

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

DATE: **30th MARCH 2022**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY)**

SUBJECT: **ERECTION OF A PAPER PROCESSING MILL TO PRODUCE AND MANUFACTURE TISSUE PAPER (B2, B8 USE CLASS) WITH ANCILLARY B1 OFFICE SPACE; ASSOCIATED SERVICING AND INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING CAR PARKING, HGV PARKING AND VEHICLE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION; NOISE MITIGATION FEATURES; EARTHWORKS TO CREATE DEVELOPMENT PLATFORMS; CREATION OF DRAINAGE FEATURES INCLUDING A NEW OUTFALL TO THE RIVER DEE; WATER TREATMENT PLANT; AND LANDSCAPING**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **063721**

APPLICANT: **ICT UK LTD & CRAIG HILL ESTATES**

SITE: **"THE AIRFIELDS (AIRFIELDS DELTA)", WELSH ROAD, SEALAND ROAD, DEESIDE, FLINTSHIRE**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **4TH NOVEMBER 2021**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE JONES**

TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL: **SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **DUE TO THE SCALE OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

SITE VISIT: **NO**

1.00 SUMMARY

- 1.01 This is a full application for the proposed erection of a paper processing mill on land at Plot C, The Airfields, Northern Gateway. The application proposes the erection of the papermill together with

associated ancillary buildings; infrastructure including car and HGV parking; construction of development platforms and the installation of new drainage systems to provide outfall into the River Dee.

- 1.02 Due to the scale and type of development as proposed this application falls within Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA).
- 1.03 The Airfields site is identified for B1, B2 and B8 employment development as part of its allocation under Policy HSG2A in the Flintshire UDP (2011) for mixed use development and has outline planning permission (ref: 054758) on this land for an employment led mixed use development granted in May 2014. This application will generate significant employment opportunities during construction and operational phases. The use of the brownfield site to promote economic growth is supported by the Future Wales Act 2020-2040. Accordingly the principle of development for a papermill is acceptable.
- 1.04 The scale of the proposal is significant with a total floorspace of 124,000 square metres and building heights ranging from between 10 metres to a maximum of 39 metres for the high bay warehouse. The height is a specific requirement of the applicant to maximise productivity. The development will have a striking visual presence and will be visible from a wide area. A comprehensive Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has been completed and the Council concurs with its findings. Careful incorporation of external materials, together with the layout of the site to ensure the tallest buildings sit against the backdrop of Deeside Industrial Park minimise any visual intrusion.
- 1.05 A significant matter with regards to this application are the ecological implications of the development on statutory and non-statutory designations (SAC/SSSI) and on protected species. Natural Resources Wales and the County Ecologist have worked closely with the Local Authority and the applicant to ensure that the development will not cause any adverse ecological impact. The applicant has provided a comprehensive scheme of mitigation to provide reassurance and long term protection.
- 1.06 Initial concerns with regards to marine quality have been overcome and a negligible rise in river temperature from the discharge is not considered to cause any impact on the SAC/SSSI or fish. Additionally, any effect on protected species including birds, bats and otters has been well-thought-out and mitigated for. No objections are raised from NRW or the County Ecologist.
- 1.07 As Members may be aware the site is located within a defined C1 Flood Zone. A comprehensive Flood Consequences Assessment has been submitted with the application which has been modelled on the agreed mitigation scheme as part of the outline planning permission.

Finished Floor Levels (FFL) across the site are, with the exception of the high bay warehouse) within the previously agreed parameters and both the Council and NRW are satisfied that the proposed alterations to the high bay warehouse are sufficient to minimise risk. There are no objections with regards to flood risk.

- 1.08 Further material planning considerations including highway safety; air quality and impact on historical assets have been fully and satisfactorily assessed.
- 1.09 In conclusion, this application proposes the erection of a new papermill on land within the strategic mixed use Airfields site. The principle of development is compliant with both local adopted and emerging development plans, together with national policy. Concerns regarding ecological impacts, flood risk and visual appearance are material but have been adequately addressed by the applicant. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the inclusion of conditions.

