

*Application Number:* 17/02965/CPO  
*Date Registered:* 13 July 2017  
*Parish:* Henstridge  
*District:* South Somerset  
*Member Division:* Blackmoor Vale  
*Local Member:* Cllr William Wallace  
*Case Officer:* James Jackson  
*Contact Details:* 01823 359783  
*Description of Application:* Retrospective application - wood recycling and processing waste management site  
*Grid Reference:* 375512-120424  
*Applicant:* Mr C Hunt – Longman Wood Recycling  
*Location:* Longman Wood Recycling, Camp Road, Henstridge Airfield, Henstridge, Templecombe, BA8 0TN

## **1. Summary of Key Issues and Recommendation(s)**

The key issues for Members to consider are:-

- Whether the principle of development is acceptable
- Whether the proposal represents sustainable development
- The waste hierarchy
- Impact of the proposal on landscape features and elements; landscape character; and visual amenity
- Impact of the proposal on the highway network
- Impact of the proposal on amenity – noise, odour and dust

**It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the imposition of the conditions in section 8 of this report and that authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager - Planning Control, Enforcement & Compliance.**

## 2. Description of the Site

- 2.1 The application relates to a broadly rectangular and flat site of approximately 0.68 hectares. Because the proposed use is already in operation, the site is already arranged as proposed by the application. The two boiler houses are sited against the eastern site boundary, with drying containers, a heat exchanger and air duct located along the southern boundary. Further drying bays with heat exchanger and air duct are located towards the centre of the site. To the western site boundary are the weighbridge, two site offices, two storage containers and a diesel tank, all of which are formed from shipping container style structures. The northern half of the site is proposed to be used as a storage area for the waste wood to be processed and an area for the waste to be shredded. The site access is located in the south western corner, with three parking spaces either side.
- 2.2 The site boundaries are formed by security fencing. Beyond the north and eastern boundaries are earth bunds of approximately three metres in height, beyond which appears to be disused land with no obvious use or function. To the west is an adjoining excavating contractor business trading under the name Robin Chapman Ltd. To the south is a private road that facilitates access to the public highway known as Camp Road, which in turn leads to the A30. Across from the private road is another earth bund of approximately three metre height.
- 2.3 The site is part of Henstridge Airfield, the majority of which accommodates a relatively small scale airfield. The remainder is occupied by a number of small businesses, which in the main are uses of industrial character. In addition to these small businesses there are areas of scrubby grassland and hardstanding in poor condition. Beyond the boundaries of the airfield are agricultural fields and settlements of varying scale.

## 3. The Proposals

- 3.1 The submitted application form describes the proposed development as follows:

***‘Retrospective application - wood recycling and processing waste management site’***

- 3.2 In general terms, the process involves waste wood of varying quality being brought to the site from various sources, where it will be processed to produce a finished product that can be sold to, and used by, a number of different customers.
- 3.3 The wood to be brought to the site is primarily sourced from construction and demolition sites and from commercial and industrial processes. Grade A+ wood (mainly soft white wood) to grade C wood (such as MDF, formica, hardboard) is all accepted and is stockpiled at the site. An initial manual separation of materials that cannot be processed is then undertaken, and the

unsuitable material is placed in a skip. This is collected from the site and taken away for further sorting and disposal.

- 3.4 The waste wood is then chipped on-site by a mobile chipping and screening machine. The wood chips are then sorted into two grades of wood by another machine. The lower grade wood chips are then ready to be used for purposes such as fuelling industrial boilers, whilst the higher grade wood chips are stockpiled for further processing.
- 3.5 Some of the wood chips are used to power the on-site boilers. The heat that is produced then goes through a heat exchanger and hot air is then blown into one of the two drying facilities. These facilities are a line of seven specially adapted metal skips and a set of three underfloor heated storage bays. This part of the process dries the higher grade wood chips for more efficient combustion and produces a better quality end product, which is then transported to customers or collected in the customers' own vehicles.

#### **4. The Application**

##### **4.1 Documents submitted with the application**

- Site Location Plan
- Site Plan
- Boiler House No.1 Floor Plan and Elevations
- Boiler House No.2 and Drying Bay Elevations
- Boiler House No.2 and Drying Bay Floor Plan
- Completed Application Form
- Design and Access Statement
- Fire Prevention Plan
- Site Photographs
- Dust Mitigation Plan
- Details of vehicular movements

#### **5 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 5.1 An assessment of the proposed development in the context of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 has demonstrated that the proposal falls within Schedule 2, specifically 11(b) 'Installations for the disposal of waste', and that the proposal exceeds the applicable thresholds and criteria insofar that the area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares. In terms of the other criteria, the development is not sited within 100m of any controlled waters and the disposal of waste is not by incineration (it is accepted that some of the chipped wood is incinerated to provide heat to dry the remaining wood chips; however this is not the core process at the site). Given that the development exceeds the site size threshold, it is necessary to screen the proposal to determine whether or not the effects on the environment associated with the development are likely to be significant. The screening process determines whether or not the

proposal represents EIA development, and therefore whether or not an Environmental Statement is required.

