

Network Space Ltd

Sovereign Business Park (Former Sovereign Distillery)

Planning Statement

Revision A 4 February 2022



Revision Record

Revision Reference	Date of Revision	Nature of Revision	Author	Checked By
A	February 2022		LY	GW

Report Author	Laura Young
Report Date	February 2022
Project No.	4478
Document Ref.	P4478-SPA-RP-TP-0001
Revision	A

Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Site Context and Development Proposals	5
	Development Proposals	7
3.	Relevant Planning History and Designations	10
4.	Statutory Policy Context and Other Relevant Policies	12
	Statutory Development Plan	12
	National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework)	13
	Other Relevant Policies	15
5.	Reasoned Justification for Proposed Development.....	16
	Principle of Development.....	17
	Design.....	18
	Other Material Considerations	19
6.	Summary and Conclusions.....	26

I. Introduction

- I.1. Spawforths have been instructed by Network Space Ltd to prepare and submit a full planning application for the former Sovereign Distillery site, at Huyton Business Park, located off Wilson Road, Huyton. The proposal comprises:

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS TO CONSTRUCT TWO NEW INDUSTRIAL UNITS AND REMODELLING, REFURBISHMENT, EXTENSION AND PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF EXISTING INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TO FORM SEVEN UNITS TO CREATE E (G)(II) (III), B2 AND B8 EMPLOYMENT SPACE, WITH ANCILLARY E(G)(I) OFFICE USE, REMODELLING OF CAR PARKING, SERVICE, VEHICULAR CIRCULATION AREAS, LANDSCAPING AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS.

- I.2. The applicants have taken professional advice from a development team and supplementary information has been prepared in support of the application by the following consultants. This Statement should be read in conjunction with these reports.

- Spawforths - Planning Statement
- AEW – Plans Package and Design and Access Statement
- Tetra Tech – Flood Risk Assessment
- Tetra Tech – Drainage Strategy
- Rachel Hacking Ecology – Ecological Phase I Habitat Survey
- Tetra Tech – Tree Survey
- Tetra Tech – Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
- Tetra Tech – Geo-Environmental Assessment Desk Top Study
- Tetra Tech – Noise Assessment

2. Site Context and Development Proposals

Site Context

- 2.1. The Site now referred to as Sovereign Business Park, is located on the Huyton Business Park and covers an area of 9.54 hectares. The wider Business Park comprises a well-established predominantly industrial and trade counter location.
- 2.2. The Application Site is occupied by the former Sovereign Distillery which was the former headquarters of Halewood Artisanal Spirits PLC. The distillery company has now relocated the majority of its operations to Chorley. The former Distillery extends over a wider area, including buildings edged in the blue on the plan below, however these buildings do not form part of this Application.



