



Rotherwas Waste Management Facility

Proposed Segregated Food Waste Transfer Operation Including Change of Use of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) Building and Erection of 2 No. Portable Welfare Buildings

Planning Statement

Prepared for



Mercia Waste Management Ltd.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mercia Waste Management (MWM) Limited. It supports a planning application for the proposed introduction of a segregated food waste transfer operation and the erection of 2 No. portable welfare buildings at the company's existing Rotherwas Waste Management Facility.
- 1.1.2 The food waste transfer activity, which would comprise receipt of source-segregated food waste, bulking, and onward transhipment for waste treatment; would take place in the existing Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) building. At present, this building benefits from planning consent for a sui generis use for the handling of mixed dry recyclable waste, specifically, receipt, bulking and transfer of such wastes to the EnviroSort MRF at Norton, in Worcestershire. As such, the application now being submitted includes for a 'change of use' to permit the addition of a second sui generis use i.e. food waste transfer to take place within the MRF building.
- 1.1.3 With the introduction of food waste handling within the MRF building, it will be necessary, from a health and safety perspective, to relocate staff welfare facilities, presently existing within the MRF building. The relocated facilities would be in two new portable buildings, located adjacent to the existing site office.
- 1.1.4 The proposed changes would all take place in the eastern part of MWM's existing Rotherwas Waste Management Facility located off Chapel Road, Rotherwas Industrial Estate, HR2 6LD (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').

1.2 Structure of the Planning Statement

- 1.2.1 This Planning Statement is divided into six sections of which this introduction is **Section 1.0**. **Section 2.0** describes the Site and its context, including any relevant planning history. **Section 3.0** provides a description of the Proposed Development. **Section 4.0** provides an overview of the planning policy context, including the Development Plan and any other material considerations. **Section 5.0** appraises the Proposed Development in relation to planning policy and technical considerations of relevance. **Section 6.0** provides concise conclusions.



2.0 THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

2.1 Site Location and Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The application site is located within Rotherwas Industrial Estate and lies approximately 3.4km south-east of the centre of Hereford. The Site is surrounded on all sides by the wider Rotherwas industrial estate. To the east is a metal recycling centre and to the north there are a number of small businesses including a garage and scrapyard. To the south there is a vehicle repair shop and to the west of the Site lies the other facilities forming part of MWM's overall Rotherwas Waste Management Facility, which include the Household Waste Site and Waste Transfer Station. The northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the Site are well screened by existing vegetation including a number of trees.
- 2.1.2 The Site is situated entirely within Flood Zone 2, which has a medium probability of flooding. Accordingly, a Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted in support of the planning application; the conclusions of which are summarised within Section 5 of this Planning Statement. The closest heritage asset is a Grade II listed 'Barn about 60 yards south of Rotherwas Chapel' which is situated 300m north-west of the Site. Given the distance between the nearest heritage asset, intervening features and the nature and scale of the Proposed Development, it is considered that there would be no effects on this heritage asset. Finally, the closest residential property is located approximately 325m distance, to the northwest of the Proposed Development.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 The Site has been in a waste management use since circa 1997, pre-dating the formation of the current Herefordshire Council. It was largely redeveloped, into its current form in 2002, following planning permissions granted in June 2000 and 2002. Details of those consents and three subsequent permissions granted under s.73 (of the TCPA), are as follows:
- CE2000/0099/N- Chapel Road Rotherwas Industrial Estate Rotherwas, Hereford HR2 6LD. Relocation and construction of existing waste transfer station and nearby household waste site and the provision of a materials reclamation facility in an extended existing waste transfer station. Approved 21/06/2000.



- CE2001/2790/N- Chapel Road Rotherwas Industrial Estate Rotherwas, Hereford HR2 6LD. Construction and operation of a green waste composting facility. Approved 26/04/2002.
- CE2002/0982/N- Chapel Road Rotherwas Industrial Estate Hereford. Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary Condition 2 of planning permission Ref. No. CE2000/0099/N for the construction of a materials reclamation facility, household waste site and waste transfer station. Determined 29/05/2002.
- CE2002/1289/N- Rotherwas Industrial Estate Chapel Road Rotherwas, Hereford. Relocation and construction of existing waste transfer station and nearby household waste site and the provision of a materials reclamation facility in an extended existing waste transfer station without complying with Conditions 16 and 18 subject to which planning permission was granted on 21st June, 2000 under ref. CE2000/0099/N. Determined 24/06/2002.
- S111209/N- Rotherwas Waste Management Site, Chapel Road, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 6LD. Variation of conditions 16, 18, 19 of permission CE2002/1289/N to extend working and operating hours. Determined 29/06/2011.



3.0 CONTEXT AND THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Background, Purpose and Benefits of the Proposal

3.1.1 The run-in to the new Millennium heralded a national drive towards more sustainable waste management. This was evidenced nowhere more clearly than in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, with the two authorities entering a new, integrated, pathfinder waste management contract. This was one of the first municipal waste contracts to receive support from the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), in 1998/99, with some ██████████ in PFI credits being provided by the government to support the new infrastructure that was necessary.

