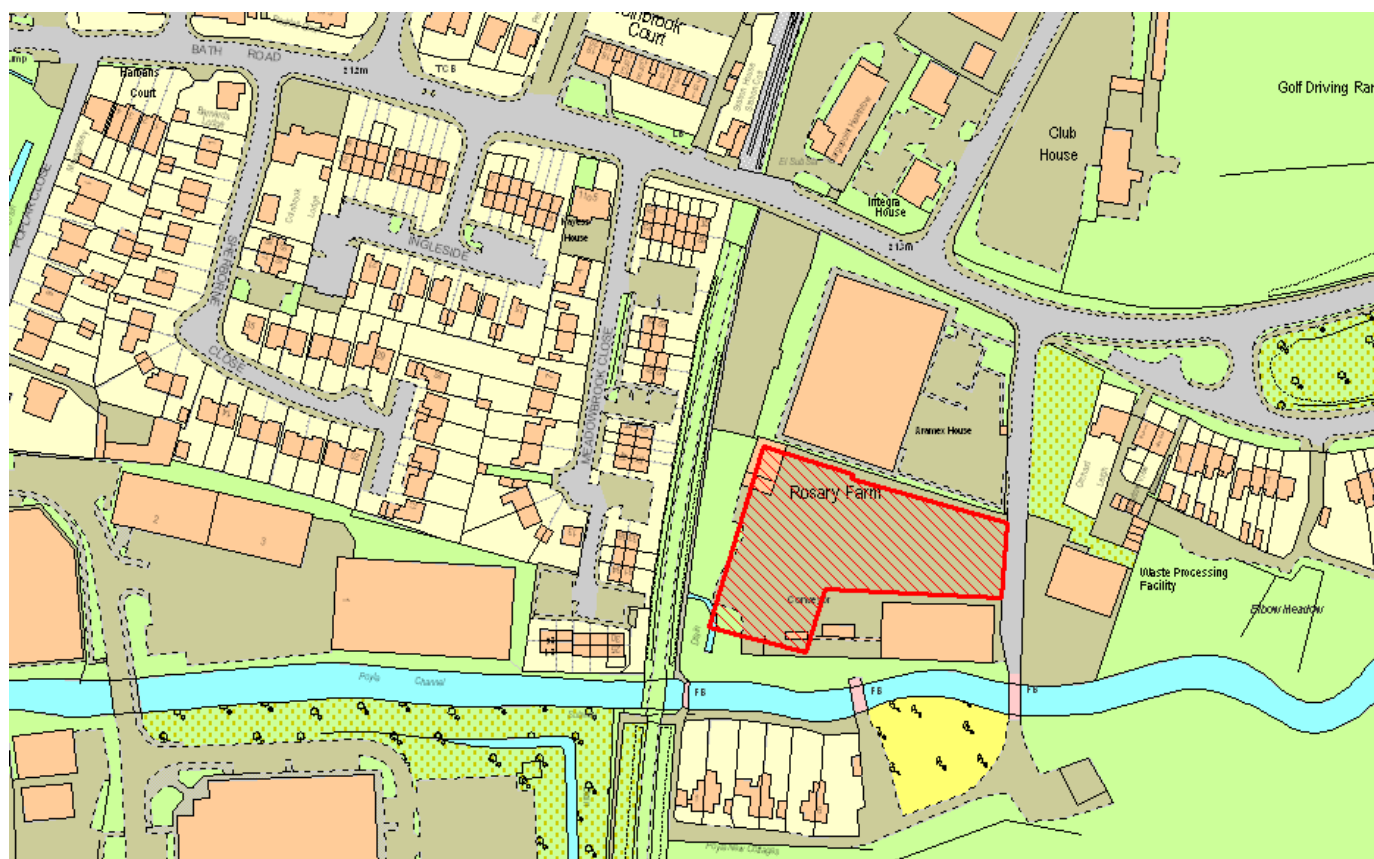


Registration Date:	15-Sep-2014	Applic. No:	P/10697/009
Officer:	Ian Hann	Ward:	Colnbrook with Poyle
Applicant:	Mr. D Hepsworth, Lanz Farm Ltd		
Location:	Rosary Farm, Bath Road, Colnbrook, Slough, Berkshire		
Proposal:	ERECTION OF NEW BUILDING TO HOUSE NEW RECYCLING FACILITY WITH REVISED ACCESS AND INTERNAL LAYOUT.		
		Applic type:	Major
		13 week date:	1 st December 2014

Recommendation: Refer to the Secretary of State



1.0 **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION.**

- 1.1 Following consideration of any outstanding consultation responses, it is recommended that the application be referred to the Secretary of State under departure procedures. In the event that the Secretary of State decides not to call in the application for his own determination that the Acting Planning Manager be authorised to finalise conditions, complete a S106 agreement and make a final decision on the Planning Application.
- 1.2 This application is to be decided at planning committee as it is for a major development and is a waste and minerals application.

