

**HEYWOOD: RECYCLING OF SCRAP VEHICLE TYRES INCLUDING THE  
INSTALLATION OF STATIC PLANT AND CONSTRUCTION OF STORAGE BAYS,  
145/146 ENGINEER ROAD, WEST WILTS TRADING ESTATE, WESTBURY, FOR  
P.J. WARNE ON BEHALF OF WILTSHIRE PLASTICS LTD.  
(Application No. W.03.1525)**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To comment on the application and to recommend that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

**Background**

2. Planning permission is requested to carry out the shredding and granulation of scrap tyres within an existing building currently used for the granulation of plastics at Engineer Road, on the West Wilts Trading Estate, Westbury. The current operation consisting of the granulation of plastics has been carried out since 1982 at the premises in the older part of the West Wilts Trading Estate (WWTE).

**The Site**

3. WWTE lies 2km north-west of Westbury and 4km south of Trowbridge (see **Appendix 1**).
4. The building to be used for the proposal is one of many Nissen hut-type corrugated buildings which exist on the trading estate dating back to the war years. The estate is orientated on a traditional 'grid iron' type layout and is mainly occupied by smaller business establishments (see **Appendix 2**).

**The Application**

5. Planning permission is sought to intensify the use of the site by carrying out the storage, shredding and granulation of tyres in addition to the granulation of plastics which currently takes place on the site.
6. The proposal is to install static plant within the building and to create bays to store the tyres outside ready for the shredding and granulation process.
7. The applicant would import some 750 tonnes of scrap tyres per annum and would utilise the existing buildings on site to accommodate the plant. There would be no additions to existing buildings and tyres would be stored at a maximum height of 2 metres. The capacity of the plant would be approximately 1 tonne per hour or 5 tonnes per day.
8. The tyres would be brought to the site by road and the shredded and granulated product distributed by road. It is anticipated that approximately two vehicles would enter the site and two leave daily, bringing in tyres and distributing the finished product.

9. If granted planning permission, the proposal would assist with the current problems regarding the disposal of scrap tyres, which can no longer be disposed of in landfill sites.

### **Planning Policy**

10. Policies W1-W4 of the Wiltshire Structure Plan (Adopted January 2001) are considered relevant to this application. Policies 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 of the Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan 2011 Draft for Adoption January 2005 are also considered relevant, together with Policy E2 F of the West Wiltshire District Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Alteration - June 2004 (see **Appendix 3**).

### **Consultations**

11. **West Wiltshire District Council** – no objection subject to the satisfactory resolution of issues raised in the West Wiltshire District Council Environmental Health Officer's letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2003 (see below).

The Environmental Health Officer requested that if any new plant was to be installed further information would be required as to the proposed location and mitigation measures to be undertaken.

12. **Heywood Parish Council** – objects to the application on the grounds of:
- Provisions for foul drainage are potentially damaging to existing watercourses and
  - The buildings on site are not suitable for the proposed use and would limit health and safety provisions.
13. **Environment Agency** – no objections to the proposed development.
14. **Highways Development Control** – no highway objections raised.
15. **Waste Local Plan** – no objection.

### **Publicity**

16. The application was advertised in the local press, by site notices and by neighbour notification. Two letters of representation have been received from local Members of West Wiltshire District Council. The concerns raised in the letters can be summarised as follows:

- (i) Serious concerns regarding current operation of the site. Particularly concerned about fire risk from storage and shredding of waste tyres.
- (ii) Fire risk survey is required to ensure that residents are safeguarded from fire.
- (iii) Concerns regarding levels of noise and likely dust from the process.
- (iv) Need to keep the site tidy and secure.
- (v) Need to ensure adequate fire appliance access to the site.

All the above consultation responses and the letters of objection are available for inspection in the **Members' Room**.

