

Report of the Head of Development Management and Building Control

- Address:** HIGH VIEW FARM NEWYEARS GREEN LANE HAREFIELD
- Development:** Regularisation of the existing green waste composting operations and proposed extension to the green waste open windrow compost maturation yard, construction of a storage container, site offices, welfare building, weighbridge/weighbridge offices, 2 no. leachate holding tanks, 2 no. 180kW generator sets, landscaping and areas of ecological enhancement, including a change of use of the land from pasture to a waste management use.
- LBH Ref Nos:** 39755/APP/2023/652
- Drawing Nos:**
- GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-01 Rev 04 Site Location Plan
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-02 Rev 06 Site Layout Plan Bund Markup
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-03 Rev 02 Site Location Plan (including HS2 boundary)
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-04 Rev 01 Elevations of Proposed Leachate Tanks
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-05 Rev 0 Elevations of Store
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-06 Rev 0 Elevations of Welfare Unit
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-07 Rev 0 Elevations of Office Unit
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-08 Rev 0 Elevations of Weighbridge Office
 - GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-09 Rev 03 Site Layout Plan (including biodiversity net gain)
 - 001 Rev Topographical Survey, Proposed Final Levels
 - ALD938_PL401_Rev P02 Planting Plan
 - ALD938_SL601_Rev P01 Bund Sections
 - ALD938_PL401_RevP01 Planting Plan
 - BMD.21.0069.DRE.902 Revision C Habitat Plan
 - BMD.21.0069.DRE.903 Revision B Habitat Plan Extension
 - Planning Statement, prepared by GP Planning, dated March 2023
 - Response to the GLA Report, prepared by GP Planning, dated September 2023
 - Energy Efficiency Plan, authored by James Cooper, dated February 2023
 - Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment, prepared by Planet Mark, dated July 2023
 - Circular Economy Statement, authored by James Cooper, Envar, dated September 2023.
 - Flood Risk Assessment, Revision 1.3 dated 08-02-23, prepared by Pluviam Environmental
 - Pluvial Review and Drainage Letter Report, prepared by Pluviam Environmental, dated 8 August 2023
 - Air Quality & Odour Assessment, Revision 2 dated 15-02-23, prepared by Entran
 - Odour Management Plan, Revision 11A dated 18-03-22, prepared by Envar
 - Noise Assessment, prepared by LF Acoustics, dated February 2023

Ecological Assessment (ref. BMD.21.0069.RPE/P1.802.-.Ecology), prepared by BMD dated February 2023
Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (ref.BMD.21.0069.RPE.IA.803.-.Biodiversity Net Gain Plan), prepared by BMD dated February 2023
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ALD938-22 RP901 Revision P02 Landscape and Visual Assessment Report
ALD938_LD1020 Rev P01 Viewpoint 1 overmark of approx. bund location
ALD938_LD1021 Rev P01 Viewpoint 2 overmark of approx. bund location
ALD938_LD1022 Rev P01 Viewpoint 3 overmark of approx. bund location
ALD938_LD1023 Rev P01 Viewpoint 4 overmark of approx. bund location
ALD938_LD1024 Rev P01 Viewpoint 5 overmark of approx. bund location
ALD938_LD1017 Rev P01 Viewpoint 6 baseline
ALD938_LD1018 Rev P01 Viewpoint 7 baseline
ALD938_LD1019 Rev P01 Viewpoint 8 baseline
Fire Prevention Plan, Rev 5, dated 09-05-2023

Date Plans received: 06-03-2023 **Date(s) of Amendments(s):**
Date Application valid 08-03-2023

1. SUMMARY

Planning permission is sought to regularise the buildings/infrastructure on the existing site of the green waste composting operations and the extension of the maturation yard to the north and east. An ecological enhancement area in the north-west part of the site, designed to achieve biodiversity net gain, is also proposed.

The site would continue to receive source separated green waste which turns into compost through an organic open air maturation process using windrows. The main source of incoming material is green waste from the West London Waste Authority.

With regard to the principle of the use at this site, the existing site benefits from permanent permission for composting. For the avoidance of doubt this permission allows up to 75,000 tonnes per annum of organic waste through the existing facilities at land to the North and South of Newyears Green Lane. This application seeks to extend the area of the compost maturation pad on the site North of Newyears Green Lane. This is principally to maximise the permitted annual throughput of green waste, while complying with the Environment Agency's permitting requirements. There is no proposed increase in permitted annual tonnage throughput.

Composting is a form of industrial use which is not normally considered appropriate in a Green Belt location. The extension of the maturation site for composting is therefore contrary to Local Plan Policy DME1 4 and constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt. There is therefore a requirement for 'very special circumstances' to be demonstrated.

The applicant's 'very special circumstances' case is based on the following summarised matters:

- Operational need to extend the compost maturation yard (related to compliance with updated Environment Agency guidance requiring a reduction in fire risk and to minimise odour generation; and the cessation of the In-vessel composting (IVC) facility/ food waste recycling and an increase in green waste recycling);
- Waste management capacity and need;
- Environmental benefits including the need for sustainable waste management/landfill diversion and maintaining recycling/recovery rates, waste hierarchy and climate change (this is related to contribution to recycling targets, carbon savings and moving waste up the waste hierarchy); and
- Economic and employment benefits (this is related to maintaining and increasing employment in the proposed development and sustaining an existing rural based business).

By providing waste recovery, it is considered that the proposal would make a significant contribution to the Government's policy on climate change, which the National Planning Policy Framework confirms is central to sustainable development. In addition, planning policies aim to increase green waste recycling in line with the Government's Waste Strategy. The proposed development would continue to make a significant contribution to waste management in the Borough and the surrounding area of West London, and maximise the diversion of waste from landfill, meeting the Mayor's recycling and composting targets for the London region.

It is considered that the applicant's proposal is compliant with the Mayor of London's aspirations of moving towards a circular economy. The proposed development would make a significant and important contribution in providing organic waste management capacity for the West London and west of London areas and would continue to divert waste from landfill, moving waste up the waste hierarchy.

It is considered that the proposal accords with the aims of national, regional and local waste policies and should be supported. Furthermore, there are particular locational needs in terms of large areas required for the open maturation process.

It is therefore considered that there are 'very special circumstances' to justify the land expansion of the maturation site (north of Newyears Green Lane), to the extent that the harm on the openness of the Green Belt is outweighed. Therefore, no objections are raised to the principle of the proposed extension of the windrow composting site area.

The existing operations have previously been assessed through a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (ES), which accompanied a previous planning application. It has been determined through the Council's Screening Opinion that no further Environmental Statement (under the Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations) is required for the proposed extension to the windrow compost maturation yard (ref. 39755/APP/2022/3726 dated 8th December 2023).

No additional infrastructure apart from 2 leachate storage tanks and 3 small mobile buildings are proposed and it is not considered that the activities would be visually intrusive, increase the built-up nature of the site or harm the openness of this part of the Green Belt.

In terms of the throughput of waste at 75,000 tonnes per annum, this has already been approved. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of traffic generation and on highway safety grounds. In terms of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) associated with site operations, this would not change and a condition restricting HGV vehicular movements is re-imposed on this recommendation, from the earlier application permitting the permanent composting operations (ref.12579/APP/2021/2010 dated

31st August 2022).

With regard to contamination and drainage matters, it is considered that subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would not compromise the statutory functions of the Environment Agency, the risk of flooding would be minimised and the quality of the water environment would be protected.

In terms of air quality and odour emissions, of which there have been some complaints, the proposed extension of the maturation yard would require a variation to the Environmental Permit for the site, which is regulated by the Environment Agency. As part of this Permit variation process, detailed assessments of odour management, monitoring and control techniques would have to be submitted for approval to that Agency. In addition, a condition requiring an updated and improved odour management plan has been included in this recommendation. Given these safeguards, it is anticipated that these measures would reduce the risk of odour release, thereby safeguarding the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining properties, and residents further afield.

Subject to conditions, principally to address environmental impacts, approval is recommended.

2. RECOMMENDATION

1. That the application be referred to the Secretary of State as a departure from the Development Plan.

2. That the application be referred back to the Greater London Authority for Stage 2.

3. That should the Secretary of State not call in the application, or should the Mayor not direct the Council under Article 6 to refuse the application, or issue a direction under Article 7 that he is to act as the Local Planning Authority for the purposes of determining the application, the application be deferred for the determination by the Head of Development Management and Building Control under delegated powers to approve the application.

4. That should the Secretary of State or Greater London Authority request new conditions or changes to conditions that these are deferred to the Head of Development Management and Building Control under delegated powers to amend/update.

5. That if the application is approved, the following conditions be attached:

1. T8 Time Limit - full planning application 3 years

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. NONSC Waste Tonnage

The cumulative total of waste input for the combined composting operations site (the site boundaries outlined in red and blue on drawing ref. GPP/E/WLC/EX/22/01 Rev 04 comprised of both sites to the north and south of Newyears Green Lane) shall not exceed a maximum of 75,000 tonnes per annum.

REASON

In order to comply with the terms of the application, to safeguard the amenity of the Green Belt and to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced in accordance with Policies EM2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DME1 12, DME14 and ,DMT2 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policies G2, and T4 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

3. COM4 **Accordance with Approved Plans**

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers:

GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-01 Rev 04 Site Location Plan
GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-02 Rev 06 Site Layout Plan
GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-03 Rev 02 Site Location Plan (including HS2 boundary)
GPP-E-WLC-EX-22-04 Rev 01 Elevations of Proposed Leachate Tanks
GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-05 Rev 0 Elevations of Store
GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-06 Rev 0 Elevations of Welfare Unit
GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-07 Rev 0 Elevations of Office Unit
GPP-E-WLC-EX-23-08 Rev 0 Elevations of Weighbridge Office
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BMD.21.0069.DRE.903 Revision B Habitat Plan Extension

and shall thereafter be retained/maintained for as long as the development remains in existence.

REASON

To ensure the development complies with the provisions the Hillingdon Local Plan, the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

4. COM5 **General compliance with supporting documentation**

The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the following has been completed in accordance with the specified supporting plans and/or documents:

Planning Statement, prepared by GP Planning, dated March 2023
Response to the GLA Report, prepared by GP Planning, dated September 2023

Energy Efficiency Plan, authored by James Cooper, dated February 2023
Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment, prepared by Planet Mark, dated July 2023
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ALD938_LD1020 Rev P01 Viewpoint 1 overmark of approx. bund location

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ALD938_LD1023 Rev P01 Viewpoint 4 overmark of approx. bund location

ALD938_LD1024 Rev P01 Viewpoint 5 overmark of approx. bund location

ALD938_LD1017 Rev P01 Viewpoint 6 baseline

ALD938_LD1018 Rev P01 Viewpoint 7 baseline

ALD938_LD1019 Rev P01 Viewpoint 8 baseline

Fire Prevention Plan, Rev 5, dated 09-05-2023

Thereafter the development shall be retained/maintained in accordance with these details for as long as the development remains in existence, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

To ensure that the development complies with the objectives of relevant Policies in the Hillingdon Local Plan, the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

5. NONSC Restriction of Use - Organic Waste

The composting facility hereby approved shall be used only for the processing of organic biodegradable waste (excluding commercial food waste) and shall not be used for the processing or disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.

REASON

To safeguard the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties in accordance with Policies EM2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policy DME1 12 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) policy SI 8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy WLWP3 of the West London Waste Plan and the NPPF (2023).

6. NONSC Restriction of Use - Customers

The composting facility hereby approved shall accept waste input from local authority and commercial sources only and shall not accept material directly delivered by members of the public.

REASON

To prevent unacceptable levels of traffic generation to the site, in compliance with Policies T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (Nov 2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

7. NONSC Windrows Height Restriction

The windrows on the compost maturation site shall not exceed 2.0 metres in height.

REASON

To protect the visual amenities of the Green Belt and Colne Valley Park, in compliance with Policies EM2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (Nov 2012), Policy DMEI 4 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy G2 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

8. NONSC Stockpiles Height Restriction

The stockpiles on the compost maturation site shall not exceed 3.0 metres in height.

REASON

To protect the visual amenities of the Green Belt and Colne Valley Park, in compliance with Policies EM2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (Nov 2012), Policy DMEI 4 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy G2 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

9. NONSC Construction and Environmental Management Plan

No development shall commence, including any works of demolition, until a detailed Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with HS2 limited and Natural England). The CEMP shall include, but not be limited to, the following details (where appropriate):

- i. a construction programme including a 24-hour emergency contact number;
- ii. complaints procedures, including complaint response procedures;
- iii. air quality mitigation measures, including dust suppression;
- iv. parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors (including measures taken to ensure satisfactory access and movement for existing occupiers of neighbouring properties during construction);
- v. arrangements to demonstrate how any concurrent construction with HS2 works shall not impede the construction of the HS2 works;
- vi. arrangements to minimise the potential for noise and vibration disturbance. This should include details on how any impacts on species and habitats would be avoided or mitigated;
- vii. locations for loading/unloading and storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- viii. details showing the siting, design and maintenance of security hoardings;
- ix. wheel washing facilities and measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- x. site lighting details;
- xi. site drainage control measures. This should also include how chemical and or fuel run-off during construction would be mitigated;
- xii. tree protection measures in accordance with BS 5837:2012;
- xiii. details of ecological mitigation measures including an operational lighting scheme for bats;
- xiv. details of specific mitigation in relation to breeding or foraging black redstart;

- xv. details of biodiversity and arboricultural mitigation measures including a pre-commencement check by an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to determine whether nesting birds are present;
- xvi. a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works in accordance with the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles;
- xvii. An Unexploded Ordnance assessment to be undertaken;
- xviii. Membership of the Considerate Constructors Scheme.
- xiv. Details of waste disposal during construction and how any impacts on species and habitats would be avoided or mitigated.
- xv. Details of how any construction noise or vibration impacts on species and habitats would be avoided or mitigated.
- xvi. Details of how any storage of construction materials or equipment would avoid or mitigate impacts on species and habitats.

The development, including any works of demolition, shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP.

REASON

To safeguard the HS2 Phase One programme and to protect HS2 assets and to avoid damaging the site's nature conservation value, in compliance with Policy EM7 of the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 (2012), policy DMEI 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020), and London Plan Policy G6 (2021).

10. NONSC Construction Logistics Plan

No development shall commence, including any works of demolition, until a detailed Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with HS2 limited). The CLP shall include information on:

- i. forecast programme and construction trips generated;
- ii. booking systems;
- iii. consolidated or re-timed trips;
- iv. secure off -street loading and drop off facilities;
- v. use of logistics and consolidation centres;
- vi. re-use of materials on-site;
- vii. collaboration with other sites in the area;
- viii. use of rail and water for freight;
- ix. implementation of a staff travel plan;
- x. any areas for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors (including measures taken to ensure satisfactory access and movement for existing occupiers of neighbouring properties during construction).

The development, including any works of demolition, shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved CLP.

REASON: To safeguard the HS2 Phase One programme and to protect HS2 assets.

11. NONSC HGV Movements

For the combined composting operations site (the site boundaries outlined in red and blue on drawing ref. GPP/E/WLC/EX/22/01 Rev 04 comprised of both sites to the north and south of Newyears Green Lane) there shall be no more than 100 vehicular movements (one way), of which

there shall be no more than 41 one way HGV (vehicles above 7.5 tonnes) movements in any one working day, involving a cumulative total not exceeding a maximum 75,000 tonnes of waste input each year.

REASON

To safeguard the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties, to safeguard the amenity of the Green Belt and to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced, in compliance with Policies T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy T4 and SI 8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy WLWP3 of the West London Waste Plan and the NPPF (2023).

12. NONSC Deliveries and Servicing Plan

Prior to the first use of the enlarged site hereby approved, a Delivery and Servicing Plan, in line with TfL's Freight and Servicing Action Plan, including tracked vehicle movements where necessary, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out and maintained in full accordance with the approved details.

