

Item C2

Revised application for change of use of part of yard from open storage to waste separation using a trommel with a covered waste sorting facility and provision of netting on top of the existing rear wall, Rochester Way, Dartford – DA/12/89 (KCC/DA/0485/2011)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 8 May 2012

DA/12/89 (KCC/DA/0485/2011) – Retrospective application by Easy Load Ltd for an amendment to planning application DA/10/1232 for the change of use of part of yard from open storage to waste separation using a trommel with a covered waste sorting facility, and the provision of netting on top of the existing rear wall at Lee's Yard, Rochester Way, Dartford

Recommendation: Planning permission be granted subject to conditions

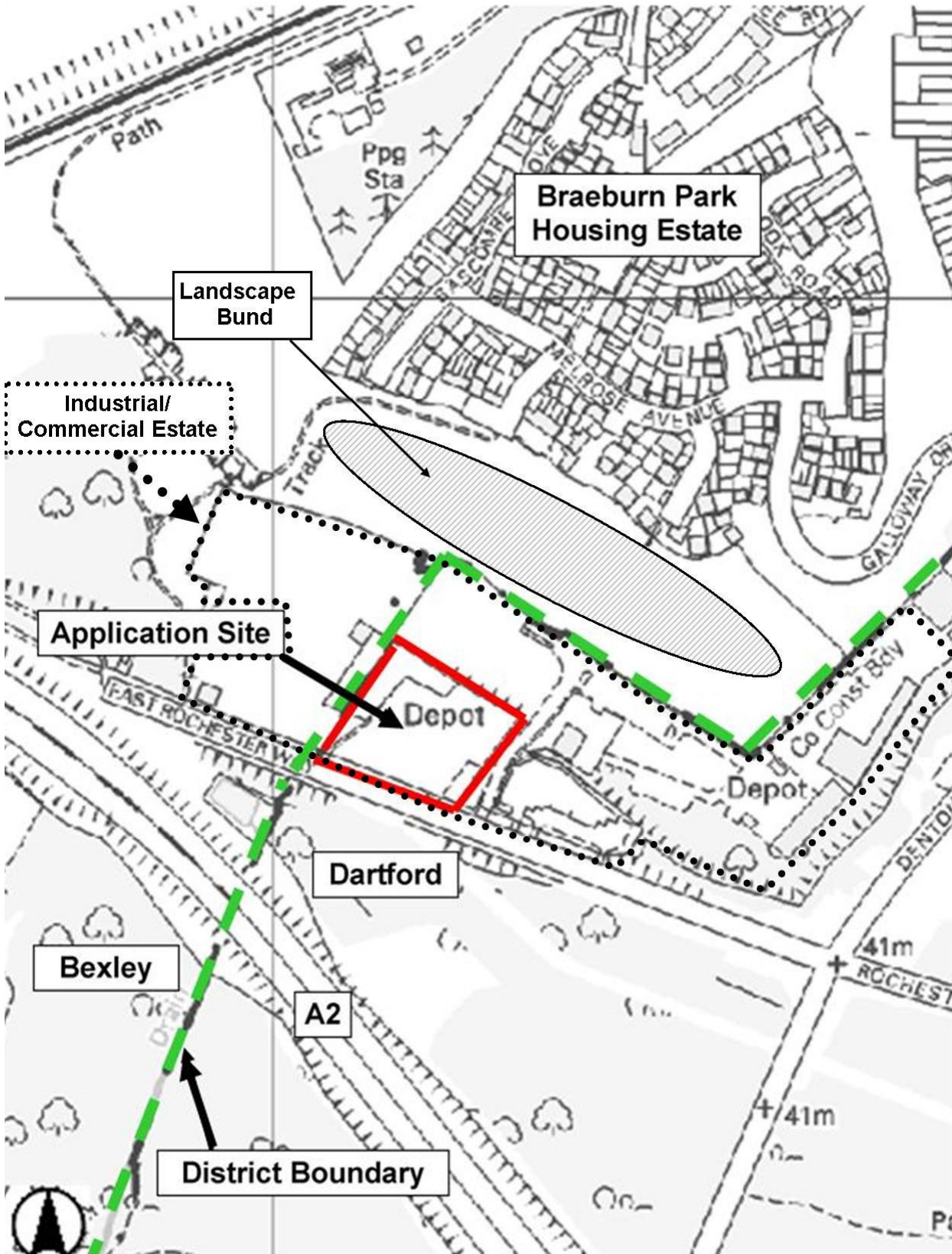
Local Member(s): Jan Ozog

Classification: Unrestricted

Site Description

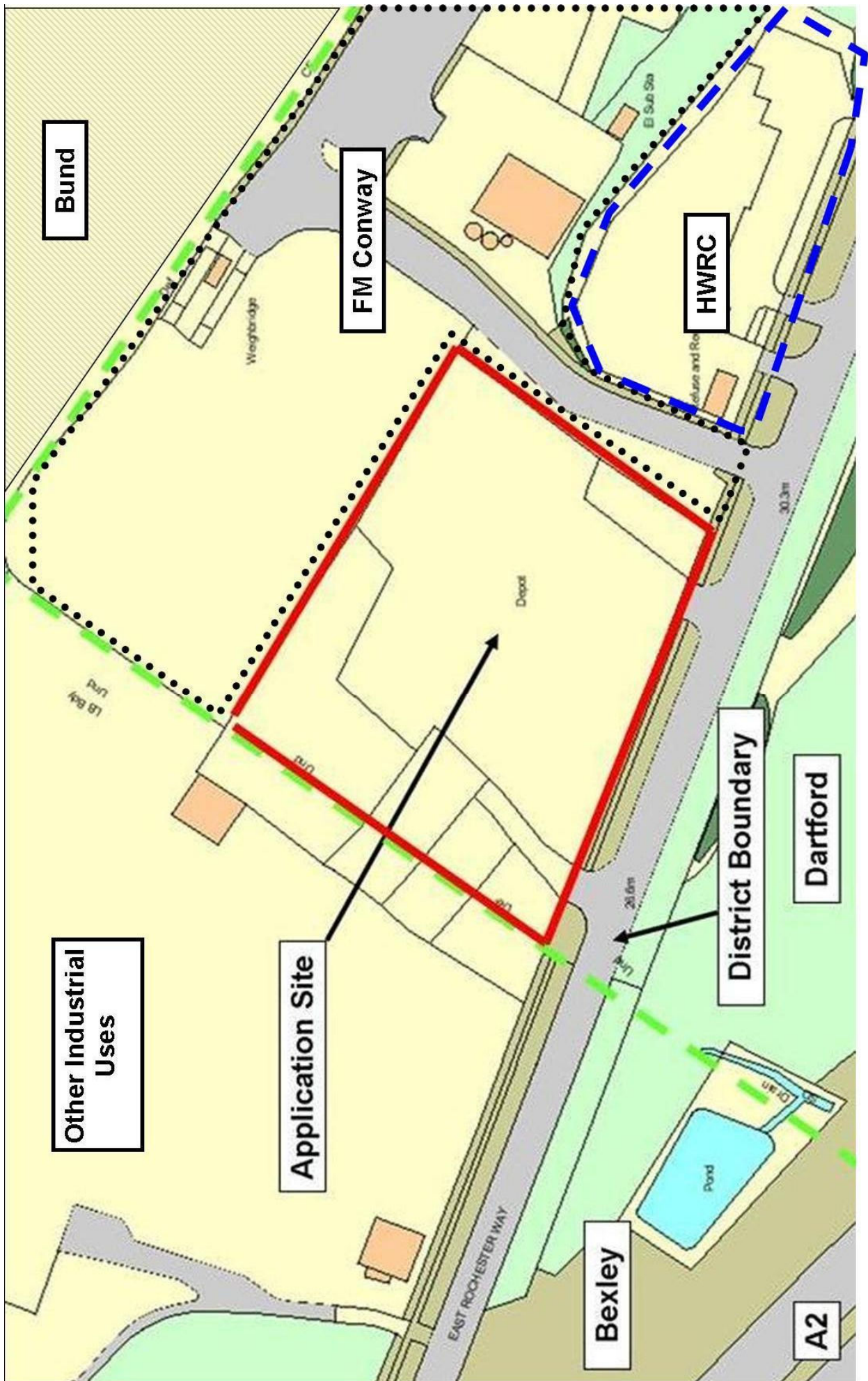
1. The Easy Load Ltd application site is located wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB), on an original industrial unit known as Lee's Yard. It is now a skip storage and waste transfer site. The 0.53 hectare site is within the Rochester Way industrial area, and forms part of a cluster of compatible uses, including FM Conway Aggregate processing to the north, a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) to the east, and South East Building Supplies to the west. The Rochester Way forms the southern boundary to the site, with land designated as a Site for Nature Conservation Interest beyond.
2. The site is accessed from Rochester Way - a no-through road which provides access only to the businesses located in this area. The road connects to the primary road network via a roundabout on the A2018 Old Bexley Lane, which links to the A2 a kilometre to the south.
3. The nearest residential properties are located 160m to the north in a housing estate known as Braeburn Park, which lies within the London Borough of Bexley. The Easy Load site is separated from this estate by the FM Conway yard, and a landscaping bund beyond, which was constructed as part of the housing estate planning permission and separates the residential and commercial land uses. The housing in Braeburn Park is set at a considerably lower level than the commercial uses in Rochester Way. Members may recall that they visited this locality as part of the consideration of earlier planning applications.
4. The application site, and the internal operations, is partially visible from on top of the landscaping bund, and from Galloway Drive – which provides access down into the Braeburn Park housing estate. The application site is most unlikely from my own observations to be visible from any of the houses themselves as the houses are set down behind the bund in a disused quarry, with the Easy Load site at a higher level.

