

Item C2

Application to extend the hours of operation permitted under planning permission reference AS/12/813 to allow for the transportation of waste to and from the site at the beginning and the end of each day at Ashford Waste Transfer Station, Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, Brunswick Road, Ashford – AS/17/243 (KCC/AS/0045/2017)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 13 September 2017.

Application by Biffa Waste Services to extend the hours of operation permitted under planning permission reference AS/12/813 to allow for the transportation of waste to and from the site at the beginning and the end of each day at Ashford Waste Transfer Station, Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, Brunswick Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1EL – AS/17/243 (KCC/AS/0045/2017).

Recommendation: Permission be granted, subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr P. Bartlett

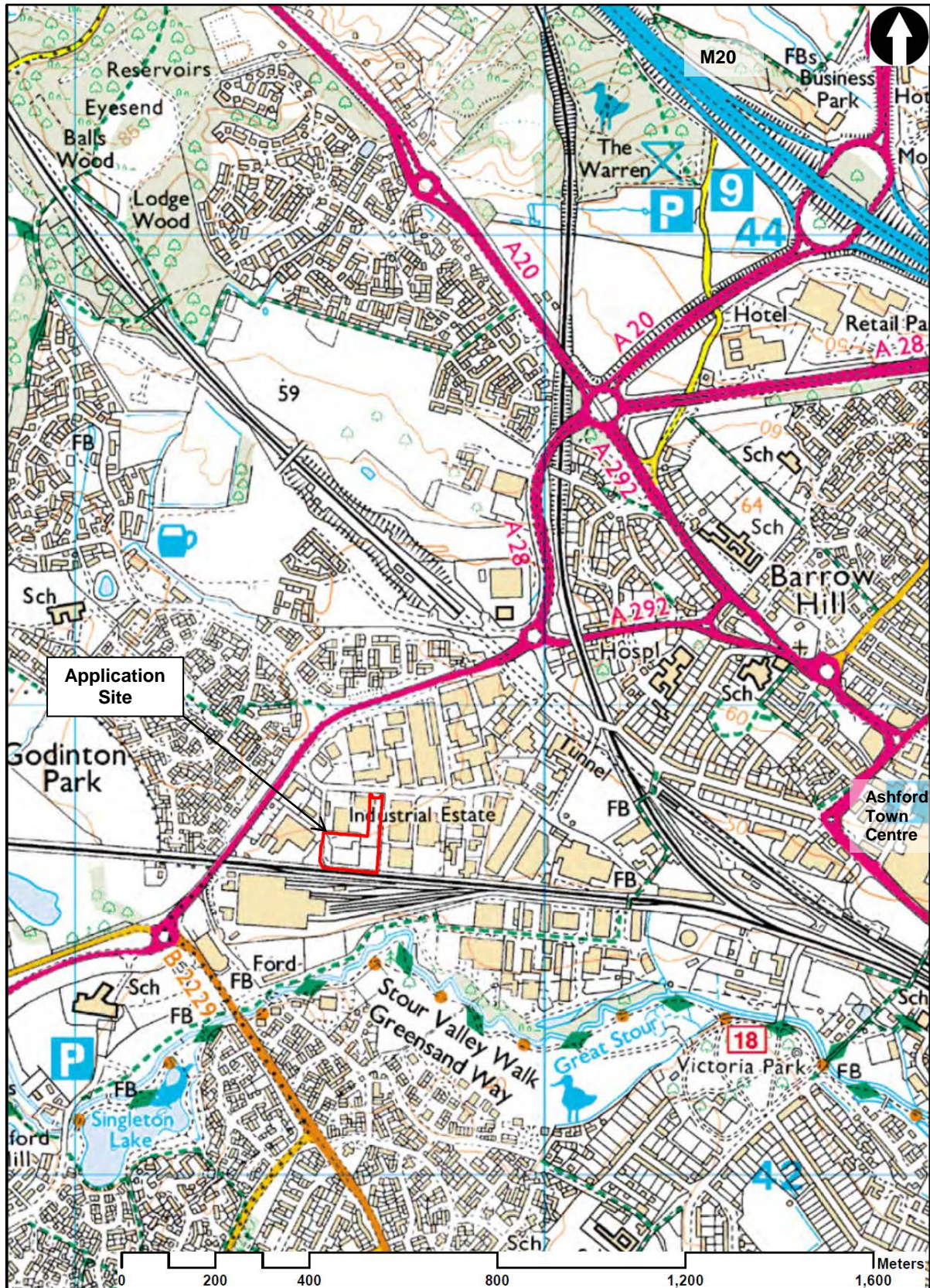
Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. The application site forms the Ashford Waste Transfer Station (WTS) and Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) located within the Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, Brunswick Road, Ashford. The industrial estate is approximately 1km west of Ashford Town Centre and 1.5km south-west of junction 9 of the M20. The application site comprises the HWRC and dedicated public access to the north, with the WTS to the south. The WTS includes a waste transfer building and admin building with a separate commercial access and weighbridge parallel with the eastern boundary.
2. The application site as a whole lies to the south of Brunswick Road, which forms the main spine road serving the industrial estate. Chart Road (A28) comprises the primary access route to Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, providing direct links to the M20 and the surrounding highway network. There are three main access points into the estate leading off Chart Road, via Brunswick Road, Hilton Road and Carlton Road (off the Chart Road / Templer Way Roundabout).
3. Buildings and other industrial uses within the industrial estate surround the site to the north, east and west. The railway line between Ashford and Tonbridge passes immediately to the south. A large rail depot is positioned on the far side of the railway lines to the south-west. The surrounding land uses include (amongst others): light engineering operations; warehouse / storage facilities; vehicle depots; vehicle showrooms; trade suppliers; other commercial / industrial activities; and other waste management facilities. Further industrial uses are located beyond the railway to the south east on Leacon Road.