Figure 1 – Location Plan of Site

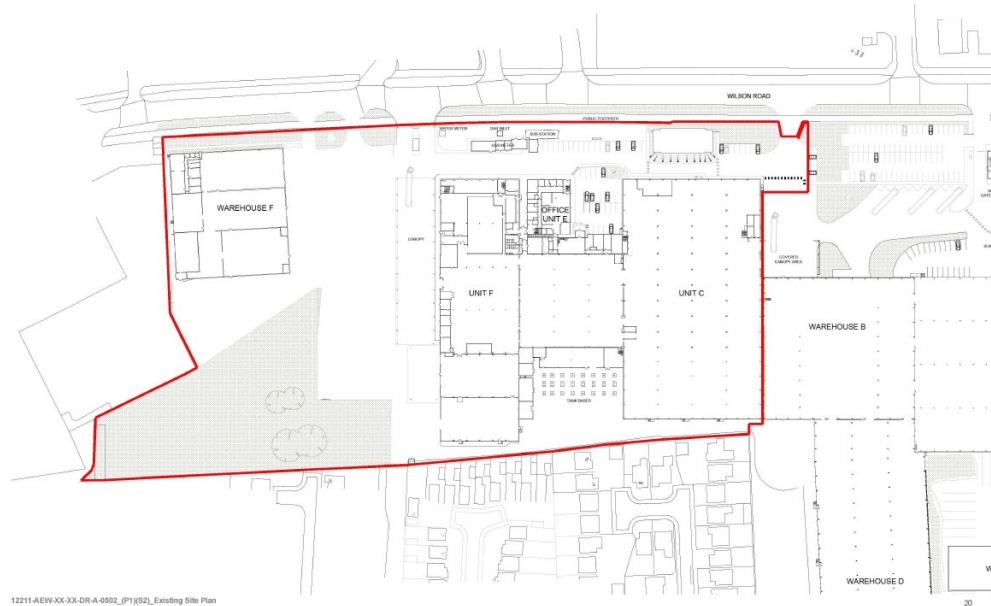


Figure 2 – Site Existing Redline Plan

- 2.3. Liverpool City Centre is located approximately 9.5 miles to the west and Warrington and Manchester are located 11.5 miles and 25 miles to the east. The estate benefits from excellent road communications, with great access to the M57, M62, as well as the M56, M58, and M6 motorways.
- 2.4. There are bus stops on Cronton Road approximately 330m south of the Site which provide frequent services from Liverpool to Palacefields and Liverpool to Warrington, including Huyton, Widnes, Runcorn and Prescott. The nearest train station is in Huyton located 1.5 miles northwest of the Site.
- 2.5. The Application Site comprises a large and irregular shape with a number of warehouse units. Vehicular access is currently taken from Wilson Road. To the north and east of the Site along Wilson Road, are additional industrial units and warehouses including a waste recycling centre, a business park, international movers company, a CEMEX plant, bus depot, hotel, café, pub and restaurant. To the southeast of the Site lies an Aldi, Starbucks, Petrol Station and KFC. To the south and west of the Site lies residential development.



Figure 3 – Aerial view of Existing Site

Development Proposals

- 2.6. The proposed development at Sovereign Industrial Park will comprise the following:

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS TO CONSTRUCT TWO NEW INDUSTRIAL UNITS AND REMODELLING, REFURBISHMENT, EXTENSION AND PARTIAL DEMOLITION OF EXISTING INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TO FORM SEVEN UNITS TO CREATE E (G)(II) (III), B2 AND B8 EMPLOYMENT SPACE, WITH ANCILLARY E(G)(I) OFFICE USE, REMODELLING OF CAR PARKING, SERVICE, VEHICULAR CIRCULATION AREAS, LANDSCAPING AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

- 2.7. The proposed development will see the remodelling of the former Sovereign Distillery Site, modernising and improving the Site following the closure of the Distillery.

- 2.8. The scheme will involve part demolition, part refurbishment and repurposing of some of the existing facilities and, two new build units to the north end of the Site.
- 2.9. The existing warehouse F (as indicated on to the west of the Existing Site Plan) is to be demolished and will be replaced with two new units Unit G1 and G2. These units will be built up to the western boundary of the site with service yards, individual car parking and circulation space for each unit provided and will face the centre of the site. Unit G1 will be 10m in height to underside of haunch and Unit G2 will be 8m in height to underside of haunch. These units will also be served from the existing points of access and junctions onto Wilson Road.
- 2.10. The existing canopy adjacent to Unit F in the centre of the Site is to be removed. Unit F will be mostly stripped out, leaving the two storey offices at the northeast end in place, with the remainder of the premises converted into a terrace of 6 units. The existing building height will be retained and is set at 6.65m to the underside of haunch. The buildings will be re-furbished and re-clad consistent with the material and colour palette used on Units G1 and G2. The external envelopes will predominantly be built-up profile metal cladding, with composite cladding panels to feature areas and mezzanine office elements. The office elements are generally located at the prominent corners of the units to maximise the visual impact. The colour pallet proposed is various tones of grey which provides an interesting and contemporary aesthetic and complements other units within close proximity of the site.
- 2.11. The existing office Unit E as well as the link between existing Unit C and Unit F are both to be demolished, creating one large standalone Unit C. The existing building height will be retained and is set at 6.80m to the underside of haunch. Car parking is provided to the north with vehicular access onto Wilson Road and a service yard and circulation area is proposed in the space created by the demolition of the buildings that currently link Unit F and C. HGV's and light goods vehicles will utilize the existing main vehicular access into the site from Wilson Road. The buildings will be re-furbished and re-clad consistent with the material and colour palette used across the Application Site.
- 2.12. In total, the proposals will provide approximately 18,083m² (194,649ft²) GIA of employment space for E (g) (ii) (iii), B2, B8 use with ancillary E (g) (i) offices in each unit.
- 2.13. The proposals to refurbish and remodel this site will result in positive improvements and provides the opportunity to enhance this dated industrial Site and provide industrial employment space, which is better integrated with its local environment and with improved