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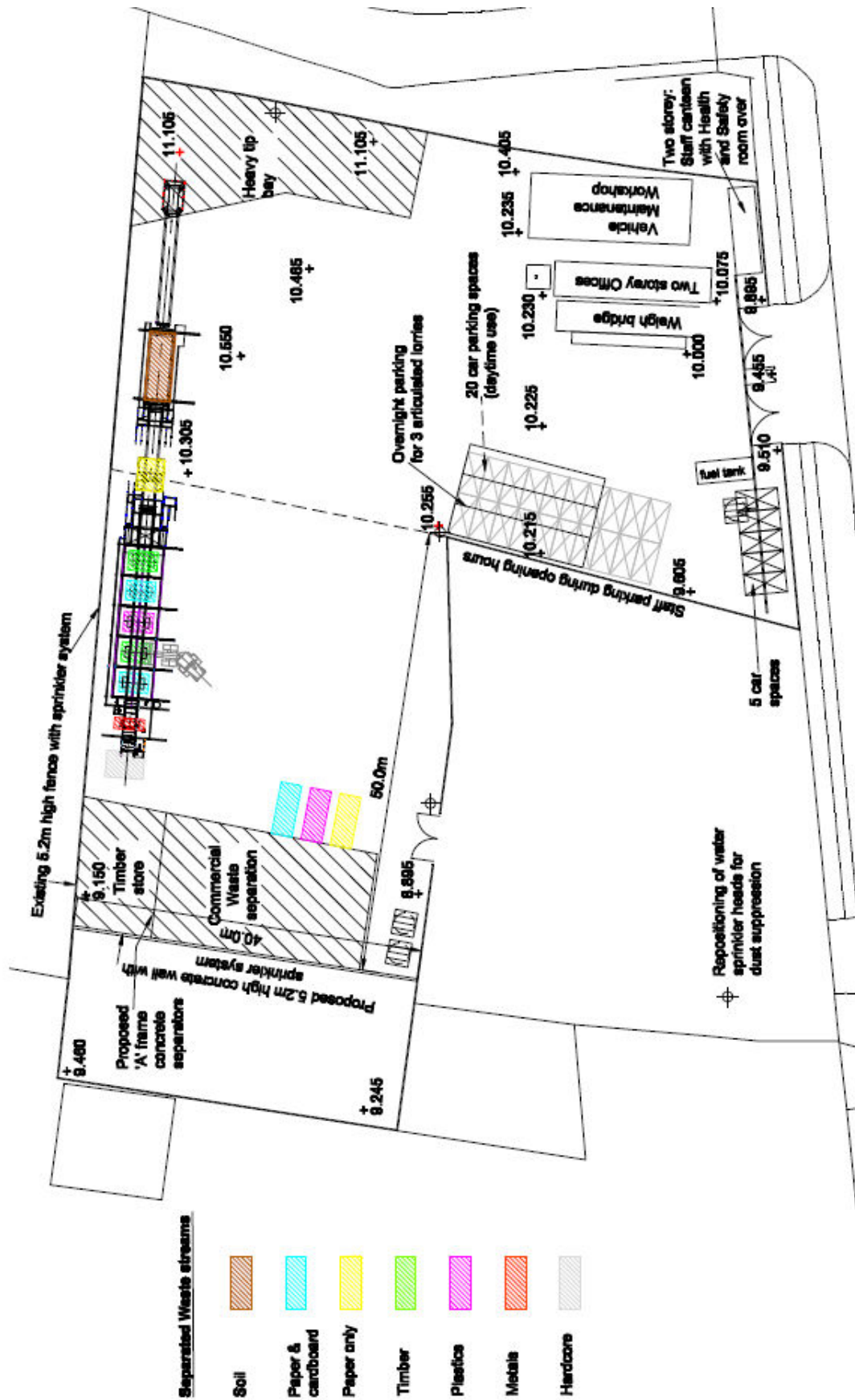


Site Location Plan

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5. The application site, and the internal operations, is partially visible from on top of the landscaping bund, and from Galloway Drive – which provides access down into the Braeburn Park housing estate. The application site is most unlikely from my own observations to be visible from any of the houses themselves as the houses are set down behind the bund in a disused quarry, with the Easy Load site at a higher level.

