



<b>Application Reference:</b>	<b>P1633.24</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Veolia ES (UK) Ltd Coldharbour Lane</b>
<b>Ward</b>	<b>RAINHAM AND WENNINGTON</b>
<b>Description:</b>	<b>Extension to the operational life of the landfill and composting facilities until the end of December 2029 and restoration of the land by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2031 (Amended description).</b>
<b>Case Officer:</b>	<b>MALACHY MCGOVERN</b>
<b>Reason for Report to Committee:</b>	<b>The application is within the categories which must be referred to the Mayor of London under the Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order.</b>

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## **1 SUMMARY OF KEY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The current proposal to extend the life of the existing landfill site for a further 5 years i.e. until the end of December 2029, is necessary in order to complete the infill of the proposed landscaped mound, which requires a further 1 million cubic metres of non-hazardous waste. A further 2 years is required to restore the land to its intended form i.e. by the end of December 2031.
- 1.2 This existing operation was first granted planning permission in 1997 (having operated as a largely uncontrolled landfill site for many years) and then an extension to the period to complete the landform granted in 2012 as part of the larger waste activities on the wider site. Since then, the demand on recycling infrastructure has increased as public policy and legislation has advanced to require more sustainable use of resources and more sustainable waste management. The consequence of increased recycling and less waste going to landfill is that the anticipated timeframe for filling the existing landfill site has slipped, and an additional 5 years is required to complete the filling of the mound. The annual projected input is 200,000 cubic metres of waste which equates to 1 million cubic tonnes of waste after 5 years. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable and in line with the borough's waste management strategy and sustainability goals as well as Joint Waste Development Plan for the East London Waste Authority Boroughs.

- 1.3 The proposed scheme to complete the filling of the existing mound and to enable reprofiling and greening of the site for use as public open space would represent a notable improvement in the visual amenity of the site and would also represent a more sustainable use of the land in the long run.
- 1.4 Given the proposal is a continuation of the existing landfill operation this would not cause additional material harm to local ecology and biodiversity nor would it cause additional unacceptable adverse impact on the natural environment. The proposal is sustainable in terms of transportation and would not have undue impact on the local highway network.
- 1.5 The recommended conditions and Heads of Terms would secure future policy compliance by the applicant on the site and ensure any unacceptable development impacts are mitigated.
- 1.6 Officers consider the proposal to be acceptable, subject to direction from the Mayor for London, the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 and Section 106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and all other enabling powers to modify the obligations in the original Section 106 dated 12 July 2016 (as may be modified by any prior deeds of modification) and conditions.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Although the application is referable to the Mayor, the Mayor has confirmed by letter that the proposed development does not need to be referred back to the GLA at Stage 2 for any direction.
- 2.2 That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:
  - Prior to completion of a legal agreement to modify the Section 106 Agreement dated 12 July 2016 (as may be modified by any prior deeds of modification) to secure the following planning obligations:

### **Legal Costs, Administration and Monitoring**

The Council's legal costs associated with the preparation of the planning obligation to be paid prior to completion of the deed and irrespective of whether the deed is completed; to pay the Council's administrative costs associated with monitoring compliance with the obligation terms and monitoring fees and contribution sums to be subject to indexation from the date of completion of the deed to the date of actual payment by applying the BCIS Tendered Price Index.

### **1. Extension of Operational Life and Restoration**

- Extension of landfill and composting operations until **31 December 2029**;
- Full site restoration to be completed by **31 December 2031**.

**2. Land Transfer Option to the Council**

- Provision of land for a water sports facility, visitor centre, and associated uses;
- Location of future visitor centre to be agreed between the parties prior to transfer.

**3. Provision of Visitor Car Parking**

- Provision of visitor car parking to serve public access and the visitor centre, to be delivered in accordance with the approved Public Access Plan.

**4. Waste Input and Settlement Monitoring**

- Submission of six-monthly reports detailing waste inputs, settlement behaviour, landfill progression, and compliance with approved contours.

**5. Revised Restoration and Public Access Plan**

- Submission and approval of a new Restoration and Public Access Plan, to include:
  - Phased restoration schedule;
  - Delivery of public riverside pathways and recreational access;
  - Prioritisation of ecological and community areas.
  - Maintenance and management of the site and public access post aftercare

**6. Green Travel Plan**

- Continued implementation of the Green Travel Plan, limiting HGV movements to no more than 300 two way movements per day, and annual review of river transport alternatives.

**7. Aftercare Management**

- Delivery of aftercare obligations following restoration, with completion by **31 December 2031**.