## **Planning Considerations**

17. The application must be determined in accordance with the relevant policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The main issues to be considered are:-

- Conformity with national, strategic and local policy
- Environmental implications of the development

### **Conformity with National, Strategic and Local Policy**

#### ***National Policy***

18. The Landfill Directive which came into force in June 2002 established important targets requiring the diversion of waste from landfill and also set stricter controls over what waste could be landfilled. From July 2003 whole tyres were banned from being disposed of in landfill sites and shredded tyres are banned from July 2006. Consequently, tyres can either be used as a fuel source, as at Westbury Cement Works where they are burned in the kilns in place of fossil fuels, or they can be shredded and used in a number of ways, e.g. playground surfaces, horse ménage etc. The introduction of the Landfill Directive has led to the development of businesses such as the applicant company, which has in the past recycled plastics and is now proposing to shred and recycle tyres. The activity being carried out is therefore one which should be supported subject to it being in the right location and with the appropriate safeguards in place

#### ***Strategic Policy – Adopted Wiltshire Structure Plan 2011***

19. At the strategic level, Policies W1-W4 of the Wiltshire and Swindon Structure Plan 2011 (Adopted January 2001) (see **Appendix 3**) support waste minimisation and recycling proposals subject to their environmental impact being acceptable and meeting other criteria, e.g. Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO), Proximity Principle etc. These issues are considered in more detail in the following two sections which look at local waste policy (Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan) implications and the environmental implications of the development.

#### ***Local Policy – Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Local Plan 2011 – Draft for Adoption January 2005***

20. The main policies of the Waste Local Plan relevant to the consideration of this proposal are Policies 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 (see **Appendix 3**).
21. Policy 3 considers Strategic Waste Management Facilities within identified preferred areas and suggests that permission should be granted where such facilities provide for the on-site recovery of waste materials and that they also comply with Policies 1, 2, 6 and 9 of the Plan. The WWTE, within which the application is submitted, is included in the list of Strategic Waste Management Facilities (Site S1 of the Waste Local Plan) and it is suggested in the text that the estate could potentially be used for:
- Small scale energy from waste facilities
  - Strategic Materials Recycling Facility
  - Household Recycling Centre
  - Other local waste management facilities

The proposed use of the applicant's building for a tyre shredding use is in accordance with the preferred area and defined uses for the estate and therefore conforms with Policy 3 of the Waste Local Plan.

22. Policy 1 of the Plan considers sustainable waste management and the BPEO, and Policy 2 deals with the need for waste development and regional self-sufficiency. The positive use of scrap tyres which usually have little value as a waste commodity is considered to be sustainable and can be regarded as the BPEO. The proposed plant would be within a contained building to reduce noise.
23. In terms of need and regional self-sufficiency, the need for the proposal is evident considering the increasing European legislation aimed at diverting tyres from landfill sites completely by July 2006. The shredding of tyres and re-use of the rubber thus produced is a positive way of dealing with the scrap tyres problem subject to the minimising of impacts on the environment in which the shredding is carried out.
24. Policy 6 of the Waste Local Plan concerns environmental protection, human health and amenity and transport. It sets out a list of criteria which any proposal would have to meet in order to be considered acceptable, for example, safeguarding amenity of any nearby dwellings, control of noise, light, air emission, and traffic movements, etc. These issues are dealt with in paragraphs 26 to 33 of the report.

#### ***West Wiltshire District Local Plan***

25. The main policy which relates to the development is Policy E2 F which relates to employment development being permitted on the WWTE providing certain requirements are met with regard to impact on the surroundings, adequate services being provided etc. The policy relates to the new development and extensions to existing development and changes of use. The proposal being considered is an intensification of the current plastic granulation process to incorporate tyre shredding. It is not envisaged that this use would adversely impact upon the character of the area to such a degree that it would warrant a refusal of planning permission.

#### **Environmental Implications of the Development**

26. Policy 6 of the Waste Local Plan looks at the need to consider the variety of environmental impacts which can be associated with the type of development proposed. These are considered below.

#### ***Noise***

27. In view of the process involved (i.e. the shredding of tyres) in conjunction with the existing approved plastics granulation process which takes place within the same building, it is inevitable that there would be a degree of noise associated with the proposed operation. Initially, no noise information was provided with the planning application. A survey was subsequently undertaken and the impact assessed. Although it was concluded that the noise levels would be no worse than those generated by the existing granulation machine, the Environmental Health Officer suggested conditions which should be imposed on any permission granted. These would form part of any planning permission granted.

### ***Dust***

28. Although there may be some generation of airborne dust within the building where the shredding of tyres would take place, it is not envisaged that this would be a problem outside the building. The storage of pre-shredded tyres outside and the storage of shredded tyres in large bags for transportation would not lead to problems of airborne dust.

### ***Odour***

29. The tyres to be shredded are not biodegradable in nature and it is unlikely that odour would be a problem. The shredding process would be carried out within the existing building.