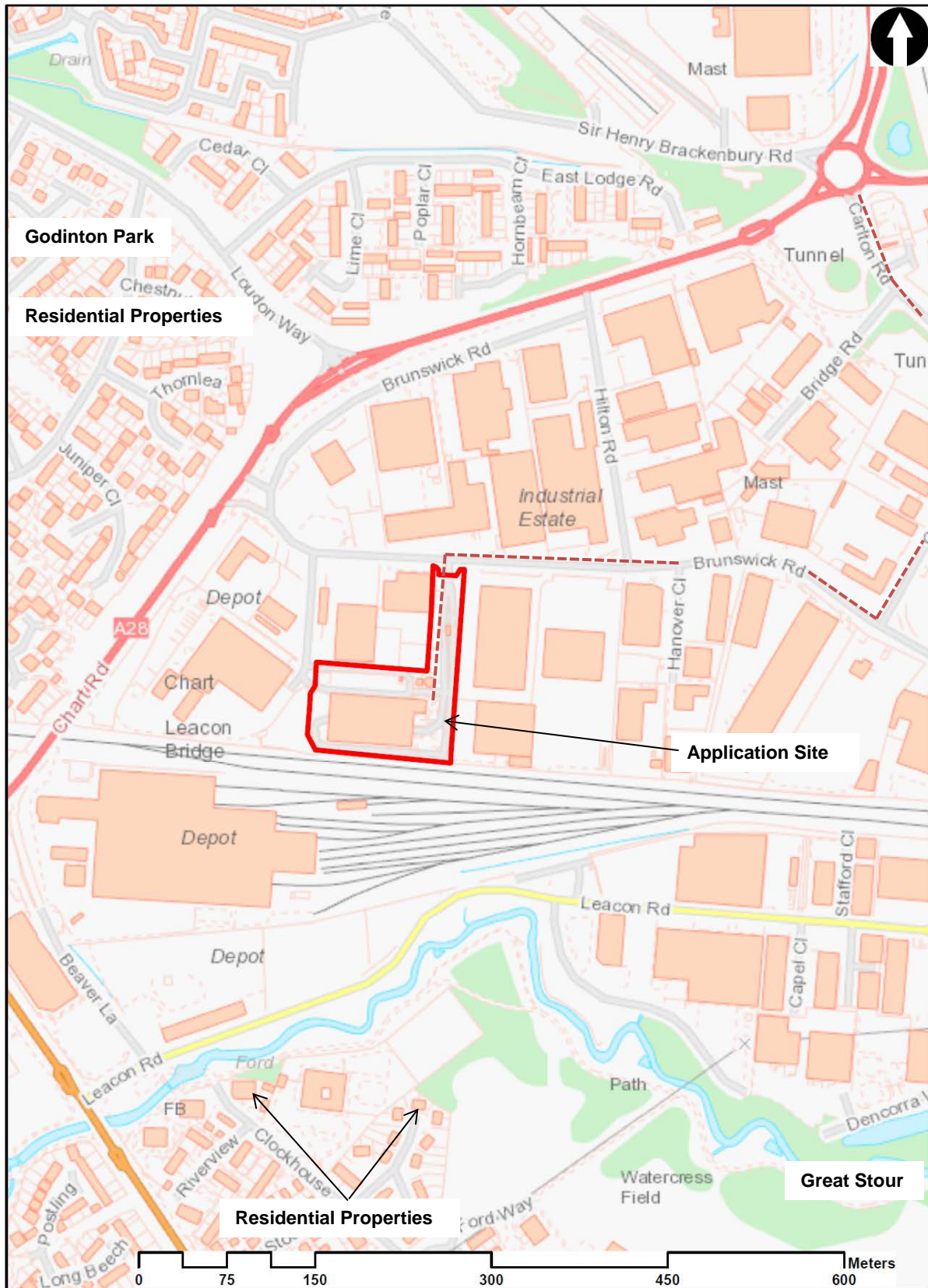
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General Location Plan