parking and circulation areas for each industrial unit. Each unit will be serviced with utility connections and electrical vehicle charging points.

- 2.14. Noise mitigation has been considered for the site in the form of a 6.0m high acoustic barrier along the western boundary of the site overlooking the service yards of units F(1-6) and unit C in order to protect the residential amenity of existing properties to the south. Enhanced landscaping is also proposed in the south western corner of the site and the western boundary, which will also enhance the biodiversity of this part of the site.
- 2.15. All building envelope and fabric systems have been specified to maximise their functionality, integrity and appearance. The Proposed Development is targeting a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating.

3. Relevant Planning History and Designations

- 3.1. A review of the Council's web-based Public Access suggests that there are several planning applications that relate to the Halewood International, however the more relevant and recent planning applications have been identified below:

Application Ref.	Description of Development	Site Address	Decision
13/00073/FUL	Erection of extension to south east elevation of existing building to form automated storage area for finished products (Use Class B8) together with associated works	Halewood International 9 Wilson Road Huyton Knowsley L36 6AD	Approved 21.05.2013
06/00694/FUL	Construction of concrete bund to contain six stainless steel tanks for the storage of alcohol	Halewood International Wilson Road Huyton Knowsley L36 6AD	Approved 28.09.2006

- 3.2. The following section identifies relevant planning considerations connected to the Site and the application proposals:

Planning Designations / Considerations	Site Address / Proximity to the Site
Conservation Areas	The Site does not fall within a Conservation Area.
Listed Buildings	None on the Site. There are two Grade II Listed dwellings located over 700m east of the Site.
Heritage Assets	None known on the Site.
Ancient Monuments	None known on the Site.
Tree Preservation Orders	There is a band of trees to the southern and western boundaries which are protected by a TPO.
AONB or Landscape Designation	None.
SSIs/SSSIs	Located within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

Planning Designations / Considerations	Site Address / Proximity to the Site
Ecological Designations	None known on the Site.
Flood Risk Zone	Flood Zone I
Air Quality Management Area	Nitrate Vulnerable Zone 2017 Designation
Rights of Way (including PROW, bridleways etc.)	No Public Right of Way on or around the Site.

4. Statutory Policy Context and Other Relevant Policies

- 4.1. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, states that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. This section identifies the planning policies and other material considerations which are relevant to this proposal.

Statutory Development Plan

- 4.3. The statutory Development Plan for Knowsley comprises of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (January 2016) and the remaining saved planning policies in the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2006), including the Proposals Map.