REASON

To safeguard the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties, to safeguard the amenity of the Green Belt and to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced, in compliance with Policies T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policies T7, T4 and SI 8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy WLWP3 of the West London Waste Plan and the NPPF (2023).

13. NONSC Vehicular Routes - Delivery & Collection Vehicles

All delivery and collection vehicles servicing the development hereby approved shall enter and depart the site using the eastern section of New Years Green Lane, via Breakspear Road.

REASON

To safeguard the amenity of the Green Belt and to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced, in compliance with in compliance with Policies T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (Nov 2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

14. NONSC Travel Plan

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a Travel Plan (for both sites operated by the applicant, including the in-vessel composting site to the south of Newyears Green Lane) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall follow the current Travel Plan Development Control Guidance issued by Transport for London and will include:

- (1) targets for sustainable travel arrangements;
- (2) effective measures for the ongoing monitoring of the Travel Plan;
- (3) a commitment to delivering the Travel Plan objectives; and
- (4) effective mechanisms to achieve the objectives of the Travel Plan by both present and future

occupiers of the development.

The Travel Plan shall also outline the means and methods of:

- (i) recording the numbers of deliveries and collections to the site and provision of this information to the Local Planning Authority.
- (ii) providing information to all operators of the preferred route via Breakspear Road for all vehicles entering and exiting the site
- (iii) transfer of in-vessel composted material from the site to the windrows, located on the adjoining land, north of New Years Green Lane.

The above monitoring details (i) to (iii) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority on a yearly basis.

REASON

To safeguard the amenity of the Green Belt, to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced, to promote sustainable transport where practicable and reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding road network in accordance with London Plan (2016) Policies 6.1 and 6.3 and to comply with Policies EM2, T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

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15. NONSC Wheel Washing - Operational Phase

Provisions shall be made within the site to ensure that all vehicles associated with the operation of the development hereby approved are properly washed and cleaned to prevent the passage of mud and dirt onto the adjoining highway.

REASON

To ensure that the development does not cause danger and inconvenience to users of the adjoining highway, and to ensure that pedestrian and vehicular safety is not prejudiced, in compliance with Policies T1 and E5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMT 1, DMT 2, DMT 5 and DMT 6 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021) and the NPPF (2023).

16. NONSC Air Quality - Odour Management Plan

No development shall commence until an updated and improved Odour Management Plan (OMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The OMP shall specify effective ways to mitigate possible odour impacts on sensitive receptors, with particular focus on receptors downwind of the proposed facility. The measures are to include but not be limited to:

- A) Fencing of odorous operations with focus on downwind receptors.
- B) Minimising evaporation.
- C) Odour neutralizing strategies.

The OMP should be designed to:

- 1) Employ appropriate methods, including monitoring and contingencies, to control and minimise odour pollution.

- 2) Prevent unacceptable odour pollution at all times.
- 3) Reduce the risk of odour releasing incidents or accidents by anticipating them and planning accordingly.

The OMP must include an inventory, with descriptions and quantities, of all potentially odorous solid, liquid and gaseous materials held on site across the full range of operating conditions.

The measures in the agreed scheme shall be maintained throughout the life of the development.

REASON

To ensure that there is a scheme for the control of odours in place so as to avoid unnecessary detrimental impacts on neighbouring and downwind properties, as there is insufficient detail in relation to that within the submitted application, and to comply with Policy D3, Policy D13, Policy E7, and Policy SI8 of the London Plan.

17. NONSC Hours of Operation

No machinery shall be operated, no process shall be carried out and no deliveries taken at or dispatched from the site except between 07:30 hours and 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays, between 07:30 hours and 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays, Bank and public Holidays.

REASON

To safeguard the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties in accordance with Policies EM8 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMEI 12 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policy D14 and SI 8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy WLWP3 of the West London Waste Plan and the NPPF (2023).

18. NONSC Landscaping Scheme - Implementation

All landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved landscaping drawings and documents and shall be completed within the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development.

The new planting and landscape operations should comply with the requirements specified in BS 3936 (1992) 'Nursery Stock, Part 1, Specification for Trees and Shrubs' and in BS 4428 (1989) 'Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (Excluding Hard Surfaces)'. Thereafter, the areas of hard and soft landscaping shall be permanently retained.

Any tree, shrub or area of turfing or seeding shown on the approved landscaping scheme which within a period of 5 years from the completion of development dies, is removed or in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority becomes seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the same place or, if planting in the same place would leave the new tree, hedge or shrub susceptible to disease, then the planting should be in a position to be first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in the next planting season with another such tree, shrub or area of turfing or seeding of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority first gives written consent to any variation.

The approved landscaping shall be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

REASON

To ensure that the proposed development will preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality and provide adequate facilities in compliance with policies DMHB 11, DMHB 14, DMEI 1 and DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) and London Plan Policies G7 and G8 (2021).

19. COM26 Ecology

Prior to the first use of the extended site area approved by this permission, an Ecological Enhancement and Management Plan to support long-term maintenance and habitat creation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This plan shall also include timelines for its implementation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

REASON

To avoid damaging the site's nature conservation value, in compliance with Policy EM7 of the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 (2012), policy DMEI 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020), and London Plan Policy G6 (2021).

20. NONSC Heritage Record of Hedgerow

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a descriptive record and reporting of the historic hedgerow boundary of Bayhurst Wood shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, prepared by a suitably qualified heritage person. Upon completion, the descriptive record/report will be published in the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER).

REASON

To ensure that an appropriate record is made of the historic hedgerow boundary of Bayhurst Wood that may be affected by the development, in compliance with Policy HE1, Policy DMHB1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Development Management Policies (2020) and London Plan Policy HC1.

21. NONSC Previously Unidentified Contamination

If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

REASON

To ensure that the development is not put at unacceptable risk from, or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels water pollution from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site to comply with the NPPF (2023) and Policy DMEI 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Development Management Policies (2020).

22. NONSC Drainage Scheme - final detailed design & maintenance

Prior to commencement of groundworks (excluding site investigations and demolition), the applicant must submit a final detailed drainage design including drawings and supporting calculations to the Lead Local Flood Authority for review and approval, aligned with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (08/02/2023) and associated drawings. A detailed management plan confirming routine maintenance tasks for all drainage components must also be submitted to demonstrate how the drainage system is to be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

REASON

To prevent the risk of flooding to and from the site in accordance with relevant policy requirements including but not limited to London Plan Policy 5.13, its associated Sustainable Design and Construction SPG, the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and Hillingdon Council's Local Plan Policy EM6.

23. NONSC Drainage Scheme - verification of implementation

No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until evidence (photographs and installation contracts) is submitted to demonstrate that the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the submitted details. The sustainable drainage scheme shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan for all of the proposed drainage components.

REASON

To comply with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, the National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan (Policies 5.12 and 5.13) along with associated guidance to these policies and Hillingdon Council's Local Plan Policy EM6.

24. NONSC Noise Rating Levels

For the lifetime of the development hereby permitted the Rating level of noise caused by its operation shall not exceed:40 dB LAeq 15 min for any fifteen-minute period between 2300 and 0700, and 50 dB LAeq 1 hour for any one-hour period between 0700and 2300, determined one metre free field external to any window of any permanent residential, or equivalently noise sensitive premises, in accordance with 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound' British Standards Institution BS4142 2014.'

REASON

To ensure the recommended internal noise levels set out in 'Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings' BS8233 2014 are achieved with windows partially open for the purposes of ventilation. The night-time limit provides additional protection for vulnerable persons in line with the WHO 2009 Guidelines on night-time noise.

INFORMATIVES

1. I52 Compulsory Informative (1)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

2.

This proposal will require an Environmental Permit variation under the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2016, from the Environment Agency, unless an exemption applies. The applicant is advised to contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 for further advice and

to discuss the issues likely to be raised.

You should be aware that there is no guarantee that a permit will be granted. Additional 'Environmental Permitting Guidance' can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/environmental-permit-check-if-you-need-one>.

The Environment Agency will consider the following areas of potential harm when assessing the permit:

- Management - including maintenance, accidents, incidents, non-conformances and those drawn to the attention of the operator as a result of complaints
- Operations - including permitted activities, waste acceptance, operating techniques and those based on the site location
- Emissions and monitoring - include emissions to water, air and land, fugitive emissions, impact of odour, noise and pests, and monitoring

Should an environmental permit be granted, it would not regulate:

- The on-site storage of any certified Quality Protocol compost produced
- The off-site land spreading or other use of the waste compost produced by the facility

3.

The developer is advised that the application site is in the vicinity of land required to construct and/or operate Phase One of a high-speed rail line between London and the West Midlands, known as High Speed Two. Powers to construct and operate High Speed Two were secured on 23 February 2017 when Royal Assent was granted for Phase One of HS2. Accordingly, the applicant is advised to follow ongoing progress of the HS2 project at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collecti ons/high-speed-rail-london-west-midlands-bill>.

153 Compulsory Informative (2)

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all relevant material considerations, including The London Plan (2021).

DMEI 10	Water Management, Efficiency and Quality
DMEI 11	Protection of Ground Water Resources
DMEI 12	Development of Land Affected by Contamination
DMEI 13	Importation of Material
DMEI 14	Air Quality
DMEI 4	Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land
DMEI 7	Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement
DMEI 9	Management of Flood Risk
DMHB 14	Trees and Landscaping
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
LPP D12	(2021) Fire safety

LPP D13	(2021) Agent of change
LPP D14	(2021) Noise
LPP DF1	(2021) Delivery of the Plan and Planning Obligations
LPP G2	(2021) London's Green Belt
LPP G6	(2021) Biodiversity and access to nature
LPP G7	(2021) Trees and woodlands
LPP G9	(2021) Geodiversity
LPP GG2	(2021) Making the best use of land
LPP HC1	(2021) Heritage conservation and growth
LPP SI1	(2021) Improving air quality
LPP SI12	(2021) Flood risk management
LPP SI13	(2021) Sustainable drainage
LPP SI2	(2021) Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
LPP SI7	(2021) Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
LPP SI8	(2021) Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency
LPP SI9	(2021) Safeguarded waste sites
LPP T4	(2021) Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site has an area of 7.2 hectares on the northern side of Newyears Green Lane. The majority of the site is bound by open land, with four residential dwellings to the south west and St Leonard's Farm to the south east of the site. The site is located within Green Belt.

Vehicular access to the site is from Newyears Green Lane from the southern end of the site. Newyears Green Lane links to the A4180 to the east, which provides access to Rickmansworth to the north and the A40/M40 and M25 motorways to the south and the south west.

The application site operates as an open windrow composting site. The existing waste management site straddles both sides (north and south) of Newyears Green. Whilst not part of this application (and not within the red-lined site boundary), the southern side of the road operates an in-vessel composting facility (IVC) and bulky waste transfer station. As noted, the application site on the northern side of the road contains the compost screening/shredding and maturation area (by open windrows).

There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the vicinity of the site, the nearest being Ruislip Woods (Specifically Bayhust Woods Country Park). This adjoins the northern boundary of the application site where the ecological enhancement area is proposed. The adjacent Ruislip Woods is also a designated Nature Conservation Site of Grade 1 Borough or Metropolitan Importance, is part of Colne Valley Regional Park and is a National Nature Reserve.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

This application seeks planning permission to regularise the buildings/infrastructure on the existing green waste composting site and extend the maturation yard to the north and east. An ecological enhancement area is also proposed to the northwest of the existing site to achieve biodiversity net gain.

The proposed development involves the following elements:

- Laying of an impermeable concrete surface for screening, shredding, processing, storing and maturing of green waste material. This hard-surface pad would be bunded around its perimeter with a concrete curb to ensure total surface water containment;
- Construction of a landscaped perimeter bund/mound using stripped soils;
- Regularisation of a site office, welfare cabin, store, weighbridge and weighbridge office;
- Regularisation on-site of two 180kV generators;
- Car parking for nine vehicles;
- Landscape planting and areas of ecological enhancement; and
- Two additional above ground leachate storage tanks.

The existing maturation windrow area (measuring 6m wide x 210m length) has capacity for four windrows. The proposed site extension (subject to this planning application) would enable the operations to accommodate an additional ten windrows, bringing the proposed capacity to 14 windrows. The largest of these additional window areas would measure 6m wide x 175m length, with a secondary area proposed at 6m wide x 90m length. The longest windrow is proposed at 210 metres long, and the shortest 90 metres in length. The maximum height of these windows is proposed to be 2 metres (which is consistent with the existing operations, whereby the maximum height of 2 metres is secured by condition in the previous planning permission).

The proposed extension to the composting site north of Newyears Geen Lane would enable the applicant to maximise the 75,000 tonnes per annum throughput of green waste permitted for both sites combined (north and south of Newyears Green Lane), while complying with the Environment Agency's permitting requirements and associated guidance.

As noted above, the proposal also seeks retrospective planning permission for the installation of portable buildings that are located within the existing permitted area of the site. The details of these portable buildings are as follows:

- Site office measuring 15.24 metres long by 4.57 metres wide and 2.99 metres high (inclusive of 40cm raised height above the ground). This steel panelled portable building is coloured grey.
- Welfare cabin measuring 9.75 metres long by 3.05 metres wide and 2.99 metres high (inclusive of 40cm raised height above the ground). This steel panelled portable building is coloured grey and its internal layout provides for WCs and hand-basins.
- Store measuring 6.06 metres long by 2.44 metres wide and 2.59 metres high. This shipping container is coloured dark green.
- Weighbridge and office. The weighbridge office measures 15.24 metres long by 4.57 metres wide and 2.99 metres high (inclusive of 40cm raised height above the ground). This steel panelled portable building is coloured grey.

The introduction of a weighbridge on the northern site (subject to this application) would mean that vehicles transporting separated green waste to the composting facility would not need to be weighed

at the southern site first, but could head directly to the green waste site.

The landscaped soil bund using stripped soils is proposed for the perimeter of the site. This would be approximately 3 metres in height.

The two proposed additional above ground leachate storage tanks would deal with surface water runoff from the proposed extension to the compost maturation pad. The proposed extended maturation pad would be laid with an impermeable concrete surface which is curbed around its perimeter to ensure that there is no pollution to groundwaters.

The proposed development would utilise the existing vehicle access from Newyears Green Lane to the south. The existing access has suitable geometry and visibility for HGVs.

3.3 Relevant Planning History

12579/APP/2006/1524 Land Adjacent To Compost Maturation Site Pylon Farm New Years Green Lane Harefield

CHANGE OF USE FROM LOW GRADE AGRICULTURAL LAND TO ALLOW THE NORTHERN EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING COMPOST MATURATION FACILITY

Decision: 17-08-2006 Approved

12579/APP/2006/673 Pylon Farm Newyears Green Lane Harefield

VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 OF PLANNING PERMISSION REF. 2579/M/99/2048 DATED 13/09/2002 TO ALLOW CONTINUED USE OF THE LAND AS AN ORGANIC COMPOSTING SITE.

Decision: 18-08-2006 Approved

12579/APP/2012/2366 West London Composting Land & Land To The North And South Of Newyears Green Lane Harefield

The continuation of existing recycling operations at land to the North and South of New Years Green Lane for an organic composting facility operation to handle a maximum throughput of up to 75,000 tonnes per annum of organic waste for a temporary period of five years.

Decision: 15-09-2015 Approved

12579/APP/2016/4099 Highview Farm Newyears Green Lane Harefield

Details pursuant to the full discharge of condition 3, 8 and 9 and partial discharge of condition 13 (Landscape maintenance plan, a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) and a delivery and Servicing Plan (DSP), bio filters, and Travel Plan), of planning permission ref: 12579/APP/2012/2366 dated 15-09-2015 (Increase in throughput from 50,000 tpa to 75,000 tpa of green waste material for a temporary period of five years).