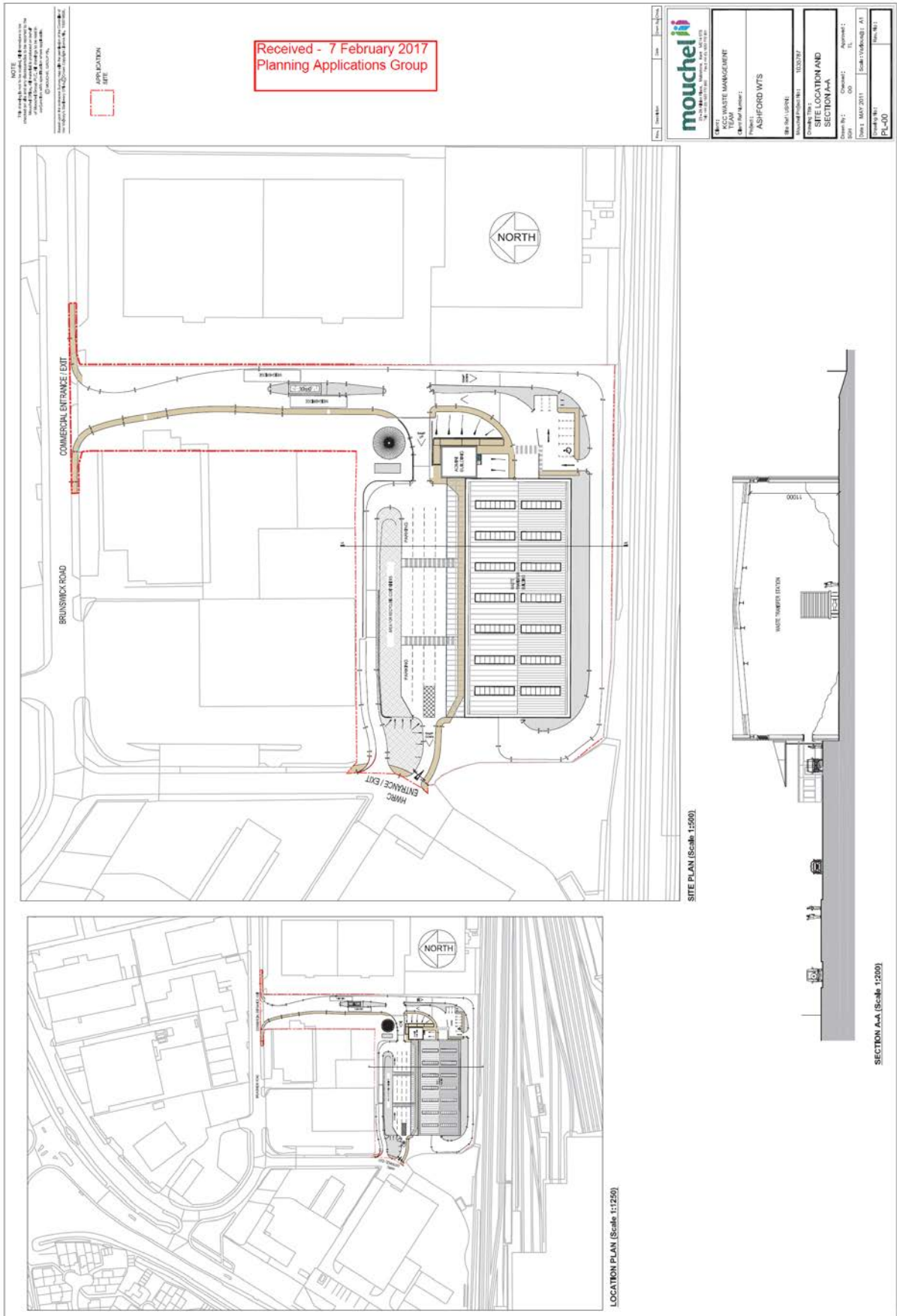
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Location Plan



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Site Layout Plan



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4. The nearest residential properties are located beyond the surrounding industrial estate within Godinton Park, approximately 180m to the north and west on the far side of Chart Road (A28). Further residential properties are located approximately 280m to the south beyond the railway and depot and 580m to the north-east on the far side of the industrial estate. Please see location plan(s) attached.
5. The application site is located within the confines of the urban area as defined by the Ashford Local Plan Proposals Map. Policy CSW16 of Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) safeguards existing waste management facilities. The site overlies a Minor Aquifer and is identified by the Environment Agency as within a Groundwater Vulnerability Zone. There are no other relevant site specific designations, although more general Development Plan policies are set out in the policy section below.

Background and Recent Site History

6. The application site was originally permitted as a HWRC in 1985 (under reference AS/85/69). This facility was modified and upgraded a number of times over the intervening years.
7. Planning permission (AS/11/981) was granted by the Planning Applications Committee on 16 April 2012 to redevelopment the existing HWRC to provide enhanced facilities and revised internal layout, construction of administrative building and a new waste transfer station with independent vehicular access and weighbridge. The waste transfer station's principle function is to handle kerbside waste collections from the local area before it is bulked up with waste from the HWRC for onward transportation to suitable processing facilities.
8. Planning permission (AS/12/813) was granted on 5 September 2012 to vary conditions 4 and 17 of planning permission AS/11/981 to allow a 0.5m reduction in permitted ground levels across the site, as well as changes to the permitted site layout and building design. This permission was subsequently implemented.
9. Planning permission AS/12/813 (which forms the base permission being varied) was granted subject to 36 conditions, including those relating to:
 - highway improvements to the nearby junction between Brunswick Road and Chart Road;
 - the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted plans and any approved pursuant to the conditions;
 - implementation of an approved foul and surface water drainage;
 - implementation of an approved external lighting scheme;
 - implementation of an approved site waste management plan (including dust and odour controls);
 - controls on the new access to ensure HGVs enter and leave the site to the north-east;
 - controls on the total combined waste throughput (to a maximum of 100,000tpa);
 - controls on the overall number of HGV movements to 120 (60 In/60 Out) each day;