Background

6. The Easy Load site is approximately 0.53 hectares and is bound on three sides to the east, south and west by a concrete wall of between 4 and 5 metres in height.
7. Part of the application site has been operated as a waste transfer station since 1988, with a smaller area having been used for some years previous, albeit at a smaller scale.
8. Easy Load Ltd have operated the site since 1995 and provides a service for the collection of skip waste for sorting and recycling to customers within approx. 20 mile radius, with disposal of residual waste being sent for landfill in Essex. The current planning permission and waste licence allows the transfer station to receive up to 75,000 tonnes of waste per annum: 200 tonnes per day of Category A inert waste; 400 tonnes per day of Category B slowly degradable waste (wood, paper etc); and up to 10 tonnes per day of putrescible waste. All waste brought to the site is to be removed within 48 hours. During 2008/2009 the site received almost 50,000 tonnes of waste – 12% Category A, 85% Category B, and the remainder putrescible Category C.
9. A continuing investment programme has been undertaken by the applicants, including site improvements and operational changes. The changes have been brought about by planning permissions for extended opening hours; the provision of new buildings for offices, training and staff; and modernisation of plant and machinery.
10. A number of planning breaches in 2005 led to the County Council serving an Enforcement Notice against stone crushing and screening within the 'extension area'. The use has ceased, but the Notice remains in place. Planning permission DA/09/974 was granted in 2009 for the parking and storage of skips and Lorries, in support of the main waste transfer activity.
11. In 2010 Easy Load Ltd sought permission (DA/10/1232) to extend the area and extent of waste separation and recycling, through rearrangement of the site layout, relocation of the storage and parking areas, and the introduction of dedicated plant and machinery. Specific elements of the application were to extend the waste handling area, over an area currently used for the parking of skips and Lorries, and the introduction of a dedicated mechanical screener, with a trommel machine, and manual picking station. This application was granted permission subject to conditions at the Planning Committee on 15 March 2011.
12. Following the grant of the above permission, the applicants commenced development and operation of the extended site area. However, the mechanical trommel and picking station installed was different to that permitted, and was therefore in breach of permission DA/10/1232. The original design, height, location and noise rating of the trommel was a crucial determining issue within the previous application, as these factors, combined with the physical relationship with the noise attenuation fencing, were deemed important to ensure noise impacts upon the nearest residential properties could be kept to an acceptable level. Consequently, under Regulation Committee endorsement, the applicant was formally requested to regularise this breach by way of a further and retrospective application, supported (among other details) by an appropriate

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noise assessment for the new trommel. Failure to have done so would have invited enforcement action by the County Council.

13. The operator has submitted that the reason for the breach is that they changed the site arrangement due to purchasing the plant from a different manufacturer and took the opportunity to review the facilities to be provided and their operation. The new trommel is manufactured by DUO Plc and is shown on drawing no. 1772/4B.

Proposal

14. The planning application is a resubmission of permission DA/10/1232. The only difference between the two applications is a revised trommel and picking station (hereon referred to as 'the trommel'), and the addition of netting. All other elements of the application, including site layout, operational management and throughput are proposed to remain unchanged. However, as this is a resubmission of the entire proposal, a brief summary of the proposed development is given below in italics, as it was first reported to Members. I would stress though that the site upgrading and organisational changes are already largely in place.
15. *The proposal seeks to extend the area and extent of waste separation and recycling at the site by internal rearrangement, relocation of the majority of existing storage and parking and the introduction of dedicated plant and machinery. Currently, mixed skip waste is brought onto the site, weighed, tipped, separated and sorted. Reusable and recyclable materials are extracted, with the residue going to landfill. The operation involves up to 6 manual pickers sorting waste, whilst Lorries tip around them. A mechanical 360 grab crane is also used which moves larger components of waste material into a metal container for removal off-site.*
16. *The current waste sorting and recycling operation is considered by the applicant to be less than efficient with only 30-40% of the waste being recycled, and the rest going to landfill. It is proposed that the application will address this problem in two ways.*
17. *Firstly, the waste handling area of the station would be extended over the part of the site currently used for skip storage and lorry parking (the 'extension' area). The operator proposes to relocate the existing 500 skips and 12 skip lorries to a nearby skips storage site, owned by the Easy Load Ltd, in Bexley. Space would be retained within the site to park 3 articulated vehicles overnight.*
18. *Secondly, mechanical screening of waste would be introduced through the use of a 'Trommel' machine and picking station. The waste brought onto site would be tipped into the designated areas either side of the site – heavy waste to the east, and commercial waste to the west. The proposed trommel and picking station would be located between these areas, close to the northern site boundary fencing. The applicant advises that the separation of these waste types would aid recycling and make it easier to sort, separate and export. The application estimates that the amended operational arrangement would lead to separation rates of 60%-70%, thereby greatly reducing the proportion of material sent to landfill. The proposed trommel has 2 additional picking stations (to DA/10/1232)*
19. *The proposed changes would not result in any changes to the waste stream, hours of operation, throughput and combined vehicle movements. The proposal is stated as being directed instead towards improving the efficiency and sustainability of existing waste management methods on site.*