Site Specific Allocation

- 4.4. The Site is allocated in the UDP Replacement Proposals Map as a Primary Industrial Area within Huyton Business Park under Policy EC3: Primary Industrial Areas.
- 4.5. The Core Strategy and remaining Saved policies in the Replacement UDP relevant to this Application, are as follows:

Core Strategy (2016) Policies	
Policy	Summary
SD 1	Sustainable Development
CS 1	Spatial Strategy for Knowsley
CS 2	Development Principles
CS 4	Economy and Employment
CS 7	Transport Networks
CS 19	Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

CS 21	Greenspaces and Trees
CS 22	Sustainable and Low Carbon Development
CS 23	Renewable and Low Carbon Infrastructure
CS 24	Managing Flood Risk
CS 26	Waste Management
CS 27	Planning for and Paying for New Infrastructure
Saved Replacement UPD (2006) Policies	
Policy	Summary
EC 2	Sites Allocated for Employment Development
EC 3	Primary Industrial Areas
T5	Location of Major Traffic Generating New Development
T8	Transport Assessments
DQ 2	Security in the Built Environment
DQ 3	Gateway Sites and Corridors
ENV 5	Contaminated Land

National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework)

- 4.6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) adopted in February 2021, is a key material consideration as the statement of national policy and should therefore be taken into account and given significant weight when assessing this planning application.
- 4.7. Adopted as an expression of national planning policy, The Framework sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the Government's key objective to increase significantly the delivery of new homes. Where relevant policies are out of date, for example where a five year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated, it states planning permission should be granted.

4.8. In summary, the key elements of The Framework relevant to the proposals are:

- Achieving sustainable development
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Decision-making

4.9. Sustainable development is defined as ‘*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*’. Paragraph 8 of the Framework sets out three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and sets out that to achieve sustainable development, the three overarching objectives, need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve net gains across each of the different objectives.

4.10. Paragraph 10 states that “*at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development***”. Paragraph 11 outlines that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.11. Chapter 6 of the Framework, “*Building a strong, competitive economy*”, places significant weight at Paragraph 81 on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

4.12. Paragraph 83 also notes that planning decisions should “recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors”, including making provision “for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations”.

4.13. Chapter 9, “Promoting sustainable transport”, requires at Paragraph 104 that “transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals”, including the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure, and opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. Paragraph 105 states that “significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable”.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 4.14. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides guidance to support the policies within The Framework, and in that sense does not provide additional policy but rather more detailed consideration of how policies within The Framework should be approached and met. The guidance covers all relevant planning policy areas under separate topics and will be updated online as and when required.

Other Relevant Policies

Relevant Local Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.15. The Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) relevant to the application proposals are as follows:
- Ensuring a Choice of Travel Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
 - Designing Quality in New development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
 - Developer Contributions SPD
 - Local Development Order Design Code for Knowsley Industrial and Business Park

5. Reasoned Justification for Proposed Development

- 5.1. The Application proposes the development of employment and industrial units on the site now referred to as Sovereign Industrial Park, Huyton. The following section considers the proposed scheme in the context of the relevant planning policy.
- 5.2. Within this overarching policy framework, the evaluation of the application proposals is now considered against the following issues:

- Principle of Development
- Design
- Other Material Considerations

Affording weight to planning policies

- 5.3. The Framework indicates that Development Plans which have been adopted post-2004 (but prior to the publication of The Framework) should carry weight in relation to Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act in terms of their compliance with the policies within The Framework. Where Local Plan policies pre-date the publication of The Framework, the national policy will hold sway in any conflict, whilst post-Framework development plans and policies will be afforded their full weight under the plan-led presumption so long as none of the policies therein are absent, silent or out-of-date (such as an absence of a five year land supply).
- 5.4. Paragraph 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear that the:
- “National Planning Policy Framework does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.”*
- 5.5. In this regard the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016 and as such carries weight in relation to Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act in terms of compliance with the policies within The Framework. Although the allocation of this Site under Policy EC3 of

the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and certain saved policies pre-dates the Framework, they still remain operational as part of the Statutory Development Plan and weight is still attached to these policies.