- 5.2 Due regard has been given to the government's indicative screening thresholds, published on 26 March 2015, which in respect of project type 11(b) confirms that the indicative criteria and threshold for proposals to represent EIA Development is '*Installations (including landfill sites) for the deposit, recovery and/or disposal of household, industrial and/or commercial wastes where new capacity is created to hold more than 50,000 tonnes per year, or to hold waste on a site of 10 hectares or more. Sites taking smaller quantities of these wastes, sites seeking only to accept inert wastes (demolition rubble etc.) or Civic Amenity sites, are unlikely to require Environmental Impact Assessment.*' Given that the existing operation processes approximately 5,000 tonnes per annum, and anticipates that 15,000 tonnes per annum will be processed in two years' time, it is considered that the scale of the proposal is so far below the indicative threshold of 50,000 tonnes that it does not represent EIA development.
- 5.3 In addition to the above, it is considered that this report demonstrates that the effects associated with the development will not be significant and can be avoided, managed or mitigated through the use of appropriate conditions.
- 5.4 Taking account of the above, and for the reasons discussed in this report, it is concluded that the proposed development is Schedule 2 development; however the associated effects on the environment are not considered to be significant. Accordingly, the proposed development is not EIA development and an Environmental Statement is not therefore required.

## **6 Consultation Responses Received**

### External Consultees

#### **6.1 South Somerset District Council –**

The District Council raises no objections to the application, but urge the County Council to give careful consideration to the highway impacts of the proposed development and the potential for native scrub planting to the external face of the bounding bund to help play down the new buildings in longer views towards the site.

Suggested informatives:

01. The County Council should be aware that the airfield and former airfield experience high volumes of traffic due to the nature of the users on site, including the unauthorised storage of a large quantity of cars. Particular reference should be made to application 04/02229/FUL, where, at the request of the SCC Highway Authority, a Section 106 agreement was entered into between the district council

and the applicant concerning the management of traffic generation on site.

02. The County Council should be aware of the comments of the SSDC Landscape Architect who has requested native scrub planting to the external face of the bounding bund to help play down the new buildings in longer views towards the site.

## 6.2 **Henstridge Parish Council –**

Members discussed their deep concerns over air pollution caused by the operations on this site and the risk of fire or explosion caused by the storage of large amounts of waste and burning of contaminated waste. Councillor William Wallace noted that he had received letters of complaint from residents.

RESOLVED It was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council recommends refusal of this application on safety and environmental grounds and requests that the matter should be brought before Somerset County Council's Regulation Committee. In addition, the Parish Council felt strongly that the site should be cleaned to prevent contamination.

## 6.3 **Environment Agency –**

The Environment Agency has no objections, in principle, to the proposed development but recommends that if planning permission is granted the following informatives and recommendations should be included in the Decision Notice:

The proposed development will require either an exemption or Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency. For more information the applicant should refer to the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-environmental-permits>.

### INTERNAL CONSULTEES

## 6.4 **Councillor William Wallace –**

Henstridge Parish Council have objected to this application and I have received local concerns re. pollution and safety. Officers should consider referral to Regulation Committee.

## 6.5 **Transport Development –**

It is noted that the application is located within Henstridge Airfield which has access onto Camp Road which further leads to the A30 and wider distribution. From onsite observations Camp Road and the junction from Henstridge airfield currently have a relatively low use.

The applicant has provided details of the expected vehicle movements from the airfield and then further onto Shaftsbury Road, the proposed number of vehicle movements would appear to represent approximately 34-38 vehicle movements per day including both HGC/LGV and smaller vehicles. The junction from Henstridge airfield has sufficient capacity to cope with the proposed level of vehicle movements as does the junction with Shaftsbury Road as well as being sufficient capacity within the surrounding highway network.

It was noted during site visits that the visibility from the existing junction is sufficient and this aspect of the application would not draw an objection from the Highway Authority.

The application site is a sufficient distance away from the highway that vehicles are unlikely to reverse onto any public highway, however, it is noted that there is sufficient space within the site to allow for parking and turning.

The site is located a sufficient distance from the highway and again it is unlikely that there will be any drainage concerns. There are no proposed changes to the access that will cause the drainage to be affected, however, it should be noted that it is an offence under the Highways Act (1980) for any water and or detritus to be discharged onto the highway.

Taking the above into account, the Highway Authority does not wish to raise an objection to the planning application.