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Current Proposal

20. As part of the revised proposals, the applicant has attempted to safeguard against any potential visual, noise, dust or odour amenity problems encountered. The trommel would be located 1m behind the 5m high northern site boundary. The application proposes to install a 'netting' style extension to the top of this fencing in order to help screen the plant from view, as the proposed trommel would protrude above the barrier in places by approx. 1.5m. Noise, dust and odour assessments have also been submitted with the application.
21. The previous application (Ref: DA/10/1232) was accompanied by a noise assessment which was predictive, based upon assumed sound ratings and variables, in order to demonstrate that the trommel would fall below background noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptor (NSR). It was noted within this assessment that the position of the trommel, and its relationship to the site boundary, would be crucial in achieving the required noise management. Upon receipt of the revised proposal, the applicant was requested to provide a revised noise assessment which was specific to the trommel installed. As the specific plant was then known, and operational, the applicant was able to provide specific data in relation to the noise levels generated assessed against existing background levels.
22. The dust assessment states that the majority of waste materials (85%) handled at the site are not potentially dust creating, and the activities that could give rise to dust would be undertaken in an area which has a water sprinkler dust suppression system installed. Good site housekeeping measures, such as frequent sweeping and dampening down are recommended, which would further mitigate dust releases. The trommel itself would also have its own water spray system.
23. Odour control and mitigation would largely be attained through standard EA waste transfer permitting controls which require, amongst other things, that any odorous waste (e.g. putrescible waste) be removed from the site within 48hours of arrival. This in addition to good practice measures such as containment surface waste water drainage is considered sufficient through the odour assessment for the protection of amenity. The operator is proposing to extend the sprinkler system by installing new spray bays over active areas, to enhance the mitigation strategy of any adverse emissions from the site being released into the atmosphere.
24. The entire proposed trommel would be approx. 64m long, by 6m wide, and 6.5m at its highest point. It is made up of various component parts, and is not one solid structure; therefore the visual bulk is less than the footprint area. The majority of the machinery is below 6m in height and would therefore be screened by the existing fence, with the remainder proposed to be screened by the additional proposed netting. Waste materials would be fed into a feed hopper, and then pass through a vibrating feeder and onto an inclined conveyor which subsequently feeds into a 6-bay trommel. The 9.4m x 2.4m trommel element mechanically grades and screens material. Oversize material then passes through to the 10man picking station within a 17.5m cabin (Drawing no.1772/4B).

Planning Policy

25. The Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to consideration of the application:

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- (i) **Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management**
- (ii) **National Planning Policy Framework 2012**
- (iii) The adopted (2009) **South East Plan**
 - Policy CC1** Seeks to achieve and maintain sustainable development within the region.
 - Policy NRM1** Sustainable water resources and groundwater quality
 - Policy NRM2** Water quality
 - Policy W7** Priority to safeguarding and expanding suitable sites within existing waste management use
 - Policy W17** Location of waste management facilities
- (iv) The adopted **Kent Waste Local Plan** (1998)
 - Policy W3** Locational criteria for waste processing and transfer facilities
 - Policy W6** Need considerations in waste developments
 - Policy W9** Development proposals for waste separation and transfer
 - Policy W18** Control of noise, dust and odours from waste operations
 - Policy W19** Protection of ground and surface water
 - Policy W25** Control and design of operations
 - Policy W31** Visual impact and landscaping
- (v) **Dartford Borough Council Local Plan** (1995) – the most relevant saved policies, and the policies contained within the Amended Second Deposit Draft 2004 – GB1, GB2 and B1; and GB1, GB2, GB6, RT14, C14, NR10, NR14 and NR16 respectively.

Consultations

26. Dartford Borough Council: Raise no objection subject to the imposition of the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant should be required to ensure that existing dust suppression mechanisms such as water spraying and conveyor screening are maintained in sufficient working order and fully utilised to mitigate/suppress dust from the operations affecting local residents.
- 2) Stockpiled materials should be maintained to a maximum height of 5m above the site ground level.
- 3) Hours of operation should remain unchanged and controlled by a condition on the new permission.
- 4) Requirement to erect netting above existing wall to a height and specification to be agreed with Kent County Council.

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Environment Agency: No comments to make on this application.

Jacobs (Noise): No objection. The operation of the trommel will meet the proposed noise condition, and minimise the likelihood of complaint from residents.

Jacobs (Air Quality): No objection. It is considered that no significant dust or odour impacts are expected. Mitigation and good practice measure would keep dust and odour emissions at minimum levels.

Bexley Borough Council: No comments received. Consulted 27/01/12.

Local Member

27. The local County Member for Dartford West, Mr Jan Ozog, was notified of the application on the 25 January 2012. No comments have been received.