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

2.01 Conditions

- Compliance with the approved plans
- Noise assessment
- Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Full Travel Plan and Transport Implementation Strategy.
- Sealand Bank Culvert upgrade works completed satisfactorily
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Protected Species (Otter) protection
- Submission of a Biosecurity scheme
- Landscaping scheme implementation
- Completion of off-site highway works prior to occupation of the building

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member

Councillor Christine Jones – Requests committee determination due to the nature of the development and the proximity to nearby houses.

Sealand Community Council

No objections received to the proposal

Community and Business Protection

Supports the application in principle it is recommended that a condition is attached to any permission that may be granted that will require the pollution studies be repeated (particularly the Noise assessment) once the plant is operational in order to demonstrate

compliance and identify any unexpected issues/exceedances and potential improvements so they can be dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru

Initial comments required clarification that the proposed development would not interfere with the rising main which is located close to the site. The applicant has confirmed, in conjunction with Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru that the rising main is located outside of the red edge of application boundary and will not be affected by the proposal.

Natural Resources Wales

The development raises significant concerns with regards to matters including flood risk, protection of designated areas such as the SSSI/SAC and protected species. However, NRW are satisfied that these concerns can be overcome by attaching appropriately worded conditions (which have been included in the list of conditions above) relating to a construction environmental management plan, flood risk, protected species and biosecurity are included on any consent.

County Ecologist

The shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment as submitted with the application is considered satisfactory. Any impact on protected species is adequately mitigated for and can be secured by condition. There is no significant effect on protected species.

CADW

The impact of the proposed development on the setting of the registered Shotton Steelworks Garden historic park and garden has been assessed in a Technical Paper by BWB Consulting. This assessment concludes that there will be a minor/slight, but not significant, adverse impact on the setting of the registered historic park and garden. CADW concur with this conclusion. Therefore no objection is raised.

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT)

There is a negligible impact on cultural heritage remains within Plot C and no significant visual impact. It is understood that the WWII airfield defence pill boxes will not be impacted and if this is the case then there would be no further requirement for recording these structures which should be retained in their present form and location.

Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA)

No aerodrome safeguarding objections received in relation to the proposal

Airbus

No response received at time of writing report

Highways Development Control

No objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions relating to the submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan and a Full Travel Plan and Transport Implementation Strategy.

Welsh Government

The outline planning permission for this site required the completion of a number of off-site highway works once the development reached a trigger. That trigger has been met but the works not completed. Recommends the inclusion of a condition requiring that those works be completed prior to occupation of the building.

Public Rights of Way

No response received at time of writing report

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service

No objections to the proposal

4.00 PUBLICITY

4.01 Press Notice, Site Notice and Neighbour Notification received. No responses received at time of writing report

5.00 SITE HISTORY

5.01 062898

Application for approval of reserved matters following Outline Approval reference 061125 for the erection of 368 no. dwellings. – Approved 22.02.22

059938

Application for the approval of details reserved by condition nos. 7 (sustainable drainage scheme), 15 (landscaping) and 19 (construction environmental management plan) attached to planning permission ref. (058990) – Partially Discharges 13.08.19

059903

Application for the approval of details reserved by condition nos. 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36 & 41 attached to planning permission ref. 058990 – Approved 19.08.19

059514

Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval for the erection of 283 no. dwellings. – Approved 25.09.19

058990

Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission. (049320) – Approved 25.10.18

058950

Application for approval of reserved matters phase 1 informal landscaping and POS following outline approval. (049320) – Approved 13.03.19

058531

Application for the approval of details reserved by condition no. 27 (construction management plan) attached to planning permission ref. 049320 – Approved 02.08.18

058514

Application for the approval of details reserved by condition nos. 5 (phasing scheme) 6 (development brief), 30 (highway works/transport implementation strategy), 34 (framework travel plan) and 38 (scheme for the layout, design and timetable for implementation of works) attached to planning permission ref. 049320 – Approved 24.08.18

058508

Application for the approval of details reserved by condition nos. 5 (construction environmental management plan) and 6 (ecological compliance audit report) attached to planning permission ref. 057404 – Approved 07.08.18