Decision: 23-10-2020 Approved

12579/APP/2021/2010 West London Composting Ltd, Highview Farm Newyears Green Lane Harefield

The permanent residency of the land to the North and South of Newyears Green Lane for the continued use of an organic composting facility operation to handle a maximum throughput of up to 75,000 tonnes per annum of organic waste, including retrospective retention of two above ground leachate storage tanks and the installation of three freshwater storage tanks.

Decision: 23-06-2022 Approved

12579/M/99/2048 Land At Pylon Farm New Years Green Lane Harefield

CHANGE OF USE FROM AGRICULTURAL TO ORGANIC COMPOSTING SITE (INVOLVING ERECTION OF FOUR 1.5 METRE HIGH DOME WINDROWS)

Decision: 13-09-2002 Approved

39755/APP/2022/3726 High View Farm Newyears Green Lane Harefield

EIA Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) in respect to Envar Composting Ltd. (proposed extension to the existing green waste open windrow compost maturation yard).

Decision: 08-12-2023 No Further
Action(P)

Comment on Relevant Planning History

The two waste management sites owned by the applicant to the north and south of Newyears Green Lane have an extensive planning history. However, the most recent and relevant planning permission in relation to the proposed development was granted on 31st August 2022 under planning reference 12579/APP/2021/2010 for the following:

"The permanent residency of the land to the North and South of Newyears Green Lane for the continued use of an organic composting facility operation to handle a maximum throughput of up to 75,000 tonnes per annum of organic waste, including retrospective retention of two above ground leachate storage tanks and the installation of three freshwater storage tanks."

This planning permission covered land to the north and south of Newyears Green Lane. This application was subject to a Stage 2 Referral to the Mayor of London and was supported (ref. GLA/2021/0755). The proposal was also referred to the Secretary of State in terms of being a departure from the Development Plan (Green Belt). The Secretary of State did not call in the application.

This current application relates only to the land to the North of Newyears Green Lane where the open windrow composting takes place. It is proposed to extend the site area to accommodate a larger compost maturation pad for windrows. As noted above, both the site north (subject to this application) and south of Newyears Green Lane are owned by the applicant (West London Composting Ltd.).

It is also noted that a request for a Screening Opinion for this current proposal was submitted to the Local Planning Authority (ref. 39755/APP/2022/3726 dated 8th December 2023). The LPAs Screening Opinion determined that no further Environmental Statement (under the Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations) is required for the proposed extension to

the windrow compost maturation yard. It can be noted that the existing operations have previously been assessed through a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (ES), which accompanied a previous planning application.

4. Planning Policies and Standards

The Development Plan for the London Borough of Hillingdon currently consists of the following documents:

The Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012)
The Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020)
The Local Plan: Part 2 - Site Allocations and Designations (2020)
The West London Waste Plan (2015)
The London Plan (2021)

Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) is also a material consideration in planning decisions, as well as relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

Local Plan Designation and London Plan

The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.EM2 (2012) Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains

PT1.EM6 (2012) Flood Risk Management

PT1.EM7 (2012) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PT1.EM8 (2012) Land, Water, Air and Noise

Part 2 Policies:

DMEI 4 Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land

DMEI 7 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement

DMHB 14 Trees and Landscaping

DMT 1 Managing Transport Impacts

DMT 2 Highways Impacts

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DMEI 10 Water Management, Efficiency and Quality

DMEI 11 Protection of Ground Water Resources

DMEI 12 Development of Land Affected by Contamination

DMEI 13 Importation of Material

DMEI 14 Air Quality

DMEI 9 Management of Flood Risk

LPP D12 (2021) Fire safety

LPP D13 (2021) Agent of change

LPP HC1 (2021) Heritage conservation and growth

LPP D14 (2021) Noise

LPP DF1 (2021) Delivery of the Plan and Planning Obligations

LPP G2 (2021) London's Green Belt

LPP G6 (2021) Biodiversity and access to nature

LPP G7 (2021) Trees and woodlands

LPP G9 (2021) Geodiversity

LPP GG2 (2021) Making the best use of land

LPP SI1 (2021) Improving air quality

LPP SI12 (2021) Flood risk management

LPP SI13 (2021) Sustainable drainage

LPP SI7 (2021) Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

LPP SI8 (2021) Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency

LPP SI9 (2021) Safeguarded waste sites

LPP SI2 (2021) Minimising greenhouse gas emissions

LPP T4 (2021) Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework

5. Advertisement and Site Notice

5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date: **1st June 2023**

5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date: Not applicable

6. Consultations

External Consultees

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The application has been advertised in the local press as a development that does not accord with the provisions of the development plan. Seven neighbours were consulted. A further round of consultation was conducted, upon receipt of further documentation, and additional information regarding visual impact. The formal consultation period expired on 19th September 2023.

One response to the neighbour consultation has been received which raised the following:

"We already have environmental, health and safety concerns with how the site is currently run and we have raised these with Environment Agency who is currently looking into these issues. If the site is expanded it will only increase the smell, dust, flies and amount of fires that this site already suffers from".

EXTERNAL CONSULTTEES

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY (GLA) - Stage 1 (Summarised)

Land Use Principles:

The proposals represent inappropriate development on Green Belt. In this case, it is considered that the limited additional harm caused to the Green Belt would be outweighed by very special circumstances. The application, therefore, complies with Policy G2 of the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Waste Management:

The proposal would help support the waste policies of the London Plan and complies with London Plan Policy S18.

Transport:

The proposal does not comply with any of the London Plan transport policies. No transport assessment has been submitted, and so TfL are unable to assess the scheme against policy requirements.

Further work is needed related to urban design, energy, whole life-cycle carbon, circular economy, urban greening, sustainable drainage, and air quality.

Recommendation:

That Hillingdon Council be advised that the application does not yet comply with the London Plan. Possible remedies set out in this report (GLA Stage 1 response) could address these deficiencies.

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PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE

Additional information has been submitted by the applicant to address the matters raised by the GLA. In addition, transport matters raised by the GLA and TfL are addressed by the Council's Highways Officer in the consultation response below, and in section 7.10 of this Committee Report.

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TfL)

Summary:

The current proposals do not comply with any of the London Plan transport policies. No transport assessment has been submitted, and so TfL are unable to assess against policy requirements.

Healthy Streets and Vision Zero:

All developments should deliver against the Mayor's Healthy Streets approach, in line with Policy T2. Further information should be provided to demonstrate the measures the applicant is implementing to encourage cycling and to reduce overall vehicle movement to and from the site.

Noting the site's rural location, TfL officers accept that pedestrian routing to the site is limited. Encouraging and protecting cyclists in the area should be a focus for the proposal and this should be demonstrated through further evidence. Noting Newyears Green Lane is used by cyclists, particularly leisure cyclists, TfL strongly recommends a wheel washing facility is provided throughout construction and within final proposals to reduce accidents for riders in line with Vision Zero.

Trip Generation and Highway Impacts:

No trip generation or mode share information has been provided. Therefore, it is unclear from the documents provided, whether an increase in trips will be generated from the proposal. In line with London Plan Policy T4, an assessment of the impact that the proposed development is having on the surrounding transport network should be undertaken.

No information has been provided on the vehicles accessing the site, and their proposed routing. It cannot therefore be confirmed that all vehicles driving to this site can do so safely (noting there are height restrictions on Breakspear Road South due to HS2) and in line with the Mayor's Vision Zero and Healthy Streets approach. Further information on this matter should be provided

Access:

Access to the site is off Newyears Green Lane. Currently the proposal fails to demonstrate how pedestrians and cyclists safely enter, move around, and exit the site in line with the Mayors Vision Zero Strategy and London Plan policy.

Car and Cycle Parking:

The application material lacks any information regarding proposed cycle parking which should meet minimum requirements as set out in policy T5 (Cycling) of the 2021 London Plan. TfL will comment further on the cycle parking proposals once further information is provided.

The submitted plans suggest 10 car parking spaces are to be provided on the site. Justification for the

number of parking spaces, blue badge spaces, and electric vehicle charging provision should be demonstrated for this industrial use, noting the number of employees and any visitors to the site. TfL will comment further on the car parking proposal once further information is provided.

Travel Plan:

The applicant should clarify how many staff will be employed at the development, and how they will travel to and from the site. TfL recommends a Travel Plan or Travel Plan Statement is secured. This should include measures such as carsharing and incentives to encourage less car use and more sustainable travel. This would help reduce vehicular trips to the site, in line with the Mayor's strategic target.

Construction:

A draft Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) has not been provided in accordance with London Plan Policy T7. The CLP should contain detail on the measures that will be implemented to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the surrounding transport network. The CLP will need to demonstrate how safe pedestrian and cyclist access around the boundary of the site will be maintained throughout the construction process.

Deliveries and Servicing Plan:

A Delivery and Servicing (DSP) has not been submitted to support this application. The strategy should be agreed with the local authority due to the road (Newyears Green Lane) being a borough highway, and its implementation secured through the appropriate mechanism in line with London Plan Policy T7.

PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE

The transport matters raised by TfL are addressed by the Council's Highways Officer in the consultation response below, and in section 7.10 of this Committee Report.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EA) (Summarised)

Environment Agency position based on a review of the submitted information, we have no objection to the proposed development.

Environmental Permit

This proposal will require an Environmental Permit variation under the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2016, from the Environment Agency, unless an exemption applies.

The applicant is advised to contact the Environment Agency for further advice and to discuss the issues likely to be raised. You should be aware that there is no guarantee that a permit will be granted.

We expect new composting developments to comply with the standards in the EPR Technical Guidance. Further guidance is available in Horizontal Guidance Note 4 - Odour Management.

We will consider the following areas of potential harm when assessing the permit:

- Management - including maintenance, accidents, incidents, non-conformances and those drawn to the attention of the operator as a result of complaints
- Operations - including permitted activities, waste acceptance, operating techniques and those based on

the site location

· Emissions and monitoring - include emissions to water, air and land, fugitive emissions, impact of odour, noise and pests, and monitoring

PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE: No objection noted.

NATURAL ENGLAND (Summarised)

No objection, subject to appropriate mitigation being secured.

We consider that without appropriate mitigation the application would damage or destroy the interest features for which Ruislip Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest has been noticed.

In order to mitigate these adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required / or the following mitigation options should be secured:

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

Natural England advises a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted to and approved in writing by the district ecologist/biodiversity officer that identifies the steps and procedures that will be implemented to avoid or mitigate constructional impacts on species and habitats. The CEMP should address the following impacts:

- Storage of construction materials/chemicals and equipment;
- Dust suppression
- Chemical and/or fuel run-off from construction into nearby watercourse(s)
- Waste disposal
- Noise/visual/vibrational impacts

The approved CEMP should be secured via an appropriately worded condition attached to any planning consent and shall be adhered to at all times, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Please note that if your authority is minded to grant planning permission contrary to the advice in this letter, you are required under Section 28I (6) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to notify Natural England of the permission, the terms on which it is proposed to grant it and how, if at all, your authority has taken account of Natural England's advice. You must also allow a further period of 21 days before the operation can commence.

PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE

No objection subject to a CEMP condition is noted. The matters raised have been included in Condition 9 requiring the submission of a CEMP for approval.

HS2 LIMITED (Summarised)

The implications of the application on the delivery of the consented permanent works design for the Ruislip Northern Sustainable Placement Area (RNSP) and to ascertain whether these works impact HS2's

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capability to meet compliance with the Project's Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs), including compliance with affected Undertakings and Assurance and the General Principles has been assessed.

This has concluded that the proposed regularisation/expansion of the existing green waste composting facility operations is not expected to give rise to any new or different/significant environmental effects in the detailed design of RNSP, as compared to the HS2 Phase One Environmental Statement (as amended) scheme.

Accordingly, I am also pleased to confirm that the outcome of the Integrated Project Team's (IPT) assessment is that HS2 Ltd will accept the proposal of displacing HS2 landscaping proposals from the approved RNSP area to an alternative area provided by the applicant and can support the principle of the application proposals in planning and safeguarding terms.

In light of the above interfaces with HS2 safeguarded assets, it is requested that appropriately worded pre commencement planning conditions are attached to any consent to ensure practicalities associated with respective construction programmes in this location can be managed. Accordingly, in event that the Council is minded to grant planning consent, HS2 Ltd's approval is subject to conditions to include the requirement to submit a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) to include details of construction traffic movements and routing and to ensure that the proposed development does not restrict or delay delivery of works associated with the HS2 programme in that location.

Should the local planning authority be minded to approve the application without such planning conditions, (or similarly worded alternatives to achieve same outcomes), against the formal advice of HS2 Ltd they should, in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Safeguarding Directions dated 22 August 2018, be sent, together with the material specified in paragraph 7 of the Safeguarding Directions, by authorities by first class post.

PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE

No objection subject to conditions is noted. The requirement for a CEMP and CLP have been included in this recommendation at Condition 9 (CEMP) and Condition 10 (CLP) as well as the recommended informative.

Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) - (received 22-05-2023 and 29-09-2023)

You will recall that in my letter dated 22nd May 2023 we objected to the application as submitted due to the harm it would cause to Bayhurst medieval wood, as defined by its medieval boundary. We suggested that the applicant be asked to redesign their proposals to avoid breaching the historic hedgerow, and if they were unwilling to do so we would recommend refusal. As the application layout has not been changed as requested we maintain our objection. The basis of objection was set out in my previous letter but I would like to re-iterate and emphasis my reasoning.

Assessment of Significance and Impact:

Bayhurst Wood is a National Nature Reserve, an ancient semi-natural woodland suggested on botanical grounds to be a remnant of England's ancient 'wildwood'. Drawing on research carried out for High Speed 2, consideration of the archaeological and historical evidence identifies the historic oval woodland boundary, enclosing both the existing wood and adjoining unwooded enclosures, as having the appearance of a former deer park both today and from the first time it was mapped. Bayhurst Wood was held by the Knights Hospitaller's Moorhall manor by the mid-13th century and remained in their possession

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until Henry VIII's dissolution of religious orders in 1542.

The hedgerow through the application site is shown on Newdigate's Estate map of Harefield dated circa 1708 held by Warwickshire County Record Office (ref: WCRO CRO319/17/1-16).

Thus, the hedgerow affected by the development is certainly over 300 years old and probably of medieval origin. It preserves part of the outline of the medieval woodland/deerpark forming a rare survival on the outskirts of London.

The hedgerow would meet the archaeology and history criteria for an important hedgerow set out in Schedule 1 of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Specifically, it is visibly related to a feature of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor and is recorded in a document held at a Record Office as an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure Acts.

I therefore recommend that Hillingdon Council identify the ancient woodland of Bayhurst Wood, and specifically this associated historic boundary hedgerow, as a non-designated heritage asset. It is worthy of preservation because of its association with a nationally significant ancient woodland.

The application would remove a section of this ancient boundary and intrude a modern waste facility into Bayhurst Wood's ancient oval form thus causing a high degree of harm.

Planning Policies:

Both the NPPF and the London Plan (Policy HC1 supporting text 7.1.2) provide a broad definition of heritage assets including historic managed landscapes demonstrating that they have high importance for both the historic and natural environment.

NPPF paragraph 203 says that "the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset".

The NPPF also advises that local planning authorities should look to retain and enhance greenbelt landscape (NPPF 145).

Recommendations:

We object to the application due to the harm it would cause to the historic hedgerow boundary of Bayhurst Wood. The historic hedgerow is considered a non-designated heritage asset worthy of preservation because of its age, association with a nationally significant ancient woodland and contribution to the local greenbelt landscape.

As much of the hedgerow's significance lies in its survival as an intact landscape feature its loss could not be adequately mitigated by recording, or replacement by planting elsewhere. But, if notwithstanding the above, you wish to grant planning consent then paragraph 205 of the NPPF says that applicants should record the significance of any heritage assets that the development harms. To achieve this, a suitably worded condition should be applied.

