
<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	23/01899/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Mark Quinn
<u>WARD:</u>	Halewood South	<u>PARISH:</u>	Halewood Town Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	Getrag Ford , South Road, Halewood		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	PROPOSED EXTENSION TO EXISTING CAR PARK, ERECTION OF SOLAR CAR PORTS TO EXISTING AND PROPOSED PARKING AREAS, INSTALLATION OF GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR ARRAY AND ASSOCIATED WORKS.		

Site Description

This application site is within the Getrag Ford plant in Halewood, Knowsley. This application relates to the southern and eastern parts of the site, adjacent to South Road and East Road.

Proposal

The existing car park to the south of the site is proposed to be extended to create an additional 210 spaces . The erection of solar car ports would cover both the existing and proposed car parking spaces (585 spaces in total). The proposal also includes the erection of 2,560 ground mounted solar panels to the east of the site.

Consultations

Halewood Town Council - No Comments Received

Highway Authority - No objections subject to a travel plan to be secured by planning condition.

LLFA/Drainage - No objections subject to the submission of a detailed surface water drainage scheme.

Arboricultural Officer - No objections subject to the trees to be lost replaced on a 2:1 basis

Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service - No objections subject to planning conditions covering Ecology matters.

Environmental Health - No objections in principle.

United Utilities Water Ltd - No objections in principle .

Natural England - No objections

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 14 neighbours. It has also been advertised by Site Notice and a Press Notice. No representations have been received.

Planning History

23/02377/FUL - PROPOSED CAR PARK (TO THE EAST OF EXISTING CAR PARK) TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL VEHICLE AND CYCLE PARKING SPACES AND ASSOCIATED WORKS. - UNDER CONSIDERATION.

Relevant Policy

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF clarifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

- CS2 - Development Principles
- CS7 - Transport Networks
- CS8 - Green Infrastructure
- CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
- CS23 - Renewable and Low Carbon Infrastructure
- CS24 - Managing Flood Risk

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

- DQ4 - Trees and Development
- Env5 – Contaminated Land
- National Planning Policy Framework

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The proposal would be required in connection with the operation of the Ford's plant in response to continued investment to build its first electric vehicle components and consequent increase in staff . By 2035 Ford seeks to use 100% locally sourced renewable energy for all of its manufacturing plants around the world. In principle this proposal would be consistent with the land use allocation on the Local Plan policies map as primarily industrial area.

With regard to the renewables element of the proposal Local Plan policy CS23 states that *The Council will support proposals that will produce and distribute decentralised, low carbon and renewable energy, provided that they do not cause significant harm (in terms of their number, scale, siting or cumulative impacts) to:*

- a) Natural resources, biodiversity, geodiversity, water and air quality and, landscape character;*
- b) Aviation and transport safety;*
- c) Historical and cultural assets;*
- d) Public amenity and living conditions; or*
- e) Openness and amenity of the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances.*

The proposal would be in compliance with Local Plan policy CS23.

Design and Appearance

The car port structures and supports would be constructed from galvanised steel attaining a maximum height of 4.4m . The PV solar panels would be mounted on the car port structures.

The ground mounted solar arrays to the east would attain a height of 1.7m above ground level.

A glint and glare report has been submitted to support the application. The array systems will be coated in an anti -reflective coating. Glare can be a distraction to motorist and air traffic. This particularly relevant given the close proximity of John Lennon Airport . Glare is predicted from the south facing array however only during a short period of the day and taking account that some cloud cover would be predicted the report concludes that the level of glare to the flight paths would be acceptable.

The appearance of the solar array and solar car ports is considered to be acceptable as they are becoming a common feature on many sites throughout the borough.

The car park extension and solar array would be removing areas of greenery from the site, however areas of soft landscaping are proposed within the proposed car park extension and areas of greenery would still exist in between the groups of solar arrays. Given the sites location in a primarily industrial area the loss of greenery would be acceptable.

The proposal would be in compliance with Local Plan policy CS19.

Amenity

The Council's Environmental Health section have requested planning conditions on restricting construction hours and limiting the noise levels of fixed plant and machinery to protect the amenity of local residents. The closest residential dwellings are approximately 180m away (outside the borough boundary) with a major road (Speke Boulevard) and large car parking area in between. In addition there is no fixed plant being proposed associated with this

development. Given the above it is not considered that these conditions are appropriate in this instance.

Highway Safety

The application has been supported by a Transport Assessment. The findings of the transport assessment are agreed by KMBC Highway Engineers and the additional car parking and vehicles would not have any adverse impact on highway safety and the surrounding highway network is able to cope with the proposed increase in vehicle numbers.

A MASA (minimum accessibility standards assessment) has also been submitted which Highways consider to be acceptable.

Taking account of the additional number of parking spaces it is considered that a travel plan would be required for this site. This can be secured by way of a planning condition.

Subject to the planning condition the proposal would be in accordance with Local Plan policy CS7.

Drainage & Flood Risk

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment. This demonstrates that the proposed development is not a significant flood risk and will not increase flood risk to others subject to the recommended flood mitigation strategies being implemented.