058506

Non-material amendment following grant of planning permission 057404 – Approved 06.07.18

058452

Non-material amendment following grant of planning permission 057404 Amendment to shape of area for proposed temporary stockpiles of imported fill materials – Approved 14.06.18

058244

Application for approval of details reserved by condition No5 & No6 attached to planning permission ref 057404 – Partially Discharges 17.05.18

057404

Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval 049320 for phase one enabling works comprising an access road, surface water drainage, landscaping and engineering works to create developments platforms – Approved 09.03.18

054488

Reserved matters application for phase 1 of the highway works and associated infrastructure works following outline approval 049320 for a mixed use development and associated infrastructure – Approved 01.03.16

051764

Temporary contractors compound to facilitate flood defence strengthening works – Approved 15.04.14

051139

Discharge of condition no.24 (Framework Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy) attached to planning permission ref: 049320 – Approved 25.09.13

050730

Engineering works to provide flood defence strengthening along 1.5km of the River Dee embankment, to include sheet piling to a maximum depth below ground of 12m and a minimum height of 7.2m AOD and a proposed temporary access route and site compound – Approved 25.06.13

049320

Outline application for the redevelopment of a strategic brownfield site for an employment led mixed use development with new accesses and associated infrastructure including flood defences and landscaping. – Approved 07.01.13

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan

STR1 – New Development

STR3 – Employment

STR7 – Natural Environment

GEN1 – General Requirements for Development

D1 – Design Quality, Location & Layout

D2 – Design

D3 – Landscaping

L1 – Landscape Character

AC2 – Pedestrian Provision and Public Rights of Way

AC3 – Cycling Provision

AC4 – Travel Plans for Major Traffic Generating Development

AC13 – Access & Traffic Impact

AC18 – Parking Provision & New Development

HSG2A – Strategic Mixed Use Development, Land NW of Garden City

EM1 – General Employment Land Allocations (12)

WB1 - Species Protection

WB2 - Sites of International Importance

WB3 - Statutory Sites of National Importance

EWP12 – Pollution

EWP13 – Nuisance

EWP14 – Derelict and Contaminated Land

EWP16 – Water Resources

EWP17 – Flood Risk

Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes
SPGN No. 3 - Landscaping
SPGN No. 11 – Parking Standards

National Policy
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11
Future Wales Act 2020-2040
TAN 11: Noise
TAN 12: Design
TAN 18: Transport

As the site forms part of the strategic mixed use allocation of HSG2A the principle of mixed use development including the B1 (office accommodation) and B2 (industrial production) and B8 (distribution) uses proposed is established.

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.01 Introduction

This application seeks planning permission for the proposed erection of a paper processing mill on land at Plot C, The Airfields, Northern Gateway. The application proposes the construction of buildings to facilitate paper processing and an automated high bay warehouse, together with associated infrastructure. New drainage proposals together with a water treatment plant, which will result in discharge from the site into the River Dee.

7.02 The main issues to consider in determination of this application are the principle of development having regard to local and national planning policy together with environmental impacts.

7.03 Site Description

The application site comprises of to an area of land extending approximately 23.74 hectares (58.67 acres) in size and forms part of the former RAF Sealand 'South Camp' site, now referred to as the Airfields, which forms part of the Northern Gateway Strategic Mixed Use Development site.

7.04 The site currently comprises managed grassland. It does not have any of the former RAF Camp building bases and site roads that were removed in the phase 1 enabling works associated with the Airfields site. The Site is flat with a group of trees along the north western boundary on the bank of the Shotwick Brook and a hedge along the western boundary.

7.05 Beyond the northern boundary of the application site is the Northern Drain which will be widened and the banks reprofiled as part of enabling works to facilitate Plot C to be delivered separately by the landowner. The north and western perimeter of the application site

abuts the existing disused rail corridor which now incorporates the cycling and walking route known as the Chester Millennium Greenway. Beyond the National Cycle Route is Deeside Industrial Park (DIP).