**8. Environmental Education Facility**

- Provision and maintenance of a visitor centre or environmental education facility (the Gatehouse or alternative facility) during the Aftercare Period.

**9. Public Access and Riverside Pathways**

- Maintenance and delivery of new and existing public access routes, including the First, Second, and Third Riverside Footpaths, until the end of the Aftercare Period.

**10. Brown Land (PLA Access Protection)**

- Securing and protecting Port of London Authority (PLA) access rights over the Brown Land to facilitate river dredging and navigation rights.

**12. Yellow Land (Nature Conservation Transfer)**

- To incorporate the yellow land into the wider site including nature conservation and public access paths

**13. Blue Land (Riverside Access Rights)**

- Protection and maintenance of public rights of access over the Blue Land along riverside routes and footpaths.

#### **14. Financial Bond and Insurance**

- Provision of a financial bond to secure restoration, aftercare, and access obligations;
- Maintenance of public liability insurance for the duration of the Aftercare Period.

#### **15. Monitoring Fees and Legal Costs**

- Payment of the Council's reasonable legal costs and an annual monitoring fee of to cover the Council's compliance and enforcement functions.

2.3 That the Director of Planning is delegated authority to negotiate the legal agreement indicated above and that if not completed by the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2025 the Director of Planning is delegated authority to refuse planning permission or extend the timeframe to complete the legal agreement and grant approval.

2.4 That Director of Planning has delegated authority to issue the planning permission subject to the completion of the legal agreement and conditions to secure the following matters:

#### **Conditions:**

1. · Time Limit for Operations
2. · Approved Plans
3. · Restoration and Phasing Plan
4. · Noise Mitigation Scheme
5. · Dust and Air Quality Control
6. · Wheel Wash and Road Cleanliness
7. · Traffic Management
8. · Pest and Gull Management Plan
9. · Lighting Scheme
10. · Interim Seeding and Soil Management
11. · Soil Storage and Reuse
12. · Waste Type Restriction
13. · Unexpected Cessation of Operations
14. · Biodiversity Net Gain
15. · Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)
16. · Ecological Method Statement and Invasive Species Strategy
17. · Review and Update of CEMP and Site Management Plan
18. · Invertebrate Survey Strategy
19. · Final Landform and Surface Water Drainage Compatibility
20. · Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) Emissions Control

### **3 SITE DESCRIPTION**

3.1 The application site is approximately 177 hectares in area and is located on the northern bank on the River Thames, just southwest of Coldharbour Lane in the south of the borough. The site is approximately 700m to the west of a large wetland area called Wennington Marshes nature reserve (SSSI). Access to Coldharbour Lane, where the application site is located, is 1.3km from the A13

(Rainham Bypass), which forms part of the strategic road network, via Ferry Lane. The access road connecting the site to Coldharbour Lane is an unadopted highway. To the south west of the site is the Momentum Logistics Park (former Freightmaster Estate) and to the south is the existing Veolia Materials and Plastics recycling facility.

- 3.2 The site is not located within a conservation area, and not in close vicinity of any Listed Buildings or buildings of heritage value however is located within an Archaeological Priority Area.
- 3.3 Due to the expansive marsh area surrounding the north of the site, the nearest residential properties to the application site are located approximately 1km to the south west across the River Thames in Erith. The nearest residents in Havering to the site are on Wennington Road some 1.5km away. The public transport accessibility of the site is PTAL 0 (Worst).
- 3.4 The site is located within a Strategic Industrial Location (Local Plan Policy 19) and within the Thames Policy Area (Havering Local Plan Policy 31) and within a Flood Zone 3a (high probability of flooding).
- 3.5 The site also falls within the Havering Site Specific Site Allocations DPD reference SSA17 – London Riverside Conservation park designation, and is located within the Rainham, Aveley and West Thurrock Marshes Landscape Character Area (LCA) of the Land of the Fanns Landscape Character Assessment (2016). The site is not located on Green Belt land.