Principle of Development

Site Allocation

- 5.6. The Site is allocated in the UDP Replacement Proposals Map as a Primary Industrial Area, within Huyton Business Park under Policy EC3: Primarily Industrial Areas. This policy recognises these established primary industrial areas are appropriate locations for B1 (now E g (i)), B2 and B8 uses.
- 5.7. The principle of employment development on the Site is firmly established by its employment allocation under Policy EC3, previous planning permissions and the former B2 and B8 uses that operated on the Site.
- 5.8. The application proposals seek to remodel and extend the existing industrial building, as well as demolish existing buildings and erect 7 no. industrial units to create E (g) (ii) (iii), B2 and B8 employment space, with ancillary E(g)(i) office space on the established Huyton Business Park, on the former Sovereign Distillery site operated by Halewood International. These uses are consistent with Policy EC3 and will make a positive contribution to economic growth and regeneration attracting inward investment and creating employment opportunities for the local area.
- 5.9. With regards to the adopted Core Strategy Local Plan 2016, it is considered that the development proposals are in general compliance with the strategy and Policy CS4 which seeks to promote sustainable economic growth in Knowsley. There is clear policy support for the development of this Site for employment use and the development of the Site will deliver key strategic benefits to the Borough.
- 5.10. Further support for the scheme is identified within the NPPF Paragraph 81 which confirms that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

- 5.11. The Proposed Development seeks to bring the site forward for a flexible E(g)(ii)(iii), B2 and B8 employment use and ancillary E(g)(i) office space, attracting modern and innovative industries to locate and operate there as market interest dictates. The proposed site layout includes the provision of yards suitable for HGV servicing to all units and car parking for visitors and staff, offering flexibility for differing operating needs to be met on Site.
- 5.12. The Proposed Development will bring an existing vacant Site into beneficial economic use and represents significant investment in the local area resulting in the creation of jobs during both the construction and operational phases. Overall, the development proposals will have a positive socio-economic impact and will bring clear benefits to the local and wider area.

Summary

- 5.13. The development can deliver significant economic and regeneration benefits for the area and in line with Core Strategy policy. The compelling case for this application proposal and its regenerative benefits is reinforced by the NPPF which recognises the need to support economic development and growth now to create sustainable communities.
- 5.14. The development opportunity and consequent benefits are a significant material consideration in favour of the development of the Site. As outlined, such benefits are therefore entirely consistent and reflective of local and national planning policy objectives and the principle of development as presented in the application proposals is acceptable.

Design

- 5.15. The Proposed Development will accommodate a mix of E (g) (ii) (iii), B2 and B8 employment space, with ancillary E(g) (i) office use for up to 18,083m² (194,649ft²) GIA.
- 5.16. The proposed nine units vary in size from 716m² (7,707ft²) terraced units up to a single unit of 8,122 m² (87,429ft²) in order to maximise the developments range of potential end users and therefore the generation of employment opportunities.
- 5.17. The proposed units are steel portal framed buildings on reinforced concrete foundations to suit the ground conditions. The external envelopes will predominantly be built-up profile metal cladding to warehouse areas, with composite cladding panels to feature areas and mezzanine office elements. The office elements are generally located at the prominent corners of the units to maximise the visual impact and unit identity when entering the Site along the main

spine road. The colour pallet proposes various tones of grey which provides an interesting and contemporary aesthetic.

- 5.18. The Site has been designed to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure to support the use of the development. This includes the provision of yards suitable for HGV loading and unloading and car parks for staff and visitors.
- 5.19. The proposed layout has been designed to have a positive impact that will benefit the local and wider area by modernising the Site, encouraging inward investment, creating jobs in both the construction and operational phases and in the long-term management of the Site. The Design and Access Statement provides a detailed justification for the design rationale. In summary, the proposals are in general conformity with Core Strategy Local Plan Policy CS19.