7.06 To the north western boundary of the Site is the Shotwick Brook. Beyond the eastern and southern boundaries of the application site will be the Welsh Government's proposed Commercial Spine Road Phases 2 and 3. Separating the Application Site and the Commercial Spine Road are proposed drainage swales, which will also connect into the proposed new swale between the Application Site and Plot D.

7.07 Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of a new paper processing mill and production facility (B2, B8 use class) with ancillary B1a office space and associated infrastructure, access and landscaping on the former Airfields site.

7.08 Whilst the application site is identified for B1, B2 and B8 employment development as part of its allocation and has outline planning permission, the applicants bespoke operational requirements are such that they utilise buildings of heights exceeding the maximum parameters approved with the outline consent of 30m. As a result, a new full planning permission is required.

Phasing

7.09 The proposed new papermill will be developed in three phases comprising of manufacturing and production area (B2 use class), ancillary offices (B1a use class), and a warehouse section, (B8 use class) with car parking and HGV parking.

7.10 Phase 1 of the development extends the length of the Site and proposes a building which is 501.85m in length from east to west across the Site and is 375.35 wide from north to south across the Site (including the finished product high bay warehouse and dispatch). The Mill comprises the following components (from west to east) pulp warehouse, paper mill, jumbo reels storage warehouse building, converting hall, dispatch area, workshop and staff social area and automated 10 level finished product high bay warehouse. The water treatment plant and mill station (which comprises the electrical generators 11kV) are detached buildings in the north eastern corner of the Site. In addition, a two storey office building is proposed as part of phase 1.

7.11 Phases 2 and 3 of the development sees the development of further processing buildings within the site.

7.12 Once completed a total of 124,000 square metres of floorspace will be operational. Building heights vary across the site from 10 metres

above finished floor levels up to 39.65 metres of the high bay warehouse.

Principle of Development

7.13 The site forms part of the strategic mixed use development allocation HSG2A land North West of Garden City within the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan. The Airfields and the Former Corus, Garden City site together make up the 'Northern Gateway', a comprehensive mixed use redevelopment which takes advantage of the strategic location and the availability of previously developed land.

7.14 Both component sites have the benefit of outline planning permission which as part of the approved mixed use includes a large commitment to providing employment generating, commercial and industrial development opportunities within the Deeside Enterprise Zone. In addition to the site's mixed use allocation, the site also falls within employment allocation EM1 (12) which allows for B1, B2 and B8 employment uses.

7.15 The proposed development will generate significant employment opportunities not only during the construction phases but once operational it is expected that more than 400 full time employment (FTE) jobs will be created.

7.16 The site's allocation for mixed use reflects both the strategy of the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan and the principles embodied in Planning Policy Wales. Furthermore, the Future Wales Plan identifies this area of Deeside as one for the promotional of economic growth and employment opportunities. In this context, there is a clear policy framework supporting the principle of commercial development on this site. The location of these proposed B1, B2 and B8 uses within Plot C of the Airfields site conforms with the approved Masterplan for the site.

Highways

7.17 The proposed development will be accessed from roads (as yet to be constructed) granted planning consent under reference 063191; the proposed road layout fully accommodates the access requirements of all three phases of the current application. The application also provides for car parking for the phases of development, HGV parking and appropriate turning facilities.

7.18 An Interim Travel Plan was supplied to support the application to consider matters including traffic flows and junction capabilities. The assessment of the impacts has shown that no higher significance of effects than a minor adverse impact was shown. The contents are considered acceptable for the purposes of determining the application but a full Travel Plan will need to be submitted for approval and it is recommended that this can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition. The Full Travel Plan should cover issues including

objectives to promote the level of public transport use to and from the site; consideration of existing bus services including the Deeside shuttle; possible changes to existing bus stops on Welsh Road.