## 6.6 **Scientific Services (Noise) –**

The development proposal to process waste wood is located on land that would appear to contain an active airfield and large scale commercial development that includes a grain processing factory. As such it is expected to be a mixed industrial noise environment. The closest residential developments lie approximately 590m or more to the west and south west of the development site centre. The terrain appears to be flat (+/- 1m) and the western site boundary would not appear to have bunding but material storage and plant location currently provides some screening .

The applicant has provided photographic detail of the plant used with subjective comment on the noise impacts that might arise and states that residential locations are *'unlikely to be adversely affected by the operations being undertaken'* and the *'limited amount of noise created from these activities is unlikely to be more than many of the other commercial activities already operating on the Henstridge Airfield site'*. The applicant indicates that the working hours would be 0700 and 1830 hours on Mondays to Fridays only.

There would appear to be plant associated with the production of wood chip and plant associated with the accelerated drying of wood chip. The fire management plan would indicate that materials may remain on site for 30

days and the following material volumes may exist on site:

- Unprocessed materials in a pile measuring 13m x 14m at a maximum height of 4m and total volume of no greater than 730m<sup>3</sup>
- Processed materials in a pile measuring 10m x 11m and maintained at a maximum height of 4m with total volume no greater than 440m<sup>3</sup>

The production of wood chip involves the use of a chipper that would appear to be similar to a Vermeer HG6000 grinder and the characteristics of noise would be expected to be similar to those shown in video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyimomYTgol> and involve engine noise and impulsive noise as wood is chipped. Plant specification data would suggest the sound power level is Lw120dB(A). The power screen would appear similar to a Terex Finlay 863. Looking at our site photos I also note another power screen similar to a Terex 595 and if this is the case operational noise would be approximately 77dB(A) at 10m and equate to a sound power level of Lw 105dB. Other plant such as shovels and slews would each be expected to have similar sound power levels of approximately 105dB(A). As such the chipper represents the most dominant noise source.

The plant associated with the accelerated drying of wood chip would include Kalvis wood burners and a diesel generator. It is not clear from submitted information but I would also expect there to be electric blower fans. It remains unclear if the operation of the operation of drying plant is to be continuous over 24hour periods and at times when the site is unoccupied.

The geometric attenuation of sound power levels over 600m would be equivalent to 64dB over hard ground or 70dB over soft ground and would suggest unobstructed individual noise contributions from mobile plant and the small screen could be approximately 35dB(A)-41dB(A) at nearest housing. As such I would not expect mobile plant or the noise from the power screen to present a risk of noise disturbance, particularly if screened by material stock piles or when subjected to the winds that would be expected to prevail from the western quadrant, and the general direction of housing, as these would have significant effect over 600m. Noise from the chipper could be 50dB(A)-56dB(A) if operated in the open however noise from this type of plant is often directional and this may introduce a further +/- 6dB variation. Consequently in my view noise from chipping plant has the potential to be distinct at residential locations under some conditions.

The applicant indicates in the fire prevention plan that 'a maximum of 80 tonnes of waste {wood} can be accepted for delivery each day and this is supplied from a variety of waste producers'. It is not known where this limit is derived from or if there is any output limit from the site as there is no description of the transportation requirements or expectations for the development. The export of material might involve bulk 20t transport but other unprocessed wood might arrive in skips or high-sided container lorries. I would expect lorries to use the A30 route and as such vehicles would pass close to a few properties along the 800m of minor road to the airfield entrance. All vehicles would pass 35m from Airfield House and while pass-by

noise would be distinct it is not known whether site traffic would represent a significant increase over existing traffic.

In my view noise impacts of site operations would not present an obstacle to planning consent however there would appear a risk that prolonged processing noise might create an unnecessary additional noise at housing. Without more detailed information it would seem difficult to establish if the processing operation would be undertaken in ways to best reduce noise at housing. The description of site materials would however suggest there was ample opportunity to adopt simple measures that could minimise the propagation of noise toward nearest housing and so avoid any risk of disturbance. I would not expect the noise impact from the drying plant to be sufficient to be a planning consideration. If the planning authority were to seek measures to minimise noise in the absence of more detailed information then I would then suggest the following conditions:

1. All plant and machinery used on site shall be used and maintained so as to minimise operational noise emissions.
2. All site based mobile plant that is required to use audible reverse warning alarms shall be fitted with broadband devices within 2 months of the commencement of this planning permission.
3. Within 2 months of the commencement of this planning permission the operator shall provide, and obtain planning consent for a sketch plan and description of the measures to be taken to minimise noise propagation towards housing. Measures considered will include plant orientation and physical screening using material stockpiles and this will then form the basis for permitted plant operation.

#### 6.7 **Scientific Services (Odour / Dust) –**

Whilst I recognise the positive aspects of this application in terms of recycling of waste material, it is my view that the activities for which planning permission is sought are likely to generate significant quantities of dust, potentially to the detriment of the health and amenity of neighbouring businesses and residents.