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- all HGVs attending site to follow an agreed routing strategy (through the industrial estate to the north-east, accessing the A28 (Chart Road) via the roundabout at the junction of Carlton Road, Chart Road and Templer Way – see location plan);
 - all waste associated with the Transfer Station to be loaded, unloaded, sorted and stored within the building;
 - all biodegradable waste shall be removed within 48 hours of arrival on site;
 - with exception of 30 minutes site preparation before and after, controls on the hours of operation for WTS to 0700 to 1630 hours Mon to Fri and 0700 to 1300 hours Sat;
 - with exception of 30 minutes site preparation before and after, controls on the hours of operation for HWRC 0800 to 1630 Mon to Sat and 0900 to 1600 Sun / Bank Holidays;
 - controls on the noise to ensure the rating noise level for the site does not exceed background noise at the nearest residential property; and
 - HGV's leaving the site shall be sheeted or netted.
10. The following permissions have since been granted by the County Planning Authority for minor changes to planning permission AS/12/813:
- AS/13/839 for the temporary modification of condition (26) of planning permission AS/12/813 up until 20 September 2013 to allow the hours of working for the WTS only to be extended to between 0700 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday and 0700 to 1300 hours on Saturdays was granted permission on 4 September 2013.
 - AS/14/725 for the proposed relaxation of condition (26) of planning permission AS/12/813 to allow the hours of working for the WTS only to be extended to run from 0900 to 1600 hours on Sundays between 1st April to 30th September and to allow no more than a maximum of 3 deliveries (6 movements) during each extended period was granted permission on 23 July 2014.
 - AS/16/1819 for Section 73 application for the temporary modification of condition (26) of planning permission AS/12/813 to permit hours of working for the WTS (only) from 07:00 to 17:00 on Saturday 31 December 2016, Saturday 7 January 2017 and Saturday 14 January 2017 was granted permission on 4 January 2017.

Proposal

11. The application is being made by Biffa Waste Services for a proposed extension to the hours of operation permitted under planning permission reference AS/12/813 (as amended) to allow for the transportation of waste to and from the WTS at the beginning and the end of each day. No changes are proposed to the hours of the HWRC.
12. Condition (26) of AS/12/813 restricts activities within the WTS and associated vehicle movements to 0700 to 1630 hours Monday to Friday, 0700 to 1300 hours Saturdays with preparation of the site by staff 30 minutes before and after the hours of use. Permission AS/14/725 varies the above hours to allow the WTS to open on Sundays from 0900 to 1600 hours Sundays between 1st April and 30th September (with no more than a total of 6 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements (3 in / 3 out)).

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13. The application proposes to vary these hours to extend the start and finish times each day. This variation is being sought to accommodate deliveries from Canterbury and New Romney's HWRCs during the afternoons and at weekends as these facilities are open for longer hours than the Ashford facility. The WTS accepts and bulks up waste from these outlying sites alongside Ashford's waste for onward transportation. The extended morning hours would also provide extra time at the start of the day to bulk up the previous days waste / recycled materials and load it onto HGVs for onward transportation when the Ashford HWRC and WTS are closed to the public and commercial / kerbside collection vehicles.
14. The application proposes the following hours:
 - 0500 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday
 - 0600 to 1800 hours Saturdays; and
 - 0700 to 1730 hours Sundays.
15. During the extended morning hours (0500 to 0700 hours weekdays and 0600 to 0700 hours on Saturdays) the application states that the site would only be used for the loading of articulated vehicles (artics) with bulked waste for onward transportation. No waste deliveries would be accepted during this time. Each artic takes 20 minutes to load and during this time the WTS has to be closed to deliveries for health and safety reasons. If the artic loading takes place during the normal working day it can lead to kerbside collection vehicles waiting to deliver their loads, creating logistical problems and the potential for vehicles to queue on the public highway. On Monday to Friday the extra morning hours would be used to load 6 artics, 3 of which are parked on site overnight with the other 3 arriving after 0600 hours. All 6 artics would leave between 0600 and 0700 hours when the weighbridge opens. During the Sunday mornings a small number of deliveries from the outlying HWRCs are anticipated.
16. The application states that all other conditions imposed on permission AS/12/813 (as amended) would remain in force, including:
 - all waste associated with the WTS shall be loaded, unloaded, stored and sorted within the building whilst on site;
 - the roller shutter doors to the waste transfer building shall remain closed at all times except when vehicles are entering and leaving;
 - the rating noise level from the development at residential properties shall not exceed background levels;
 - no more than a combined total of 120 HGV movements (60in / 60out) in any one day; and
 - all HGVs shall enter and leave the site to the east in accordance with the agreed routing strategy.
17. In addition to the existing conditions the application proposes further controls, including:
 - no more than 9 HGV movements (3 in and 6 out) between 0600-0700 Monday to Friday;
 - no more than 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 0600-0700 Saturdays;
 - no more than 10 HGV movements (5 in and 5 out) between 0700-0900 Sundays; and