- 7.19 Subject to the inclusion of conditions relating to the Full Travel Plan and Construction Traffic Management Plan then the proposal is considered acceptable from a Highways Development Control perspective.
- 7.20 Flood Risk
The site lies entirely in Zone C1 as defined by the Development Advice Map (DAM) referred to in TAN15: Development & Flood Risk (2004).
- 7.21 The flood risk criteria assessed in this application refer back to the standards and flood risk parameters agreed in 2013 when outline planning approval was secured. Even though this is a full planning application the Local Authority are satisfied for this approach as has been adopted across the rest of the Northern Gateway reserved matters application be applied to this site.
- 7.22 The application has been submitted with a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) and the ES's Water chapter. The report refers to the FCA and hydraulic modelling work undertaken by Weetwood in support of the Plots C and D enabling works application (ref: 061986), which was approved in June 2021. This application involved some of the approved flood mitigation measures including works to Shotwick Brook and Northern Drain, and construction of a swale between Plots C and D.
- 7.23 The FCA has identified that in the baseline scenario, the site is at risk of flooding from both fluvial sources (Shotwick Brook and Garden City Drain) and from the tidal River Dee. The modelling outputs referred to in the FCA are based on the modelling work undertaken by Weetwood in support of application 061986. In order to mitigate the identified flood risks from fluvial and tidal sources, the FCA proposes to set the development platform level at 4.83 m AOD, and the finished floor levels (FFL) of most of the proposed buildings to 4.98 m AOD or higher. These proposed measures are in accordance with the approved Amended Flood Mitigation Plan.
- 7.24 However, the finished floor level of one of the proposed structures (the High Bay Warehouse (HBW)) does not comply with the measures agreed in the Amended Flood Mitigation Plan, as the proposed finished floor level is to be set below the agreed level, at 4.60 m AOD. The FCA explains that this lower finished floor level is needed to allow effective operation of the dispatch building and associated loading bays. In order to mitigate for this, an in-situ retaining concrete wall will be directly tied into the floor slab of the High Bay Warehouse. The FCA also recommends measures to

ensure that the warehouse is designed to be watertight. Whilst this element of the proposal does not appear to comply with the previously agreed mitigation measures, the Council and Natural Resources Wales acknowledge that there are exceptional operational circumstances as to why a deviation from the agreed mitigation measures is needed. The proposed mitigation minimises the risk of internal flooding adequately and in accordance with TAN 15.

- 7.25 Section 6.2.4 of the FCA provides an assessment of the proposed development on flood risk elsewhere, referring to modelling work undertaken by Weetwood in support of the Plots C and D enabling works FCA. It is concluded that the modelling work undertaken demonstrates that the impacts on flood risk elsewhere are acceptable, based on the flood risk parameters agreed at the outline planning stage. As such, there is no increased risk of flooding anticipated elsewhere.
- 7.26 Whilst the FCA satisfies the parameters of the original outline application (with the exception of the High Bay Warehouse), it should be noted that the work undertaken is based on a scenario where the upgrading of the Sealand Bank Farm culvert has taken place. Upgrading of the Sealand Bank Farm culvert is one of the mitigation measures outlined in the original FCA prepared in support of the outline application for the Airfields site. Concerns were previously raised by NRW that this upgrade would not be undertaken prior to subsequent phases of the development occurring, because the culvert lies within land outside the applicant's control. This led to a planning condition being included on the Phase 1 enabling works consent, stipulating that if the upgrade works had not been completed prior to commencement of Phase 2, an additional FCA would need to be prepared, based on the upgrade works not being undertaken. This FCA was submitted under application 060575 and presented an alternative mitigation strategy (along with the Alternative Flood Mitigation Plan) for the site. It was agreed that this strategy should be referred to for subsequent applications, until the upgrade works have been completed.
- 7.27 The FCA states that "the target date for completion of the culvert works is March 2022". The Local Authority are aware that works to the replacement culvert have commenced and accordingly the target date is considered achievable. However, to provide complete security it is recommended that if planning permission is granted that a condition be imposed ensuring that the Sealand Bank culvert upgrade be completed prior to commencement of this development.
- 7.28 Ecological Matters
The application site is located within a zone of influence which includes eight statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites. The closest of these is the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

which is located directly to the southern boundary of the site. Although the proposed main buildings are some distance away from these sites, the boundary extends to the River Dee to allow the discharge of waste water.