This view is based on:

- the description of the wood recycling activities provided by the applicant;
- opinions expressed by objectors who observe and describe current on-site practices;
- online searches of issues arising from similar applications.

**It is therefore my suggestion that the client is requested to submit a thorough and detailed plan on how dust generation issues can be mitigated at each stage of the process.**

A thorough dust mitigation plan would include the following measures:



- Weather forecasts, reports, and local conditions to be monitored to ensure that dust suppression or road cleaning is available when required;
- Routine dampening down of all trafficked and active areas using water bowsers and sprays to be carried out during dry weather, or at any other time that dust other than trivial quantities is seen to or is likely to escape the site boundary;
- Routine dust monitoring at the site boundary;
- In the event that dust other than trivial quantities is seen to or is likely to escape the site boundary, the activity causing the dust to be immediately suspended until effective dust control has been achieved;
- Areas where dust generating activities will take place to be protected from wind by screens, or preferably enclosed entirely;
- Sweepers to be employed to clean roads where appropriate;
- Debris falling from vehicles to be immediately removed;
- Wheel-wash facilities to be provided at the site exit to ensure vehicles do not track mud or debris onto public highways;
- Where appropriate, only designated access routes to be used - site directions to be provided to suppliers and/or sub contractors;
- Good quality access track to be provided;
- Vehicle speed limits to be set and enforced;
- All vehicles transporting materials to and/or from site to be sheeted to prevent dust and debris escape during transport;
- All plant to be maintained and checked on a daily basis;
- Vehicle exhausts to be angled so that they do not discharge directly at the ground;
- Vehicle engines to be switched off when vehicle is not in use;
- Stockpiles to be located out of the wind where possible and kept to the minimum practicable height, with gentle slopes;
- Fall height of all materials to be minimised;
- A daily dust log to be maintained;
- A complaints register to be maintained, and a structured protocol established of actions to be taken by named individuals in the event that a dust issue arises or a complaint is received.

## 6.8 Public Consultation

The following representations have been received in respect of the proposals:

- 0 representations in support of the proposals; and
- 3 representations objecting to the proposals;

The representations objecting to the proposals raise the following issues:

- Significant dust issues associated with the operation (***cited as an issue in 3 representations***)

- Potential for surface water run-off to pollute water sources
- Applicant does not control water supply needed for fire prevention (***cited as an issue in 2 representations***)
- Fire prevention plan relies on 24 hour security, which is no longer present
- Proposal could result in increased insurance premiums for other businesses
- Conditions should be attached to any planning conditions to control effects
- Likelihood of applicant ignoring planning conditions
- Operator should demonstrate viability of business
- Traffic generation would be significant
- Development will not provide employment benefit
- Height of woodpile poses fire risk

## **7 Comments of the Service Manager**

7.1 The key issues for Members to consider are:-

- **Whether the principle of development is acceptable**
- **Whether the proposal represents sustainable development**
- **The waste hierarchy**
- **Impact of the proposal on landscape features and elements; landscape character; and visual amenity**
- **Impact of the proposal on the highway network**
- **Impact of the proposal on amenity – noise, odour and dust**

## **7.2 The Development Plan**

Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan consists of the:

- Somerset Waste Core Strategy adopted February 2013; and
- South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) adopted March 2015

The following policies are of relevance in the determination of the application:

### Somerset Waste Core Strategy adopted February 2013

SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development  
 WCS2: Recycling and reuse  
 DM1: Basic location principles  
 DM2: Sustainable construction and design  
 DM3: Impacts on the environment and local communities  
 DM6: Waste transport  
 DM7: Water resources

## South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) adopted March 2015

SD1: Sustainable development  
EP6: Henstridge Airfield  
TA5: Transport impact of new development  
EQ2: General development  
EQ7: Pollution control

### 7.3 **Material Considerations**

Other material considerations to be given due consideration in the determination of the application include the following:

- National Planning Policy for Waste October 2014 (NPPW);

### 7.4 **Principle of Development**

The Somerset Waste Core Strategy differentiates between strategic and non-strategic sites, noting that *'Strategic sites are required to support the delivery of strategic waste treatment capacity in Somerset. Non-strategic sites are required to ensure that local needs are met in an appropriate way, acknowledging the need for consolidation points (such as transfer facilities) and stakeholder support for a mix of larger and smaller scale waste facilities.'*

When defining strategic waste management sites, paragraph 9.8 states that *'A strategic site will be capable of contributing towards meeting Somerset's need for treating a particular waste management stream or resource. A strategic site should be: a) central to the delivery of the Waste Core Strategy, making a significant contribution to the sustainable management of waste generated in Somerset; b) well located to the source of the waste(s) and with good access to Somerset's strategic transport network; and c) of sufficient area (as a guide, at least 2ha) to promote the co-location of complementary activities and provide the potential to accommodate a range of waste management technologies.'*

In terms of a definition of non-strategic wastes, paragraph 9.18 states *'waste facilities at non-strategic sites will contribute towards meeting local waste management needs.'* Paragraph 9.19 notes that non-strategic sites would be expected to accommodate small scale recycling and waste transfer of up to 50,000 tonnes per year.