### ***Visual impact***

30. As the site is located within an existing industrial estate with businesses of a similar nature, visual impact is not considered to be a problem. The tyre storage area is proposed to be at the side and rear of the building and the bags of shredded rubber would be taken away on a daily basis.

### ***Litter/potential fire risk hazard***

31. As the process is to be carried out within a building, it is not considered that litter would be a problem. Comments have been made by objectors to the development regarding the present tidiness of the existing site and the need for good housekeeping. This is a matter for the owners of the estate in terms of the landlord/tenant responsibilities. However, it is proposed to condition any permission granted to the effect that the site should be kept clean and tidy at all times.
32. Of greater importance in terms of objections received is the potential fire risk hazard due to the nature of the product being shredded (i.e. rubber) and the fact that plastic granulation already takes place on the site. Detailed discussions have taken place between Planning Officers and the Wiltshire Fire Brigade and there has been considerable correspondence between the applicant, the County Waste Planning Authority and the Fire Brigade over a period of some twelve months. The outcome of the discussions and correspondence is that the Fire Brigade have suggested a number of management controls be imposed to ensure an acceptable level of fire safety. These measures would be imposed by condition where possible with additional notes to the applicant for matters not able to be controlled by condition. It is anticipated that with increased awareness of the need to adhere to certain levels of environmentally acceptable practices, together with powers available to regulatory bodies such as the Environment Agency, the Environmental Health Department and the Waste Planning Authority, the fire safety concerns would be eliminated as far as is reasonably possible.

### ***Traffic generation***

33. It is proposed that the tyres would be brought in by road in two lorry loads and that the granulated tyres would be taken out by two loads per day. The storage of a limited amount of tyres on site would be regulated by a planning condition. Traffic would not therefore be a problem.

## **Conclusion**

34. The application must be judged on its merits against the relevant Development Plan policies and all other material considerations. The proposal involves the introduction of a tyre shredding facility on a site which currently has permission to carry out plastic granulation. This existing use has been carried out without any major problems in the past.
35. In terms of the policy background and Development Plan policies in particular, the proposal conforms with national and strategic policy in that it is providing a solution to the problem of scrap tyres which can no longer be landfilled after July 2006. The importance of recycling and the need to develop more sustainable waste management technologies to achieve national targets cannot be underestimated. In policy terms, therefore, the shredding and recycling of a waste which is difficult to dispose of satisfactorily should be supported.
36. With regard to the environmental impacts of the proposed development, concerns have been raised regarding fire risk and noise, together with the general tidiness of the site. Following discussions and the provision of further information, the safeguards being proposed by the applicant, other regulatory bodies and required by planning conditions, there would appear to be no material planning reasons which would justify refusal of the application. In considering planning applications of this nature it has to be made quite clear that it is the proposal itself which is being considered and not the proponent of the proposal. The planning authority is not able to have regard to the past history of the site or the operator. Each application should be considered on its merits and determined accordingly.
37. The environmental impacts of the proposals have been considered fully and it has been demonstrated that they would be minimal in such matters as noise, visual impact, odour, dust, litter and traffic with adequate safeguards in place.
38. Overall, it is considered that this application is in accordance with the relevant policy criteria of the Development Plan and there are no overriding material planning objections which would justify refusal.

## **Recommendation**

39. That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:-
  1. The development hereby granted shall commence within five years from the date of this permission.
  2. No more than 30 tonnes of tyres shall be stored on site at any one time.
  3. Whole tyres will be stored in concrete bays and the maximum height of storage will not exceed 2 metres.
  4. Granulated tyres will be stored in 1 tonne fabric bags and no bags will be placed on top of each other.
  5. Outside the existing recycling building no waste materials or product waste shall be tipped onto the ground for storage, sorting or loading purposes.
  6. Outside the hours of normal operation the site shall be securely protected to discourage entry by unauthorised persons.

7. In order to safeguard the amenities of the area in which the development is located, the hours of operation shall be limited to 0730 to 1800 hours on Mondays to Fridays and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays. There shall be no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
8. In order to safeguard the amenities of the area in which the development is located, all doors and windows shall remain closed when the shredder is operational.
9. No materials shall be burned on site.

**GEORGE BATTEN**

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Report Author

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

Consultation replies and correspondence.