PLANNING OFFICER RESPONSE

These comments are noted. The impact on the non-designated heritage asset is discussed in section 7.03

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of this Committee Report.

COLNE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK (Groundwork Thames Valley)

Colne Valley Regional Park have been notified of the proposal. No representation or comments have been received.

Internal Consultees

WASTE SERVICES

Responded that have no comments to make.

CONTAMINATION OFFICER

I have no comments, as this application involves composting of green waste and is subject to waste management regulations / Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2016, each of which the Environment Agency (EA) are the regulatory authority. To prevent duplication of any required conditions I therefore recommend that the EA are consulted accordingly. I understand a permit variation (from the Environment Agency) is required and is being addressed accordingly. I therefore have no objections or further comments.

NOISE SPECIALIST TEAM

Sufficient information has been provided by the applicant to make a recommendation with respect to noise. It is subject to the inclusion of a suitable condition which should be met based on the design information provided and considering measurement and prediction uncertainty.

Hence:

'For the lifetime of the development hereby permitted the Rating level of noise caused by its operation shall not exceed:40 dB LAeq 15 min for any fifteen-minute period between2300 and 0700, and50 dB LAeq 1 hour for and one-hour period between 0700and 2300, determined one metre free field external to any window of any permanent residential, or equivalently noise sensitive premises, in accordance with 'Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound' British Standards Institution BS4142 2014.'

This should ensure the recommended internal noise levels set out in 'Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings' BS8233 2014 are achieved with windows partially open for the purposes of ventilation. The night-time limit provides additional protection for vulnerable persons in line with the WHO 2009 Guidelines on night-time noise.

HIGHWAY ENGINEER

The proposal is essentially a regularisation of an existing site waste operation utilising existing vehicular access arrangements taken from Newyears Green Lane (NYGL) without an intensification over and above the conditioned 75,000 tonnes waste throughput per annum as reaffirmed by condition 2 of the permission granted for the 'permanent residency' of the waste operation in 2022 (12579/APP/2021/2010). This was based on the earlier consent for the continued use of the site for such purposes granted in 2015 (12579/APP/2012/2366).

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In addition, condition 5 of the 2022 permission states that "there shall be no more than 100 vehicular movements (one way), of which there shall be no more than 41 one-way HGV (vehicles above 7.5 tonnes) movements in any-one working day, involving a cumulative total not exceeding a maximum 75,000 tonnes of waste input each year."

In relation to this new application, the applicant confirms that all waste throughput and vehicular activities will continue to be bound by conditions 2 and 5 of the 2022 permission for permanent residency.

NYGL is a very narrow two-way public roadway located within a rural location measuring approximately 1.7 km in length sited between Breakspear Road South and Harvil Road with a width ranging from approximately 3.2 to 4.3m for most of its length. In addition to the waste transfer station, several commercial enterprises including farmsteads are served by NYGL with negligible residential premises. The 'Harefield Civic Amenity site' is located at the westernmost extremity of NYGL at its junction with Harvil Road.

As the proposal is fundamentally a reconfiguration of site operations without any increase in throughput or vehicle intensity as referred to above, the Highway Authority (HA) raises no material opposition related to the proposal.

Notwithstanding this stance and for clarification, a formal response to Transport for London's (TfL) Stage 1 response (2nd May 2023) is outlined in sequential form as follows:

Transport Assessment

TfL suggest that a Transport Assessment should be submitted with the proposal in order to understand the impacts of the proposal.

LBH Response

The Highway Authority would be in full agreement with this request if the proposal was not an established operation or if a major upward shift in current activities was proposed.

The aspect of traffic generation was fully considered and appraised at the time of the determination of the original 2012 application (12579/APP/2012/2366) for the continued use of the site for waste operations that gave rise to two separate planning conditions - 2 and 6 which capped the 75,000 tonnes limit of waste throughput with no more than 100 vehicular movements (one-way) in any-one working day respectively. The same 'cap related' caveats were reaffirmed in the 2022 permission for 'permanent residency (12579/APP/2021/2010).

The Highway Authority therefore concludes that as the proposal is fundamentally a reconfiguration of "established" site operations without any increase in waste throughput or vehicle movements as fully confirmed by the applicant and previously secured by way of condition, it is clear that activities would not result in any net change (i.e. increase), as the site is already an established consented use. Hence, it would be considered inconsequential and therefore unreasonable for the Highway Authority to request further appraisal of impacts by way of a Transport Assessment.

Healthy Streets and Vision Zero

TfL suggest that pedestrian and cycling travel should be promoted in this location to reduce motorised vehicular travel to and from the address.

LBH Response

The Highway Authority believe that TfL are not fully informed in terms of the site user profile (existing and proposed) and more importantly, the safety implications if pedestrian and cycle travel is promoted given the non-conducive physical constraints of NYGL.

Firstly, the user profile of the site does not, in any shape or form, lend itself to pedestrian bound patronage based on the inherent need to ferry waste to and from the site in bulk quantity. The total absence of footway provision in NYGL due to its very narrow width for most of its extent, together with measurable daily HGV (and other traffic) movements, would expose pedestrians walking on the roadways to a very high risk of personal injury and must clearly be avoided and therefore cannot be promoted as suggested by TfL.

Secondly, in terms of cycling to and from the site, the reasoning behind the non-promotion of this mode of transport is supported by the Highway Authority for the very same logic as applied to pedestrian movement, based mainly on the sub-standard physical characteristics of NYGL. As the Highway Authority has a duty of care to protect the community (including any staff operatives attending the site) against potential conflict and safety compromise on public roadways, promotion of cycling (and walking) to and from this particular site would be considered contrary to this aim and fundamentally unnecessary given the user profile described above.

No further action or imposed demand is therefore required by the Highway Authority.

Trip Generation and Highway Impacts

TfL State that "no trip generation or mode share information has been provided. Therefore, it is unclear from the documents provided, whether an increase in trips will be generated from the proposal."

LBH Response

The response to the above 'Transport Assessment' paragraph is reprised.

No further action or imposed demand is therefore required by the Highway Authority.

Access

TfL state that "the proposal fails to demonstrate how pedestrians and cyclists safely enter, move around, and exit the site in line with the Mayors Vision Zero Strategy and London Plan policy."

LBH Response

As this is established provision and pedestrian/cycle movement is not to be promoted on grounds of safety and actual demand as outlined in the above 'Healthy Streets and Vision Zero' paragraph, no further action or imposed demand is required by the Highway Authority.

Car and Cycle Parking

TfL state that "the application material lacks any information regarding proposed cycle parking which should meet minimum requirements as set out in Policy T5 of the London Plan. TfL will comment further on the cycle parking proposals once further information is provided."

LBH Response

This is an established sui-generis (SG) use and there are no prescriptive local or regional car parking standards that can be formally applied. The depicted nominal 10 on-plot car parking are therefore taken on merit and likely necessity related to the business model. It is accepted that, in line with Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Policy - DMT 6 (Appendix C (Table 1(a)) Section 10) a minimum of 5% of the parking spaces provided should be dedicated both to 'active' and 'passive' provisions. This amounts to 1 'active' together with 1 'passive' space which should be secured via planning condition.

As the promotion of cycling to the site is considered prejudicial to the personal safety of cyclists due to the physical characteristics of NYGL, cycle parking is not to be encouraged as outlined in the above 'Healthy Streets and Vision Zero' paragraph. No further action or imposed demand is required by the Highway Authority.

Travel Plan

TfL require a Travel Plan.

LBH Response

The Highway Authority considers that a Travel Plan is likely to achieve little gain in terms of promoting sustainable travel to and from the site, given the aforementioned limited alternative travel options available to all attendees of the address. The only realistic potential lies with promoting car-sharing by some of the workforce, so a tailored Travel Plan is recommended which should be secured via planning condition.

Construction Logistics Plan

LBH Response

It is agreed by the Highway Authority, that this aspect is relevant and should therefore be secured via planning condition. It is highlighted that all effort should be made to avoid conflict with current HS2 activities in the locality and this aspect should therefore be inclusive to the plan.

Deliveries and Servicing Plan

LBH Response

It is agreed by the Highway Authority, that this aspect is relevant and should therefore be secured via planning condition.

Conclusion

The application has been reviewed by the Highway Authority who are satisfied that the proposal would not discernibly exacerbate congestion or parking stress, and would not raise any measurable highway safety concerns, in accordance with Local Plan: Part 2 Development Plan (2020) Policies DMT 1, DMT 2 and DMT 6 and Policies T4 and T6 of the London Plan (2021).

AIR QUALITY OFFICER

Summary of Comments

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The proposed development is located outside the LBH Air Quality Management Area and due to its nature will produce mainly odour emissions. There are sensitive receptors downwind of the proposed facility.

Analysis of the registered odour complaints relating to the site received between July 2015 and December 2021 indicated that the vast majority of complaints occurred from the residential area on the outskirts of Ruislip, over 600m east of the site, which is downwind from the facility, with a total of 44 complaints received.

Whereas the submitted air quality report states that of the 44 complains received, only two were determined to be related to operations at the WLC site, it is not clear how the remaining 42 complaints were dismissed.

Odour is a statutory nuisance and therefore needs to be mitigated to avoid future complaints. Odour impacts are subjective with different people having different sensitivities and tolerance to various odours and respective intensities. Given that there were complaints in the past, the existing Odour Management Plan will need to be revisited and improved.

Mitigation Measures

From the information provided in the air quality report, it is not clear what BAT will be deployed to mitigate the generation of dust, odour and bioaerosols.

Whereas the report states that the existing WLC facility has an effective environmental management system comprising an Odour Management Plan, Fugitive Emissions Management Plan, Dust Management Plan and Bioaerosols Risk Assessment, no information is provided to clearly list and describe the measures that will be deployed and therefore their suitability cannot be evaluated by LBH.

Therefore, the submission of an improved Odour Management Plan is required. The Air Quality condition below is required to minimise to the maximum possible extent the odour impacts in nearby sensitive receptors.

Condition: Air Quality - Odour Management Plan

No development shall commence until an updated and improved Odour Management Plan (OMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The OMP shall specify effective ways to mitigate possible odour impacts on sensitive receptors, with particular focus on receptors downwind of the proposed facility. The measures are to include but not be limited to:

- A) Fencing of odorous operations with focus on downwind receptors
- B) Minimising evaporation
- C) Odour neutralizing strategies

The OMP should be designed to:

- 1) Employ appropriate methods, including monitoring and contingencies, to control and minimise odour pollution;
- 2) Prevent unacceptable odour pollution at all times;
- 3) Reduce the risk of odour releasing incidents or accidents by anticipating them and planning accordingly.

The OMP must include an inventory, with descriptions and quantities, of all potentially odorous solid, liquid

and gaseous materials held on site across the full range of operating conditions.

The measures in the agreed scheme shall be maintained throughout the life of the development.

Reason - In accordance with Policy SI 8 of the London Plan (2021).

SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

Energy

There are no energy demand requirements with the development and therefore the zero carbon policy requirements are not applicable. In addition, it must be noted that the proposals are to retain a valued composting site that serves West London and beyond. The throughput will divert material from the carbon intensive landfill process and therefore in terms of carbon impacts, the proposals are considered to be preferable to an alternative landfilling operation.

Ecology

The operational works presented in the submission are not new. The site is an active composting facility and therefore impacts on ecology are limited. Natural England are the lead regulator with regards to the site of special scientific interest (SSSi) to the north and their comments should be required as to whether the proposals would impact the conservation status of that site.

FLOODING TEAM (Comments received 27-09-23, 07-11-23 and 11-12-23) (Summarised)

Type of development: Full, Major

Flood risk: Low

Types of conveyance / attenuation features: Water harvesting tanks, a bund, and a concrete drainage channel.

Runoff rate restriction (l/s): Not required as there is no runoff off-site.

Runoff attenuation volume (m³): Not required as there is no runoff off-site.

Maintenance plan: Maintenance tasks and frequencies have been provided for the proposed drainage features, and the maintenance owner is confirmed to be West London Composting Ltd.

- The applicant has stated what the existing and proposed impermeable area is.
- The applicant has clarified that the pond is not linked to the proposed drainage network.
- Infiltration is confirmed to be not feasible due to the Environmental Permit which has been issued for the site.
- The applicant has provided sufficient storage for 4 1 in 100-year events eliminating the risk of exceedance flows.
- The applicant has confirmed there is no clean surface runoff.

The applicant has confirmed that the storage includes c.2,297m³ in the tanks and c.7,703m³ on the surface of the hardstanding behind the site bunding, which is approx. 3m high. This is to show that the 1in100+CC storm event can be stored with no offsite flooding. The water would be spread onto the compost as confirmed previously. The site bunding prevents over 22,900m³ of volume from leaving site.

Recommendations and Condition

We would be happy to approve provided that the Environment Agency are in agreement with the proposals given the nature of the development.

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Conditions

Prior to commencement of groundworks (excluding site investigations and demolition), the applicant must submit a final detailed drainage design including drawings and supporting calculations to the Lead Local Flood Authority for review and approval, aligned with the Flood Risk Assessment (08/02/2023) and associated drawings. A detailed management plan confirming routine maintenance tasks for all drainage components must also be submitted to demonstrate how the drainage system is to be maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To prevent the risk of flooding to and from the site in accordance with relevant policy requirements including but not limited to London Plan Policy 5.13, its associated Sustainable Design and Construction SPG, the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and Hillingdon Council's Local Plan Policy EM6.

No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until evidence (photographs and installation contracts) is submitted to demonstrate that the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the submitted details. The sustainable drainage scheme shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan for all of the proposed drainage components.

Reason: To comply with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 103), the London Plan (Policies 5.12 and 5.13) along with associated guidance to these policies and Hillingdon Council's Local Plan Policy EM6.

URBAN DESIGN AND CONSERVATION (Comments received 16-10-23 and 18-05-23)(Summarised)

Context

The application site consists of the existing organic composting operations. The proposed scheme extends the operations area to the north and east with an area for ecological enhancement to the west.

The site is situated within the Green Belt. The Bayhurst Wood Country Park to the north of the site is a Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Nature Conservation Site of Metropolitan of Borough Grade 1 Importance.

High Speed 2 (HS2) is currently working around the site significantly altering the immediate surrounding landscape context. The eventual proposals for the areas directly to the east and west of the site are to create landscaped mounds to be in keeping with Bayhurst Wood. The landscape mound to the west will become an area of open space. Negotiations are ongoing for the area to the east to determine the final use.

Impact on the Landscape

The proposals extend the organic composting facility operations to the east and north of the original site into an area made up of existing bare ground, hardstanding, ruderal, scrub and grassland. This area is within the Green Belt and in close proximity to the Bayhurst Wood Country Park SSSI.

The proposals impact the openness of the Green Belt and will lead to a loss of open land in proximity to Bayhurst Wood Country Park to the north of the site which is a SSSI. It is acknowledged that the proposals include mitigation measures for the loss of landscape and habitat. These include areas of mitigation

including; broad leaved woodland, an area of scrub adjacent to Bayhurst Wood and landscape screening to reduce the visual impact of the proposals.

Summary

It has been identified that the extended scale of the development into Green Belt land will affect the openness and landscape character setting of the Bayhurst Wood Country Park SSSI. However, this must be balanced with the effectiveness of mitigation proposals to enhance the landscape character and reduce the visual impact. It is recognised that this area is undergoing change due to the HS2 works and eventual proposals for adjacent areas.

The mitigation proposals will improve the setting of the Bayhurst Wood with a subsequent negligible impact on ecology.

There remains an impact on the openness of the Green Belt due to increased scale of the development.