PART A: BACKGROUND

2.0 **Proposal**

- 2.1 The information supplied with the application indicates that currently 80% of the waste that goes through the site represents 'heavy' waste (that is building type waste such as bricks, aggregate and soil) compared to 20% of 'light' waste (metal, paper, cardboard, plastics and wood). The company is seeking to increase its waste-handling of light waste by accommodating this activity within a new building as the current light waste handling facilities onsite requiring modernising.
- 2.2 It is therefore proposed to:
- i) retain the existing recycling centre and ancillary building and equipment for the handling of heavy waste, weighbridge and associated structures.
 - ii) erect a large single storey building handling light waste with a proposed floorspace of 1697m². This would occupy part of the site now in use principally as circulation and open storage. However, there is a small operational building within the north western corner of the site.
- 2.3 It is contended that any increase in traffic at this site will be offset by less waste laden traffic visiting other landfill sites. Numbers of vehicle entering or leaving the site can be reduced if larger HGV vehicles can be used. The scheme design allows for such larger vehicles to utilise the site
- 2.4 The proposed building will have a depth of 36m, length of 68m and a height of 10m to eaves and 15m to ridge and will be constructed with a metal clad finish. The building itself will contain the necessary plant and machinery for the sorting of waste into its separate components with the rest of the building being used for the storage of the sorted waste, some of which needs to be kept clean and dry for it to be recyclable. This will reduce the need for open storage in bunkers, which takes place on the site at the present time and is unsightly. The building itself would be located to the western side of the site close to the boundary with the disused railway line.

3.0 **Application Site**

- 3.1 The site is approximately 0.8ha in size and lies south of Galleymead House, Bath Road, Colnbrook and immediately east of the former Staines to West Drayton disused railway line and immediately north of the Poyle Channel, together with Poyle New Cottages and the restored Longford II landfill site.

- 3.2 The site is in current use as a recycling centre with the types of waste limited in Condition 6 of Planning Permission P/10697/000 dated 2nd February 1999 as follows:

Dry and solid inert soils and overburden
Concrete stone and clay, coal and coke
Scrap metal and plastics, polymers and resin, gypsum
Wood and wood products, paper and Cardboard, tree loppings
Leather and natural fibre

- 3.3 The site is used by Lanz in association with their office and vehicle workshop premises on the east side of the private access road. The recovery site comprises a large single storey building in use for waste recovery. Large mechanical waste recovery equipment is partly housed in the building with part of this projecting eastwards outside of this main building. There is storage for recovered materials below. Elsewhere there are numerous open storage bunkers for recovered materials awaiting dispatch. A smaller second building is used for paper baling, the bales be stored outside. The remaining part of the site has a weighbridge and circulation road, together with area(s) for skip storage.
- 3.4 The eastern boundary of the waste recovery site has a chainlink fence and concrete posts fronting onto the private access road. To the north a large warehouse building is in use as well as a vacant site immediately to the west of the warehouse building with a valid planning permission for residential use, as yet unimplemented. To the east of the private access road and the remaining Lanz buildings, are residential properties.

4.0 **Site History**

- 4.1 In 1986, Spelthorne Borough Council granted an Established Use Certificate in respect of most of the western part of the site for storage of topsoil and excavated material, ancillary parking, repair and maintenance of earth moving equipment and vehicles and the parking of such equipment and vehicles for hire. The majority of the green belt designation on site is covered by the Established Use Certificate. In 1993 a temporary permission for open storage enclosures, wheel washing equipment and other ancillary structures was granted until the completion of the deposit of waste materials at Longford II landfill site. In 1999, the permanent retention of the waste recycling centre was granted conditional planning permission permitting recovery of certain categories of new waste. Permission was then granted in July 2001 for the erection of the waste sorting hall, which was amended in October 2002 in close proximity to the Poyle Channel. The other buildings on the site along with the weighbridge were granted consent in February 2004.
- 4.2 The nearby Longford II Landfill site was closed in 2002 with responsibility for the landfill site remaining with the waste operator for controlling ongoing leachate and landfill gas measures in place. Part of the restored landfill site was the subject to a green waste proposal but withdrawn in spring 2012. Following many years of landfill activities on the nearby site, its closure and restoration will reverse its previous degraded appearance when it was operational
- 4.3 In 2011-12, the Environment Agency has received an application to vary the waste permitted to be handled at this site. They have also sought an Odour Management Plan to be put in place. Both are currently outstanding. No application has been submitted to Slough Borough Council requesting the variation of waste categories to be handled and a planning decision is necessary before these commence.