3.1.2 This contract, operated by Mercia Waste Management (MWM) and its sister organisation Severn Waste Services (SWS), has delivered a huge range of new or upgraded waste management infrastructure across the counties including:

- New and upgraded Household Waste sites;
- New Waste Transfer Stations (WTS);
- Recyclables bulking facilities;
- Open windrow composting facilities;
- The EnviroSort CMRF at Norton (a Material Reclamation Facility);
- Incinerator Bottom Ash recovery facility at the existing Hill and Moor landfill site; and
- The EnviRecover Energy from Waste (EfW) facility at Hartlebury, near Kidderminster.

3.1.3 This infrastructure included comprehensive redevelopment and upgrading of facilities at the Rotherwas site in 2002/03. The drive towards sustainable waste management continues, now more strongly fuelled by climate change objectives. In 2018 DEFRA published 'Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England' which signalled a move towards managing waste in line with a Circular Economy and the delivery of climate change goals. Two key plants of the Strategy were:

- To work towards eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030; and



- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from landfill by ensuring that every householder and appropriate business has a weekly separate food waste collection.

3.1.4 In 2021, the UK government passed the Environmental Act which supports the commitment of moving towards eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030; and paved the way for new food waste legislation to come into effect in 2023.

3.1.5 The new legalisation sets out that:

- All food waste must be separated into a different bin for collection; and
- Food cannot be sent to landfill or incineration; it must be sent for recycling. The two methods that can be used are composting or anaerobic digestion.

3.1.6 Accordingly, MWM / SWS is implementing its plans for the receipt of segregated food waste collections and the bulking of this waste prior to transshipment for treatment. At present MWM propose to send the food waste to the anaerobic digestion (AD) facility operated by [REDACTED] for treatment. This new receipt, bulking and transfer operation being the subject of this planning application.

3.2 Existing Use

3.2.1 The Site currently receives commingled recycling for bulking up prior to it being exported off-site to the Severn Waste Service 'EnviroSort' plant at Norton, near Worcester. Food waste is currently accepted at the adjacent Waste Transfer Station, however, it is received in combination with the residual waste stream and is not separated.

3.3 The Proposed Development

3.3.1 The planning application seeks full planning permission for the following:

'Proposed Segregated Food Waste Transfer Operation Including Change of Use of the MRF Building and Erection of 2 No. Portable Welfare Buildings'.

3.3.2 The proposed portable buildings would be erected on jack legs at a height of c. 300mm above existing ground level. The buildings would be constructed from anti-vandal, steel-clad units coloured anthracite (RAL 7016). The dimensions of the



buildings would be 9.6m (l) x 3.0m (w) x 2.545m (h) and have a cubic capacity of 73.3m³. See drawings 3508-01-03 and 3508-01-04 for further information.

- 3.3.3 The area relating to the proposed change of use for the segregated food waste transfer operation is shown on the proposed site plan (reference: 3508-01-02). The remainder of the existing MRF building would continue to be used for the processing of residual recyclable materials. The location of the two proposed portable buildings is also shown on the proposed site plan.

3.4 Summary of the Proposed Development

- 3.4.1 The Proposed Development would enable a proportion of the existing MRF building to be used for the receipt and bulking of food waste. Health and safety issues require that staff welfare facilities, currently provided within the existing MRF building, are relocated from the area of proposed food waste handling. Accordingly, two portable buildings are proposed outside the existing MRF building on an area of existing hardstanding. The remainder of the existing MRF building would continue to be used for the processing of residual recyclable materials.



4.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 4.1.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the development plan for the area comprises the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031, which outlines the overarching strategic proposals and planning policies for the county to be delivered during the plan period. The policies of relevance to the Proposed Development have been considered below.

4.2 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy

Policy SD1 Sustainable design and energy efficiency

- 4.2.1 This policy states that proposals are required to make efficient use of land, taking into account the local context and site characteristics.
- 4.2.2 The proposal Site is an existing waste management facility and the Proposed Development seeks only to augment the operations undertaken on-site, specifically, a segregated food waste transfer operation. Accordingly the Proposed Development conforms with the aims of this policy.

Policy SS1- Presumption in favour of sustainable development

- 4.2.3 This policy identifies that when considering development proposals Herefordshire Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within national policy. This policy also mentions that the Council will work proactively to find solutions, which means that proposals can be approved wherever possible to secure development that improves the social, economic and environmental conditions in Herefordshire.

4.3 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004-2034 (First review August 2011)

- 4.3.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire is a relevant material consideration and contains 24 policies, the most relevant of which have been summarised below.



Policy 1

- 4.3.2 This policy states that the council will adopt the following waste hierarchy as a template for their approach to waste management, ensuring that waste is prevented wherever possible first before considering options. The Proposed Development accords with this policy in moving the waste to be managed higher up the waste hierarchy.