7.29 The applicant and planning officers have engaged with Natural Resources Wales and the County Ecologist with regards to the ecological implications of the development. Due to the scale and operational design of the proposed papermill there is a potential for significant ecological issues which have been addressed at length. Those issues include:

- The impact on the SAC/SSSI
- Water environment and environmental management
- Impact on fish
- Ornithology
- Air quality
- Bats
- Otters and water vole
- Biosecurity

7.30 The application has been supplied with a comprehensive technical paper and initial Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to provide analysis and mitigation on any likely effects to these and wider designated areas. The proposed mitigation relates to the potential operational impacts on the River Dee SAC/SSSI arising from the discharge into the Dee and ensures that the proposed effluent would not significantly alter the condition of the river.

7.31 Natural Resources Wales have confirmed that subject to the inclusion of a number of ecological conditions to any planning consent then they raise no objection to the proposal.

7.32 Water Quality
An updated Marine Discharge Assessment has been supplied which indicates that there will be a negligible rise of 0.5 degree rise in river temperature arising from the discharge. However, the assessment does fail to consider the potential release of contaminated sediment as a result of construction works. It is recommended that this information can be secured by way of a condition requiring a full CEMP to be submitted. Subject to the suitably worded condition there are no issues from a water quality perspective.

7.33 From a fisheries perspective, the construction and more importantly operational phases of the development could have a significant affect on fish features of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC (Atlantic salmon) and Dee Estuary SAC (river lamprey and sea lamprey). However the minimal temperature increase and mitigation as proposed in the outline CEMP are considered satisfactory.

Ornithology

- 7.34 The application has been supplied with historic and newly undertaken bird surveys of the area. Broadly the findings suggest that estuarine habitats in the vicinity of the proposed works do not support significant aggregations of roosting or foraging waders and wildfowl species.
- 7.35 The recent surveys support the conclusion that there is low use of the mudflats in the vicinity of the development and therefore it is concluded that there is unlikely to be any significant affect either during construction or when operational.

Air Quality

- 7.36 Once operational the papermill will produce a total of 24MW of on-site generated electricity. Air quality assessments for the development concluded the impacts arising from airborne nitrogen deposition on the River Dee SAC and Dee Estuary SAC / Ramsar would be insignificant and none of the estuarine habitats listed for the Dee Estuary SAC which are sensitive to nitrogen deposition. The assessment demonstrates that any air quality impacts from the proposal would be insignificant on protected species or designations.

Bats

- 7.37 The application has been supplied with a bat report which details that a sensitive lighting scheme has been developed for the site to ensure that the most sensitive areas of the site are not subject to excess lux levels to avoid potential disturbance of foraging/commuting bats. The development is considered to represent a lower risk for bats as it is not likely to be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.
- 7.38 Furthermore, the proposed development is not likely to harm or disturb the bats or their breeding sites and resting places at this site, provided the avoidance measures described in the bat report are implemented.

Otter and Water Vole

- 7.39 The embankment where the discharge is proposed is not considered suitable for use as otter holts or lying up areas due to the lack of suitable cover and the existing recreational use (cycle path /footpath). Otters are known to use Shotwick brook and associated "drains" within and adjacent to the Northern Gateway development site. The key issue is to ensure that this development does not affect access to these dispersal/foraging routes. This has been assured through adoption of the Framework Ecological Mitigation Strategies (FEMS) for the wider Deeside Airfields and Northern Gateway Development sites. The papermill development will not result in any additional barriers to movement. Daylight working will avoid disturbance to otters active at night and any excavations will be covered at night to prevent open hazards. In addition, the works will not be lit during

construction or operation. These activities can be conditioned through a conservation plan.

Biosecurity

7.40 Biosecurity is a material consideration in determination of this application owing to the nature and location of the proposal. In this case, biosecurity issues concern invasive non-native species and diseases. It is recommended that a condition be imposed on any planning consent requiring the submission of a Biosecurity Risk Assessment.