5.0 **Neighbour Notification**

5.1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Poyle New Cottages, Old Bath Road, Colnbrook

Orchard Leigh, Old Bath Road, Colnbrook

Colnbrook Car Centre, Old Bath , Road, Colnbrook

Aramex House, Old Bath Road, Colnbrook

1, 2, 3, 4 Meadow View Court, Old Bath Road, Colnbrook

25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, Meadow Brook Close, Colnbrook

Site Notice displayed.

Advert placed in local press.

Three letters of objection have been received outlining the following issues:

- The access road has become dangerous for vehicles and pedestrians with vehicles blocking the road while they wait to enter the Lanz and Aramex sites.

RESPONSE : This is a material planning consideration and is discussed in the report below.

- Increase in noise and dust from the site.

RESPONSE : This is a material planning consideration and is discussed in the report below.

- Increase in traffic will make access to Old Bath Road worse.

RESPONSE : This is a material planning consideration and is discussed in the report below.

5.2 The applicants undertook pre application consultation with local residents being invited to an open day in March 2013 and further consultation with Councillors and the Parish Council. Leaflets were sent to 500 local residents inviting them to attend the open day where those who attended had a presentation, a tour of the facilities and the opportunity to provide comments where the siting of the building, HGV movements and the increase in efficiency were considered.

6.0 **Consultation**

6.1 **Environmental Services**

The Environmental Team Manager advises that the redevelopment of the site presents an opportunity to further safeguard surrounding amenities through careful design and installation and operation of the new building housing a light line recycling facility. Additionally to proactively set out conditions that will safeguard said residential amenities and ensure the site viz. a viz. can operate as a responsible neighbour.

The principal environmental impacts in respect of this application and current operation relate to the noise and dust from the waste activities The Lanz site is an existing waste operation regulated by the Environment Agency under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010.

It is therefore important when considering the environmental impacts from this application that the site activities do not give rise to detrimental harm to the local amenities. The area is

subject to very high levels of aircraft noise due to its close proximity to Heathrow airport. Further, that the environmental impacts are managed and where identified as being significant/harmful mitigated to a level that is considered to be acceptable within defined environmental guidelines and limits.

The local amenity is made up of a mixture of industrial/waste uses and residential properties. There is a requirement for noise and dust conditions to protect the amenities. As the environment experiences very high levels of ambient noise, it is unreasonable to impose over prescriptive noise limits. Therefore a noise limit based on 60 decibels around 10 decibels below the ambient level, as opposed to the background noise level is proposed.

Recommended Environmental Protection Quality Conditions:

Condition 1 - Dust Emissions

The best practical means shall be employed at all times to control dust emissions from the site. In any case no visible emissions of dust shall breach the site boundary at any time during site operations. If such emissions are reported or monitored, the source shall be determine and the operation ceased until corrective action has been undertaken in order to prevent off-site dust emissions.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area and prevent nuisance arising from dust and to accord with the Core Policy 8 (Sustainability and the Environment)

Condition 2 – Dust and Noise Management and Monitoring Plan

A comprehensive dust and noise management plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall cover and/or include:

- All potential sources of noise and dust emissions from the site (including new sources).
- Identify the nearest sensitive receptors (including new receptors).
- Outline all mitigation measures employed on site to date (including new mitigation measures with dates of implementation).
- Outline additional mitigation measure to prevent harm to local amenities.
- Specify the Dust and Noise monitoring on site and supply the findings to the Local Planning Authority within 4 working weeks of the assessment.
- The Operation of a complaints system with a logbook kept on site for a minimum of 2 years, and outcome of all investigations including follow up and corrective actions. The logbook should be made available for inspection to the Local Authority's Environmental Quality Team, Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and Planning Team as well as Environment Agency Environmental Officer.
- An two yearly review of dust and noise management and monitoring plan shall be conducted each year and submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area and prevent nuisance arising from dust and to accord with the Core Policy 8 (Sustainability and the Environment)

Condition 3 – Dust and Noise Mitigation Measures

The operator shall ensure all physical dust and noise mitigation measures, for example sound insulated building, screens, bunds, fences, roads, wheel wash, dust suppression systems etc, shall be maintained in good working order at all times to ensure their

effectiveness.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area and prevent nuisance arising from dust and to accord with the Core Policy 8 (Sustainability and the Environment)

Condition 4 - Noise Limits

The operator will be required to comply with the following noise limit at the following locations at all times when the site is in operation:

Receptor	Noise Limit level (Site Operations only)
Meadowbank Close	60 dB
Poyle New Cottages	60 dB
Meadow View Court	60 dB
Elbow Meadow	60 dB

Note: All Noise levels are measured $L_{Aeq, 1 \text{ hr}}$ (freefield)

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area and prevent nuisance arising from dust and to accord with the Core Policy 8 (Sustainability and the Environment)

Condition 5 – Reverse Alarms

The use of audible reverse warning alarms on any mobile plant and HGV accessing the site shall be restricted to ensure that white noise reversing alarms are fitted and used to prevent nuisance impact to residential amenities.