#### **4 BACKGROUND (Existing Site Operations)**

- 4.1 This planning application, submitted by Veolia ES Cleanaway (UK) Ltd, seeks permission to extend the operational life of the existing landfill and composting facilities at Rainham Landfill, located at Coldharbour Lane, Rainham. The site has previously been granted planning permission (ref. P1566.12), which extended the period for waste disposal and other waste management activities to operate until 31 December 2024, with site restoration by 31 December 2026.
- 4.2 Due to significant changes in waste management practices—specifically increased recycling rates and reduced waste generation—there remains approximately 1.085 million cubic metres of landfill void capacity at Rainham in order to achieve the required landscaped mound finish. Consequently, the applicant proposes an extension of landfill and open windrow composting operations until 31 December 2029, with final restoration completed by 31 December 2031.
- 4.3 The applicant submits that the proposed extension is necessary for ensuring sustainable management of residual non-hazardous waste, achieving approved restoration contours, and delivering comprehensive site restoration. The continued operations would facilitate strategic waste disposal capacity for London and the wider region, supporting waste management practices aligned with the waste hierarchy principles. The applicant submits that furthermore, extending landfill operations at Rainham would avoid the environmental and logistical impacts associated with developing new landfill sites elsewhere.

- 4.4 Finally, the applicant submits that if the extension to the life of the existing landfill operation is not permitted, the site risks significant environmental issues, including increased leachate production, uncontrolled gas emissions, compromised landfill stability, and substantial limitations to habitat restoration and public amenity provision. The proposal therefore aims to avoid these negative impacts and deliver enhanced biodiversity outcomes, alongside high-quality amenity space integrated into the broader London Riverside Conservation Park initiative.

## **5 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL**

- 5.1 The submitted Planning Statement describes the proposal as follows:

The proposal consists of the following composite parts:

- 1. Extension of Operational Life:**
  - Landfill operations to continue until 31 December 2029 (5 years).
  - Open windrow composting operations to continue concurrently until 31 December 2029.
- 2. Restoration Timeline:**
  - Completion of final site restoration by 31 December 2031.
- 3. Landfill Void Utilization:**
  - Use of the remaining landfill void capacity, approximately 1.085 million cubic metres, for residual non-hazardous waste disposal.
- 4. Restoration and Landscape Scheme:**
  - Achieving approved restoration contours to deliver a sustainable and stable final landform.
  - Comprehensive site restoration providing enhanced biodiversity, high-quality habitats, and public amenity space.
- 5. Environmental Safeguarding:**
  - Continued adherence to environmental controls to prevent leachate production, control landfill gas emissions, and maintain landfill stability.
- 6. Integration with Local Initiatives:**
  - Restoration to integrate with and enhance the London Riverside Conservation Park, improving local ecological connectivity and recreational amenities.

- 5.2 An Environmental Statement has also been submitted with the application and the main findings have been incorporated into the relevant planning considerations section below.

## **6 RELEVANT HISTORY**

- 6.1 P1275.96 - Deposit of refuse materials through controlled landfill provision of material recovery facilities and creation of contoured landform and restoration scheme – Approved with conditions 14<sup>th</sup> February 1997.
- 6.2 P1566.12 - Planning application for the continuation of waste inputs and operation of other waste management facilities (materials recycling facility, waste transfer station, open air composting site and associated soil plant, gas engines, leachate treatment plant, and incinerator bottom ash processing) until

2024 and re-profiling of final contours – APPROVED with conditions on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.

## **7 CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

### Rainham Veolia Landfill Pre-Application SPC meeting Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024

7.1 The following comments were made by Members of the SPC:

- To have confidence in any submission that Veolia is able to complete the landfill development in the timeframe. Reassurance about calculation, Members sought reassurance that this period of five years would be sufficient to complete landfill development.
- Question around negative effects of not completing landfill development. It was expected that the application would detail out such information.
- Wish to ensure that all safeguards as previously imposed on the permission through conditions and S106, including those in relation to pests, litter and condition of Coldharbour Lane are going to be adhered to, particularly given that there are newly completed employment uses in close proximity to the site and the continued recreational use of the area.

### Planning Application Consultation Responses:

7.2 As part of this formal planning application, public consultation took place in accordance with statutory requirements on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024. This included a total of 63 letters sent to occupiers of neighbouring properties and a press advert published in Romford Recorder and site notices displayed outside the application site.

7.3 Responses from neighbours and 2 objections were received and can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns were raised by a resident regarding odour/ smells and air quality impacts arising from ongoing landfill and composting operations.

Officer response: *The submitted Environmental Statement includes an updated Air Quality Assessment, which confirms that emissions of dust, odour and other pollutants remain within acceptable levels. Existing mitigation measures, including odour management protocols, surface capping, and composting controls, are in place and will continue to be regulated under both planning conditions and the Environmental Permit issued by the Environment Agency. No significant adverse impacts on human health or amenity are predicted, and the proposal does not involve an intensification of operations. Planning conditions can be reviewed and updated to ensure continued compliance.*

- Adverse impact on the Strategic Industrial Location (SIL) at Momentum Business Park, undermining its ability to attract tenants and deliver jobs.

