibration)

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024 and sets out the Government's key objectives for achieving sustainable development. The following Sections of the NPPF are considered relevant.

- **Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development** - Highlights the planning system's Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. Proposals in accordance with development plans should be approved and in other circumstances, development should only be refused where *'any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole'*.
- **Section 6: Building a Strong, Competitive Economy** – Attaches significant weight to proposal which support economic growth. Section 6 highlights the need to create conditions where businesses can invest, expand, and adapt.
- **Section 12: Achieving Well Designed Places** - Notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- **Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change** - The planning system should support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. Paragraph 167 notes Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing building. 168 informs that local planning authorities should recognise that small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions

Earlsfield Park Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Earlsfield Park SPD was adopted in June 2016, and sets out Knowsley Council's development, design and infrastructure requirements for Earlsfield Park. This SPD sets out to ensure any development proposals on site comply with the Core Strategy Policy requirements when preparing a Masterplan and subsequent planning applications for the site.

This SPD is a material consideration when determining any planning application on any of the Sustainable Urban Extensions within Knowsley. The key objectives of this SPD are as follows;

- Deliver a high quality employment location for uses in line with the Liverpool City Region core economic sectors
- Provide employment and supply opportunities for local residents and businesses.

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The Earlsfield Park SPD states that the vision is for a “*prestigious employment and housing location. The business park and employment uses on the site will ensure that this part of Huyton continues to contribute to the City Region’s economic growth, building on the success of the nearby Kings Business Park*”.

Part 2.6 notes that a principle objective for development on Earlsfield Park is to *provide employment and supply opportunities for local residents and businesses*. Paragraph 2.9 also expresses a desire to invest in the “best in class” in employment sectors with the intention of promoting and enhancing the Borough’s “prestige employment offer”.

Earlsfield Park Masterplan

The Earlsfield Park Masterplan Report was approved by Knowsley Council’s Planning Committee on 7th September 2017. The document now forms a material planning consideration in the determination of any planning application on site.

This Masterplan document was produced by ION and Bellway as a direct requirement of Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SUE2. It aims to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated development at Earlsfield Park applying the highest standards of planning and design.

The document sets out the development, design and infrastructure opportunities that will help to deliver a high quality mixed use scheme across the whole SUE.

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

Core Strategy

SUE1, SUE2, SUE2a of the Core Strategy apply to the assessment of this planning application. SUE1 informs that the Site was removed from the Green Belt to meet development requirements and SUE2 provides criteria for developments within these locations. SUE2a relates exclusively to the wider park. Part b of this informs that the site is allocated for employment development in the eastern portion – the proposals in this planning application will enable a major employer to occupy Unit 2 thus according with the requirements of the policy.

Part 2 notes that the employment uses must be of a nature which would not cause detriment to the amenity of nearby residents. This is considered below.

It is considered that an application for ancillary buildings and associated plant are in accordance with these policies. They enable a major employer to occupy the existing unit and create significant job growth and investment in the borough.

Parts h and j of Policy CS22 support the use of decentralised energy systems and sustainable waste management practices. The biomass boiler unit proposed ensures that wood offcuts are reused to generate energy for the unit and is in accordance with this policy.

Earlsfield Park Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The proposed development is to be ancillary plant to support the functions of the main Unit 2 building which in turn supports the intentions of the SPD. As such, the SPD provides no reasons to refuse the proposed development.

Earlsfield Park Masterplan

Any potential conflict with the B2 use in the unit was addressed through application references 24/00686/FUL and 24/00687/FUL which was approved. The proposed development will facilitate the occupation of the unit for that use. The proposals do not conflict with the Masterplan, and the ancillary buildings proposed will be similar to the existing unit in terms of building materials and finishes.

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It is also worth considering that neither document forms part of the development plan and whilst material considerations, they date from 2017 and were adopted almost ten years ago now. The Masterplan is illustrative, rather than providing a rigid and inflexible approach to the site's development.

Residential Amenity

Policy CS2 (Development Principles) regards the need to minimise negative impact on air quality.

The technical specification sheets submitted alongside this application demonstrate that the plant is to industry standards and compliant with relevant standards with regard to air quality. The site is not within an AQMA that would otherwise necessitate an AQA.

The plant is to be positioned in the eastern part of the Site to minimise any potential disruption to the residential development to the West. Whilst the external staircase is proposed to be on the western face, this is not uncommon in warehouse development of this nature and is in keeping with the nature of Earlsfield Park.

Noise

Saved Policy ENV2 of the UDP states that development that will either cause an unacceptable increase in noise or vibration levels or itself be subject to unacceptable noise or vibration from an existing source will not be permitted and that conditions may be attached to the planning permission to ensure effective noise insulation or other required mitigation measures are carried out.

A Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by NSL to assess the proposed fixed plant. Conditions 14, and 15 of application reference 25/00614/FUL states outlines noise from fixed plant and machinery should be at least 5dB below the existing LA90 background noise level.

The assessment finds that predicted noise levels for proposed plant when assessed at the nearest noise sensitive receptor (R1 - 133 Knowsley Lane, and R2 - 64 Higherfield Crescent) are no louder than the existing background sound level and thus satisfying Conditions 14 and 15. Predictions are inclusive of the following mitigation measures:

- 4no. ventilation fans to be housed within acoustic enclosures;
- Biomass boiler and additional fan to be housed within an enclosure comprised of composite panelling similar to the main building structure; and
- Wood chipper to be housed within an enclosure comprised of composite panelling similar to the main building structure. Based on the findings of this assessment, noise should not be grounds for refusal of planning permission for the proposed plant.

The proposals are therefore in line with the requirements of Policy ENV2 and there are thus no noise reasons to refuse the proposals.

Overall, there are no technical or policy reasons to refuse the proposals, and we trust that you have all the information you need to determine the application. However, should you require anything further please do not hesitate to get in touch. I look forward to receiving confirmation that the application has been validated in due course.

Yours faithfully,

Tom Carter

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