Other Material Considerations

Highways and Transportation

- 5.20. A Transport Statement (TS) and Travel Plan (TP) have been undertaken by Tetra Tech. The TS confirms the proposals will utilize existing vehicular access points and following demolition and remodeling of the Site, the proposals will result in a reduction of 1,040m² of employment floorspace on the Site. The TS confirms the proposals will provide 256 parking spaces of which 20 are proposed as electric and 16 proposed as accessible. Based on the Council's parking standards and ratios, the proposed parking is in line with the maximum and minimum standards set out in the Council's SPD.
- 5.21. The TA states the development is expected to generate 86 and 77 two-way trips in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. Of those trips, 10 and 5 are expected to be HGV movements in the AM and PM peak hours respectively. The total vehicle trips equate to less than one trip every 90 seconds on average. The proposals are expected to generate less traffic than the existing land use has potential to generate. Therefore, the proposals are expected to have a net reduction in traffic on the local highway network. On that basis, it is considered that the proposals will not have a significant traffic impact and indeed could result in a betterment in traffic conditions and traffic flows compared to the existing position due to the proposed reduction in floorspace.

- 5.22. In summary, the TS confirms the proposals accord with Core Strategy Policy CS7 and the NPPF and will not have any adverse significant or severe impacts on the local transport network. The Travel Plan also confirms the proposals constitute a sustainable development, with good access to public transport connection and is in easy walking distance of a number of local facilities and residential areas.

Ground Conditions

- 5.23. A Geo-Environmental Desk Top Study has been prepared by Tetra Tech in support of this Application which includes a preliminary qualitative geotechnical and contamination risk assessment. It can be seen that commercial development has been present on this Site from approximately 1975 onwards.
- 5.24. The Study confirms the risk from ground contamination on the Site is generally low, when based on a continued commercial usage. The risk from ground gas and potentially vapours is considered to be high as this specifically relates to the potential for unrecorded coal mining activities, the presence of mine shafts and the backfilled pond towards the south west of the Site. It is not likely that Made Ground deposits at the Site will be of gassing potential mainly due to their thickness and likely composition.
- 5.25. The Site was formerly agricultural land and therefore Made Ground deposits are likely to be fairly thin. As such, land stability constraints relate to the potential for unrecorded shallow mine workings beneath the site. The presence of Made Ground and natural soils of unknown competence.
- 5.26. The Study recommends Ground Investigation should be undertaken to further assess the various risk and development constraints identified. In conclusion, this proposal accords with relevant policy and the impacts are considered to be minor and can be controlled through a detailed remediation strategy.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.27. A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared in support of this planning application by Tetra Tech. The FRA confirms the Site falls within Flood Zone I and there are no rivers running within immediate proximity to the Site, the nearest is Longwood Mill Brook which sits approximately 350m east of the Site.

- 5.28. The Proposed Development is classified as 'Less Vulnerable'. The FRA confirms that whilst there are areas within the Site where there is high risk of surface water flooding, within the areas where development is proposed the highest risk is medium.
- 5.29. There is no available information to indicate that there has been historical sewer flooding on the Site. The Council indicates that surface water flooding is a good indicator of areas at risk from sewer flooding, so it is assumed that there are some parts of the Site where the risk is medium.
- 5.30. There is no information to indicate that there has been historical groundwater flooding on site. The geological conditions indicate a permeable aquifer, conditions which might allow groundwater flooding, but no water table identified in the borehole records reviewed and risk from this source is generally considered low. In conclusion, it is considered that the Proposed Development is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS24.
- 5.31. A Phase I Drainage Strategy and Maintenance Strategy Plan is included which should be read in conjunction with the FRA. The strategy establishes constraints and design requirements and assesses the potential for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) at the site in accordance with the Knowsley Council planning advisory note for surface water drainage and flood risk management. This confirms the following:
- Units G1, G2 and hard standing, is proposed to outfall via an existing manhole connection on an existing surface water sewer (750 Diameter) Upstream attenuation is provided in the form of below ground crate storage tanks with an Aco-Q Brake flow control with discharge rate of 78.4/s prior the connection.
 - Units F1-6 and hard standing will discharge to the same manhole as the north part of site. Two upstream attenuation crate storage tanks are provided with flow control. The attenuation is also proposed with an Aco-Q Brake flow control with discharge rate of 100.7/s prior to connection.
 - Unit C and hard standing is proposed to discharge into an existing manhole to the south east of site. An upstream attenuation crate storage tank is provided controlled with an Aco-Q Brake flow control with discharge rate of 69.3l/s prior to connection.
 - All areas have lined permeable paving to accommodate the proposed flows.