The drainage proposals are considered acceptable to United Utilities subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted Foul and Surface Water Drainage Design Drawing and surface water drained at the restricted rate of 4.5l/s.

The LLFA has no objection in principle to the proposed drainage strategy subject to a detailed drainage strategy being secured by a planning condition to ensure the proposal is in compliance with Local Plan policy CS24.

Trees

The application is accompanied by an arboricultural impact assessment and method statement. To the south of the site 5 trees are proposed to be removed and 19 retained. To the east of the site 2 trees would be retained and 10 removed. The Council's arboriculture officer has raised no objections to the tree loss subject to the trees being replaced on a 2:1 basis. There is sufficient space within the site to accommodate this mitigation planting which can be secured by planning condition.

Subject to the above planning condition the proposals would be in compliance with saved UDP policy DQ4.

Ecology

The application has been accompanied by an ecology appraisal. The report concludes no evidence of bat use or presence was found. Any lighting scheme should be designed so it

protects ecology and does not cause excessive spillage onto adjacent areas which may be used for roosting, foraging or as a commuting habitat for bats. Lighting can be secured by planning condition.

The proposal would result in the loss of bird breeding habitat, to mitigate for the loss details of bird breeding boxes would be required. These details can be secured by planning condition.

Reasonable avoidance measures for hedgehogs should be implemented. These can be secured by planning condition.

Locally rare bee orchids were present in the grassland in Area A to the south and MEAS recommended that these are translocated to a suitable receptor area within the site. Unfortunately development has already commenced on the car park extension and the bee orchids have been dug up and therefore cannot be translocated as would normally be required. Following consultation with MEAS they now recommend that a mitigation strategy is submitted to compensate for the locally rare orchids. This can be secured by planning condition.

The proposed development is within the Natural England SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) (August 2023). As the proposed development falls within the category 'Solar schemes with footprint > 0.5ha, all wind turbines.' Natural England must be consulted on the planning application prior to determination. Natural England have assessed the proposal and considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes

Subject to the above mentioned planning conditions the proposal would be in compliance with Local Plan policy CS8.

Contaminated Land

There is no evidence any contamination being present on this site however during the course of the development should any contamination be found works should cease and the full details of the contaminants and remediation measures should be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

This can be secured by planning condition.

In addition no soil should be imported onto the site prior to it being tested for contamination and to ensure its suitability for use on the site. This can be secured by planning condition.

Subject to the above planning conditions the proposal would be in compliance with saved UDP policy ENV5.

Conclusion

The proposal would not have any adverse impacts on highway safety or visual amenity. The tree loss is acceptable subject to suitable replacements and the impacts on ecology are acceptable subject to conditions as set out above.

The proposal would be in accordance with the relevant Local Plan and saved UDP policies referred to above.

Recommendation

That Planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions :-

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 2) Within 3 months of the date of this permission a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council as Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include immediate, continuing and long-term measures to promote and encourage alternative modes of transport to the single-occupancy car. For the avoidance of doubt, the Travel Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- Involvement of employees.
- Information on existing transport policies, services and facilities, travel behaviours and attitudes.
- Access for all modes of transport.
- Targets for mode share.
- Resource allocation including Travel Plan Co-ordinator and budget.
- A parking and management strategy.
- A marketing and communications strategy.
- Appropriate measures and actions to reduce car dependence and encourage sustainable travel.
- An action plan, including a timetable for the implementation of each of the above.
- Mechanisms for monitoring, reviewing and implementing the Travel Plan.

The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied and in use.

An annual report shall be submitted to the Council no later than 1 month following the anniversary of the first occupation of the development for a period of 5 years. The report shall include a review of the Travel Plan measures, monitoring data and updated action plan.

Reason: To maximise opportunities for travel by modes of transport other than the private car, and to ensure that the development is sustainable, having regard to Policies T6 and T9 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006.

- 3) Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved drawings, within 3 months of the date of this permission full details of hard and soft landscaping works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The details shall relate to all land surfaces not built upon and shall include:

- a) Land-levels and gradients resulting in the formation of any banks, terraces or other earthworks
- b) hard surfaced areas and materials,
- c) planting plans, specifications and schedules, planting size, species and numbers/densities, and a scheme for the timing / phasing of work.
- d) tree replacement for individual and groups of trees to be removed on a 2:1 basis.
- e) existing plants / trees to be retained
- f) A detailed regime for the ongoing and longer term maintenance of all soft landscaping is also required to be submitted for approval.

The approved landscaping works shall be implemented and completed within the first available planting season following the development being brought into use.

Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and to comply with Policy CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016, Saved Policy DQ4 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4) Prior to the installation of any external lighting a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which shall be designed to ensure it protects ecology and does not result in excessive light spill onto the area in line with paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The lighting shall be installed and thereafter retained in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the impacts of the lighting scheme are mitigation on ecology. To ensure compliance with Policy CS8 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted January 2016 and guidance in NPPF.

