

**DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED CHANGES**

**Condition 1**

1. This condition requires the HRC to be developed in the way shown on the plans submitted with the original planning application in 1999. The proposed variation seeks to change how the general layout of the HRC is arranged in order to enable the centre to operate more efficiently. Changes are also sought to the way the HRC would be landscaped.
2. In respect of general layout, the proposed changes extend to little more than minor amendments to how the HRC is arranged. The main change is that of turning the alignment of the on-site waste compactors through 90° so that they lie on a north-south axis, as opposed to an east-west axis. This would enable the site to be arranged in a more effective manner, creating improved vehicle circulation and parking areas for users of the site and facilitating easier access for service vehicles collecting/returning skips and containers.
3. The other changes to the site layout (the relocation of office and revision to the point of access) are inconsequential in terms of how the HRC would operate or how it would impact on surrounding land uses. No objections have been received in respect of the proposed changes to the site layout and Officers are satisfied that the proposed variation of this condition is acceptable.
4. With regard to the changes to the landscape details, these changes relate to revisions to the type and size of plant species and spacings. It is not proposed to reduce the number of planting areas around the perimeter of the site.
5. Whilst not objecting to the principle of the variations proposed by this application, Kennet District Council has expressed its opinion that the revised landscaping specification is inappropriate for the site as it would not provide an adequate level of screening. The District Council considers that standard trees should be reintroduced to the scheme, that shrub planting density should be increased to one per metre and that 90-100 cm sized plants should be used rather than the 60-90 cm size.
6. Conversely, the County Countryside Officer (Landscape) advises that the proposed changes are generally acceptable. The Countryside Officer has however recommended that some amendments be made to the revised landscape details with respect to the distribution and spacing of plant species. Although the proposed planting density of two metre spacing is considered to be a good average, the Countryside Officer recommends that the planting spacing should be rather more random, with certain plant species being slightly closer together and predominately to the front of planting areas and other plant species slightly wider apart and predominately to the back of the planting areas. The Countryside Officer considers that these amendments would create a more effective scheme.

7. The Countryside Officer advises that the use of larger sized plants as suggested by the District Council would provide a more 'instant' level of screening, but the increase in planting density would be imprudent as it would be necessary to remove a large number of plants after only one year in order to maintain the growth of other plants.
8. The Countryside Officer's recommendations and the District Council's suggestion regarding plant sizes have been discussed with applicant. The applicant was agreeable to making the said amendments and has subsequently submitted a further revised landscaping specification.
9. It is considered by Planning Officers that these further revised landscape details are of an appropriate standard to achieve an effective level of screening of the site, in an aesthetically acceptable manner. It must be remembered that the HRC site is located within an industrial estate. It is therefore necessary to strike a balance between providing adequate planting to visually screen the HRC and requiring an over-abundance of planting that would itself bear little relationship to the site's surroundings. Officers are satisfied that the revised landscape details now achieve such a balance and consider that the proposed variation of this condition is acceptable.

#### Condition 5

10. The variation proposed in respect of this condition is simply the substitution of the reference number of the drawing showing the original landscaping details for the reference number of the revised drawing. In other words, this condition would be modified to require the implementation of the revised landscaping specification, rather than its predecessor.
11. An objector to this application has pointed out that there is an easement strip along the eastern boundary of the site. This easement relates to existing public foul and surface water sewers, which the objector considers would sterilise this strip of land in terms of planting. However, as indicated on the revised landscaping details the proposed planting would be adjusted to accommodate the requirements of Wessex Water in terms of plant spacing (planting directly above the sewers may not be permitted). It should also be noted at this point that the adjoining business has already provided shrub planting along the other side of this boundary.
12. The suitability of the revised landscaping specification is considered above and no changes are proposed to those elements of the condition that require the maintenance of the planting for a period of five years. The proposed variation of this condition is therefore acceptable.

#### Condition 7

13. As with the site layout and landscaping, this condition requires the HRC to be developed in the way shown on the plans submitted with the original planning application in 1999. This condition requires the construction of an earth bund and acoustic fencing in accordance with the details specified on the original plans.
14. It is proposed that Condition 7 be varied to substitute the reference to those plans submitted with the original planning application to that of the revised details for the bund and acoustic barriers.

15. The approved details require an earth bund along the southern boundary. The bund would increase in height from east to west, reaching its highest point of 3.0 metres in the western corner of the site. The bund would also incorporate a 3.6 metre high acoustic screen fence. Further acoustic fencing (1.8 metres high) would be erected around waste containers to reduce noise levels to those residential properties to the south.
16. The revised details propose a minor change to how the earth bund would be constructed. The base of the bund would be reduced through the provision of a retaining wall on the inside face of the bund over part of its length. A retaining wall would negate the need for an inside batter to the bund and release up to 3.5 metres of additional operational space to the HRC. No changes to the height or length of the earth bund are proposed. The associated acoustic barrier would however be extended in length by 5.0 metres along the southern boundary. The revised details retain provision for the erection of acoustic fencing around waste containers.
17. An objector to this application has stated that the bund planned for the south of the site should be moved to the east of the compound and amendments made to the design of the site. This objector has also questioned the adequacy of the bund. It is assumed that this person has incorrectly interpreted the revised plans because to relocate the earth bund in this way would be to remove it from the boundary that is closest to Cross Roads Cottages. The earth bund would then offer zero noise mitigation or visual screening to these residential properties.
18. The independent noise assessment commissioned by the County Council with respect to the 1999 planning application concluded that the operation of a HRC at this location could, with the provision of the earth bund and acoustic fencing described above, take place in accordance with Government guidelines concerning noise levels and without detriment to neighbouring residential and industrial properties. On the basis that the proposed changes affect only the inside batter of the earth bund, and do not alter the overall dimensions of height and length, it is considered that the variation of this condition would not reduce the ability of the earth bund and associated acoustic fencing to reduce noise from the HRC to acceptable levels. The proposed variation of this condition is therefore considered acceptable.

#### Condition 10

19. This condition requires that an element of the previously approved landscape details, namely a hedgerow along the northern boundary, to be maintained at a minimum height of 2.0 metres. It is proposed that the HRC development take place without compliance with this requirement as it would be superseded by the revised landscaping details.
20. This condition was imposed on the 1999 planning permission at the request of Kennet District Council and no objections have been received in respect of this proposed change. The suitability of the revised landscaping specification is considered above and Officers are satisfied that the deletion of this condition is acceptable.

### Condition 11

21. This condition requires the “avenue planting” of London Plane trees in addition to the previously approved landscape details. It is proposed that the HRC development take place without compliance with this requirement as it would be superseded by the revised landscaping details.
22. This condition was again imposed on the 1999 planning permission at the request of Kennet District Council and again no objections have been received in respect of this proposed change. The suitability of the revised landscaping specification is considered above and Officers are satisfied that the deletion of this condition is acceptable.