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WALSALL COUNCIL

MIDDLEMORE LANE WTS & HWRC

HABITATS RISK ASSESSMENT

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Walsall Council propose to develop and operate a combined Waste Transfer Station (WTS) and Household Waste Recycling Centre (including trade recycling scheme) on its site off Middlemore Lane, Walsall.
- 1.1.2 The WTS will accept wastes collected through the Council's services. This will primarily consist of household waste collections, with secondary streams from grounds maintenance and street sweepings services. Household waste streams will be mixed residual waste (black bin waste), garden waste, mixed dry recycling waste and material collected through bulky waste collections. The facility has been designed with capacity and capability to accept future segregated waste streams, for example food waste.
- 1.1.3 The WTS will be primarily housed in a purpose built, covered building to the north west of the development site. External bays have been allocated for the storage of suitable materials. The WTS will have a maximum design capacity of 125,000 tonnes per annum.
- 1.1.4 The HWRC will be located in the East of the development site, accessed separately from the WTS and small traders' scheme. This has a maximum design capacity of approximately 40,000 tonnes per annum. A re-use shop will be located on the approach to the HWRC allowing residents to dispose of unwanted furniture, bric-a-brac, toys, bicycles and electrical items that are suitable for refurbishment or immediate re-use. The re-use shop will include a workshop facility to refurbish items.
- 1.1.5 A small traders' scheme, offering disposal and recycling options for small businesses will be located to the south of the WTS. This will handle a selection of waste streams from commercial operators similar to that handled by the HWRC.
- 1.1.6 Wardell Armstrong have been appointed to prepare an environmental permit application for the proposed development. This report provides the habitats risk assessment for the proposed operation. The report identifies potential risks and describes the mitigation in place to prevent or minimise those risks.
- 1.1.7 The report has been written in accordance with the Environment Agency's guidance "Risk assessments for your environmental permit".

2 PROTECTED HABITATS AND SPECIES

2.1.1 There are no European sites close to the installation but there are five SSSIs of biological interest, three Local Nature Reserves, and a number of areas of priority habitat within 2km.

2.1.2 The closest SSSI to the site is Stubbers Green Bog. This lies approximately 600m North of the site. Stubbers Green Bog is a small wetland site in Walsall comprising a shallow pool with fringing valley mire and swamp communities which have developed in a hollow, presumed caused by mining subsidence. The site overlies unstratified, gravelly, boulder clay on top of Etruria Marl. This combination of habitats is poorly represented in the county and valley mire is scarce nationally.

2.1.3 SSSIs within proximity to the site are:

- Stubbers Green Bog SSSI – 600m north of site;
- Daw End Railway Cutting SSSI – 900m west of site;
- Swan Pool and the Swag SSSI – 1.1km northwest of site;
- Hay Head Quarry SSSI – 1.6km south of site;
- Jockey Fields SSSI – 1.8km north northwest of site.

2.1.4 LNR in proximity to the site are:

- Park Lime Pits LNR – 1.5km west southwest of site;
- Hay Head Wood LNR – 1.6km south of site;
- Cuckoo's Nook and the Dingle LNR – 1.6km south of site.

2.1.5 There are a number of areas of priority habitat within 2km of the site. The closest area of deciduous woodland lies approximately 15m south of the site. Priority habitat in proximity to the site are:

- Floodplain grazing marsh – closest 700m northwest of site;
- Various Good quality semi-improved grassland (non-priority) – closest 520m northwest of site;
- Various lowland fens – closest 670m northwest of site;
- Ancient Woodland (x5) – closest Leighswood 700m northeast of site;

- Various Deciduous Woodland – closest 15m from southeast corner of site across Middlemore Lane bordering recreation ground;
- Various traditional orchards – closest 1.2km northeast of site.

2.1.6 These habitats may be vulnerable to toxic contamination, eutrophication or changes in water levels.

3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

3.1 Habitat Loss

3.1.1 The site will not impact directly on any SSSI or priority habitat. The closest protected sites are two areas of deciduous woodland to the south of Middlemore Lane. There will be no physical loss of habitat due to the development of the installation.

3.1.2 The installation relies on mains water, however water usage should not be excessive being limited to cleaning and dust suppression. There will be no flooding or water abstraction associated with the installation and there should be no impact on local water levels as a result of the activity.

3.2 Noise

3.2.1 The waste transfer station operations will predominantly take place inside a building. The HWRC and similar small traders' scheme will be external operations. These are located to the back and middle of the site respectively to minimise emissions of noise to neighbours.

3.2.2 The installation is located on an existing industrial estate, and is surrounded to all sides by further industrial estates. The operation will involve delivery of waste materials from local authority collections, and removal of bulked waste materials for reprocessing and/or disposal. The HWRC will involve delivery of unwanted waste and recycling by members of the public in private cars, and removal in bulk containers by waste operators.

3.2.3 A noise assessment has been carried out as part of the planning application for the site, which showed that noise levels are likely to be of low impact to each identified receptor during operational hours with no mitigation in place. Therefore, noise is not considered to be an issue for the site and the proposed development.

3.2.4 It is therefore deemed unlikely that there will be any noise disturbance to these habitats as a result of the proposed development.

3.3 Dust

3.3.1 The waste transfer station operations will predominantly take place inside a building, with waste streams most likely to generate dust emissions handled exclusively within this building. An atomiser is provided to suppress dust in the building if needed though the WTS building is provided with air extraction via a dust filter which will limit emissions to less than 5mg/m³.

3.3.2 Waste will be stored in bays (WTS) and either four sided bulk containers or fully sealed units (HWRC/STS) appropriate to the waste stream being collected. When full HWRC containers with the potential to generate dust emissions will be sheeted to prevent airborne transfer.