Publicity

28. The application was advertised by the posting of a site notice and the notification of 106 neighbours and businesses.

29. The application was also advertised in the Kent on Sunday 5 February 2012.

Representations

30. There have been 4 letters of objection and comment from nearby residents and businesses, and the main points of objection can be summarised as follows:

- The existing noise pollution emanating from the site is already significant and these levels would increase.
- Air pollution is excessive and this application would increase this.
- The smell that the site already pollutes would also increase.
- Not convinced that working hours are being adhered to.
- Concern over the scale of risk from erroneous waste (asbestos, contaminated earth etc) being increased with increased capacity.
- Concern over putrescible waste.
- Object to further industrialisation in this area.
- Houses on Braeburn Estate suffer from dust being carried by winds.
- Noise of machinery.
- The provision of netting would add to the eyesore, can trees not be planted?
- Complaints over the digger noise operating 6 days a week (photo attached shows Conways Site).
- Danger of corner of Rochester Way/Swan Lane and the large amount of lorries pulling onto the road.
- Rubbish and damage along Rochester Way will increase with further industrialisation.

Discussion

31. In considering this proposal regard must be had to Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph (23) above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this proposal needs

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to be considered in the context of Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations including those arising from consultation and publicity. Material planning considerations include the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which promotes sustainable development and the local plan policies set out in paragraphs 12 to 15. It should be noted that the South East Plan remains part of the development plan although the Government's intention to abolish regional spatial strategies is a material consideration and the weight given to it is a matter for the decision maker.

32. This application has been brought for determination by the Planning Applications Committee following objections and comments from a number of local residents. The objections raise a number of issues and concerns directly relating to the proposal and others to wider issues. It is important when considering this application to focus on the material planning merits of the proposal as contained within the application and in the context of earlier permission on the site. The main issues to discuss relate to the location of the development within the Metropolitan Green Belt; case of need; location; amenity impacts (noise/visual/air quality), highway considerations and control.
33. The development proposal involves the revision of planning permission DA/10/1232, incorporating an alternative specification trommel and picking station into the main proposals: *change of use of part of yard from open storage to waste separation using a trommel with a covered waste sorting facility, and the provision of netting on top of the existing rear wall.*

Appropriateness within the Metropolitan Green Belt

34. The **National Planning Policy Framework** section 9 refers to the importance that the Government attaches to Green Belts, and the essential characteristics of their openness and permanence. There is a presumption against inappropriate development within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB), and it should only be approved in very special circumstances (para.87). In general, all new building is inappropriate, apart from a list of exceptions contained within para.89 of the NPPF.
35. In assessing the appropriateness of the proposal within the Green Belt, it is material that the development would be within the context of a small industrial estate and integral to existing waste transfer use, on a previously developed site. In my opinion, it would not have any greater material impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the previous internal arrangement. Therefore, in my opinion, the proposal would not constitute inappropriate development by virtue of para.89 of the NPPF. It does not therefore need to be referred to the Secretary of State as a Departure from the Development Plan should members accept my recommendation. The principle of the development of this site was established and agreed under DA/10/1232. I am of the opinion that the new trommel and picking station, and netting would not materially impact further upon the openness of the MGB.

Case of Need

36. There is an acknowledged general case of need within the context of the KWLP 'saved' Policy W6 (need considerations), for increases in the level and efficiency of waste separation and recycling. That is especially the case at established sites with existing capacity and potential for such improvements. Easy Load Ltd is conveniently located within range of the urban areas of Dartford, Gravesham and Bexley, with ready access to the primary road network. The operators have a defined catchment area which has been serviced since 1986 by the current permitted waste transfer station and since 1996 by the current owners. There is an evident case of need, which is potentially able

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to be met in a more sustainable way by enhancing the waste management operations within the site. The applicants state that the proposals, including the new trommel, would enable recovery rates of up to 70% of material for recycling, whereas only 30/40% was recoverable under the previous operations. The increase in recycling proportions, and reduction in material sent to landfill, is in line with current government guidance within the Waste Strategy, PPS10 and the relevant parts of the development plan.

Suitability of the Location

37. Kent Waste Local Plan (KWLP) Policy W9 sets general criteria for assessing the suitability of waste separation and transfer stations within their surrounding site contexts. In my opinion the suitability of this location and site has been agreed under successive planning permissions, and the principle of this particular development was established under DA/10/1232. The access to the main road network, and location within the context of other waste and industrial uses, remain unchanged by the current proposal.
38. The revised proposal contains a different model of trommel, which is approx 1m higher, and 30m longer than the specifications within the original proposal. The applicant has proposed to install netting to the top of the fence to aid in screening the trommel to the north. The netting would not provide further mitigation for noise or air quality. However, development on the FM Conway site partially restricts views into the Easy Load site from the main vantage points located to the north of the site – on top of the earth bund, and from the entry road to the housing estate. The trommel would be visible from these locations, however views are interrupted by activity on the Conway's site, and it would be viewed in the context of the existing visual envelope of the industrial uses on Rochester Way. Therefore, in my opinion, the visual impact of the trommel would not be overriding to warrant refusal on the grounds of the suitability of the location.