- For all three surface water networks Bypass separators is included to treat any lightly contaminated water before the attenuation and the outfall to the existing sewer.
- Connection into existing systems for the surface water are subsequent for approval by United utilities.
- Site levels have been designed to comply with flood exceedance route requirements.
- The proposed SuDS measures will require future maintenance in order to ensure long term effective operation.
- For Units G1 and G2 main gravity foul drainage is designed to run on the low side of the development. The foul drainage on the south side of the development (Units F1-6 and C) will also gravity drain to the same existing combined sewer (825 diameter).
- Foul flows will be calculated during the detailed design stage.

Ecology

- 5.32. An Extended Phase I Habitat Survey has been produced by Rachel Hacking Ecology in support of this application, relating primarily to the vegetated parts of the Site to the south western corner.
- 5.33. Habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g. setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt. The Site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.
- 5.34. The Survey confirms no waterbodies exist on the Site. Only 1 pond exists within 250m of the site boundary, this is an attenuation within the wider industrial estate. This was dry at the time of the survey and has a decking installed over the basin which will result in it being heavily shaded.
- 5.35. The semi-mature trees were assessed from the ground for features that could be used by bats for roosting such as damaged limbs or woodpecker holes. No such features occur. It is possible that bats use the Site for foraging.

- 5.36. No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on Site.
- 5.37. The grassland habitats across the Site are sub-optimal for ground-nesting birds. The proximity to elevated perches for predatory birds such as the surrounding woodland, fencing and streetlights and use from walkers (including dog walkers) reduce the suitability for ground-nesting birds.
- 5.38. The Habitat Survey states that there is potential that a nesting bird survey will be required prior to work commencing during the appropriate survey window, which is generally between March and August. It is also recommended that the Japanese Rose be eradicated from the Site as part of the development.
- 5.39. General recommendations to enhance biodiversity on the Site are for soft landscaping to include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species to provide a pollen and nectar source, bird boxes and/or bat boxes to be erected on new buildings where possible and tree planting of native species where practically possible.
- 5.40. Further survey works will be undertaken to accommodate an update to the original proposals, based on demolition of a number of buildings on the Site. The details of which will follow in subsequent reports due for completion in February 2022.

Landscaping and Trees

- 5.41. The Proposed Development will incorporate elements of both hard and soft landscaping on the principle of simplicity with high quality. The hard landscaping scheme includes concrete service yards and tarmac finish car parking bays and paving slabs utilised for paths to, and around the unit entrances. Soft landscaping elements will include grass, shrubs and trees on the approach to the Site along the northern boundary, as well as improving planting along the south of the Site.
- 5.42. A Tree Survey has been prepared by Tetra Tech which determines the size, condition and value of the trees and provides recommendations for any remedial work required, as well as root protection distances to ensure the future health and stability of retained trees on Site.

- 5.43. The band of trees located to the southern and western boundaries of the Site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Existing trees have largely been retained within the Site and added to, where possible.
- 5.44. There is a strong recommendation to retain all of the trees and groups of moderate quality (B category) during the development. The single group of high quality (A category) is located off-site and it is recommended that trees are retained with sufficient space to protect their roots, as defined by the root protection areas, and sufficient space is provided for future development without causing a nuisance.