Policy 4

- 4.3.3 This policy summarises that the council is committed to achieve existing and future waste targets set within the local area. The Proposed Development would contribute to achieving these targets.

Policy 7

- 4.3.4 This policy outlines that the council will seek to provide waste management services in a manner that minimises greenhouse gas emissions and other impacts that contribute to climate change. The Proposed Development is in line with this policy and would drive the management of waste higher up the waste hierarchy and help minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy 18

- 4.3.5 This policy notes that the local authorities will continue to work together on waste prevention, re-use and recycling schemes and raise awareness of the links between these and climate change. The Proposed Development accords with this policy in driving the management of waste higher up the waste hierarchy.

4.4 Herefordshire Council Integrated Waste Management Strategy (2021-2035)

- 4.4.1 This document sits alongside the current joint waste strategy with Worcestershire County Council and sets out the ambitions for the future of Herefordshire. The most relevant targets from this strategy have been included below:



- Target 1- Net zero carbon by 2030
- Target 3- Achieve national municipal reuse and recycling rate targets of 55% by 2024, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035.
- Target 4- To meet the requirements of the Environmental Bill.
- Target 5- No more than 1% of municipal waste to be sent to landfill from 2026 and zero waste by 2035.
- Target 6- Improve reuse and recycling at all HWRC sites to achieve a reuse and recycling target of 85% by 2035.

The Proposed Development would contribute to achieving the targets set by the council. In particular target 4, which specifically requires segregated food waste collection.



5.0 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 It must be noted that the proposal would operate under the Site's Environmental Permit, which would be subject to variation to encompass the food waste transfer activity. The purpose of such a Permit is to ensure the regulated activity would not give rise to any harm to the environment or human health. Relevant to this proposal, the Permit would ensure adequate controls and management practices are in place in relation to odour, vermin and pests and litter.
- 5.1.2 With regard to such matters and the planning system, paragraph 188 of the NPPF is very clear and states that the: *"... focus of planning ... decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively"*.
- 5.1.3 Accordingly, the following planning and environmental issues, which are not regulated through Permitting, are considered in this appraisal:
- The Principle of the Development;
 - Transportation; and
 - Flood Risk and Drainage.

5.2 The Principle of the Development

- 5.2.1 There has been no material change in circumstances at the Site, or in planning policy, which could suggest that the principle of waste management development on the site is no longer acceptable. The Proposed Development would maximise the efficient use of land on the existing waste management site, in line with policy SD1 of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and paragraph 124 of the NPPF. The Proposed Development would also provide additional climate change benefits by driving waste management higher up the waste hierarchy, in line with the National Planning Policy for Waste. The food waste managed at the Site would be sorted prior to being transported to a nearby anaerobic digestion plant for treatment, in line with recent legislative changes.



5.3 Transportation

- 5.3.1 A Transport Statement has been prepared by Axis (August 2023) and is submitted in support of the planning application. The report concludes that the Proposed Development is considered to pass the test set out in Paragraph 111 of the NPPF, which states that developments should only be prevented or refused if the traffic impacts on the road network would be 'severe'. Accordingly, it can be concluded that there should be no reason to withhold planning permission, from a transport perspective

5.4 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.4.1 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared by Axis (August 2023) and is submitted in support of the planning application. The report concludes that, although the Proposed Development is located within Flood Zone 2, there is no history of flooding at the Site, from any sources over the last 20 years of operation. The proposals constitute Minor Development and, in accordance with Environment Agency Standing Advice, the proposed portable welfare buildings would be constructed such that the finished floor levels are set 300mm above the existing site levels. The FRA confirms that with these mitigation measures in place the flood risk to the Proposed Development from all flood sources is acceptable.



6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 This application seeks planning consent for the 'Proposed Segregated Food Waste Transfer Operation Including Change of Use of the MRF Building and Erection of 2 No. Portable Welfare Buildings'.
- 6.1.2 This Planning Statement has assessed the extent to which the Proposed Development accords with prevailing planning policy and guidance. The planning appraisal has further demonstrated that the Proposed Development would be of an appropriate scale in the context of the surrounding area.
- 6.1.3 The Transport Statement identified that the Proposed Development is considered to pass the test set out in Paragraph 111 of the NPPF which states that developments should only be prevented or refused if the traffic impacts on the road network would be 'severe'. Therefore, there should be no reason to refuse planning from a transport perspective.
- 6.1.4 The Flood Risk Assessment confirmed that the portable buildings would be constructed such that finished floor levels would be set 300mm above existing site levels, which would be an acceptable form of mitigation.
- 6.1.5 It is clear that the planning balance is firmly in favour of the Proposed Development with the positive benefits of the development outweighing any perceived negative effects or policy tensions.
- 6.1.6 The Proposed Development accords, in full, with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, advocated within Policy SS1 of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, and planning consent should be granted in due course.