The proposed development currently processes approximately 5,000 tonnes per annum, and proposes to process 15,000 tonnes per annum in two years' time. Clearly these quantities are significantly below 50,000 tonnes per annum, which indicates that the operation is non-strategic; however it is important to consider the role and function of the development as well as its scale. In this regard, the majority of the waste material is received from locally based businesses on an ad hoc basis; the applicant does not have

contracts with non-local suppliers. Furthermore, the majority of the recycled wood products are sold to local businesses.

Taking account of the above, it is considered that the development is a non-strategic facility and the principle of development in the location proposed is therefore considered to be acceptable from a planning policy perspective.

In accordance with the Waste Core Strategy, it is therefore appropriate for the assessment of the proposal to focus largely on the Core Strategy development management policies DM1 to DM9 where relevant, and those of relevance within the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) adopted March 2015.

## 7.5

### **Does the proposal represent sustainable development?**

The Somerset Waste Core Strategy and South Somerset Local Plan contain an almost identically worded policy in relation to sustainable development. The general thrust of the policies is that planning permission will be granted, without delay, for policies that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this particular case, it is considered that the following assessment demonstrates that the proposal represents sustainable development, by reason that it satisfies the relevant planning policies within the Development Plan. Consequently, it is considered that the proposal accords with policies SD1 of the Somerset Waste Core Strategy and SD1 of the South Somerset Local Plan. In addition, the compliance of the proposal with the various planning policies of relevance demonstrates that the proposal would not unacceptably intensify the level of activity at the airfield, thereby ensuring compliance with part of Policy EP6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

## 7.6 **The Waste Hierarchy**

The Somerset Waste Core Strategy sets out the Waste Hierarchy (on page 9). The hierarchy establishes the Council's approach to waste management, with disposal being the least preferred option, then other recovery, recycling, preparing for reuse, with waste prevention being the most preferable situation.

Policy WCS2 relates to the recycling and reuse of waste, and confirms that planning permission will be granted for waste management development that will maximise reuse and/or recycling of waste subject to the applicant demonstrating that the proposed development will, in particular, be in accordance with Development Management Policies 1-9.

It is considered that the proposal accords with Policy WCS2 and has broad policy support through the Waste Hierarchy. The development will process various grades of waste wood (grades A+ to C) so that it can be reused. It is

proposed that the lower quality wood chippings can be used for industrial boilers, whilst the higher quality product can be used for animal bedding and other uses where a higher grade product is required. The principle of the reuse of waste material is supported by the Waste Core Strategy and this weighs in favour of the proposal.

Policy WCS2 also requires that the proposal must be in accordance with the Core Strategy's Development Management policies 1-9. In this regard, it is considered that the policies of relevance to the proposal are DM1, DM2, DM3, DM6 and DM7. This report demonstrates that the policy is in accordance with these relevant policies, and others of relevance from the South Somerset Local Plan.

## **7.7 Impact of the development on Landscape Features and Elements; Landscape Character; and Visual Amenity**

The submitted Design and Access Statement correctly notes that Henstridge Airfield is not visible from the majority of locations within the surrounding area, by reason that visibility is obscured by a combination of hedgerows, trees, existing built form, and topography. In particular, it is noted that there are two existing Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) within reasonably close proximity to the site, references WN12/11 and WN12/38; and views of the site are not possible from these routes.

The airfield is visible from a greater distance, from higher land, however the site would not appear as being unduly dominant in the landscape from these areas due to its relatively modest scale and the presence of other areas of built form that combine to make up the character and appearance of the area.

The site can be seen from numerous points within the airfield itself; however there are no concerns in this regard. Firstly, the majority of the airfield is private land, and so the views of the site are not from areas that are generally accessed by the public. Secondly, when viewed from within the airfield, the site is seen not in isolation but in the context of the character of the airfield. In this regard, there are examples of large and bulky buildings of a somewhat industrial and functional character within close proximity to the site, including the building currently being constructed on the adjacent site. A review of the planning permission shows that this is a substantial building with a footprint of approximately 24.5 metres x 20.5 metres and a ridge height of approximately 8.3 metres. In addition, the site is viewed from many points within the airfield across areas of scrubby vegetation and cracked hardstanding, which further adds to the impression of industrial character. Thirdly, the existing waste wood material pile at the site is unacceptably high at present and results in the operation having a greater visual impact than will be the case going forward: it is recommended that a condition be attached to the planning permission that will limit the height of the pile to 3 metres. This will further reduce the visual impact of the site. It is understood

that the 3 metre height limit will also be a requirement of the Environment Agency, and can also help to address concerns raised by local residents.