The visual impact is only likely to be marginally increased. The applicant has provided additional information including sections of newly proposed bunds with associated planting, existing and proposed levels. The combination of the bunding and planting will visually eliminate views of the proposals from View 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.01 The principle of the development

GREEN BELT & VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Policy EM2 (Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains) of Local Plan: Part 1- Strategic Policies (2012) says that the Council will seek to maintain the current extent, hierarchy and strategic functions of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains.

Policy DMEI 4 (Development in the Green Belt or on Metropolitan Open Land) of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) says that inappropriate development in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will not be permitted unless there are very special circumstances.

Policy G2 of the London Plan states that Green Belt should be protected from inappropriate development and "development proposals that would harm the Green Belt should be refused except where very special circumstances exist".

Paragraph 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances".

Paragraph 153 further states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF set out exceptions whereby specified forms of development are not inappropriate within the Green Belt. The proposal does not fall within any of these exceptions, therefore it is inappropriate development and very special circumstances need to be established.

The proposal is inappropriate development within Green Belt, and therefore very special circumstances need to be demonstrated which clearly outweighs the harm.

The case for very special circumstances put forward by the applicant is based on the following main summarised reasons:

1. Operational need to extend the compost maturation yard (related to compliance with Environment Agency guidance requiring a reduction in fire risk and to minimise odour generation; and the cessation of the in-vessel composting (IVC) facility/ food waste recycling and an increase in green waste recycling).
2. Waste management capacity and need.
3. Environmental benefits including the need for sustainable waste management/landfill diversion and maintaining recycling/recovery rates, waste hierarchy and climate change (this is related to contribution to recycling targets, carbon savings and moving waste up the waste hierarchy).
4. Economic and employment benefits (this is related to maintaining and increasing employment in the proposed development and sustaining an existing rural based business).

These points are elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

1. OPERATIONAL NEED TO EXTEND THE COMPOST MATURATION YARD.

The Environment Agency published guidance on 21st September 2021 relating to the 'Biological waste treatment: appropriate measures for permitted facilities'. The guidance applies to aerobic and anaerobic processes including composting in open-air and closed (in vessel) systems.

This guidance seeks a reduction in fire risk and minimisation of odour generation. Section 8.5 of the document relates to 'Open Air Composting' operations and contains a number of specific requirements amongst which are:

- To minimise dust, odour and bioaerosol fugitive emissions to air from open air composting processes, you must actively manage material to prevent anaerobic conditions developing and to prevent overheating; and prevent dry and dusty conditions occurring.
- You must work out the appropriate dimensions of your windrows taking account of waste type; heat generation and loss; space availability; effective retention time; aeration requirements; monitoring capability; and seasonal variation.
- You must provide enough space between composting windrows so that there is sufficient passive aeration; plant and equipment can access the windrows without compacting the waste or causing cross-contamination.
- You must adapt your operations to the meteorological conditions. For example, by: avoiding turning

waste, screening or shredding during adverse weather conditions; orientating windrows so that the smallest possible area of composting mass is exposed to the prevailing wind; and locating windrows and piles at the lowest elevation within the overall site layout.

- You must maintain adequate moisture and control high temperatures to prevent anaerobic conditions, bioaerosols and odour plume dispersal; and dampen roadways and working areas.

- You must also consider using one or a combination of the following techniques where bioaerosols, dust or odour are a problem: cover actively composting windrows using semi-permeable membranes (particularly if there is an increased risk to receptors) - using alternative targeted containment may be acceptable; use purpose made windrow turners; use dust and bioaerosols suppressants during turning, shredding and screening, for example, back actor water sprayers or aprons on plant; and install static aeration with an aeration system that is the correct size to deliver enough air to the waste to prevent anaerobic conditions developing.

The applicant states that the requirements of the Environment Agency's guidance gives rise to a number of operational changes that are required to the open windrow composting operations, which are set out below.

Seasonality, Windrow Size and Spacing

The current open windrow maturation pad is cramped, particularly during the peak season. The lack of current space means that to comply with the EA guidance the applicant would need to create windrows which are up to 5-6 metres in height, and position them adjacent to each other making it difficult to turn the windrows. This in turn could give rise to increased fire risk from spontaneous combustion and can create problems associated with odour. The existing planning permission requires windrows to be no more than 2 metres in height. This also accords with the Environment Agency's recent Appropriate Measures guidance.

The applicant experiences high demand during the Spring/Summer months, particularly during, for example, Bank Holiday weekends. As the composting production process usually takes greater than two months to complete, there is a need for flexibility to be able to manage and store green waste and construct windrows during the peak periods and beyond. The applicant is also required to manage size graded leftovers, which involves cleaning up contaminating plastics all of which requires additional space.

The applicant therefore requires more space within which to process the green waste by open windrow methods into a compost product and to comply with the Appropriate Measures guidance.

Compliance with Fire Prevention Plan Guidance

The prevention of fire is a significant undertaking in waste and in particular, composting. Composting piles heat up through the creation of biological heat through aerobic respiration of the microbes which breakdown the materials into a stable product. This heat must be allowed to dissipate in order to prevent exponential rises in temperature and the start of slow chemical pyrolysis. If not managed carefully, the material can self-combust.

The Environment Agency has released guidance on fire prevention plans to which each site is required to produce a detailed operating plan setting out how they will minimise the risk of combustion and fire occurring. This includes many features and processes. In brief, the operator of a composting

operation is required to manage pile size to ensure they are within the guidance volumes or, if during the actively managed phase, the material is turned, and pile sizes are small enough to allow heat dissipation through maximisation of the surface area to volume ratio.

In addition, the operator must also ensure adequate stocks of firefighting equipment together with adequate firefighting water supplies and then the ability to contain the water on site providing total containment to prevent pollution risk. The proposed tanks ensure there is firefighting water supplies available.

Management of Windrows & Windrow Turner

As recommended by the Environment Agency in their 'Appropriate Measures' guidance, the applicant proposes to introduce a purpose-built mechanical windrow turner which will enable the windrows to be turned more easily, uniform in size and scale and restricted in height (2 metres) to conform with the requirements of the main planning permission.

Recent Legislative Changes Affecting Food and Green Waste Streams

The Government has introduced a landmark Environment Bill which included that Local Authorities should provide separate weekly kerbside collected food waste from households by 2024/5 (Green waste is yet to be confirmed if this will be mandated). For those Local Authorities that currently collect co-mingled food and green waste, they will need to transition "as soon as contracts allow". The exact details of how this change will be rolled out have been subject to consultation by Defra with the organic waste industry and the outcome of this is now overdue from Defra.

It is expected that the consultation outcome and guidance will cover the timing of this transition, compensation from Government to assist with the cost of transition (changes to fleet, transfer stations, staff and so on) and the circumstances whereby some Local Authorities may be exempt from the changes if they can evidence that the separate waste collections are not economically viable.

Recent data from WRAP (part of Defra) forecasts that the proposed separate collections will increase food waste capture from 3.2 million tonnes per annum to 5.1 million tonnes per annum. It is likely that most of this food waste will go to Anaerobic Digestion plants that can generate green gas from this waste as well as liquid digestate for fertilising agricultural land. As Anaerobic Digestion operators benefit from financial incentives, such as the Feed in Tariff (FIT's)/ Renewable Heat Incentive and Green Gas Support Scheme, they currently offer more competitive gate fees (typically £15/t to £30/t) compared to £35-50/t for IVC facilities.

The impact of this move to separate food waste collection means that IVC (which has traditionally offered an Animal By-Product compliant, highest recycling option at best value) will no longer be able to be competitive with Anaerobic Digestion Plants. This will mean that IVC will only be viable for the period of time that Local Authorities can continue with existing co-mingled contracts and/or the remaining asset life of the IVC plant and equipment. The applicant estimates that the timeframe for the demise of comingled waste and IVC will be 3-5 years.

IVCs for many years have avoided accepting source segregated food waste due to the odour issue associated with the inability to mix the two streams (Food and Green waste) efficiently on site rather than being mixed by the householder. It would not be feasible to assume that an IVC can take a percentage of food waste source segregated for this reason, notwithstanding the commercial

pressures mentioned above.

It is anticipated that the capture of green waste will increase as a result. Organic waste processors such as the applicant (West London Composting Ltd) will be able to continue to process this waste through open windrow only (IVC is only required for food waste, but not for green only).

Impacts upon the West London Site

The majority of waste coming into West London is green waste from the West London Waste Authority. There is a smaller component of co-mingled food and green waste that comes from Medway Council (22,000t) but this will cease in 2024. Due to changes in contracted tonnages, the applicant anticipates that its Cambridge site will have capacity to continue to take existing co-mingled food and green waste in 2024 (where the applicant has other co-mingled contracts to run their course at this site).

There is no reasonable likelihood of the West London site receiving any further food waste or co-green and food waste going forward for the main reasons detailed as follows:

- All of West London Waste Authority's food waste goes to bio-collectors South London Anaerobic Digestion Plant sites.
- Hillingdon were the last Authority to collect co-mingled food and free waste within the WLWA area and this ceased in July 2021.
- Surrey, Kent and Buckinghamshire already separately collect food and green waste.
- Berkshire sends its co-mingled waste to Veolia (Padworth).
- Oxford have a PFI arrangement with Agrivert.

The applicant's existing site is restricted to 75,000 tonnes per annum made up of 30% food waste and 70% green waste. The anticipated cessation of food waste collections will enable the applicant to increase green waste recycling from the West London area by approximately 22,500 tonnes per annum. This will require additional compost windrow maturation space.

Summary - Operational Need

In order to minimise odour generation and fire risk, additional operational space is required to improve the management of the open windrowing of green waste into a compost product. A purpose-built windrow turner is proposed to be used to improve the efficiency and management of windrows.

The forthcoming cessation of food waste collections will enable the applicant to maximise the recycling of green waste from the West London area in compliance with the cumulative permitted total of 75,000tonnes per annum (condition 2 of the extant planning permission and included in the recommendation for this application).

It is considered that the requirements for additional compost management and windrowing area are matters which represent a very special circumstance which are afforded significant weight against any harm to the Green Belt.

2. WASTE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY & NEED

The London Plan (2021) identifies that at present 32% of London's waste that is biodegradable is sent

to landfill. The Mayor is committed to sending no biodegradable waste to landfill by 2026. The applicant's existing composting site has been operating for a number of years and is the primary facility for managing organic waste across West London. It is an allocated site within the West London Waste Local Plan and therefore plays a crucial role in managing green waste in the West London area and moving waste up the Waste Hierarchy.

Policy SI 8 of the London Plan 2021 (Waste Capacity and Net Waste Self-Sufficiency) supports the optimisation of the waste management capacity of existing sites. Part E of the policy relates specifically to development proposals to increase the capacity of existing sites and sets out evaluation criteria including the effective implementation of the waste hierarchy, impact on the amenity of surrounding areas, and the transport and environmental impacts. Part F of the policy also requires consideration to be given to the job creation, social value benefits, local need and the accessibility of services to local communities / businesses.

Policy SI 9 (Safeguarded Waste Sites) of the London Plan provides protection to existing waste management sites.

The West London Waste Plan (WLWP) (2015), plans for all waste in the plan area up to 2031. It gives priority to waste reduction, recycling and composting. It does this by identifying suitable sites for development of new facilities and safeguarding all existing waste sites within west London. Policies relevant to this application are as follows.

Policy WLWP2 (Safeguarding and Protection of Existing and Allocated Waste sites) of the WLWP protects the existing waste facility for continued use for waste management. It also requires that any redevelopment proposals ensure that the quantity of waste to be managed is equal to or greater than that which is currently permitted.

Policy WLWP3 (Location of Waste Development) of the WLWP supports waste development proposals on existing waste management sites provided the proposals comply with the development plan for the area.

Policy WLWP4 (Ensuring High Quality Development) sets out a series of criteria for ensuring new waste management facilities mitigate their impacts on the environment and local communities. This includes consideration of local amenity, together with environmental, transport, heritage and health impacts.

Whilst this proposal does not seek to increase capacity, it does seek approval to extend the maturation yard to enable the applicant to improve the way in which green waste is managed and matured into a compost product, minimising odour and fire risk, and optimising the length of time of the maturation process. These are matters which represent a very special circumstance which are afforded significant weight against any harm to the Green Belt.

Another VSC identified includes the lack of suitable alternative sites identified in the WLWP. No other existing composting sites are identified as having potential for expansion. Of the remaining sites allocated in the plan, the majority of these are in built-up industrial areas which would not be suitable for open maturation process. The location of such sites in more rural areas also ensures that they are located as near as possible to the end uses of the waste processed on site.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Strategic Objective 2 of the WLP seeks to encourage development which supports sustainable waste management at least in line with national targets for recycling, recovery and composting.

National policy states that in preparing local plans, Waste Planning Authorities should drive waste management up the waste hierarchy. This means encouraging prevention of waste, and preparing for the reuse, recycling and recovery of waste (including recovery of inert waste to land).

The proposal would make an important contribution to green waste recycling, reducing emissions and helping to meet the Government's climate change objectives. In addition, the proposal would also contribute towards the Mayor of London's aspirations of creating a circular economy.

The proposal's contribution to recycling targets, carbon savings and moving waste up the waste hierarchy are environmental benefits that are considered to constitute a very special circumstance which is afforded significant weight against any harm to the Green Belt.

4. ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity and meeting the twin challenges of global competition and a low carbon future.

Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that "planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. 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. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential".

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF also provides that planning policies and decisions, should enable the "sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings" and "the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses".

The proposal would sustain 10 existing jobs, create 3 full-time positions, and assist in maintaining a prosperous rural based business. Maintaining and increasing employment in the applicant's business and sustaining an existing rural based business is considered to represent a very special circumstance which is afforded moderate weight.

CONCLUSIONS - Green Belt & Very Special Circumstances

The existing green waste management facility is required to adapt from older, more traditional composting techniques to modern operating procedures due to the need to comply with the Environment Agency's Appropriate Measures guidance, published on 21st September 2021.

In addition, the anticipated cessation of food waste collections will enable the site to increase green waste recycling/composting by approximately 22,500 tonnes per annum. These factors require additional space to improve green waste/compost management, minimise odour generation and reduce fire risk.

This existing waste management facility (comprised of the application site and Pylon Farm on the

southern side of Newyears Green Lane) plays a vital functional role in the West London area for moving green waste up the waste hierarchy and contributing to the Mayor of London's aspirations of a circular economy. Accordingly, the site is identified within the West London Waste Plan (which forms part of the Local Plan) and safeguarded as an essential resource. The proposal will also comply with the aspirations of Policy SI 8 of the London Plan by maximising waste management capacity at existing sites.

The proposal contributes to increasing and improving the recycling of green waste, helping to meet the Government's climate change agenda, and contribute to a circular economy. It would also maintain existing and create new jobs, and sustain a rural-based business.

Overall, it is considered that any harm by reason of inappropriateness is clearly outweighed by the considerations set out above, which amount to a robust very special circumstances case. The proposal therefore complies with Green Belt policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan and Hillingdon's Local Plan.

For the reasons given above, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable, in accordance with Policy EM2 of the Local Plan Part 1- Strategic Policies (2012), Policy DMEI 4 of the Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020); Policies G2, SI7, SI8 and SI 9 of the London Plan (2021), the West London Waste Plan (2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

GREEN BELT & IMPACT ON OPEN CHARACTER

Notwithstanding the case for VSC already discussed, Paragraph 142 of the NPPF says that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Two new leachate tanks are proposed, adjacent to the existing permitted tanks, and are similar in size (maximum 5 metres in height). Three associated portacabins are also proposed along the southern boundary. Aside from these built structures, the majority of the development involves works to extend the maturation site into adjacent land, creating new open surface windrow compost mounds/piles (comprising approximately 225 cubic metres of material in each pile), which would sit on hardstanding.