REASON: To protect the amenities of the area and prevent nuisance arising from dust and to accord with the Core Policy 8 (Sustainability and the Environment).

6.2 Public Protection Services: Neighbourhood Enforcement

No response has been received. Should any response be received this will be reported to Members on the amendment sheet.

6.3 Transport and Highways

No response has been received. Should any response be received this will be reported to Members on the amendment sheet.

6.4 Environment Agency

Consider that planning permission could be granted to the proposed development as submitted if planning conditions are included as set out below. Without these conditions, the proposed development on this site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment leading to objections to the application.

Condition 1

No development approved by this planning permission shall take place until a scheme that includes the following components to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the

site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority: 1) A preliminary risk assessment which has identified:

- all previous uses,
- potential contaminants associated with those uses,
- a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors,
- potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.

2) A site investigation scheme, based on (1) to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.

3) The results of the site investigation and detailed risk assessment referred to in (2) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken. 4) A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy in (3) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action. Any changes to these components require the express written consent of the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason 1

To protect groundwater. The site is located on a Secondary aquifer and a historic landfill. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented (NPPF, paragraph 121). We are satisfied that there are generic remedial options available to deal with the risks to controlled waters posed by contamination at this site. However, further details will be required in order to ensure that risks are appropriately addressed prior to development commencing.

Condition 2

No occupation shall take place until a verification report demonstrating completion of works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a "long-term monitoring and maintenance plan") for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan. The long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be implemented as approved.

Reason 2

To protect groundwater. The site is located on a Secondary aquifer and a historic landfill. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8. The verification report should be undertaken in accordance with in our guidance 'Verification of remediation of land contamination': <http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/SCHO0210BRXF-e-e.pdf>

Condition 3

No development should take place until a long-term monitoring and maintenance plan in respect of contamination including a timetable of monitoring and submission of reports to the local planning authority, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning

authority. Reports as specified in the approved plan, including details of any necessary contingency action arising from the monitoring, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any necessary contingency measures shall be carried out in accordance with the details in the approved reports. On completion of the monitoring specified in the plan a final report demonstrating that all long-term remediation works have been carried out and confirming that remedial targets Cont/d. 3 have been achieved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason 3

To protect groundwater from pollution and potential further deterioration. The site is located on a Secondary aquifer and a historic landfill. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented (NPPF, paragraph 121).

Condition 4

If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy to the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason 4

To protect groundwater. No site investigation fully characterises a site. The site is located on a Secondary aquifer and a historic landfill. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8.

Condition 5

No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground at this site is permitted other than with the express written consent of the local planning authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to controlled waters. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

Reason 5

To protect groundwater. The site is located on a Secondary aquifer and a historic landfill. Infiltration SUDs/ soakaways through contaminated soils are unacceptable as contaminants can remobilise and cause groundwater pollution. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8.

Condition 6

Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be permitted other than with the express written consent of the local planning authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason 6

Some piling techniques can cause preferential pathways for contaminants to migrate to groundwater and cause pollution. A piling risk assessment should be submitted with

consideration of the Environment Agency guidance 'Piling into contaminated sites': <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/scho0202bisw-e-e.pdf> . This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8.

Condition 7

No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and management of an 8 metre wide buffer zone alongside the River Colne shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and any subsequent amendments shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The buffer zone scheme shall be free from built development including lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping; and could form a vital part of green infrastructure provision. The schemes shall include:

- plans showing the extent and layout of the buffer zone.
- details of any proposed planting scheme (native species only).
- details demonstrating how the buffer zone will be protected during development and managed/maintained over the longer term.
- details of any proposed footpaths, fencing, lighting etc.

Reason 7

Development that encroaches on a watercourse can have a potentially severe impact on their ecological value. Land alongside are particularly valuable for wildlife and it is essential this is protected. This condition is in line with Slough Borough Councils Core Strategy (adopted in 2006) Core Policy 8 and 9.

This condition is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 109 which recognises that the planning system should aim to conserve and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act which requires Local Authorities to have regard to nature conservation and article 10 of the Habitats Directive which stresses the importance of natural networks of linked corridors to allow movement of species between suitable habitats, and promote the expansion of biodiversity. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF also states that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.

6.5 Aircraft Safeguarding, Heathrow Airport Ltd

We have now assessed the application against safeguarding criteria and can confirm that we have no safeguarding objections to the proposed development.