It is noted that the South Somerset Local Plan contains a policy that relates specifically to development at Henstridge Airfield; Policy EP6. This policy states that permission will not be granted for further development at the airfield that would unacceptably intensify the level of activity or materially add to built development. In terms of the built development, the proposed structures of modest scale and single storey form on the site must be considered in the context of the other, comparatively massive structures that are found on other sites within the immediate locality. These include the building on the adjacent site to the west referenced above; another large building to the west; significant built form to the north west at Kedgeworth 2000; a recently constructed building of imposing scale to the south west; and a further massive building to the south west associated with AJN Steel Stockists. In this context, it is considered that the buildings proposed by the current application are insignificant in terms of scale and visual impact. It is therefore concluded that the proposal will not materially add to the existing built form at the airfield and that the proposal complies with Policy EP6.

It is noted that the visual impact associated with the site is reduced by the earth bunds that currently are located alongside the northern and eastern site boundaries, and across the road at the southern boundary. Representation has been made which correctly notes that the bunds are not within the control of the applicant. It is considered unlikely that the bunds will be removed, as it is understood that they are protected by a condition attached to an earlier planning permission at the airfield. However, in the event that they are removed, there are no concerns in respect of the visual impact associated with the development, for the reasons discussed above. Consequently, it is considered unnecessary to attach a condition to any forthcoming planning application requiring that bunds be provided on the site, should the existing bunds be removed.

It is also recommended that a condition be attached to any forthcoming planning permission requiring the provision of a landscaping scheme. This will also assist in softening the appearance of the development.

For the reasons set out above, it is concluded that the impact of the proposal on landscape features and elements; landscape character; and visual amenity will be acceptable, and that the proposal therefore accords with the requirements of Waste Core Strategy Policy DM2 and South Somerset Local Plan policies EP6 and EQ2.

## **7.8 Impact of the proposal on the highway network**

Somerset County Council's Planning Liaison Officer from the Highways Development Management Team has assessed the highways aspects of the proposal. To this end, and upon request, the applicant's agent has provided a breakdown of the vehicular movements associated with the proposal.

The Officer's highways assessment notes that there are approximately 34-38 vehicle movements per day, which includes HGV/LGV and smaller vehicles. The Officer has commented that the surrounding highway junctions have sufficient capacity to accommodate this level of vehicular movements and that existing vehicle movements within close proximity to the site are low. The Officer also notes that the proposal makes sufficient provision for on-site parking and turning and that there are unlikely to be any concerns in respect of drainage on the highway.

It is noted that the Planning Liaison Officer raises no objection to the proposals and does not recommend any conditions to be attached to the planning permission. As such, it is considered that there are no effects that require mitigation through the use of conditions.

In summary, taking account of the above, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in highways terms. It is therefore concluded that the proposal accords with Somerset Waste Core Strategy policies DM3 and DM6; and South Somerset Local Plan policies TA5 and EP6.

#### **7.9 Impact of the Development on Amenity – Odour, Noise, Dust, Fire**

The site is located a significant distance from residential properties; however it is still necessary to consider the impact of the proposal on the amenities of the occupiers of any dwelling. In addition, due consideration needs to be given to the impact of the proposal on other users of the airfield.

##### Dust

It is considered that the proposal has the potential to adversely affect the amenities of other businesses that are located on the airfield; particularly by reason of dust nuisance. In this regard, the County Council's Scientific Officer has assessed the proposals and originally recommended that a condition be attached to any forthcoming planning permission requiring the submission and approval of a Dust Mitigation Plan. The applicant's agent has instead submitted a Dust Mitigation Plan at this stage to demonstrate that the dust related effects associated with the proposal can be effectively controlled. The Scientific Officer has assessed the plan and has advised that it should provide adequate control of dust generated by the operation, providing that the plan is stringently implemented. A condition will be attached to the planning permission requiring that the development be carried out in accordance with the plan, thereby ensuring that it will be implemented. In the event that the plan is not adhered to, the County Council would have the ability to take enforcement action against the breach of the condition, as is the case with any other condition.

It is considered that a further condition is required to adequately mitigate the potential dust issue: the success of the Dust Mitigation Plan is to some extent dependent on the earth bunds that are located outside the site and are not

within the applicant's control. As such, it is recommended that a condition be attached to any forthcoming planning permission requiring that earth bunds be provided within the site in the event that any of the existing bunds are removed. The condition should require that the design and specification of the bunds are submitted to, and approved by, the Waste Planning Authority.

Lastly, it is considered that a condition is required to deal with foul and surface water drainage, given that there is the potential for water to be present on the site as a result of the implementation of the Dust Mitigation Plan.

In conclusion, it is considered that the effects associated with dust will be effectively managed, for the reasons discussed above.