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- all plant on site shall be fitted with broadband (white noise) reverse alarms in place of tonal alarms.
18. During the extended afternoon hours and additional hours on Saturdays and Sundays the site would accept waste from Canterbury and New Romney's HWRCs to be bulked up. As indicated above, the applicant states that these sites have longer permitted opening times than the Ashford site potentially causing operational and logistical problems in handling local waste streams.
 19. The application proposes the following additional controls during the extended afternoon hours:
 - no more than 14 HGV movements (7 in and 7 out) between 1630 and 1800 Monday to Friday;
 - no more than 24 HGV movements (12 in and 12 out) between 1300 and 1800 Saturdays; and
 - no more than 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 1600 and 1730 Sundays.
 20. The above restrictions on HGV movements would all be accommodated within the agreed combined total number of HGV movements for the site of a maximum of 120 (60 in / 60 out) in any one day, such that no increase in HGV movements is proposed.
 21. Following initial consultee responses, the applicant provided an Acoustic Assessment covering the proposed extended hours of operation. This included noise modelling in the context of the surrounding land uses and background levels that demonstrates that the proposed operations would continue to comply with the noise controls imposed on the base permission (i.e. the rating noise level for the site would not exceed background noise at the nearest residential property). This information was subsequently sent to consultees on 4 July 2017 and the consultation section below reflects the most recent replies.

Planning Policy

22. The Government and Development Plan Policies summarised below are most relevant to the consideration of this application:
23. **National Planning Policies** – the most relevant National Planning Policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012), the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW). National Planning Policy and Guidance are material planning considerations.
24. **Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) (Kent MWLP)** Policies: CSW 1 (Sustainable Development), CSW 2 (Waste Hierarchy), Policy CSW 3 (Waste Reduction), CSW 4 (Strategy for Waste Management Capacity), CSW 7 (Waste Management for Non-hazardous Waste), CSW16 (Safeguarding of Existing Waste Management Facilities), DM 1 (Sustainable Design), DM 11 (Health and Amenity), DM 12 (Cumulative Impact), DM 13 (Transportation of Minerals and Waste), DM 15 (Safeguarding of Transportation Infrastructure) and DM 20 (Ancillary Development).

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25. **Ashford Borough Local Plan (2000) (Ashford LP)** Saved Policy: Proposals Map and Policies: ET7 (Bad Neighbour Developments) and CF9 (Waste Recycling).
26. **Ashford Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (2008) (Ashford CS)** Policies: CS1 (Guiding Principles) CS15 (Transport) and CS18 (Community Needs).
27. **Draft Ashford Local Plan to 2030 (2016) (Draft Ashford LP)** Policies: SP1 (Strategic Objectives) and TRA9 (Planning for HGV Movements).

Consultations

28. **Ashford Borough Council:** raise no objection, subject to the replacement of tonal reversing alarms with white noise / broadband alarms on all vehicles and all existing conditions being carried over into any new permission to secure existing safeguards (including: roller shutter doors to remain closed when not in use; with exception of HWRC all waste to be loaded, unloaded, sorted and stored within the building; and noise to not exceed existing background noise levels at residential properties).

The Borough Council initially raised a holding objection subject to receipt of an updated noise assessment demonstrating the potential noise impacts during the proposed extended hours. Following receipt of an acoustic report, and further consultation with the local Environmental Health Officer, the Borough Council updated its views as set out above.

29. **Environment Agency:** raise no objection. States that the proposed changes to site activities would require an update to the Environmental Permit.
30. **Network Rail:** raise no objection.
31. **Kent County Council Highways and Transportation:** raise no objection on highways grounds, subject to retention of the existing control on maximum HGV movements to 120 each day (60in / 60out) and further controls on the number of movements between 1630 and 1800 hours to no more than 14 HGV movements (7in / 7out) (as proposed within the application). The additional controls are proposed because HGV movements would have the potential to extend into the afternoon peak travel times, which could impact on the A28 Chart Road without suitable controls in place.

Local Member

32. The local County Member for Ashford Central, Mr P. Bartlett was notified of the application on 4 July 2017.
33. Comments received from Mr Bartlett read as follows:

“This plant is very near to a well built up residential area and extending the hours as suggested would create considerable disruption to residents because of the noise and dust. It is at odds with the operating of other businesses nearby who do not operate with the hours sought by the operators of the plant”.

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Publicity

34. The application was publicised by the posting of a site notice, an advertisement in a local newspaper, and the individual notification of 10 surrounding properties.

Representations

35. In response to the publicity, 2 letters of representation from local Borough Councillors have been received. The key points / comments raised can be summarised as follows:
- Objection / concern about the potential for public nuisance / detriment to local amenities given the sites proximity to residential development;
 - Concern about the extended hours being proposed, particularly 0500 start on weekdays and the extensive hours of use at the weekend; and
 - Suggests granting temporary permission so that the impact could be reviewed in 3 months.
36. The Borough Councillors were sent details of the noise assessment prepared in response to the above comments. No further comments have been received in reply to the additional supporting information.