- 5) Within 3 months of the date of this permission details of the number and location of bird nesting boxes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bird boxes shall be installed in accordance with the approved details in accordance with a timetable to be submitted to and agreed in writing by The Local Planning Authority and shall be retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity conservation and to comply with Policy CS8 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016.

- 6) The following reasonable avoidance measures should be put in place throughout the duration of development :-
 A pre-commencement check for hedgehog.
 All trenches and excavations should have a means of escape (e.g., a ramp.)
 Any exposed open pipe systems should be capped to prevent mammals gaining access.

Appropriate storage of materials to ensure that mammals do not use them.

Reason : To ensure the protection of hedgehogs which are a priority species and to ensure compliance with policy CS8 in the Knowsley Local Plan, Core Strategy.

- 7) If contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on the part of the site affected must be halted and a risk assessment carried out and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall be implemented prior to the development (or relevant phase of development) being brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of safety, to prevent pollution of the water environment and to comply with Policy ENV5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006

- 8) No soil is to be imported to the site until it has been tested for contamination and assessed for its suitability for the proposed development; a suitable methodology for testing this material should be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the soils being imported onto site. The methodology should include the sampling frequency, testing schedules, criteria against which the analytical results will be assessed (as determined by the risk assessment) and source material information. The analysis shall then be carried out and evidence submitted to and approved in writing to by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of safety, to prevent pollution of the water environment and to comply with Policy ENV5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006

- 9) Within 3 months of the date of this decision a mitigation strategy to compensate for the loss of the locally rare bee orchids shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy should include the salvage of remaining soils to suitable receptor site within the application site, provision of details as to how the Bee Orchids will be encouraged to grow and provision of a grassland management regime. The mitigation strategy shall be implemented in accordance with an agreed timescale and managed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : To mitigate for the loss of the locally rare bee orchids and to ensure compliance with policy CS8 in the Knowsley Local Plan, Core Strategy.

- 10) Within 3 months of the date of this permission a detailed SUDS based drainage scheme based on the principles of The SUDS Manual (C753) and the criteria as set out within Knowsley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA, Levels 2), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority . The applicant should provide suitable drainage drawings, summary calculations and results of all investigations detailing the surface water drainage works as set below. The maximum rate of discharge, off-site, shall not exceed 4.5l/s regardless of the surface water

discharge destination (i.e. infiltration or discharge to surface water drainage systems). The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme in accordance with an agreed timescale and maintained as such thereafter.

The submitted drainage strategy shall include the following :

- A. Any drainage strategy proposal should clearly demonstrate how the movement down the hierarchy has been considered and that the selection of the most appropriate set of SuDS techniques has taken into account the site geological and topographical characteristics. To assess the feasibility of infiltration techniques as part of the proposed drainage strategy, evidence must be provided to show that a suitable number of soakaway tests have been completed across the whole site within different geology and to a suitable depth (i.e. a similar depth to the proposed infiltration devices). The tests should be completed according to the BRE 365 method and their results should be submitted with the full application.
- B. Drainage Plan showing drainage layout, manholes including cover and invert levels, proposed levels, pipe sizes and gradients, all on -line controls, on and off line storage structures and outfall details.
- C. Design details of the online control device (e.g. orifice), attenuation storage, and intercepting drains proposed at the north boundary of the site will be required.
- D. Plan showing overland exceedance routes in the storm event in excess of the 1 in 100 + 40% CC storm event. A 1 in 200 years plus 40% event would normally be recommended as the Exceedance event and expected that where manholes are surcharged to be identified, and volume and maximum depth of flood water and where the flood water pools or flows to be determined.

Reason : To ensure a satisfactory drainage system is provided to serve the site in accordance with Paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework, House of Commons Written Statement 161 for Sustainable Drainage Systems, Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) and Policies CS2 and CS24 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy (January 2016).

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
19/07/2023	-	-	TRANSPORT STATEMENT
19/07/2023	312715 REV 1	-	GLINT AND GLARE ASSESSMENT

19/07/2023	AIA 13646.01	-	ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND METHOD STATEMENT
19/07/2023	OSE1010-101.2	-	PV LAYOUT AND SECTIONS AREA B
19/07/2023	OSE1010-240.1 REV B	-	CROSS SECTIONS CAR PORT
19/07/2023	12-027_001revA	-	LOCATION PLAN
19/07/2023	12-027_101	-	PROPOSED SITE PLAN A & C
19/07/2023	12-027_102	-	PROPOSED SOLAR ARRAY SITE A
19/07/2023	12-027_103	-	PROPOSED SOLAR ARRAY SITE B
11/10/2023	6B	-	PROPOSED SITE LEVELS

Signed Case Officer¹:

Mark Quinn

Signed Authorising Officer²:

Alan Kilroe

Date:

6/12/23

Informatives

1. See attached letter from United Utilities dated 2nd November 2023.
2. No tree felling, scrub clearance, hedge or shrub removal, or vegetation management is to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then all trees, scrub, hedges, and shrubs are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected are required to be submitted for approval.
3. The applicant, their advisers and contractors should be made aware that if any European protected species are found, then as a legal requirement, work must cease, and advice must be sought from a licensed specialist.

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

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