### Noise

In terms of potential noise nuisance, the County Council's Acoustic Specialist has assessed the proposal and notes that the nearest residential properties are located approximately 590 metres or more from the site. The specialist also notes that the wood chipper is likely to be the main noise generator at the site; but states that noise impacts of site operations would not present an obstacle to planning consent. It is agreed that the material storage and plant at the site can be used to effectively screen and reduce noise levels emanating from the site, and to this end the specialist has recommended that a planning condition be attached to the planning permission which will require the site operator to give due consideration to the way that the site is arranged to provide acoustic mitigation. It is agreed that the condition has the potential to control potential noise nuisance at any residential dwelling within the area.

In terms of noise nuisance within the airfield, it is considered that any noise will be of a level commensurate with the industrial character of the airfield. There are therefore no concerns in this regard.

Taking account of the above, it is concluded that the noise related effects associated with the proposal are acceptable and that the proposal accords with Waste Core Strategy Policy DM3 and South Somerset Local Plan Policy EQ7.

### Odour

Finally, nuisance by reason of odour is not considered to be an issue in respect of the proposals, and the County Council's Scientific Officer has not raised any concerns in this regard.



## Fire

The applicant has submitted a Fire Prevention Plan in support of the application, and the fire risk associated with the proposal has been raised as an issue by the objectors to the proposal.

The comments of the objectors are noted; however the Fire Prevention Plan is a requirement of the Environment Agency's permitting regime, and so is covered by separate legislation other than the planning legislative framework. As such, no comment is made in respect of the appropriateness of the plan, as this issue will be addressed by the Environment Agency.

## Summary

Taking account of the above, it is concluded that the environmental effects associated with the proposal in terms of dust, noise and odour can be effectively controlled through the use of appropriate conditions attached to the planning permission and that the proposal therefore accords with the relevant policies cited above. Further, the proposal will be subject to additional controls as required by the Environment Agency for this type of operation, which in particular will address the issue of fire prevention and the processing of treated timber. This has been raised as an issue by an objector to the proposals.

### 7.10 **Conclusion**

It is considered that this assessment, and the input provided by the various relevant specialists, demonstrates that the effects associated with the proposal (Members are reminded this is a retrospective application) can be effectively controlled by the use of appropriately worded conditions. In addition, the operation has been found to be non-strategic in the context of waste treatment within Somerset, with the result that it is considered to be an appropriate location for the use proposed. The relevant planning policies offer broad support for the proposal in planning terms, as discussed above, as the processing of waste wood to produce a useable product that avoids landfill weighs significantly in its favour.

It is noted that a small number of objections have been received in respect of the proposals. The issues raised have been given due consideration in this report, and it is considered that the effects associated with the development will be suitably controlled through the use of conditions.

It is therefore concluded that the proposals are acceptable in planning terms subject to the conditions set out below.

## **8 Recommendation**

- 8.1 **It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the imposition of the following conditions and that authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of**

**those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager - Planning Control, Enforcement & Compliance.**

**1 Time Limit (3 years implementation)**

The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: Pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

**2 Completion in accordance with the approved details**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans:-

Site Location Plan - Drawing reference 088-01 Rev B (undated)

Site Plan – Drawing reference 088-03 Rev A (undated)

Boiler House No.1 Floor Plan and Elevations – Drawing reference 088-04 (undated)

Boiler House No.2 and Drying Bay Floor Plan – Drawing reference 088-05 (undated)

Boiler House No.2 and Drying Bay Elevations – Drawing reference 088-06 (undated)

and specifications:-

Application form prepared by Stephen Graeser Planning dated 5.6.17  
Design and Access Statement prepared by Stephen Graeser Planning (undated)

Dust Mitigation Plan and Dust Monitoring Record prepared by Dust Management UK (undated)

Email from Stephen Graeser Planning detailing vehicular movements dated 20.9.17

and with any scheme, working programme or other details submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority in pursuance of any condition attached to this permission.

Reason: To enable the County Planning Authority to deal promptly with any development not in accordance with the approved plans.

**3 Annual Tonnage Limit**

The incoming material to be processed by the development hereby permitted shall be limited to 15,000 tonnes per annum.

Reason: To ensure that the environmental impacts associated with the development are acceptable.

**4 Written Record of Incoming Material**

A written record of the amount, type and source of incoming material to be

processed by the development hereby permitted shall be maintained by the operator of the site for a period of not less than 5 years. The record shall be made available to the Waste Planning Authority for inspection upon receipt of a written request.

Reason: To enable the Waste Planning Authority to monitor the material being processed by the development.

**5 Operational Noise Emissions**

All plant and machinery used on site shall be used and maintained in strict accordance with the manufacturer's specification.

Reason: In the interests of minimising disturbance to residential and public amenity.

**6 Reverse Warning Alarms**

All site based mobile plant that is required to use audible reverse warning alarms shall be fitted with broadband devices within 2 months of the commencement of this planning permission.

