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5 May 2020

Dear Mr Henry,

Reference: 20/00173/FUL

Site Address: Alstom Technology Centre, Halebank Road, Widnes, WA8 8WQ

Proposed Development comprising 3 x loading bays and access road

We refer to the above referenced planning application for a works at Alstom Technology Centre on Halebank Road in Widnes, WA8 8WQ.

We act on behalf of Hale Bank Parish Council and are in receipt of a letter dated 23 April 2020 inviting comments on the application to be received by 14 May 2020.

We are pleased to respond by the due date on behalf of our client. Hale Bank Parish Council does not wish to object to the principle of development which has been established by the grant of planning permission for development of the site previously.

However, there are concerns regarding the level of detail provided in the applicant's submission which ought to be resolved and we therefore request that decision making is held in abeyance until adequate information is submitted for the application to be accurately assessed by Halton Borough Council.

Description of Development

Firstly, we find that the description of development is ambiguous as there is reference in the description to a proposed access road. However, in the submitted plans (Drawing Number NK018280-RPS-TRD-DR-A-8600 Rev Z01), the access road is referred to as an, ‘indicative Future HBC Haul Road for Access to Ditton Sidings’.

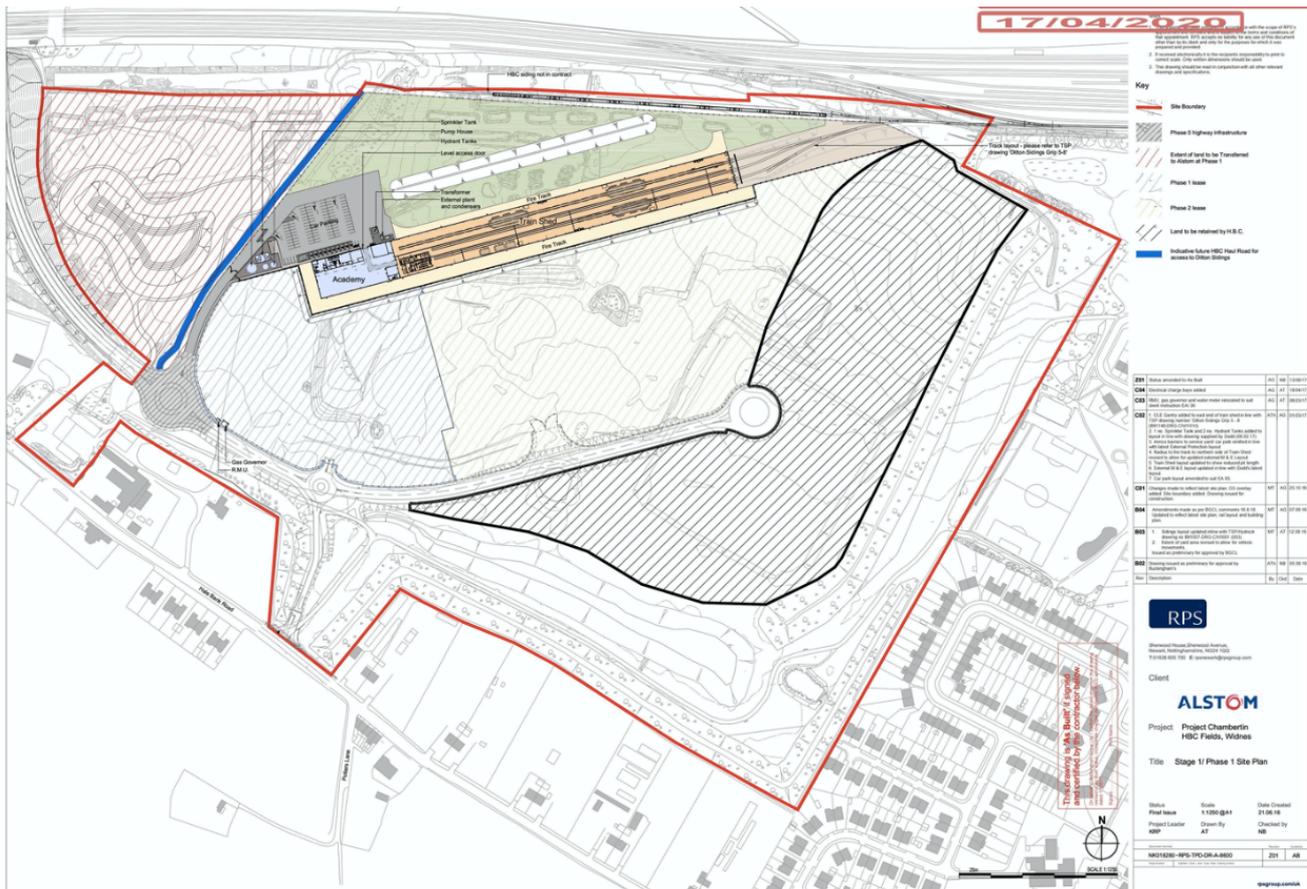


Figure 1: ‘Indicative Future HBC Haul Road for Access to Ditton Sidings’ indicated in blue (Source Applicant’s Plans, Drawing Number: NK018280-RPS-TRD-DR-A-8600 Rev Z01)

The ‘indicative Future HBC Haul Road for Access to Ditton Sidings’ is indicated in Drawing Number NK018280-RPS-TRD-DR-A-8600 Rev Z01 as a fourth ‘spur’ off the existing roundabout at Lovel’s Way. However, no Transport or Highways Information has been submitted to justify the intensification of use of the existing roundabout or to prove that an adequate visibility splay would be provided. Similarly, there is no information within the application to state the purpose of the access road, whether it would be permanent, or temporary (and if so how long it would be needed and how the ground would be reinstated afterwards); how many vehicular trips/ and or the type of vehicles which would the road would support; what type of materials would be transported to an d from the site (whether this would be construction materials to site; whether there would be imported or excavated inert materials; whether the proposals would constitute a ‘waste operation).

In our view, and in the interests of open public consultation, the local planning authority ought to consider correcting the disingenuous description of development and requiring adequate supporting Highways information and indicating the true purpose and proposed intensity of use of the Haul Road. In the absence of such information, it is impossible for the impact of development to be assessed by Halton Borough Council and the local planning authority cannot be satisfied that the impacts of the proposals would be acceptable.

Inadequate Supporting Information