However, we would like to make the following observation:

Landscaping

The development is close to the airport and the landscaping which is included may attract birds which in turn may create an unacceptable increase in bird strike hazard. Any such landscaping should, therefore, be carefully design to minimise its attraction to hazard species of birds. Your attention is drawn to Advice Note 3, 'Potential Bird Hazards: Amenity Landscaping and Building Design' (available at <http://www.aoa.org.uk/operation&safety/safeguarding.htm>)

Lighting

The development is close to the aerodrome and the approach to the runway. We draw attention to the need to carefully design lighting proposals. This is further explained in Advice

Note 2, 'Lighting near Aerodromes' (available at [http://www.aoa.org.uk/operation & safety/safeguarding.htm](http://www.aoa.org.uk/operation&safety/safeguarding.htm)). Please note that the Air Navigation Order 2005, Article 135 grants the Civil Aviation Authority power to serve notice to extinguish or screen lighting which may endanger aircraft.

Cranes

Given the nature of the proposed development it is possible that a crane may be required during its construction. We would, therefore, draw the applicant's attention to the requirement within the British Standard Code of Practice for the safe use of Cranes, for crane operators to consult the aerodrome before erecting a crane in close proximity to an aerodrome. This is explained further in Advice Note 4, 'Cranes and Other Construction Issues' (available at <http://www.aoa.org.uk/policysafeguarding.htm>)

6.6 **London Borough of Hillingdon**

No response has been received. Should any response be received this will be reported to Members on the amendment sheet.

6.7 **Colnbrook-With-Poyle Parish Council**

No response has been received. Should any response be received this will be reported to Members on the amendment sheet.

PART B: PLANNING APPRAISAL

7.0 **Policy Background**

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Statements National Planning Policy Framework 2012 National Planning Policy for Waste 2014

The Slough Local Development Framework, Core Strategy 2006-2026
Development Plan Document
Core Policy 1- Spatial Strategy
Core Policy 2- Green Belt and Open Spaces
Core Policy 5- Employment
Core Policy 7 -Transport
Core Policy 8 –Sustainability and the environment

The Local Plan for Slough,, adopted March 2004
Policy EN3 Landscaping Requirements
Policy CG10 Heathrow Airport Safeguarding Area

Waste Local Plan for Berkshire 1998
WLP 1 Sustainable Development
WLP 12 Need for Waste recycling, sorting and transfer
WLP 16 Waste management facilities-non landfill
WLP 23 Sites for Inert Waste
WLP 29 Sites for Waste Management
WLP 30 Assessing Impacts of development proposals

7.2 The planning considerations for this proposal are:

- Principle of use & Impact upon the Green Belt, Strategic Gap and Colne Valley Park
- Scale, massing, bulk and layout
- Impact to neighbouring residential properties and environmental issues
- Traffic and Highways

8.0 **Principle of use & Impact on Green Belt, Strategic Gap and Colne Valley Park**

- 8.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that unless material considerations dictate otherwise development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Planning should not act as an impediment to sustainable growth and should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. It also states that high quality design should be secured and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 8.2 The National Planning Policy for Waste, October 2014, states that when determining waste planning application Local Authorities should consider market need if the proposals are not in line with the local plan and to ensure the proposals do not undermine the local plan.
- 8.3 Policy WLP12 of the 1998 Berkshire Waste Local Plan states that Local Authorities will seek to ensure the maximum practical reuse, recovery and recycling of waste. Policy WLP1 seeks to use existing sites for handling re-use, recovery and recycling of Berkshire's waste in the most effective way and appropriate for the circumstances and location while policy WLP16 states that sites for waste management should be within existing waste control sites or industrial areas.
- 8.4 While the site is included in the preferred areas list in the 1998 Berkshire Waste Local Plan and being an existing waste transfer site it is considered appropriate that further development could be carried out at the site with relation to the recovery and recycling of waste. However any development will still have to be in accordance with the Councils approved and adopted policies with regards to impact on protected areas, scale and bulk, impact on neighbours and the environment and traffic and highway issues, as discussed below.
- 8.5 The existing site currently a waste management site and it is proposed that by the addition of a new waste recycling facility to receive, bulk and transfer 25,000 tonnes per annum (currently 5,000 tonnes per annum) of dry mixed recyclables which it will sort and remove all recyclables which will be stored and then transferred off site to specialist facilities. The increase in recycled waste being sorted on site will still be within the limit placed by the Environment Agency on the licence granted for the site. It is considered that the addition of a light line waste recycling facility will bring the following benefits:
- Enable the site to efficiently handle both heavy and light weight waste streams in purpose built buildings providing an integral approach to waste management.
 - Recovery of a greater proportion of waste, mainly commercial and industrial, to minimise waste being disposed to land fill or energy recovery.
 - Facility to sort and pre-treat waste to ensure a quality waste stream to other larger recycling centres.
 - Ability to store light line waste within a building and improve the recyclability of the materials.
- 8.6 Should permission be granted the site would then be able to handle both heavy and light waste streams in a more efficient way so that light waste would be able to be recycled and

stored in suitable conditions so that it can be fully recycled and saved from being sent to landfill and therefore be in keeping with the national waste plan that seeks to stop recyclable items being sent to landfill.