3.3.3 A Dust Management Plan has been developed for the site to ensure that dust is controlled throughout the operation. Measures used to control dust will include:

- all vehicles carrying potentially dust producing wastes to or from the site will be sheeted or covered;
- the Waste Transfer Station building is fully enclosed with a ventilation and air treatment system with particulate filtration system designed to ensure the maximum dust concentration in the exhaust air shall be less than 5mg/m³;
- excessively dusty wastes arriving at the site will be prohibited from tipping and rejected;
- wastes will be stored in concrete bays or metal containers. These will provide shelter from the wind and minimise air borne dust, and covered as appropriate;
- hoses may be used to dampen waste stockpiles in the event of hot weather or if dust is identified;
- hardstanding will be swept as necessary using brushes or the road sweeper;
- facilities will be provided to wash down vehicles leaving the site if necessary; and
- processing may be temporarily suspended during strong winds, when it may be more difficult to control dust.

3.4 Emissions to Water with Toxic or Nutrient Impact on Protected Sites

3.4.1 There are no planned emissions to water from the site. Water for fire control purposes will be stored within bunded tanks. Firewater from extinguishment of any on site fire will be contained on the site and tankered to an appropriately permitted facility for treatment.

3.4.2 Operational areas of the site are provided with impermeable surfacing and drainage to prevent liquids and runoff from waste from mixing with clean surface water runoff. Fuels and any other liquids stored on site will be stored within bunded containers.

Spill-kits will be available nearby which site operatives will be trained to use in case of spillages.

- 3.4.3 The WTS building and external WTS waste storage bays will be constructed on impermeable surfacing draining to foul sewer.
- 3.4.4 The operational areas of the HWRC and Small Traders' Scheme are provided with impermeable surfacing which drains to the surface water sewer via an oil interceptor. and system to remove suspended solids. All waste in these areas will be confined within containers preventing leachate entering the drainage system.
- 3.4.5 These measures are in line with relevant Environment Agency guidance and British Standards and will provide high levels of protection, preventing harmful emissions to surface water or groundwater. The risk of contaminants reaching the SSSI or other protected habitats via the water environment is very low.
- 3.5 Point Source Emissions to Air
 - 3.5.1 There will be two point-source emissions to air from the WTS building associated with the exhaust of the ventilation and air treatment system. Each abatement system will include dust abatement designed to reduce emissions of dust to <5mg/m³, and carbon filtration to remove odours.
 - 3.5.2 The majority of sensitive habitats are over 500m from the site boundary with some deciduous woodland closer to site. Protected habitats are therefore unlikely to be affected by emissions of dust and odour from the site.
 - 3.5.3 The ventilation and air treatment system will be maintained in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations to ensure its continued effectiveness. Replacement carbon medium will be kept on the site so that the carbon filter can be quickly changed at the recommended intervals or in the event that the medium is spent, if sooner.
 - 3.5.4 The Site will be inspected on a daily basis by a trained operative to identify any issues of concern, including dust. These inspections will include observation of the WTS's ventilation exhaust vent and site boundary.
 - 3.5.5 If potentially polluting dust emissions are detected during monitoring inspections or by site operatives during general operations, this will be brought to the attention of the site manager (or other person with necessary authority), recorded in the site log, and steps will be taken to reduce any further risk of visible dust. Any detected

emissions will be dealt with immediately and the incident recorded to prevent future emissions.

3.6 Litter

3.6.1 All light wastes delivered to the WTS will be unloaded stored and loaded inside the building.

3.6.2 Waste within the HWRC will be stored in containers and these will be exchanged on a regular basis to ensure they are not over filled.

3.6.3 The site is surrounded by a 2.4m high fence.

3.6.4 The site will be inspected daily and any loose waste will be collected and returned to the appropriate bay or container.

3.6.5 Measures are therefore in place to prevent any significant litter blowing off site.

4 MANAGEMENT

4.1.1 The site will be operated in accordance with a formal Environmental Management System which has been developed in line with Environment Agency guidance. Standard Operating Procedures will be in place to ensure that waste materials are handled appropriately and safely.

4.1.2 The site plant and infrastructure will be subject to regular inspection, servicing and maintenance to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and all emissions are prevented or controlled.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1.1 The Stubbers Green Bog SSSI is approximately 0.6km from the site and there are also a number of priority habitats close to the proposed development. The majority of sensitive habitats are over 500m from the site boundary with some deciduous woodland closer to site.
- 5.1.2 Emissions of noise from the site are expected to remain within background levels at the nearest residential receptors, and therefore are not expected to cause any disturbance to wildlife within the protected habitats identified close to the site.
- 5.1.3 The design and operational measures that will be in place at the site will ensure that activities do not pose an unacceptable risk to the environment. Emissions of dust and odour from the WTS building will be controlled via two odour and dust abatement systems. The site is provided with impermeable surfacing and sealed drainage to prevent emissions to water. Good housekeeping will ensure dust and litter are appropriately controlled.
- 5.1.4 Site equipment, machinery and infrastructure will be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's guidance and relevant legal standards to ensure that the site remains compliant, and risk to sensitive receptors remains low.
- 5.1.5 The site will be monitored daily. Records evidencing compliance will be maintained in the site office. Formal auditing of compliance will take place annually, informing continuous improvement.
- 5.1.6 In the event of an accident, strict procedure will be followed to prevent excessive damage to the site, minimise potential effects upon human health and protect the local environment.
- 5.1.7 A planned preventative maintenance programme will be in place to ensure that all pollution prevention infrastructure is properly maintained and remains fit for purpose.
- 5.1.8 As a result of the control measures in place no significant impact on the SSSI or other wildlife sites is expected. It is considered that all reasonable precautions to protect these sites have been taken.

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