Whilst not strictly an agricultural use, the proposed structures and the compost mounds are commensurate with the scale and nature of agricultural development which is a common feature of the landscape in this area. It is also noted that the whole site is proposed to be screened with a perimeter landscaped screening mound, which would help to screen the additional development. Additionally, whilst the significant extension of hardstanding is noted, the current proposal includes land reserved for biodiversity and ecological enhancement, resulting in biodiversity net gain, which is supported.

For the above reasons, it is considered that the additional visual impact on the landscape, and on the openness of the Green Belt, is limited, and on-balance acceptable.

The impact of the proposed development on the character of the wider area has been assessed in more detail in section 7.07 of this report.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal would not significantly impact upon its openness or irrevocably affect the character of the Green Belt. The proposed development would therefore accord

with Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2 Policy DME14 and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

7.02 Density of the proposed development

Not applicable to this application.

7.03 Impact on archaeology/CAs/LBs or Areas of Special Character

Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

London Plan Policy HC1 sets out that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The supporting text to this policy (paragraph 7.12) identifies historic hedgerows as non-designated heritage assets.

Policy HE1 of Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies aims to conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its setting and the wider historic landscape.

Policy DMHB1 of Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies states that the Council will expect development proposals to avoid harm to the historic environment.

The site is not located within a designated area of archaeological interest, a conservation area, or an area of special local character. Nor are the subject structures or neighbouring properties listed. Therefore, there are no designated heritage assets that would be affected by the proposal.

However, the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) has raised an objection to the application due to the harm it would cause to the historic hedgerow boundary of Bayhurst Wood. The historic hedgerow is considered a non-designated heritage asset worthy of preservation because of its age, association with a nationally significant ancient woodland and contribution to the local greenbelt landscape.

GLAAS has advised that since much of the hedgerow's significance lies in its survival as an intact landscape feature, its loss could not be adequately mitigated by recording, or replacement by planting elsewhere. Nevertheless, GLAAS has stated that notwithstanding the above, if the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant planning consent then the NPPF says that applicants should record the significance of any heritage assets that the development harms and to achieve this, a suitably worded condition should be applied.

The representation received from GLAAS has been discussed with the planning agent. Whilst it is regrettable that the hedgerow would largely need to be removed to accommodate the proposed extension of the maturation pad, it is not possible to amend the site layout to enable the non-designated hedgerow boundary to remain preserved in-situ. The development options are constrained by the location of the existing green waste recycling facility and the HS2 scheme.

There is a demonstrable need for the proposed development (discussed in section 7.01 of this report), not least that this waste management facility plays a vital functional role in the West London area for moving green waste up the waste hierarchy and contributing to the Mayor of London's aspirations of a circular economy. It is also one of a few sites in the West London area that is capable

of recycling large volumes of green waste. In weighing the planning balance, it is considered that the benefits of the proposal would outweigh the harm to and loss of the non-designated hedgerow boundary.

It is also noted that in implementing Policy HE1, Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 1 states that "where the loss of a heritage asset is justified, ensure that there will be a commitment to recording the structure and to disseminating this information to enable increased understanding of the heritage asset. Copies of these documents will, where appropriate, be deposited with local libraries and the Greater London Historic Environment Record (HER)."

In this instance, it is considered that the loss of this heritage asset is justified and a condition is recommended to ensure that a record of this heritage asset is secured. This is consistent with the advice from GLAAS, in the event that the application is approved.

7.04 Airport safeguarding

There are no airport safeguarding considerations relevant to this application.

7.05 Impact on the green belt

The impact on the open character of the Green Belt and the case for very special circumstance (VSC) has been discussed in section 7.01 (The principle of the development) of this report.

The impact of the proposed development on the character of the wider area is discussed in section 7.07 (Impact on the character and appearance of the area) of this report.

7.06 Environmental Impact

CONTAMINATED LAND

West London Composting Limited (WLC) are the applicant and operate an In-Vessel Composting (IVC) facility and Open Windrow Composting (OWC), first established in 2004. These operations have the capacity to process 75,000 tonnes of organic waste each year and produces a variety of high-quality PAS100 soil conditioners for agricultural and commercial use. The inputs for the composting process come from a variety of local authority contracts, as well as smaller commercial suppliers.

The IVC and OWC activities are carried out on two neighbouring, yet separate, sites. The IVC site and waste transfer activity are located to the south of New Years Green Lane and the OWC site is located to the north of the same road, and is the site subject to this planning application.

The currently permitted waste activities, including operational limits and permitted wastes by scheduled activity, are regulated by the Environment Agency through and Environmental Permit (EPR/UP3893EC). This permit would require a variation to manage these waste activities, should planning permission be granted. Historic planning permission also authorises 75,000 tonnes per annum to be processed through the IVC facility and then through the subsequent OWC activity.

This planning application seeks to extend the site area of the OWC activity to enable more area for windrows. It is not anticipated that there would be any increased risk on environmental issues attributable to the granting of permission. The environmental risk which covered the entire IVC and OWC activities was a key area of the previous planning application (reference 12579/APP/2012/2366), so was given due consideration and the permission was ultimately granted by the Local Planning Authority.

The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has no comment to make on the application, noting that this proposal involves composting of green waste and is subject to waste management regulations/ Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2016, each of which the Environment Agency (EA) are the regulatory authority.

Nevertheless, a standard condition has been included in this recommendation specifying the requirement for a remediation strategy in the event that previously unidentified contamination is found at the site.

On this basis, it is considered that the impact of the development on contamination would be controlled, in accordance with Policy EM8 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012), Policy DMEI 12 (Development of Land Affected by Contamination) of the Local Plan Part 2: Development Management Policies (2020) and Policy SI 1 of the London Plan (2021).

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Other environmental impacts are discussed elsewhere in this report in the relevant sections. For example, flooding and drainage matters are discussed in section 7.17 of this report; and noise and air quality matters (including odour) are discussed in section 7.18.

7.07 Impact on the character & appearance of the area

Policy BE1 of the Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012) requires all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment in order to create successful and sustainable neighbourhoods, where people enjoy living and working and that serve the long-term needs of all residents. Policy DMHB 11 Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) advises that all development will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design. Policy D3 of the London Plan states that development design should respond to local context.

Policy WLWP 4 (Ensuring High Quality Development) provides that all waste development proposals will be required to demonstrate, for both the construction and operational phases of the development, that the development is of a scale, form and character appropriate to its location and incorporates a high quality of design, to be demonstrated through the submission of a Design and Access statement as appropriate.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted in support of the application. The LVIA report comprises:

- A desktop review of current statutory and non-statutory documents;
- A landscape assessment of the wider context of the site including an analysis of character, quality and sensitivity, and the identification of key viewpoints;
- An assessment of the site and its immediate landscape setting, in particular level changes; and
- An understanding of views affected by the proposed development.

In terms of Landscape Character, the LVIA report notes that the site is situated within the West London Green Belt. It also notes that the site is in proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Woodland and Country Park, all of which are located north of the site boundary. The assessment area within the LVIA is a 3km radius.

The LVIA report sets out a summary of the potential visual impact of the proposed development from

each of the eight viewpoint locations. In summary, the visual harm on the neighbouring landscape and landscape character generated by the expansion of the Maturation Site to accommodate the updated procedures are limited. This is in part due to the works associated with High Speed 2, which will change the landscape surrounding the site, and impact on the landscape character, evident in many of the viewpoints. High Speed 2 (HS2) is significantly altering the immediate surrounding landscape of the site. Farmland to the east and west of the site is currently being reprofiled to accommodate vast amounts of soils being stripped to make way for HS2. Once the project is finished, various mounds up to 18 metres high will be created, changing the landscape, redirecting streams, and public rights of way.

Generally, the topography of land, HS2 works, wooded areas, tall hedgerows and buildings form visual barriers which restrict views towards the site. Significantly, it is also noted that the whole site is proposed to be screened with a perimeter landscaped screening mound (approximately 3 metres high), which would help to screen the additional proposed development. The proposed development, by virtue of its form and nature, would blend well into the current landscape and will therefore exert minimal visual harm.

Lorries and mechanical moving equipment such as diggers operate within in the site, accessing the site off Newyears Green Lane, opposite Pylon Farm. Due to the nature of the works, sometimes the diggers are at ground level, and other times they may be seen on top of the mounds of compost. Adjacent land-uses immediately outside of the site consist mainly of farms and their associated farmland, small industrial sites with a variety of businesses, several individual properties, works associated with HS2 and woodland. The visual impact of the maturation site should also be viewed in the context of the pockets of industry surrounding the site, which are more prominent and claim the attention of the observer, creating an environment that is man made.

The LVIA concludes that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable landscape and visual impacts, especially in the wider landscape. The land form, land cover and landscape elements have been significantly altered and, in several cases, blocked views to the site. This is especially the case beyond the 1km distance with topography, HS2 works, wooded areas, tall hedgerows and buildings forming visual barriers in views towards the site. Again, it is also noted that the landscaped screening mound is proposed around the perimeter of the site, which at approximately 3 metres in height, would screen the site from wider views.

It is considered that the proposal as shown in LVIA viewpoints would not cause unacceptable landscape and visual impacts and, as discussed in section 7.01 of this report, does not materially impact on the openness of the Green Belt. By its very form and nature, it would blend well into the surrounding landscape. The elements that draw the eye towards the site's direction are surface water tanks, the diggers when they are on the top of the mounds of compost, and occasionally the steam rising from the compost mounds as the maturation process takes place. But the diggers and steam are elements that constantly change, depending on weather conditions and site processes. They are not fixed or consistent, and on-balance the impact is considered acceptable.

Conditions are recommended to be re-imposed from a previous planning application, limiting the height of the windrows and stock piles.

In conclusion, it is considered that subject to conditions, the visual harm on the surrounding landscape character generated by the proposal are limited. On this basis, the development proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with relevant planning policies.

7.08 Impact on neighbours

Policy DMHB 11 Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) advises that proposals should not have an adverse impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space. Policy DMHD 1 also requires that there is no unacceptable loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers.

Given the nature of the proposal, the development is not expected to have an adverse impact on the existing residential amenity of surrounding properties with regards to overlooking, privacy, daylight or sunlight.

The main impact on neighbours arising from the continued use of the composting facility relate to air quality and noise. These matters have been dealt with in relevant sections of this report.

It is not considered that the proposal would have any amenity impacts over those considered within the original grant of planning permission ref:12579/APP/2012/2366 and subsequent planning permission ref. 12579/APP/2021/2010.

7.09 Living conditions for future occupiers

Not applicable to this application.

7.10 Traffic impact, Car/cycle parking, pedestrian safety

Hillingdon Local Plan Policy DMHB 12 requires development to be well integrated with the surrounding area, providing safe and direct pedestrian and cycle movement through the space and using good quality materials undertaken to a high standard. Policy DMT 2 states that development proposals must ensure that safe and efficient vehicular access to the highway network is provided to the Council's standards.

The proposed development would utilise the existing vehicular access from Newyears Green Lane which has suitable geometry and visibility for HGVs.

Condition 2 of planning permission ref.12579/APP/2021/2010 states that:

"The cumulative total of waste input for the facility shall not exceed a maximum of 75,000 tonnes per annum."

The proposed development would not result in an increase in annual throughput beyond the permitted maximum of 75,000 tonnes per annum, and therefore the development would work within the parameters of the current restriction.

The same 'highways' conditions imposed on the most recent planning permission (ref.12579/APP/2021/2010) are still valid and applicable.

Condition 6 of the earlier planning permission (ref.12579/APP/2021/2010) relates to limiting vehicle movements to and from site, stipulating that there shall be no more than 100 one-way vehicular movements of which there shall be no more than 41 one-way HGV movements in any one working day, involving a cumulative total not exceeding a maximum 75,000 tonnes of waste input per annum.

The proposal does not seek to amend the restricted HGV movements to and from the site. Vehicular access/egress would be gained from the existing entrance off Newyears Green Lane. No changes to the restriction of vehicle movements or changes to the access point are therefore proposed.

In terms of the impact of the current proposal on the surrounding highway network, since the grant of the previous planning permission on 31st August 2022, the only material and circumstantial change to the surrounding locality and road network has been the evolution of the High Speed 2 (HS2) project, which has now commenced and is gradually increasing traffic burden in the locality and will continue to do so in this decade. Nevertheless, HS2 construction works are 'transient' in terms of timescale and will conclude in due course, thereby eventually relieving traffic related imposition.

It is also highlighted that traffic imposition related to HS2 is subject to separate legislation where highway burden is vetted with the intention of least impact as far as is practical. The determination of this particular application should not be influenced by the HS2 related construction traffic.

In response to Transport for London's (TfL) request that pedestrian and cycling travel should be promoted in this location to reduce motorised vehicular travel to and from the address, the user profile of the site does not lend itself to pedestrian bound patronage, based on the inherent need to ferry waste to and from the site in bulk quantity.

Secondly, in terms of cycling to and from the site, the reasoning behind the non-promotion of this mode of transport is supported by the Council's Highways Officer for the very same logic as applied to pedestrian movement, based mainly on the sub-standard physical characteristics of New Years Green Lane.

As the proposal is fundamentally a reconfiguration of established site operations without any increase in waste throughput or vehicle movements, it is clear that activities would not result in any net change (i.e. increase), as the site is already an established consented use. Hence it would be considered unreasonable for the Highway Authority to request further appraisal of impacts by way of a Transport Assessment.

In summary, as there is no evidence to suggest that the existing composting operations give rise to measurable or negative highway and transport impact, particularly during the most sensitive and crucial morning and afternoon/ early evening peak traffic base-line periods, there is no objection to the geographical expansion or continuation of compost operations.

The application has been reviewed by the Highway Authority, who are satisfied that the proposal would not discernibly exacerbate congestion or parking stress, and would not raise any measurable highway safety concerns, in accordance with Local Plan: Part 2 Development Plan Policies DMT 1 and DMT 2 and Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021).

7.11 Urban design, access and security

Issues of design and access have been discussed elsewhere in the relevant sections of this report. With respect of security, it is not considered that the proposal requires a secure by design condition given the nature of the proposals.

7.12 Disabled access

Not applicable to this application.

7.13 Provision of affordable & special needs housing

Not applicable to this application.

7.14 Trees, landscaping and Ecology

TREES AND LANDSCAPING

Hillingdon Local Plan Policy DMHB 14 states that all developments will be expected to retain or enhance existing landscaping, trees, biodiversity or other natural features of merit, and Policy DMEI 7 requires loss of biodiversity to be replaced with features of equivalent value on-site. Policy BE1 requires all new development to be designed appropriately to the context of Hillingdon's landscape. London Plan Policy G6 states that development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and aim to secure net biodiversity gain. London Plan Policy G7 requires trees and woodlands to be protected and maintained.

Policy G5 (Urban Greening) of the London Plan is a fundamental element of site and building design by incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage. It is therefore intended for 'urban' development, particularly in cities, as opposed to the current proposal which is in a more rural setting seeking planning permission to extend an existing Green Waste Open Windrow Composting operation. Notwithstanding this, the proposal does include a significant area of 'greening' that is primarily set aside for biodiversity net gain and perimeter screening/landscaping.

The proposed extension area only contains a few poor-quality scattered trees and areas of scattered scrub within areas of ruderal and scrub within the site. There are no trees of significance in the area. The trees referred to form part of the lower poor-quality scrub. They are not of a size which could provide significant benefit.

It is considered that the loss of a small number of poor-quality trees and scattered scrub will be significantly compensated for by the proposed woodland planting area of approximately 1,100 square metres which equates to 14 of the major tree species and 94 of the minor tree species. Also proposed will be approximately 1,450 square metres of thicket planting, some of which would technically be trees. This would equate to approximately 250 new trees proposed.

Subject to a landscaping condition, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Hillingdon's Local Plan Policies DMHB 14, DMEI 7, BE1, and London Plan Policies G5 and G7.