- 8.7 Key to the principle of the use, is the location of part of the site within the Green Belt, Strategic Gap and Colne Valley Park as set out in the paragraphs below, particularly in light of the National Planning Policy for Waste which was published in October 2014.
- 8.8 The National Planning Policy for Waste, October 2014, states that Green Belts have special protection regarding development and waste managements facilities within the green Belt would amount to inappropriate development.
- 8.9 Policy WLP29 of the 1998 Berkshire Waste Local Plan states that there will be strong presumption against allowing waste management development affecting the Green Belt when sites for such development are allocated in the Local Plan.
- 8.10 The National Planning Policy Framework states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 8.11 Core Policy 2 Green Belt and open spaces development will only be permitted in the Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London and the open areas of the Colne Valley Park if it is essential to be in that location.
- 8.12 Local Plan policy CG1 seeks to control development in the Colne Valley Park and where development is permitted ensures that appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken to realise the aims and objectives of the Colne Valley Park. Policy CG6 restricts development within the Green Belt and policy and CG9 states that any development within the Strategic Gap will not be approved where it threatens the clear separation between Slough and Greater London.
- 8.13 There is a considerable weight of argument which would mitigate against further development on this site which is within the Green Belt, Strategic gap and Colne Valley Park, insofar as it would further detract from the openness in the Green Belt and the National Planning Policy Guidance for waste no longer treats such a use as an exception to Green Belt. It is always incumbent on the applicant to demonstrate the special circumstances which exist to allow a departure from policy.
- 8.14 It is considered that such mitigating circumstances exist:
- Only approximately 50% of the site lies within the Green Belt
 - The site has operated as a waste transfer site for a number of years and benefits from a permanent planning permission granted in 1999
 - Consolidating waste at this site will allow more waste to be diverted away from landfill providing environmental benefits.
 - An intensified use of this site would not result in the loss of any informal leisure use and therefore there would be no impact on the Colne Valley Park

- Given the nature of the current use of the site, it serves no Green Belt function. Given that the site has a commercial value it would not be returned to agriculture or other acceptable use within the Green Belt
- Other than through the issue of precedent itself, the site itself would not weaken the Strategic gap that separates London and Slough.
- The applicant has also undertaken a sequential test to demonstrate that there are no other suitable non Green Belt sites available which would meet the operators specific requirements

8.15 Development within the Green Belt can also be considered acceptable if there are exceptional circumstances for the development to be located within the Green Belt. While special circumstances have to be more than simply there being existing buildings or uses on the site; special circumstances could be the fact that there are no alternative sites for the building or uses. To this end the applicants have provided an Alternative Sites Assessment to demonstrate that fact that there are no alternative sites where this development could be sited. This assessment started with an assessment of 40 sites from which 9 sites were shortlisted and assessed against the following criteria:

- Proximity to waste arisings
- Proximity to the strategic road network
- Potential for co-location with other waste uses
- Compatibility with planning policy
- Re-use of previously developed land
- Development within Green Belt
- Proximity to designated ecologically sensitive areas
- Potential for landscape and visual effects
- Potential for effects on residential amenity
- Potential for effects on water resources
- Proximity to areas likely to flood
- Presence of public rights of way

8.16 The following table shows the selected short listed sites:

Name	Address	Current Use	Size
Sutton Lane old landfill, Colnbrook, SI3	Colnbrook Landfill, Sutton Lane, Colnbrook, Berks, SL3 8AB,	Non hazard Landfill	0.8
Wiggins Transport Ltd	Poyle Recycling Centre, Poyle Manor Farm, Poyle, Berks, SL3,	C&D Recycling	2.8
Simpson Way	Stoke Poges Way, Slough, SL1 3GD,	Recycling	0.9
Hindhay Quarry	Hindhay Quarry, Maidenhead	Quarry	1.0
Kingsmead Landfill	Welley Road, Horton, Slough, SL3 3QA	Landfill	15.2
		Materials	3.4

Fowles	Feltham	Recycling	
Charles Morris	Wraysbury	Materials Recycling	6.3
Longford II	Colnbrook	Open Land	0.7
Colnbrook Golf Driving Range	Colnbrook	Redundant Golf Driving Range / Open Land	3.0

- 8.17 Following the assessment of the above sites none of the sites met all of the criteria as identified below:

Name	Criteria Met	Criteria Partially Met	Criteria Not Met
Fowles Recycling Site	8	3	2
Kingsmead Landfill	8	2	3
Sutton Lane old landfill, Colnbrook, SI3	7	3	3
Charles Morris	7	3	3
Colnbrook Golf Driving Range	6	6	1
Simpson Way	6	5	2
Wiggins Transport Ltd	6	3	4
Hindhay Quarry	6	3	4
Longford II	4	5	4

- 8.18 Out of the sites which would appear to be most suitable from the above list they are in ownership where it would not be available to the applicants or for which planning permission has been granted for further development and therefore is no longer available.
- 8.19 Therefore it has been demonstrated that there are no alternative deliverable sites and the existing site, which is the subject of this application, is the most appropriate.
- 8.20 As discussed above the site is a developed site and as well as failing to act as a purposeful element of Green Belt it also fails to act within the purpose of the Strategic Gap as it is previously developed and surrounding land provides appropriate buffer to Greater London so the development will not impact upon the purpose of the Strategic Gap.
- 8.21 The building is accepted to be a large building that could impact upon the character of the area but is required at the size as it needs to house the required equipment as well as store the sorted material, which if left to the elements could get wet and therefore not be of any use to be recycled, and is therefore considered acceptable.
- 8.22 Other options have been considered with regards to the layout of the site so that the building will not be in the part of the site which is within the Green Belt, but this is considered the best

layout to ensure that neighbouring properties are not adversely impacted from possible environmental impacts of the changes. It is considered that this represents the most appropriate layout for the site.

- 8.23 The proposals will see more development within the Colne Valley Park but would not impact upon the recreational areas of the park and appropriate contributions can be made in order to help achieve the aims of the Colne Valley Park and such sums are being negotiated and will be subject to a Section 106 Agreement to be agreed prior to the granting of planning permission.

- 8.24 It is considered that special circumstances exist which justify a departure from green belt policy but which would not set a precedent for other such releases within the Strategic Gap.

9.0 **Scale, massing, bulk and layout**

- 9.1 That National Planning Policy for Waste states that waste development facilities should be well designed and contribute positively to the character and quality of the area.

- 9.2 The National Planning Policy Framework confirms the following:

“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people” (para 56).

“Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment” (Para61).

“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions” (Para 64).

“Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal’s economic, social and environmental benefits.” (Para 65).

- 9.3 Core Policy 8 of the Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, states that: *“All development in the Borough shall be sustainable, of a high quality design, improve the quality of the environment and address the impact of climate change.”* Part 2 to that policy covers design and in sub section b) it states: *“all development will respect its location and surroundings”*.

- 9.4 Policy EN1 of the Adopted Local Plan states that *“all development proposals are required to reflect a high standard of design and must be compatible with and/or improve their surrounding”*, in accordance with the criteria set out in that policy.

- 9.5 The design, size and location of the building has been led by the machinery and storage area required within the building and the fact that it acts as a visual and acoustic screen to surrounding neighbouring properties.

- 9.6 The design of the building itself is steel frame with steel cladding and insulation and compliments the existing building on the site as well as the surrounding buildings with it being a standard industrial design that fits in well with the surrounding industrial buildings, especially the neighbouring building at Aramex House and the design of the building will not have a detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the area. Furthermore the proposed building would benefit from a mature tree screening behind it which would help with some screening and help break up the mass of the building and this could be improved via appropriate conditions.
- 9.7 While the building itself could be considered to be large with a foot print of 36m by 68m and a height of 10m to eaves height and 15m to ridge height the building itself will be no larger than the neighbouring building at Aramex House and will not be out of context with the surrounding buildings. The building would cover a large proportion of the site but would not appear overbearing or over dominant within the surrounding area due to the large buildings in the area and the fact that it is set at the back of the site so that it will not be overbearing on the street scene.
- 9.8 The proposals will also see the reorganisation of the site with a revised access relocation of weighbridge and ancillary buildings and relocation of parking which will not impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding area.
- 10.0 **Impact to neighbouring residential properties and environmental issues**
- 10.1 The National Planning Policy for Waste states that waste developments should consider the likely impact on the environment and amenity.
- 10.2 Core Policy 8 of the Local Development Framework, Core Strategy, states that the design of all development within existing residential areas should respect its location and surroundings and shall not give rise to unacceptable levels of air, dust, odour, lighting or noise pollution and reduce the risk of flooding, including surface water flooding.
- 10.3 Policy EN1 of the Adopted Local Plan states that *“all development proposals are required to reflect a high standard of design and must be compatible with and/or improve their surrounding”*, in accordance with the criteria set out in that policy.
- 10.4 The nearest neighbouring residential properties to the application site are sited 33m to the west beyond the disused railway line and 46m from Poyle Cottages to the south beyond the Poyle Channel. These properties are screened from the site with existing mature trees and shrubs both within the site to act as a green buffer to the site. Although large the proposed building is considered not to result in a material detrimental impact in terms of it being overbearing or restricting views and onsite planting provision could be strengthened via appropriate conditions to help soften the appearance of the building further when viewed from neighbouring residential properties.
- 10.5 Due to the distances between the neighbouring residential properties and the proposed building it is not considered to result in a loss of light to the neighbouring properties and would not have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 10.6 The noise report that has been submitted with the application confirms that the sound level is dominated by aircraft noise and that the proposed new recycling plant machinery would not be any louder than the pre existing ambient noise level from aircraft and traffic noise and will therefore have no detrimental impact upon neighbouring properties or the surrounding environment.