Reason: In the interests of minimising disturbance to residential and public amenity.

**7 Noise Mitigation Measures**

Within 2 months of the date of this planning permission the operator shall submit to, and obtain the approval in writing of, the Waste Planning Authority for a sketch plan and description of the measures to be taken to minimise noise propagation towards housing. Measures considered will include plant orientation and physical screening using material stockpiles and this will then form the basis for permitted plant operation.

Reason: In the interests of minimising disturbance to residential and public amenity.

**8 Dust Mitigation**

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the Dust Management Plan and Dust Monitoring Record prepared by Dust Management UK and submitted as part of the planning application.

Reason: In the interests of minimising disturbance to residential and public amenity.

**9 Dust and Noise Mitigation**

Within one month of the removal of any of the existing earth bunds adjacent to the site boundaries, a scheme for a replacement bund or bunds shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Waste Planning Authority. The scheme shall set out the design, specification and timetable in relation to the replacement bund or bunds. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of minimising disturbance to residential and public amenity.

**10 Foul and Surface Water**

Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, foul and surface water drainage details to serve the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority and such approved drainage details shall be completed and become fully operational before the development hereby permitted is first brought into use. Following its installation such approved scheme shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the site is adequately drained and that foul and surface water will not adversely affect neighbouring sites.

**11 Landscaping Scheme**

The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include details of the following:

- Proposed finished levels or contours
- Hard surfacing materials
- Minor artefacts and structures (eg furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting)
- Proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (eg drainage, power, communication cables, pipelines, etc, indicating lines, manholes, supports etc)
- Planting plans
- Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment)
- Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers / densities where appropriate
- Implementation timetables

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area.

**12 Implementation of Landscaping Scheme**

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the timetable agreed with the Waste Planning Authority. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Waste Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved,

unless the Waste Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs.

**13 Height of Stockpile**

Within two months of the date of this planning permission, the waste wood stockpile at the site shall be reduced to a height no greater than 3 metres at any point, and shall thereafter be retained at a height no greater than 3 metres at any point.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

**14 Hours of Operation**

The development hereby permitted shall be operated only within the hours of 07:00 – 18:30 Monday – Friday, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Waste Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, no traffic movements to or from the site shall occur outside of these hours.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the area.

**15 Burning of Material**

There shall be no burning of any produce or material whatsoever on the site other than in a properly installed incinerator within a building.

Reason: In the interests of the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of surrounding sites.

**16 Waste Wood Grades**

The waste to be accepted at the site, and processed on site, shall be waste wood Grades A-C only, as defined by the Environment Agency, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Waste Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area.

**INFORMATIVES**

- 1 You are advised that the airfield and former airfield experience high volumes of traffic due to the nature of the users on site, including the unauthorised storage of a large quantity of cars. Particular reference should be made to application 04/02229/FUL, where, at the request of the SCC Highway Authority, a s.106 agreement was entered into between the district council and the applicant concerning the management of traffic generation on site.
- 2 The County Council should be aware of the comments of the SSDC Landscape Architect who has requested native scrub planting to the external face of the bounding bund to help play down the new buildings in longer views towards the site.

- 3 The proposed development will require either an exemption or Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency. For more information the applicant should refer to the following website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-environmental-permits>.

## 9 Relevant Development Plan Policies

- 1 The following is a summary of the reasons for the County Council's decision to grant planning permission.
- 2 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the decision on this application should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in:-

- The Somerset Waste Core Strategy adopted February 2013
- The South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) adopted March 2015

The policies in that Plan particularly relevant to the proposed development are:-

### Somerset Waste Core Strategy adopted February 2013

SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development  
WCS2: Recycling and reuse  
DM1: Basic location principles  
DM2: Sustainable construction and design  
DM3: Impacts on the environment and local communities  
DM6: Waste transport  
DM7: Water resources

### South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) adopted March 2015

SD1: Sustainable development  
EP6: Henstridge Airfield  
TA5: Transport impact of new development  
EQ2: General development  
EQ7: Pollution control

- 3 The County Council has also had regard to all other material considerations in particular the National Planning Policy for Waste October 2014
- 4 **Statement of Compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Development Management Procedure Order 2015**

In dealing with this planning application the County Planning Authority has adopted a positive and proactive manner. The Council offers a pre-application advice service for minor and major applications, and applicants are encouraged to take up this service. This proposal has been assessed

against the National Planning Policy Framework, the saved Policy 6 of the Structure Plan, Core Strategy and Local Plan policies, which have been subject to proactive publicity and consultation prior to their adoption and are referred to in the reasons for approval. The County Planning Authority has sought solutions to problems arising by liaising with consultees, considering other representations received and liaising with the applicant/agent as necessary. Where appropriate, changes to the proposal were sought when the statutory determination timescale allowed.