Discussion

37. Planning application AS/17/243 is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee as a result of concerns raised by the local County Member and two letters received from local District Members raising concerns about the potential for adverse amenity impacts in terms of noise and dust. No other objections have been received in response to the statutory consultations and publicity carried out in connection with the application.
38. 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. The proposals therefore need to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Policy and Guidance and other material planning considerations including those arising from consultation and publicity.
39. The key determining considerations in this particular cases can be addressed under the following headings:
- Principle of the development;
 - Amenity Considerations (including noise and dust); and
 - Highways and Transportation;

Principle of the development

40. The application site benefits from a number of planning permissions for waste management uses, including AS/12/813 for the recent development of WTS and HWRC. Given the extant waste permissions the site is safeguarded under policy

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CSW16 of the Kent MWLP, which highlights the importance of the current stock of waste management facilities in maintaining net self-sufficiency within the County. This facility in particular forms an integral part of the municipal waste strategy for local waste streams, serving the community directly by handling kerbside collections and household waste. Policy CF9 of the Ashford LP provides support for the continued operation of the WTS / HWRC and Draft Ashford LP Policy CS1 encourages the sustainable use of existing infrastructure.

41. The NPPW supports the delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including the provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy. National Policy seeks to ensure that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognising the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities, including taking more responsibility for local waste streams in line with the proximity principle. The NPPW, alongside Policy CSW6 of the Kent MWLP, supports the location of waste management facilities within or adjacent to existing waste management operations and / or industrial uses. Therefore, proposals for waste management facilities or changes to existing facilities within Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate would in principle be viewed favourably provided they are consistent with other development plan policies and relevant criteria.
42. The proposal would assist in the sustainable management of municipal waste by helping to drive local waste management up the waste hierarchy. The increased flexibility of the use of an existing facility would allow better integration and the bulking up and transfer of similar materials for onward transportation to suitable management and recycling facilities. This would reduce the number of vehicle movements needed to transport the material onwards and would improve the efficiency of the operations. I consider that both national planning policy and the development plan establish support for the proposed development in principle, subject to the changes being acceptable in terms of local amenity and highway impacts. These points are considered further under individual issues as set out below.

Local Amenity (Including Noise and Dust)

43. The NPPF states (amongst other things) that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the 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 air or noise pollution. Paragraph 122 states that in making planning decisions local authorities should focus on whether the development itself is an acceptable use of land, and the impact of the use, rather than the control of processes or emissions themselves where these are subject to approval under pollution control regimes (*the application site is subject to an Environmental Permit*). Paragraph 123 states that planning decisions should aim to avoid noise from new development giving rise to significant adverse effects on health and quality of life and mitigate and reduce to a minimum other adverse impacts arising from noise, including through the use of conditions. Appendix B of the NPPW requires consideration be given to the proximity of sensitive receptors and the extent to which adverse emissions (including noise and dust) can be controlled through the use of appropriate and well-maintained and managed equipment and vehicles.

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44. Policy DM1 of the Kent MWLP states that waste management development should be designed to ensure that it gives rise to no significant adverse impacts on the environment or communities. Policy DM11 states that waste development will be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it is unlikely to generate significant adverse impacts from noise, dust, vibration, odour, emissions, illumination, visual intrusion, traffic or exposure to health risks and associated damage to the qualities of life and wellbeing of communities and the environment. Policy ET7 of the Ashford LP seeks development that would have no significant impact on the visual, environmental or residential amenities of the neighbourhood.
45. Concerns have been received from two local Councillors and a County Councillor about the potential for adverse local amenity impacts from noise and dust as a result of the proposed changes to the hours of use. In response to these concerns and initial comments from Ashford Borough Council, the applicant prepared an acoustic assessment in support of the proposed development, amplifying the assessments carried out when the existing operations were permitted in September 2012.
46. The proposed development could have the potential to impact on local amenities as it would extend the permitted hours of operation by an hour and a half on weekday mornings and afternoons, five hours on Saturday afternoons and an hour and a half on Sunday mornings. The changes to the hours of use should be considered in the context of the permitted use, the surrounding industrial estate (which include existing operations with similar and/or unrestricted hours of use), the adjacent railway line and rail depot, the surrounding road network (including A28 Chart Road) and residential developments. The closest residential properties are approximately 180m to the north and west on the far side of Chart Road (A28), 280m to the south beyond the railway line, depot and Leacon Road and 580m to the north-east of the far side of the Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate and the main line railway.
47. The extant permissions for the site have established that use of the facilities 7 days a week is acceptable with members of the public using the HWRC every day.
48. In assessing the potential impact of the extended hours it should be noted that the application does not propose to change the nature or intensity of the use and would only provide for the loading / dispatch of waste materials and the delivery / unloading of materials within the WTS during the additional periods. The application site is already subject to a number of modern conditions under the extant permissions that seek to limit the potential impact on the surrounding environment (as set out above). These include noise limits and restriction of waste handling operations to within the waste transfer building. The containment of unloading, loading, storing and sorting of waste within the building reduces the potential impacts on the surrounding environment. The established controls on the maximum number of HGV movements (120 each day (60in / 60out)) and an established routing strategy for all HGVs attending site further limit the potential impacts. The routing strategy directs HGV traffic through the industrial estate to the north-east guiding movements away from the closest residential properties. The majority of other industrial uses within the estate are unlikely to be subject to the same level of control.
49. The operation of the existing WTS and HWRC has continued for a number of years without generating any material problems or concerns regarding noise or dust. The site is surrounded by similar industrial uses, which in themselves have the potential to