Amenity Impacts and Available Safeguarding Measures

39. Kent Waste Local Plan saved Policy W18 requires the application to be assessed against the means of control of noise, dust, odour and any related emissions, in respect of the potential impacts on neighbouring land uses and amenity. This would include users of the nearby KCC Civic Amenity Site, as well as residents of the Braeburn Park housing estate.
40. The proposal involves no change to the types of waste coming into the site, nor in relation to operating hours, throughput or traffic movements. Internal site changes would be involved; however the impacts of this would be limited to visual aspects discussed briefly above, and more fully in paragraph (46) below. Representations received from neighbours have raised concerns over amenity impacts however several of these appear to be related to activities other than the application site. Regardless, the impacts need to be assessed, and the applicant has submitted noise, dust and odour assessment studies.

Noise

41. The original application DA/10/1232 underwent considerable negotiation and discussion in relation to the potential noise and visual impacts of the proposal, specifically relating to the trommel machinery. The applicants were not able to confirm the specific model or specification of the trommel they would install and use, therefore their agents used indicative data and potential specifications in order to produce a noise assessment. This in turn was skewed by unauthorised use of a soil screener on site. After debate, it

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was agreed that the positioning and height of the trommel drum, in relation to the site boundary, was crucial in ensuring that noise would be unlikely to cause disruption at the nearest noise sensitive receptors. This position and the appropriate conditions were agreed at planning committee and applied within the planning consent.

42. After the development had taken place, the planning authority became aware that the trommel machinery installed exceeded the specifications used within the noise assessment. It was also higher than the boundary fencing therefore there was a risk that the noise attenuation achieved by the site boundary fencing would be compromised. In accordance with enforcement advice, the applicants were invited to resubmit the entire application in order to address the breach of the planning permission.
43. The submitted application contained the specific design and operational information for the new trommel, however the noise assessment was general and related to the recommendations of the previous assessment regarding trommel height and positioning. The agents were required to submit specific noise information relating to the model of trommel installed. As the trommel was in place and operational, it was requested that on site measurements be taken, with the methodology agreed by KCC Planning Applications Group and the County Council's noise consultants Jacobs.
44. Following submission of an updated noise assessment, Jacobs advised that they were satisfied that the operation of the trommel would meet their recommended noise condition: *"At no time during the operation of the trommel shall the noise rating level $L_{A,r,T}$, calculated in accordance with the method provided in BS4142:1997, exceed the background noise level $L_{A90,T}$ at any noise sensitive property."*
45. Neighbours have expressed concern regarding the impact of noise upon their residential amenity. I have investigated their concerns in relation to the noise report, the comments of our noise consultant, and my own site observations. In this instance, I am of the opinion that the noise concerns raised by neighbours are misdirected towards this application, due to the relatively high existing background noise levels generated by existing development, as referred to by Jacobs.
46. I am therefore of the opinion that the noise impacts of the proposed development can be sufficiently controlled by the condition suggested above, and as such not considered to be overriding. My recommendation includes the condition suggested by Jacobs.

Visual Impact

47. The primary visible element of the development is that of the proposed and more pronounced trommel. The overall development scheme re-organises the internal site layout, and therefore arguably has led to an overall improvement in the site appearance. Waste stockpiles also have the potential to create a visual impact.
48. One letter of objection raised concern about the visual impact of the proposed netting, and suggests a condition limiting stockpile heights, and also requests whether trees should be planted instead. I would point out that the Easy Load yard is only separated from the Conway's site by a 5m high fence and on this basis the suggested tree planting would not, in my opinion, be feasible. The trommel is only visible when observers are stood on top of the earth bund (created as part of the Braeburn housing estate development), and for a portion of Galloway Drive, and therefore is unlikely to be visible from within the housing estate which is also at a much lower level. It is worth noting that the trommel does not visually stand out unduly from any aspect where it is visible, as it is contained within the centre of the Rochester Way industrial area, and is

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therefore viewed within this context. The only other viewpoint is from the site access along Rochester Way, when the trommel is viewed within the context of the operational waste transfer station.

49. The earth bund which provides visual separation between Easy Load, Conways and the housing estate provides full screening of the Lee's Yard Easy Load Ltd site. This bund was put in place by the developers of the housing estate, pursuant to a planning condition imposed by Bexley Council, in order to provide visual screening and noise attenuation from the activities along the Rochester Way industrial area. The development of the bund had been required to incorporate extensive planting, which would have included trees, and therefore would have provided a great deal of mitigation for the residents of the Braeburn Estate. However, the planting scheme was not particularly successful, and the bund is largely barren apart from grasses and thistles. Notwithstanding this, the planting would have provided mitigation for the commercial land uses, but it is of note that the application site is located to the rear of other commercial premises within the industrial estate.