Officer response: *It is acknowledged that the landfill site lies adjacent to a newly developed SIL. The planning application does not propose any intensification of*

*operations but rather allows for completion of previously approved works. The ES confirms no significant impact on adjacent land uses, and conditions can be imposed or updated to minimise any amenity effects. A Deed of Variation to the S106 will secure restoration commitments and provide certainty. The applicant has prioritised the infill and restoration of the land to the north of the Momentum Logistics Park in order to mitigate the impact see dragging ref: Restoration Phasing Plan – Drawing No. 3462-01-02*

- Ongoing breaches of planning conditions and Section 106 obligations under previous permission P1566.12, including dust, odour, wheel washing and vermin control.

*Officer response: The Council acknowledges past concerns. Through this application, conditions will be reviewed and updated to secure compliance with site management standards. Continued operation will be contingent on full compliance, with monitoring mechanisms linked to planning enforcement and the Environmental Permit.*

- Poor maintenance of Coldharbour Lane, with mud and debris affecting access and site perception.

*Officer response: The applicant has been reminded of their obligations and conditioned maintenance of Coldharbour Lane and wheel washing facilities will be re-emphasised in any approval.*

- Operations generating seagulls and vermin that negatively affect the amenity and hygiene of adjacent industrial units.

*Officer response: Additional controls will be reviewed in relation to gull and pest management and the applicant has agreed to consider further controls however the typical use of birds of prey is prohibited given the neighbouring marshes nature reserve and shooting is prohibited due to the airport flight path*

*. The existing ecological sensitivity of the area (due to SSSI proximity) requires a balanced approach, but a revised mitigation scheme can be secured by condition or legal agreement.*

- Lack of a clear restoration and aftercare phasing plan, contrary to previously approved planning conditions.

*Officer response: A restoration phasing plan and aftercare scheme will be required as a condition of approval. The absence of delivery to date will be addressed through enforceable triggers and monitoring. The final restoration deadline of 2031 will be formalised through the updated S106.*

- Absence of updated environmental documents and waste forecasting data available on the planning portal, affecting transparency and ability to fully assess impacts.



Officer response: *The objectors have been advised that a full Environmental Statement and supporting technical material are publicly available. This ensures transparency and compliance with the EIA Regulations.*

- Concerns that continued operations are harmful to public health and well-being of future employees and users of the Thames Path.

Officer response: *The ES and supporting assessments confirm no significant health risks. Odour, noise and air quality controls remain enforceable and are managed under both planning and environmental permitting regimes. The approved restoration scheme will ultimately enhance environmental quality and provide future community benefit.*

- Failure to acknowledge or mitigate proximity to newly completed commercial development, contrary to Agent of Change principles and London Plan Policy E5.

Officer response: *It is acknowledged that the site context has changed since the original 2012 permission. This application is being assessed in light of updated London Plan policies including E5 and GG3. A coordinated approach between the applicant, SIL stakeholders, and the Council is encouraged, with mitigation secured where appropriate.*

- Objection to the principle of further landfill use given the waste hierarchy and updated evidence on capacity in the draft East London Joint Waste Plan (ELJWP).

Officer response: *While landfill is at the bottom of the waste hierarchy, the proposal does not seek new landfill capacity but allows for completion of an existing, engineered cell. The Joint Waste Plan's evolving evidence base will inform future allocations but does not preclude this transitional use.*

- Calls for immediate enforcement action and cessation of operations due to perceived unlawful activity post-December 2024.

Officer response: *The Council is assessing this application as a new full planning application, not as a minor amendment or variation. The legal and planning status of operations post-2024 will be regularised through this process. Should the application be refused, appropriate enforcement options will be considered.*

## **Internal Consultees**

LBH Environmental Health (Noise & contamination) - No objections subject to conditions

LBH Business Development – No objection

LBH Regeneration – No objection

LBH Parks – No objection

LBH Environmental Health (Air quality) - No objections subject to conditions

LBH Highways - No objections subject to conditions

LBH Waste & Recycling - No objections subject to conditions

Place Services (Ecology) - No objections subject to conditions

LBH Community Safety – No objection

LBH Place Services (Landscape) - No objections subject to conditions

### **External Consultees**

East London Waste Authority – No objection

Brentwood Borough Council – No objection

Thurrock Borough Council – No objection

Historic England (GLAAS) - No objections

Environment Agency - No objections subject to conditions

Essex & Suffolk Water – No objection

Ministry of Defence Safeguarding – No objection

Natural England – No objection subject to conditions

RSPB – No objection

Port of London Authority – No objection

London Fire (LFEPA) - No objections subject to conditions

Thames Water - No objections subject to informatives

Transport For London (TFL) - No objection

Greater London Authority –No strategic issues raised – local authority can determine the application without further reference to the GLA.