Noise

- 5.45. A Noise Assessment has been prepared and submitted by Tetra Tech in support of this Application. The Assessment confirms the dominant noise sources found in the area are road traffic noise, HGV deliveries to and from the Site and plant equipment.
- 5.46. The results within the Assessment show the change in noise levels between the existing measured L_{Aeq} noise levels and the contribution from the commercial units. When the differences between the 'existing' and 'proposed' scenario are compared with the noise change criteria, the contribution from the proposed trading hours falls within the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level. Therefore, the proposed scenario has 'negligible' impact on surrounding residential locations and the change in ambient L_{Aeq} noise level is not considered to be significant.
- 5.47. Maximum permissible noise limits have been set for proposed building services plant which are predicted to result in a noise rating level which is at least 10 dB below the existing background noise level during both the daytime and night-time periods at the closest sensitive receptor locations. Accordingly, the proposed plant is expected to have a low impact at the closest sensitive receptors.
- 5.48. In order to reduce noise levels at the closest sensitive receptors from noise associated with the proposed development, the following mitigation has been included within the model as mitigation:
- 6.0m high, 60m long acoustic barrier along the western side of the service yard for Unit C.

- 3.5m high, 30m long acoustic barrier along the western side of the forecourt for Unit F.
- 3.5m high, 50m long acoustic barrier along the western side of the service yard for Unit G.

5.49. Acoustic barriers will be of a close boarded construction with a minimum mass per square metre of 10 Kg/m².

5.50. In conclusion, the assessment carried out indicates that internal L_{Aeq} and L_{Amax} noise levels from all potential noise sources, during the daytime and night-time are predicted to be below the BS 8233 noise intrusion criteria at all sensitive receptors.

5.51. Including the mitigation, cumulative operational noise levels during the daytime and night-time periods are predicted to be below the guideline noise intrusion criteria at nearby properties assuming both a windows-open and a windows-closed scenario.

5.52. A change in noise level assessment has been undertaken which shows that noise levels are not expected to change significantly, which falls within the No Observed Adverse Effect Level. Therefore, the proposed development is not expected to have an adverse impact on health or quality of life, and proposals are considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

Summary

5.53. In line with the above considerations, it has been established that there are no technical or environmental issues arising from the application proposals that cannot be addressed through appropriate mitigation approaches such as through appropriately worded planning conditions.

6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1. The Application Site forms part an employment allocation in the Council's Replacement Proposals Map and accords with Core Strategy Policy CS4 and Saved Replacement UDP Policy EC3 which recognises this Site is an appropriate location to accommodate a mix of E(g)(ii)(iii), B2 and B8 employment space, with ancillary E(g)(i) office use.
- 6.2. Technical reports accompanying this Application demonstrate that the Site is deliverable and conclude that there are no technical reasons why the application proposal should not be approved. All mitigation measures can be controlled by appropriately worded conditions.
- 6.3. The proposed development will deliver a total GIA of 18,083m² (194,649ft²) of employment floorspace which will make a positive contribution to economic growth and regeneration attracting inward investment and creating employment opportunities within this part of Knowsley, following the relocation of Halewood International from the Site.
- 6.4. It will also modernise and refurbish old industrial units with modern employment space, bringing an existing vacant site back into beneficial economic use. The remodelling and redesign of the site layout and modernisation of buildings has been carefully considered to make best use of the site, taking into account the local character and context.
- 6.5. In line with relevant design policies, the layout, scale and appearance of the proposal have been developed to create a high quality, robust scheme. The planning policy context establishes the commitment of the Government to facilitate growth, investment and developments that are clearly sustainable.
- 6.6. It is considered that the development proposals are in general compliance with the strategy and Policy CS4 which seeks to promote sustainable economic growth in Knowsley. The Planning Statement has shown that the Application accords with the provisions of the relevant planning policies contained in the statutory development plan and also with relevant national policy guidance, especially that within the NPPF.
- 6.7. We therefore respectfully request that this application is supported by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in order to realise the benefits outlined in this report.