Air Quality

50. Concern has been raised about the impact of the proposed development on air quality, particularly from dust and odour. Neighbours are concerned that dust from the site would migrate carried on the wind towards their properties. The applicant undertook assessments which concluded that the current practices at the waste transfer station have not resulted in any justified dust and odour complaint..
51. The proposed layout of the site incorporates dust suppression measures with the use of water sprinklers. Additional sprinklers are also proposed, which in my view would mitigate any unacceptable impacts from dust.
52. Concerns were raised by a resident that an increase in the level of activity on the site could raise the risk of odour. The level of activity and sources of waste are not proposed to be amended by this proposal – levels of throughput, and waste sources are stated to be unchanged. Continuous good practice and current environmental controls required of the site are considered sufficient to alleviate these risks. The site is operated under an environmental permit and, amongst other matters, waste that enters the site, is required to be removed within 48 hours. This reduces the risk of putrescible materials degrading and releasing odour.
53. The County Council's technical consultees advised that *'taking into consideration that the nearest residential properties are 160m away from the waste facilities, it is considered that no significant dust and odour impacts are expected. Mitigation and good practice measures would keep dust and of odour emissions at minimum levels'*. The mitigation methods proposed, and air quality issues, were considered fully during the determination of the previous application (DA/10/1232). Having regard to the advice from Jacobs, the alternative trommel would not impact further upon these considerations, and it is worth noting that the new model trommel incorporates an internal dust suppression sprinkler system.

Highways

54. Residents have expressed concerns relating to the impact on highway safety arising from increasing levels of activity along the Rochester Way industrial area. In particular, concern relates to the danger of HGVs turning at the junction with Swan Lane.

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55. As discussed above, there would be no increase in the measurable intensity of the use of the site as previously considered. Hours of operation, waste types, vehicle movements and level of throughput are all proposed to be unchanged. Consequently there would be no material change to the impacts of the site use on the highway network. I consider that the conditions imposed on DA/10/1232, relating to site access, throughput, vehicle movements and hours of operation, if repeated would remain are sufficient to control highways impacts.

Litter

56. The activities on site allow for a mixture of wastes, therefore it is likely that light materials such as paper and plastics could be scattered by wind. I therefore recommend that a condition be attached requiring steps be taken to minimise litter spreading from the site

Conclusion

57. In conclusion, I consider that the proposed revisions to the trommel arrangements and fence netting are acceptable in planning terms. The revised arrangement consolidates a significant increase in the rates of waste recovery and a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill, therefore according with principles of Sustainable Development, PPS10 and the Waste Strategy. The selection of the new trommel represents a natural step in the progression of improvements within the site, and serves to increase efficiency above that provided within the original planning permission.

58. Amenity impact concerns have been raised by residents, however these should be viewed in the context that the proposed operational changes to the site would be internal. There would be no change to the waste stream handled at the site, nor any increase in hours of operation, throughput, or traffic movements. The proposed scheme in my view would involved no new overriding amenity impacts by virtue of visual intrusion, noise, dust, odour or related traffic-induced disturbance and emissions. The technical assessments submitted with the application have been reviewed by Jacobs Consultants and no objections raised.

59. The proposal is substantially identical to DA/10/1232 in terms of amenity impacts, with the only difference being a different model of trommel and additional netting. In my opinion the additional height and alternative specification does not give rise to noise, visual or other amenity concerns which would warrant refusal of the application. Impacts of the proposed development would be controlled through appropriate planning conditions and Environment Agency Permitting controls. On balance, I conclude that the development is in accordance with the development plan, and contributes sustainability benefits which weigh in favour of the proposal, with sufficient controls available to minimise amenity impacts.

Recommendation

60. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED subject to conditions:

- The standard time condition for implementation;
- The development to be completed in accordance with the approved plans, and scheme as submitted, and any subsequent approved details including a single site access (with emergency access) and the footprint of the proposed waste stockpiles.

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- Restriction of waste types, hours of operation, throughput, and traffic movements to the level of those already permitted on site.
- The Trommel and picking station to be a fixed specification and location, including precise heights of this and associated fencing and stand-off distances.
- Stockpile heights to be no greater than the 5m above ground level.
- Operational safeguarding measures to control noise, dust, odour, related emissions, surface run-off and drainage, litter control, light pollution and mud and debris on the road.
- Remediation measures to handle any unsuspected site contamination issues that may arise during the carrying out of the development.

Case officer – Jeff Dummett

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Background documents - See section heading
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