ECOLOGY

Policy DMEI7 of the Local Plan Part 2 sets out an approach for developments on or near sites of ecological value. Applicants must show that developments will not have unacceptable impacts and sets out a set of principles to be followed if harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided.

Policy G6 of the London Plan states that biodiversity enhancement should be considered from the start of the development process. Ecological habitat retention, enhancement and creation are key principles which have underpinned the design process for the proposed development. Where harm to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is unavoidable, and where the benefits of the development proposal clearly outweigh the impacts on biodiversity a mitigation hierarchy set out in the Policy G6.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) report and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment report has been submitted in support of this planning application. The PEA notes that the site is an area of semi-natural habitat comprising ruderal, scrub and poor semi-improved grassland. In the north of the site, the HS2 development is currently active, and some areas of the site were restricted and worked ground. There is also an area of hardstanding and limited habitat areas within the existing composting site.

The site itself does not lie within any statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance. There are five statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance within 2 km of the site. The site lies within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of two statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance: Ruislip Woods SSSI, NNR & LNR and the Mid Colne Valley SSSI. There are a number of non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance within 1 km of the site.

In terms of protected species, there are no records of Great Crested Newts within the site boundary. There are no statutory designated sites within 5 km of the site that are designated for bats.

Due to the nature of the proposals, there would be some habitat loss, however, it is considered that no areas of the site are of elevated ecological value which are due to be impacted. The main area of the site impacted by the proposed development are confined to areas of bare ground, hardstanding, ruderal, scrub and grassland.

No habitats on the site meet the appropriate criteria to be considered as UK Priority Habitats or Local BAP Habitats. Based on the habitats recorded, the site is considered unlikely to support significant populations of other protected or notable species. The habitats were low in species diversity, are generally common and widespread. It is considered that the proposal is not likely to have an adverse impact upon protected species, such as amphibians, bats, nesting birds, hedgehog or reptiles.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment submitted with the application lists the habitat creation proposed within the application site. The proposals include the following:

- An area of new proposed broadleaved woodland to sit adjacent to the ancient woodland and strengthen the corridor in the area.
- New native thicket planting is proposed along the site boundaries, in order to widen the existing hedgerows here and to form a firm boundary to the development. This habitat will provide complimentary structural diversity to the adjacent ancient woodland.
- Landscape planting associated with peripheries of the developed area.
- New species-rich native hedgerow planting.

The submitted documents advise that the greening/landscape proposals have been designed in conjunction with the works of HS2, in order to provide significant enhancement to the biodiversity attributes of the area and also the wider setting of the Bayhurst woods and locality. The proposed enhancement measures would provide improved landscaping over the current situation. The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with the aspirations of Policies G5 and G6 of the London Plan in terms of ecological enhancement.

In the consultation responses (section 6 of this report), HS2 Ltd has concluded that the proposed regularisation and expansion of the existing green waste composting facility operations is not expected to give rise to any new or different significant environmental effects in the detailed design of the Ruislip Northern Sustainable Placement (RNSP), as compared to the HS2 Phase One Environmental Statement (as amended) scheme. Accordingly, HS2 Ltd have advised that they accept the proposed displacement of HS2 landscaping proposals from the approved RNSP area to an alternative area provided by the applicant and can support the principle of the application proposals in planning and safeguarding terms.

In light of the above interfaces with HS2 safeguarded assets, HS2 have requested that appropriately worded pre-commencement planning conditions are attached to any consent to ensure practicalities

associated with respective construction programmes in this location can be managed. Accordingly, these conditions have been included in this recommendation, in the event that planning permission is granted.

The Mayor in his Stage One report requests that the applicant should prepare an Ecological Management Plan (EMP) to support long-term maintenance and habitat creation, and the EMP should be secured by planning condition. It is noted that the area of land proposed to be included as Biodiversity Net Gain set out within the planning application submission are within the ownership of the applicant and therefore can be secured by condition. This condition has been included in this recommendation, in the event that planning permission is granted.

The Site lies within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of two statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance: Ruislip Woods SSSI, NNR & LNR and the Mid Colne Valley SSSI. Therefore, Natural England have been consulted during the application. Natural England are the lead regulator with regards to the site of special scientific interest (SSSi) to the north and raise no objections to the proposed works, subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This condition has been included in this recommendation, in the event that planning permission is granted.

It is considered that subject to the recommended conditions discussed above, the proposal would avoid significant impacts to ecology and habitats. In combination, the ecological mitigation and enhancements incorporated into the design are considered to meet the requirements set out in national, regional and local plan policies. In particular, the proposed development would protect and enhance the identified SINC, as well as habitats and features of biodiversity value throughout the wider application site, in line with Policy EM7 of the adopted Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 and Policy DME1 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2. With the implementation of the proposed biodiversity measures set out above, the proposal will be compliant with the NPPF and Policy G6 of the London Plan and biodiversity net gain would be achieved.

7.15 Sustainable waste management

As discussed throughout this report (in particular section 7.01 principle of development), this proposal seeks to optimise the permitted throughput of the existing green waste processing facility, whilst complying with recently updated environmental permit regulations (regulated by the Environment Agency).

The proposal would retain a valued composting site that serves West London and beyond. The throughput would divert material from carbon intensive landfill processes and therefore in terms of carbon impacts, the proposals are considered to be preferable to an alternative land filling operation. Similarly, the proposal would prevent additional air quality impacts stemming from the need to transport the material by road to sites further outside of the West London area.

It is therefore concluded the proposed development would make a significant and important contribution in providing organic waste management capacity for the West of London area across the West London Waste Plan period. The proposal therefore represents the best environmental alternative in this regard.

7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability

Policy SI2 of the London Plan (2021) establishes the energy hierarchy for minimising greenhouse gas emissions, sets targets and advises that boroughs must establish and administer carbon offset funds. Policy SI4 of the London Plan seeks to minimise adverse impacts of development on the urban heat

island by addressing impacts of overheating and excessive heat generation.

The proposal would not alter the development in terms of renewable energy and sustainability from the scheme previously agreed within the original grant of planning permission.

The applicant is required under its existing Environmental Permit, issued and controlled by the Environment Agency, to improve its energy efficiency on site. This also extends to resource procurement, sourcing and usage.

In brief, the Environmental Permit requires (under sections 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 of the permit requirements) that the applicant carry out the following:

- Take appropriate measures to ensure that energy is used efficiently in the activities and that raw materials are used efficiently including water;
- Review and record at least every four years whether there are suitable opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of the activities, and minimise the use of raw materials;
- Take any further appropriate measures identified by a review; and
- Avoid, and if not possible, recover wastes produced as part of the site operations and associated activities.

In addition, the applicant is required to undertake energy reviews as part of ISO 14001 accreditation (international standards for managing environmental impact) to continually improve its performance in efficiency, as is required by the standard. The only site energy input is the use of diesel in plant machinery of which there is no alternative at the present time. In terms of improving energy efficiency performance the applicant intends to carry out the following methods:

- Analysing new machinery purchases and maintaining a modern fleet of machines which have been assessed against environmental suitability/efficiency;
- Engaging employees on training which aids in efficient driving of machinery;
- Monitoring and recording usage;
- Ensuring machines are maintained in the most efficient order as per the manufacturer's schedules; and
- Where possible replacing the more polluting with the less polluting or replacing COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) substances which are more harmful with those that are less harmful.

Furthermore, as noted by the Council's Sustainability Officer, there are no energy demand requirements with the proposed development and therefore the zero carbon policy requirements are not applicable. In addition, it must also be noted that the proposals are to retain a valued composting site that serves West London and beyond. The throughput would divert material from carbon intensive landfill process and therefore in terms of carbon impacts, the proposals are considered to be preferable to an alternative land filling operation.

A whole life carbon assessment (WLC) exercise has also been submitted. The assessment concludes that the greatest source of whole life carbon emissions over the study period would come from the operational energy, followed by the construction product stage. Following construction, this is expected to decrease as efficiencies can be made on site. The Whole-Life Carbon assessment is therefore considered consistent with Policy SI2 of the London Plan.

It is considered that the development would satisfactorily address the issues relating to the mitigation

and adaptation to climate change and to minimising carbon dioxide emissions, in accordance with relevant London Plan policies, policy EM1 of the Local Plan Part 1(2012) and policy DMEI 2 of the Local Plan Part 2 (2020).

7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues

Policy EM6 (Flood Risk Management) of the Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012) states that applicants must demonstrate that Flood Risk can be suitably mitigated. Policies DMEI 9, DMEI 10 and DMEI 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) seek to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate measures to mitigate against any potential risk of flooding.

The potential environmental effects of the proposed development on the geological, hydrogeological and hydrological environments, including a Flood Risk Assessment, have been assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment, submitted in support of this application.

The Environment Agency (EA) Flood Maps tool shows that the site lies within Flood Zone 1. This means there is 'low probability' of flooding which represents an annual probability of less than 0.1% of a flood occurring in any one year. The area beneath the site is designated as an Unproductive Aquifer by Defra's Magic Maps application.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted in support of the application. This has been reviewed by the Council's Flood Risk consultants, who do not raise any objections on flood risk or drainage grounds. The following summarises an assessment of the risks from potential sources of flooding and proposed mitigation measures considered within the reviewed FRA.

Surface Water Management

The Environment Agency's Flood Maps show that the entire site is indicated to lie within in Flood Zone 1, 'low probability', which represents an annual probability of less than 0.1% of a flood occurring in any one year. The site is therefore deemed not to be at flood risk from fluvial or tidal sources.

An existing surface water management system is present within the existing site which includes attenuation, storage and bunded / isolated floodable areas to ensure that existing surface water runoff rates are maintained, and the containment of contaminated water within the site, which is then either recycled or taken off site by tanker as leachate. The proposal would retain these arrangements. The extended maturation pad would be constructed of an impermeable hard surface so that there are no points of surface water infiltration into the soil or groundwater. There would be no off-site discharge of any surface water.

It is proposed to add two identical additional above ground leachate storage tanks to deal with surface water runoff from the proposed extension to the compost maturation pad. The pad will be laid with an impermeable concrete surface which is curbed around its perimeter to ensure that there is no pollution to groundwaters. The proposed compost maturation pad will therefore demonstrate total containment of surface water and leachate from the pad.

Pluvial Flooding

In terms of pluvial flood risk the proposed development site is generally at no risk of flooding from overland sources. However, there is a patch of high risk flooding located at the southern boundary of the development which has been investigated. The area of flooding in the southern section of the site

is generated by the onsite catchment falling towards the boundary. A 150mm pluvial deluge has been added to the model and this results in a maximum flooded depth of 38mm. Therefore, the flooding can be considered low risk and with a formal drainage strategy, the flooding can be mitigated and eliminated.

The submitted flood risk assessment also advises that modelling also picks up flooding within the spoil heap in the centre of the proposed development. The flooding is localised and with a 150mm rainfall deluge, the maximum depth is noted to be 82mm. The area of spoil will be removed as part of the construction for the composting pad. The area will be formally drained as part of the works, removing the risk of flooding.

Groundwater Flooding

Due to the presence of clays, it is likely that there is a perched water table. Boreholes to establish the level of groundwater on site will be commissioned prior to the detailed design stage. The West London Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) shows that there are no recorded ground water flooding incidents within the close vicinity of the development. The SFRA mapping shows that the site sits within an area of low risk for groundwater flooding. Therefore, the risk of groundwater flooding is considered low and acceptable based on historic events and risk mapping.

Flooding from Reservoirs, Canals, and other artificial sources

The Environment Agency Reservoir flood map shows that the application site is outside the zone of influence should a reservoir fail. A desktop study carried out by the applicant's consultants, shows that there are no other artificial sources close to the development which could present a flood risk. Flood risk from reservoirs, canals and other artificial sources is therefore deemed low and acceptable.

Sewer and Drain Flooding

SFRA mapping shows that the site is not within an area at risk of sewer flooding. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment further advises that no local incidents had been confirmed at the time of the report. No further information on sewer and drain flooding within the area could be found during the desktop review carried out by the applicant's consultants. The risk is considered low and acceptable.

Flooding from the Development and Sustainable Drainage Strategy

Incorporating a sustainable drainage system (SUDS) would control runoff associated with the proposal. The proposed system would allow interception of overland flow via a series of appropriate components. As discussed above with respect to surface water management, impermeable surfacing is unavoidable given the need to contain and manage contaminants. Therefore, there is no discharge/infiltration to soil or groundwater. Nevertheless, other methods within the Mayor's sustainable drainage hierarchy (e.g., water re-use) are proposed and discussed further below.

The existing strategy at the adjacent site south of Newyears Green Lane (Pylon Farm) is also proposed for the development. This strategy incorporates the re-use of water on site due to the year-round demand for water in the composting process. West London Composting Limited (the applicant) are net importers of water with their current water reuse system at the adjacent site. The additional area for composting will create more of a water demand and therefore, all water falling on site will be collected, stored and reused in processing. The site would be bunded to prevent any offsite discharge of runoff and or spills.

All compost treatment areas on the existing site are isolated from the main drainage network using a combination of barrier walls, bunding and isolated and sealed drainage systems. Attenuation storage is and would be provided to ensure that all water can be contained within site. Water is stored in the surface water storage tanks or on the pad itself in the case of a worst-case event.

Environment Agency regulations do not permit untreated runoff leaving the development site. The proposed new extension area will be linked to the existing site. The proposed new hardstanding areas would be bunded and runoff shall be collected and reused on site (e.g. spread onto the compost) with storage in the water tanks for operational use. The containment bund will contain the 1 in 100 +40% storm event runoff volume.

The biodiversity net gain area to the northeast will contain new planting and ecological enhancements. Therefore, no drainage system is suggested for the area.

The flooding risk as a result of the proposed development is low and therefore acceptable, as is the sustainable re-use of water.

Maintaining Flow Paths

No surface water flow path exists on site. The low-risk pluvial flooding is encapsulated on site and inherent to the site catchment area.

Conclusions

The FRA report submitted in support of the application has considered all potential sources of flooding to and from the site. The proposed new hardstanding areas would be bunded and runoff is proposed to be collected and reused on site with storage in the water tanks for operational use. The containment bund would contain the 1 in 100 +40% storm event runoff volume. No adverse surface water or groundwater impacts will therefore arise.

The Council's Flood Consultant has reviewed the submitted documentation and raises no objections subject to conditions. The Environment Agency also raises no objections.

Subject to conditions, it is considered that the physical expansion of the maturation yard would not compromise the statutory functions of the Environment Agency, the risk of flooding would be minimised and the quality of the water environment would be protected, in compliance with Policies EM6 (Flood Risk Management) of the Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMEI 9, DMEI 10 and DMEI 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) and, London Plan policies SI 12 and SI 13.

7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues

AIR QUALITY

Policy EM8 aims to ensure that development does not cause deterioration in the local air quality levels. The proposed development is located outside the Hillingdon Air Quality Management Area and due to its nature, the potential impacts on air quality would mainly be odour emissions. The proposed development would not change the amount of waste that is received at the facility and therefore no additional traffic will be generated during the operational phase. On this basis, there would be no traffic-related impact on air quality.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan would be secured by condition, which would also require wheel washing facilities and measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction (such as an adequate supply of water on site to dampen/suppress dust/particulate matter). A condition has also been included to secure wheel washing of vehicles during the operational phase.

For the operational phase of the development, the existing green waste composting operation is controlled under the requirements of the Environmental Permit issued under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016). As part of that Permit, the applicant is required to operate the green waste composting in accordance with an Odour Management Plan (OMP), which is enforced by the Environment Agency (EA). As such, the site is subject to regular reviews and audits by the EA and acts following any findings. The regulator can require the site to cease activities where they are not satisfied that the operations are or can be undertaken without causing significant pollution to the environment. The controls and mitigation measures set out in the OMP, which would cover the operations in the proposed extension area, are intended to ensure that odour does not become a source of nuisance in the locality.