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generate noise and dust. The changes proposed to the WTS would not alter the nature or extent of the operations taking place (only the timing) and as such the development is unlikely to result in a change to the existing dust impacts resulting from the site. The extant planning permission includes a condition ensuring adherence with an agreed dust management strategy. This strategy includes measures to minimise storage on site, the efficient movement of waste on to an appropriate treatment facility (reducing the potential for dust and odour), regular inspection and maintenance, closure of roller shutter doors, dampening down of material in wind conditions, frequent sweeping of surfaces, general housekeeping, 10mph speed limit and the installation of a dust and odour suppression system within the building. The management of dust (amongst other emissions from site) is also controlled by the Environmental Permit for the waste operations, issued and monitored by the Environment Agency.

50. In considering the noise impacts, the earlier starts may have more potential to result in an increased impact as background noise levels may be lower than those assessed when the original application was considered. The changes during the afternoon and at weekends are less likely to have an unacceptable impact as background noise levels will be higher. The acoustic assessment received with the application demonstrates that for the hours proposed, including during the early mornings, the proposed operations would not breach the permitted noise controls. The assessment concludes that subject to an agreed change to broadband reversing alarms for mobile plant used on site, noise from the operations during the mornings would still be 1dB below background noise levels at the closest residential properties. This would comply with the noise condition imposed on the extant permission protecting local amenities. Residential properties are located some distance from the application site with other industrial development, main roads and in the case of properties to the south and north-east railway lines in the intervening space that in themselves would add to background noise levels during the time periods proposed.
51. In addition to the noise limits on the operations, the applicant is proposing additional controls on the activities that could take place outside the existing hours, should permission were to be granted. In addition to the re-imposition of existing conditions, the additional restrictions would include no HGV departures before 0600 hours and a restriction on the maximum number of HGV movements during the extended hours, both in the morning and afternoon (as set out above). It should be noted that the extended use being proposed only relates to the WTS and that the operation of the HWRC would remain unchanged.
52. Ashford Borough Council's Environmental Health Officer has considered the application, including the additional acoustic assessment received, and subsequently concluded that the development would not have an unacceptable impact, subject to the replacement of tonal reversing alarms with the proposed broadband (white noise) alarms for all vehicles using the site. The Borough Council's comments recommend that all other conditions on the extant planning permission are carried forward into any new permission, including existing safeguards relating to the roller shutter doors to remain closed when not in use; with exception of HWRC all waste to be loaded, unloaded, sorted and stored within the building; and noise to not exceed existing background noise levels at residential properties. The applicant has agreed to changes to the reversing alarms on site based plant, however cannot guarantee this for all HGVs attending site due to differing sub-contractors. The comments received

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draw attention to the layout of the WTS (please see drawing above), which is designed to allow HGVs to be driven in a forward gear around the site reducing the need to reverse. It is the mobile plant manoeuvring bulked waste into the transporters that will reverse frequently and it is this plant / equipment that would be converted to use broadband (white noise) alarms.

53. The Environment Agency (responsible for regulating operations at the site under an existing environmental permit) raises no objection to the proposed development. The Agency comments that Environmental Management System for the site approved under the environmental permit would need to be updated and amended to reflect the changes proposed.
54. The site benefits from an odour suppression system and other controls that seek to limit any impact on the surrounding land uses. The current application would have no direct impacts on odour considerations, other than by providing an opportunity to ensure material is not retained on site for any length of time by facilitating its export. The potential reduction in the need to close the site to load artics (as is the current practice) would also reduce the chance of refuse collection vehicles queuing outside the building, which can add to localised odour. Odour is one of the emissions that is further controlled and monitored under the Environmental Permit.
55. The changes to the hours could also have a bearing on the operation of the external lighting at the site. The lighting system has previously been approved by the County Planning Authority under permission AS/12/813 and is designed to minimise unnecessary light spill. As such, I am content that the changes to the hours of use would have no significant amenity impacts as a result of the lighting installed on site.
56. Notwithstanding the concerns expressed by the local Members, subject to the conditions discussed, I am satisfied that there would be no significant impact on local amenity as a result of the proposed changes to the timing of operations. The site is located within a suitable area of Ashford, within an established industrial estate and surrounded by similar activities with good access to key transport infrastructure. The existing operations have continued on site without significant concerns for a number of years and I am content that through the imposition of the conditions recommended above and below (and the controls included under the environmental permitting regime) there would be adequate controls in place to ensure that the site would not have an unacceptable impact on local amenities if permission were to be granted. Given the above there would be no justification in imposing a temporary consent as suggested by a local District Member above. This would be consistent with the advice provided by the Borough Council's Environmental Health Officer and the Environment Agency. I therefore consider that, subject to the conditions recommended above and below, the development would accord with the requirements of the NPPF, NPPW and the development plan policies referred to above in respect of local amenity considerations.