This planning application is considered to be linked to previous applications including 14/00382/FUL (Proposed construction of 5 no. railway sidings to be implemented on a phased basis to serve the Mersey MultiModal Gateway (3MG) connecting to the national rail network West Coast Mainline via Ditton Junction Sidings) and 15/00549/FULEIA (Proposed construction of a purpose built transport and technology facility (Use Class B2) in three phases. Phase 1 to include a 27,938 sq. m facility with associated access, car parking, HGV parking, service yards, rail sidings, landscaping, substation and associated engineering operations. Phase 2A to include a 7,425 sq. m extension to the facility with a connection to the rail sidings constructed under Phase 1, an additional service yard, additional car parking and associated development. Phase 2B to include a further 15,925 sq. m extension to the facility with additional HGV parking and associated development).

However, there is no information in the submission to explain the relationship between the applications, or the specific purpose of this application.

As already stated, there is no Highways Information, justification, nor explanation as to the purpose of the proposed access road. In addition to the missing Transport Assessment, we also note that the following documentation has been omitted to be provided:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Planning Statement;
- Air Quality Assessment;
- Biodiversity Survey and Report;
- Flood Risk Assessment (site exceeds one hectare and is partly in Flood Zone 3);
- Lighting Proposals for Access Road;
- Noise Impact Assessment for loading bays;
- Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for Haul Road construction;
- In addition, the proposed operational hours have been omitted from the Application Form.

Planning Policy Assessment

Planning law dictates that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan (adopted Local Plan), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Meanwhile, emerging local plan policies may attract material weight, depending on the stage of preparation.

The development plan for the area in which the application site is located comprises the following documents:

- Halton Core Strategy (adopted April 2013, and comprises Strategic Planning Policies for the Borough until 2028)
- Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (adopted April 2005, for a twenty year plan period from 1996-2016)
- Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Development Plan Document (JWDP) (adopted July 2013 for a plan period up to 2027)

The following documents are material considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Published February 2019)
- National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (Published October 2014)
- Emerging Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) (not yet submitted for examination)

The absence of supporting information submitted with this application renders it impossible for the principle of development and detailed consideration of the impacts of development to be assessed by Halton Borough Council.

Insufficient supporting information is a valid reason for planning permission to be refused by a local planning authority.

If and when further information is provided by the applicant, we ask to be notified. Please also confirm if the application will be heard at Planning Committee, with advance notice of the date of that meeting. In addition, we request a copy the Council's decision in due course.

Yours sincerely,

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cc. Hale Bank Parish Council