- 10.7 The air quality report that has been submitted with the application is in the form of and Environment Agency air quality study that confirms that air quality standard objectives are being met and it is not anticipated that with a marginal increase in the amount of waste being recycled at the site and with this waste being light in nature then there will not be a detrimental impact upon air quality.
- 10.8 An odour and pest management control management plan has been submitted as part of the application which states that appropriate odour and pest control measures will be put in place and regularly monitored to ensure that there is no nuisance to neighbouring properties and can be appropriately secured via condition.
- 10.9 The site is located in flood zone 1 and is not at a high level of risk of flood and is therefore appropriate for development. Storm water will be collected onsite in underground tanks and used onsite for dust suppression and fire sprinklers with any excess water being discharged into Poyle Channel as per the existing situation so site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development will have no impact upon flood risk at the site.

11.0 **Traffic and Highways**

- 11.1 Core Policy 7 requires that development proposals will have to make appropriate provisions for reducing the need to travel, widening travel choices and making travel by sustainable means of transport more attractive than the private car, improving road safety, improving air quality and reducing the impact of travel upon the environment.
- 11.2 Local Plan Policy T2 requires residential development to provide a level of parking appropriate to its location and overcome road safety problems while protecting the amenities of adjoining residents and the visual amenities of the area.
- 11.3 The applicant has supplied a transport statement that states that the additional increase in waste being generated by the development would result in an increase in 20,000 tonnes of waste per year being sorted at the site which equates to an additional 50 HGV trips per a day if it works at its maximum. Considering the background traffic movements to and from the site and the fact that the site will still operate below its 152,000 tonne limit the additional traffic movements will not result in any traffic or highway issues.
- 11.4 The following table shows the number of trips for the site over the last three years:

Year	Tonnage	HGV Loads	Total HGV Trips
2011	70,643	13,831	27,662
2012	26,850	10,206	20,412
2013	28,960	8,047	16,094

- 11.5 The existing junction is considered to be able to be safely accommodated on the access road and at the junction with Old Bath Road so that it will not result in any highway safety issues.
- 11.6 Appropriate space is provided within the site to accommodate vehicle movements and parking so that the site can be safely accessed and navigated around.

12.0 **Other Issues**

- 12.1 The Applicant's requested a screening opinion from the Local Planning Authority with regards to if an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required due to the size and nature of the development. While the Local Planning Authority considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required due to the fact that waste would be

handled in close proximity to controlled waters. However the Secretary of State was asked for a Screening Direction following on from the Local Planning Authority response and they ruled that the proposal would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required.

- 12.2 The proposed use will not result in an increase in staff numbers at the site and therefore complies with the requirement of development within the airport safeguarding zone which seeks to ensure there is no increase in the numbers of people working within such an area.
- 12.3 The proposals for the Heathrow expansion do not interfere as the proposals at the applicant waste site fall outside of the area which will be needed for the Heathrow expansion.
- 12.4 A Section 106 Agreement is being negotiated with regards to any additional highway changes that may be required, including that for pedestrian access and financial contributions towards improved facilities at Colne Valley Park.

13.0 **PART C: RECOMMENDATION**

- 13.1 Following consideration of any outstanding consultation responses, it is recommended that the application be referred to the Secretary of State under departure procedures. In the event that the Secretary of State decides not to call in the application for his own determination that the Acting Planning Manager be authorised to finalise conditions, complete a S106 agreement and make a final decision on the Planning Application.

14.0 PART D: LIST OF CONDITIONS AND INFORMATIVES

The heads of the following draft planning conditions are proposed in the event that planning permission is granted:

1. Time Limit
2. Approved drawings
3. Approved reports
4. Materials to be approved
5. Surface materials to be approved
6. Landscaping Plan
7. Landscaping Management Plan
8. Preliminary Risk Assessment
9. Verification Report
10. Long term maintenance and monitoring plan
11. Unidentified contamination
12. Infiltration of surface water drainage
13. Restriction of piling
14. Buffer zone to River Colne
15. Dust Emissions
16. Dust and Noise Management and Monitoring Plan
17. Dust and Noise Mitigation Measures
18. Noise Limits
19. Reverse Alarms