7.41 Due to the nature of the proposed development the Local Authority has maintained that the protection of ecological matters is a significant material planning consideration when determining this application. The ecological matters are complex and wide ranging. The applicant has supplied significant evidence to demonstrate that there development will not give rise to any adverse impact. Whilst Natural Resources Wales and the Local Authority require the safeguarding of proposed mitigation and the provision of some further information by way of a condition, fundamentally the existing supplementary documents are considered satisfactory to support the proposal.

Scale and Appearance

7.42 The phasing of the proposed papermill is such that phase 1 will see the largest development of floorspace creating the mill processing plant and most of the automated finished high bay warehouse. Phase 2 is the smallest scale of development incorporating extensions to the existing processing plant. Phase 3 provides a new processing plant to the front of the site and an extension to the high bay warehouse.

7.43 The scale of the development is not insignificant and once fully built out will be highly visible within the site and from wider vistas. A comprehensive Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has been supplied with the application which concludes that whilst there may be a minor impact on wider visual vistas, these are minimal when considering the context of the site.

7.44 The applicant has given careful consideration to matters such as incorporation of external cladding to reflect sunlight and provide a translucent effect. Additionally, wherever possible the layout of the site has been considered so that the high bay warehouse for example is located to the north of the site and farthest away from residential properties or historical assets. Accordingly, whilst the scale of the development cannot be underestimated, the Local Authority are mindful of both the operational and local constraints of the site (i.e. floor levels due to flood mitigation). Additionally, significant appreciation needs to given to the wider site context and that Deeside Industrial Park and existing large scale developments already exist in the locality.

7.45 Accordingly I concur with the findings of the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.

Heritage Assets

7.46 The application site is not directly adjacent to any Listed Buildings or historic parks and gardens. However, the Grade II Listed John Summers Building and the Shotton Steelworks Garden historic park and garden border the neighbouring former Corus land. The scale of this development is such that consideration of any negative impact must be deliberated.

7.47 CADW and the Councils Conservation Officer have been consulted on the application which has been supplied with a technical paper. The paper concludes that there will minor/slight but not significant, adverse impact on the setting of either the Listed Building or the historic parks and gardens.

7.48 Both CADW and the Council concur with the findings of the technical paper. As above, the development will give rise to a minor appearance on the landscape, this must be weighed against the wider context of the site. In the case of the Grade II Listed Building, wider vistas of the site include Tata Steel, Deeside Industrial Park and the Deeside Power UK Station. Additionally, the outline planning permission and approved masterplan for the former Corus site indicated the provision of commercial/industrial units to the rear of the Grade II Listed Building.

7.49 Taking all the above into consideration the impact of the proposed new paper mill is not felt to give rise to any significant impact on the setting of historical assets close to the site.

8.00 CONCLUSION

This application seeks planning permission for the development of Plot C on the Airfields, Northern Gateway site, to provide a new papermill facility. Works include the provision of paper processing plants, high bay warehouse, ancillary buildings and associated infrastructure. The scale and nature of the proposal is such that the development falls within Schedule 2 of the EIA regulations.

The application site is located within a strategic mixed use development site which has the benefit of an extant planning permission for B1, B2 and B8 uses. The principle of this development on the former brownfield land is supported both in local adopted plan policy (HSG2A) and national planning policy (PPW11 and the Future Wales Plan).

Construction and operational phases of the development could give rise to significant environmental impacts, including on marine quality and protected species. The applicant has provided comprehensive

studies and evidence to prove that subject to appropriate mitigation there will be no noticeable impact arising from the development. Matters including flood risk and air quality have also been addressed.

Whilst the scale of the development cannot be underestimated, particularly the building heights, Members must be aware of the context of this site with existing industrial units both within the Airfields site and on Deeside Industrial Park to the rear. Careful incorporation of design choices and layout minimise any impact on the wider landscape or historical assets.

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposal satisfies planning policy and I therefore recommend that planning permission is granted subject to the imposition of conditions as set out within paragraph 2.01 of this report.

8.01 Other Considerations

The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the recommended decision.

The Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

The Council has had due regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Council has had due regard to its duty under Section 3 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the recommended decision.

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Planning Application & Supporting Documents
National & Local Planning Policy
Responses to Consultation
Responses to Publicity

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