Highways and transportation

57. The NPPW states that planning authorities should consider the capacity of existing and potential transport infrastructure to support the sustainable movement of waste, seeking when practicable and beneficial to use modes other than road transport. This

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includes considering the suitability of the road network and the extent to which access would require reliance on local roads.

58. Policy DM13 of the Kent MWLP and Policy CS15 of the Ashford CS require development to minimise road transport movements where practicable, demonstrate that access arrangements are safe and appropriate and that traffic generated would not be detrimental to road safety and that the highway network is able to accommodate the traffic generated with no unacceptable adverse effects on the environment or local community.
59. The development of a WTS at this location has had a positive impact on the sustainable management of domestic waste in this part of the County. The facilities have helped to improve recycling rates and ensure municipal waste is bulked up for onward transportation, thereby reducing the distance material travels in smaller vehicles (minimising road transport movements). The current application does not seek to vary the permitted number of HGV movements allowed to enter and leave the site in any one day (60in / 60out). The highways implications of the original development, which establishes this control, were given careful consideration by the Planning Applications Committee at the time and this is reflected in the conditions imposed on permission AS/12/813. These conditions included improvements to the junction between Brunswick Road and Chart Road (now complete), a HGV routing agreement (through the industrial estate to the roundabout between Chart Road and Templer Way) and the limit on HGV movements, amongst other matters.
60. Notwithstanding the above, the proposed changes would have the potential to spread the permitted movements out across the extended operating hours being proposed. Allowing operations to take place until 1800 hours on weekdays could also result in vehicle movements during the afternoon peak travel times. Under the existing arrangements the site is closed by 1630 hours before rush hour. The applicant has confirmed that this variation is essential to enable the effective handling of the municipal / domestic waste streams.
61. The Local Highway Authority has taken this into consideration in commenting on the application and is content to raise no objection to the application on highways grounds, subject to the retention of the existing highway controls, including HGV movements limited to 120 each day (60in / 60out), along with further controls on the number of movements between 1630 and 1800 hours to no more than 14 HGV movements (7in / 7out) (as proposed within the application and set out above).
62. Taking the above into account, subject to the re-imposition of the conditions imposed on AS/12/813 and those recommended controlling HGV movements during the extended hours to the levels stated, I am satisfied that the proposed development would accord with the policies set out above and see no reason to refuse the application on highways grounds.

Conclusion

63. The application proposes a small increase in the hours of use of an existing WTS to accommodate more efficient handling of domestic and household waste streams. Specifically it would promote more efficient management of bulked waste, including waste arising from Canterbury and New Romney HWRCs which have different

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operating hours to the Ashford facility. The application site makes a positive contribution to sustainable waste management in this part of the County and the current application would enable increased efficiency and flexibility in handling local waste streams.

64. The application has attracted concerns from the local County and District Members concerning the potential for amenity impacts from noise and dust. The application site is already subject to modern controls and conditions under the extant permission that include measures imposed by the Planning Applications Committee to prevent unacceptable impacts from (amongst other matters) noise and dust. The site is also subject to an Environmental Permit, which proves stringent controls on emissions from the site. The applicant has provided an acoustic assessment (including modelling) that demonstrates that noise generated by the extended use would not exceed background levels at residential properties, even during the quieter morning periods. The application also includes proposed controls on activities and vehicle movements during the extended hours that would further serve to minimise potential impacts.
65. The statutory consultees, including the Environment Agency, Borough Council and local Environmental Health Department, have considered the information received and raise no objections to the application subject to the conditions (as recommended above and below). Taking all this into account, including the sustainable community benefits of the proposals, I am satisfied that the extended hours could be implemented at this site without causing any unacceptable harm to local amenities, the environment or the local highway network and that adequate controls could be imposed to ensure that this would continue to be the case. Subject to the re-imposition of the existing planning conditions imposed on permission AS/12/813 and those additional conditions put forward by the applicant and recommended by consultees (as set out below), I recommend that the proposal represents sustainable development and is consistent with National Planning Policy and Development Plan Policies. I therefore recommend accordingly.

Recommendation

66. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO the imposition of conditions covering (amongst other matters) the following:
- the re-imposition of all conditions previously imposed on permission AS/12/813, including those set out above (updated and amended as necessary to reflect any details approved pursuant to this planning permission);
 - Condition (26) being amended to allow operation of the Waste Transfer Station only between 0500 and 1800 hours Monday to Friday, 0600 and 1800 hours Saturdays; and 0700 and 1730 hours Sundays; and additional conditions relating to
 - no HGVs shall enter or leave the site before 0600 hours;
 - all mobile plant / equipment based on site shall be fitted with broadband (white noise) reverse alarms; and
 - additional controls on HGV movements during the extended hours to no more than:
 - 9 HGV movements (3 in and 6 out) between 0600-0700 Monday to Friday;
 - 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 0600-0700 Saturdays;
 - 10 HGV movements between 0700-0900 (5 in and 5 out) Sundays;

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- 14 HGV movements (7 in and 7 out) between 1630 and 1800 Monday to Friday;
- 24 HGV movements (12 in and 12 out) between 1300 and 1800 Saturdays; and
- 6 HGV movements (3 in and 3 out) between 1600 and 1730 Sundays.

Case Officer: James Bickle

Tel. no: 03000 413334

Background Documents: see section heading