Nevertheless, An Air Quality and Odour Assessment (AQOA) report has been submitted in support of this application. This has been reviewed by the Council's Air Quality officer who does not object to the proposal, subject to the submission of an updated and improved odour management plan. This is required to minimise to the maximum possible extent the odour impacts on nearby sensitive receptors, and seek to prevent future complaints. This condition has been included in this recommendation.

Overall, subject to adherence with the suggested condition for an updated Odour Management Plan, it is concluded that there would be no significant environmental effects associated with the application, with respect to air quality and odour, in compliance with Policy D3, Policy D13, Policy E7, and Policy S18 of the London Plan.

NOISE

The NPPF requires developments to mitigate and reduce to a minimum the potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.

Policy D14 (Noise) of the London Plan states that in order to reduce, manage and mitigate noise to improve health and quality of life, residential and non-aviation development proposals should manage noise by avoiding significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life, reflect the Agent of Change principle, mitigate and minimise the existing and potential adverse impacts of noise and improve and enhance acoustic environments.

At a local level, Policy EM 8 (Land, Water, Air and Noise) of the Local Plan Part 1 states that the Council will seek to ensure that noise sensitive development and noise generating development are only permitted if noise impacts can be adequately controlled and mitigated. Hillingdon's Core Policy BE1 requires all new development to be designed appropriately to protect the amenity of surrounding buildings.

The nearest neighbouring residential properties are located in the southern end of the site adjacent to Newyears Green Lane. These properties are adjacent to the existing site currently in operation for a

number of years. The proposed extension to the maturation pad is to the north and east of the existing site, further away from any residential properties. Therefore the proposal is unlikely to result in noise impacts beyond the existing situation.

Green waste would continue to be brought into the site by HGV, with compost transported out by HGV. The material is processed through a shredder and subsequently through a screening plant. It is proposed to relocate the existing shredding and screening operations to a dedicated area at the northern end of the site, furthest from the neighbouring residential properties to mitigate any impact on neighbouring residents from these activities.

The application also seeks to retain two power generators. These are located adjacent to the tanks at the northern end of the site, which operate during the working hours. Overnight, one generator may automatically start periodically (less than 10% of the time), to run a sump pump, which operates when the sump fills with water. Water is pumped from the sump to the above ground tanks. When the water level in the sump drops, the generator (only one works at a time) turns off again. The generators would result in low noise levels at the neighbouring properties. The level of noise associated with this operation would remain substantially below the prevailing background noise levels and thus would not result in adverse noise impacts.

A Noise Assessment Report has been submitted in support of the application. This report concludes that the proposals would result in a noticeable reduction in noise levels at the properties, compared to the presently permitted operations. This is largely because the main changes from the existing site operations in terms of noise, would be the proposed relocation of the current shredding and screening operations, which are undertaken within the central area of the current site, to a new area, located at the northern end of the site, furthest from residences.

The proposal and submitted Noise Report has been reviewed by the Council's Noise Officer who does not raise any objections, subject to the inclusion of the a condition requiring the proposed operations to comply with specified noise emission levels. This condition has been included in the recommendation for approval. A condition has also been re-imposed from the earlier permission, restricting operational hours.

Subject to these conditions, it is considered that that there would be no significant environmental effects associated with the application with respect to noise, in accordance with relevant local, London Plan policies and the aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.19 Comments on Public Consultations

One representation has been received from a neighbouring resident. This is specified in section 6 (consultations) of this report. All matters raised are addressed throughout this committee report.

7.20 Planning obligations

The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 2010 (Regulations issued Pursuant to the 2008 Act) and the NPPF have put three tests on the use of planning obligations into law. It is unlawful (since 6th April 2010) to request planning obligations that do not meet the following tests:

- i. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- ii. directly related to the development, and
- iii. fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development

The effect of the Regulations is that the Council must apply the tests much more strictly and is only to ask for planning obligations that are genuinely necessary and directly related to a development.

Should planning obligations be requested that do not meet the policy tests the Council would have acted unlawfully and could be subject to a High Court challenge.

Policy DF1 of the London Plan (2021) requires development proposals to provide the infrastructure and meet relevant policy requirements necessary to ensure that they are sustainable and to support delivery of the Plan. Policy DMCI 7 of the Local Plan: Part Two (2020) seeks to ensure development is sustainable, planning permission will only be granted for development that clearly demonstrates there will be sufficient infrastructure of all types to support it. Planning obligations are sought on a scheme-by-scheme basis to ensure that development proposals provide or fund improvements to mitigate site specific impacts made necessary by the proposal.

The original grant of planning permission secured the following planning obligation by way of a legal agreement:

(I) highway improvements on Newyears Green Lane, including the strengthening of the carriageway.

The applicant has discharged this obligation with highway improvements, including the strengthening of the carriageway, completed. As there is no material increase in commercial activity or highway movements, and that this obligation has already been discharged, it is not necessary for this obligation to be carried forward, by way of a deed of variation to the original S106 Agreement, in the event that this application is approved.

7.21 Expediency of enforcement action

Subject to approval of this application, there are no enforcement matters relevant to this application.

7.22 Other Issues

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Policy SI 7 (Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy) of the London Plan 2021 requires that referable applications should promote circular economy outcomes and aim to be net zero-waste. A Circular Economy Statement including the provision of the completed GLA CE template with relevant tabs completed in full (in Excel format), together with a revised written report has been submitted in support of the proposal.

It is considered that the aspirations of Policy SI 7 (Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy) of the London Plan (2021) primarily relates to new development where there is demolition and new building works taking place. In the case of this proposal, there are no buildings proposed to be constructed or any existing development being demolished. Therefore, there is no opportunity to consider designing buildings for adaptation, reconstruction and deconstruction within Circular Economy considerations, because they are already built.

The throughput of green/food waste would be 75,000 tonnes per annum, which is the maximum allowed under the existing Environmental Permit. Strategic Objective 2 of the Waste Local Plan (WLP) seeks to encourage development that supports sustainable waste management at least in line with national targets for recycling, recovery and composting. The WLP confirms that Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs) should drive waste management up the waste hierarchy. This means encouraging prevention of waste, and preparing for the reuse, recycling and recovery of waste (including recovery of inert waste to land).

The applicant submits that if the current proposal is unsuccessful, green waste would have to be transported to a different facility, further afield, increasing the distance the waste has to travel, and

thus increasing emissions from vehicles. The proposal would make an important contribution to green waste recycling, reducing emissions and helping to meet the Government's climate change. The proposal is therefore considered consistent with the London Plan's aspiration of moving towards a more circular economy, increasing the resource efficiency of London's businesses, and helping to reduce carbon emissions.

The proposal seeks to secure physical expansion for the northern part of the site which would provide the necessary space to support the maturation and recycling process of the sustainable waste management facility. The proposal would support and sustain the on-going recycling activities.

The proposed development would not generate waste on-site, but would recycle green and food waste collected in the west of London, mainly by local authorities. The proposal is considered to be compliant with the Government's Waste Hierarchy by recovery, recycling and re-using the material in the form of compost, which is used as a fertiliser by farmers.

The sustainable waste management activities are monitored and controlled under the existing Environmental Permit by the Environment Agency who make regular site visits. The applicant is required to provide annual reports to the Environment Agency, thereby complying with Policy SI 7 of the London Plan.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the Mayor of London's aspirations of moving towards a circular economy. The proposed development would make a significant and important contribution in providing organic waste management capacity for the West London area and would divert waste from landfill, moving waste up the waste hierarchy.

FIRE SAFETY

London Plan Policy D12 on fire safety requires all developments to achieve the highest standards of fire safety. Major developments are required to submit a Fire Statement. London Plan Policy D5 requires developments that include a lift core to include at least one evacuation lift. This Fire Safety London Plan Guidance (LPG) sets out how applicants should demonstrate their schemes comply with these policies.

The proposed development relates to a waste management facility which requires an Environmental Permit to be obtained from the Environment Agency in order to operate the facility. As part of that future Environmental Permit Application, the applicant will be required to demonstrate compliance with the strict Fire Prevention Plan (FPP) guidance. Nevertheless, for reference a Fire Prevention Plan has been submitted in support of this application.

8. Observations of the Borough Solicitor

General

Members must determine planning applications having due regard to the provisions of the development plan so far as material to the application, any local finance considerations so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations (including regional and national policy and guidance). Members must also determine applications in accordance with all relevant primary and secondary legislation.

Material considerations are those which are relevant to regulating the development and use of land in the public interest. The considerations must fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned.

Members should also ensure that their involvement in the determination of planning applications adheres to the Members Code of Conduct as adopted by Full Council and also the guidance contained in Probity in Planning, 2009.

Planning Conditions

Members may decide to grant planning consent subject to conditions. Planning consent should not be refused where planning conditions can overcome a reason for refusal. Planning conditions should only be imposed where Members are satisfied that imposing the conditions are necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Where conditions are imposed, the Council is required to provide full reasons for imposing those conditions.

Planning Obligations

Members must be satisfied that any planning obligations to be secured by way of an agreement or undertaking pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The obligations must be directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related to the scale and kind to the development (Regulation 122 of Community Infrastructure Levy 2010).

Equalities and Human Rights

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010, requires the Council, in considering planning applications to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations between people who have different protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The requirement to have due regard to the above goals means that members should consider whether persons with particular protected characteristics would be affected by a proposal when compared to persons who do not share that protected characteristic. Where equalities issues arise, members should weigh up the equalities impact of the proposals against the other material considerations relating to the planning application. Equalities impacts are not necessarily decisive, but the objective of advancing equalities must be taken into account in weighing up the merits of an application. The weight to be given to any equalities issues is a matter for the decision maker to determine in all of the circumstances.

Members should also consider whether a planning decision would affect human rights, in particular the right to a fair hearing, the right to respect for private and family life, the protection of property and the prohibition of discrimination. Any decision must be proportionate and achieve a fair balance between private interests and the public interest.

9. Observations of the Director of Finance

Not applicable

10. CONCLUSION

The proposed development would continue to make a significant contribution to waste management in Hillingdon borough and the surrounding area of West London, and maximise the diversion of waste

from landfill. Whilst the site is located within Green Belt, it is considered that the case for very special circumstances (VSC) justifies the proposed extension of the open-air windrow composting maturation site. The VSC are considered to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, due to the proposal being 'inappropriate development'.

It should be noted that the West London Composting site has been operating as a composting facility in the local vicinity for a number of years. The site is the primary facility for managing organic waste across West London and it is deemed a protected site within the West London Waste Plan (2015). This demonstrates the wider need for the site. The site also plays a crucial role in elevating this waste up the Mayor's Waste Hierarchy.

It is considered that the proposal would not conflict with the fundamental aims of Green Belt policy, which is to prevent urban sprawl and keep land permanently open. In the light of the above, it is considered that the proposal would have limited harm to the fundamental aims of the Green Belt.

It is not considered that the visual amenities or the open character of the Green Belt would be adversely affected by the proposal. It is not considered that the scheme will have an adverse impact on ecology and nature conservation in the area, or on the highway network, subject to the imposition of recommended conditions.

Subject to adherence with the suggested conditions, it is considered that there would be no significant environmental effects associated with the application, with respect to noise, air quality and odour.

In addition, subject to the recommended conditions being imposed, it is considered that the proposal would not compromise the statutory functions of the Environment Agency in regulating environmental risk, the risk of flooding would be minimised and the quality of the water environment would be protected.

It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions and referral to the Secretary of State and the Mayor of London, as detailed in section 2 of this committee report.

11. Reference Documents

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The London Plan (2021)

The West London Waste Plan (2015)

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012)

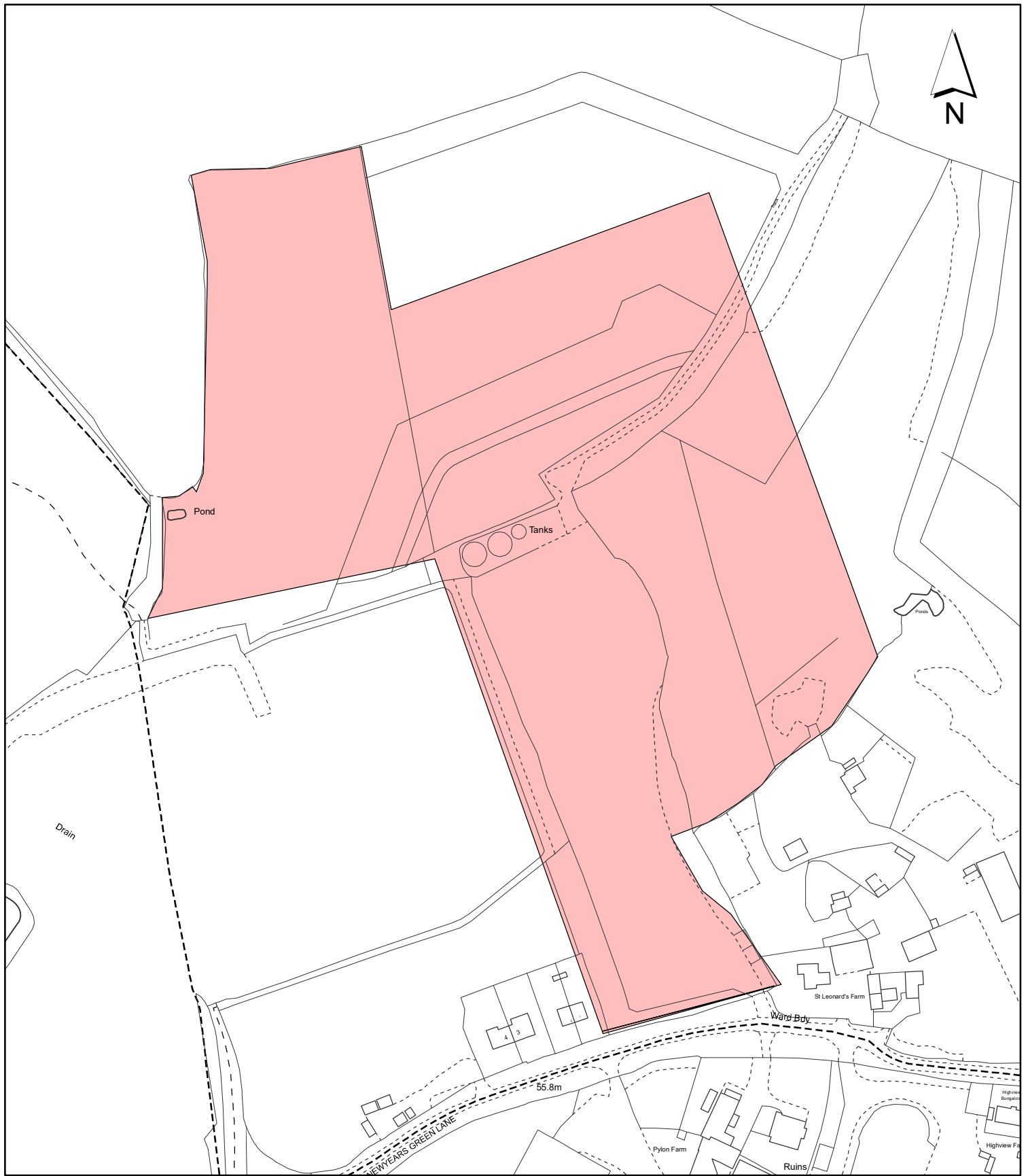
Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020)

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Notes:

 Site boundary

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON
Residents Services
Planning Section

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 Telephone No.: Uxbridge 01895 250111

Planning Application Ref:

39755/APP/2023/652

Scale:

1:2,500

Planning Committee:

Major

Date:

March 2024



HILLINGDON
 LONDON