## 8 RELEVANT POLICIES

8.1 The following planning policies are material considerations for assessment of the application: Government Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Relevant themes:

- Achieving sustainable development:
- Plan-making
- Decision-making
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### London Plan (2021)

Relevant policies:

- GG1 - Building strong and inclusive communities
- G1 – Green Infrastructure
- G6 – Biodiversity and access to nature
- GG2 - Making the best use of land
- GG5 – Growing a good economy
- D2 - Infrastructure requirements for sustainable densities
- D3 - Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D11 - Safety, security, and resilience to emergency
- D12 - Fire safety
- D14 – Noise
- E4 - Land for Industry, Logistics, and Services to Support London's Economic Function
- SI 1 - Improving air quality
- SI 2 - Minimising greenhouse gas emissions
- SI 3 - Energy Infrastructure
- SI 7 - Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
- SI 8 - Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency
- SI 9 - Safeguarded waste sites
- SI 12 - Flood risk management
- SI 13 - Sustainable drainage
- G5 - Urban greening
- G6 - Biodiversity and access to nature
- T1 - Strategic approach to transport
- T3 - Transport capacity, connectivity, and safeguarding

- T4 - Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
- T7 - Deliveries, servicing, and construction
- T9 - Funding transport infrastructure through planning
- DF1 - Delivery of the Plan and Planning Obligations

#### Havering Local Plan (2016–2031, adopted 2021)

##### Relevant policies:

- Policy 19 – Business Growth
- Policy 23 – Transport Connections
- Policy 27 – Landscaping
- Policy 28 – Heritage Assets
- Policy 29 – Green Infrastructure
- Policy 30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy 31 – Rivers and River Corridors
- Policy 33 – Air Quality
- Policy 34 – Managing Pollution
- Policy 35 – Waste Management
- Policy 36 – Low Carbon Design and Renewable Energy

#### Additional Relevant Guidance

#### **Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document – Adopted 2008**

##### **National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW, 2014):**

Paragraphs relating to ensuring landfill and waste proposals align with the waste hierarchy and sustainable restoration.

##### **Joint Waste Development Plan for East London (DPD, 2012):**

- 8.2 In 2012 the Council adopted the Joint Waste Development Plan, which was developed in collaboration with Barking and Dagenham, Newham, and Redbridge.
- 8.3 The purpose of the Joint Waste Plan is to set out a planning strategy for sustainable waste management which enables the adequate provision of waste management facilities (including disposal) in appropriate locations for municipal and commercial and industrial waste, having regard to the London Plan Borough level apportionment and construction, excavation and demolition and hazardous wastes.
- 8.4 The Joint Waste Plan forms part of the planning policy suite of documents for each borough.
- 8.5 The East London Waste Plan Evidence Base (2022) has been produced as the first step towards creating a new Joint Waste Plan. The relevant sections are as follows:
  - W1 – Sustainable Waste Management
  - W2 – Waste Management Capacity, Apportionment & Site Allocation

- W4 – Disposal of inert waste by landfilling
- W5 – General considerations with regard to waste proposals

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 The main planning issues raised by the application to be considered are:

- 1) Principle of Development
- 2) Landscaping
- 3) Neighbouring Amenity (Light Loss and Privacy)
- 4) Environmental Impacts (Noise, Dust & Air Quality)
- 5) Impact on the Highway network
- 6) Sustainability/ Energy
- 7) Archaeology
- 8) Ecology & Biodiversity
- 9) Flood Risk
- 10) Environmental Statement Summary
- 11) Other Issues (Health)
- 12) S106

## **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 9.2 The NPPF 2024 places a presumption in favour of sustainable development, highlighting three overarching objectives: economic, social, and environmental.
- 9.3 Although the landfill facility is established under permission ref. P1566.12, this permission expired in December 2024. Therefore, reassessment against current development plan policies and NPPF 2024 criteria is required.
- 9.4 Sustainable Development (Paragraphs 7-14): The NPPF 2024 emphasizes sustainable development. Extending the landfill operation would support sustainable waste management by responsibly utilizing existing landfill voids, thereby achieving economic, social, and environmental objectives.
- 9.5 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy (Paragraphs 85-89): The NPPF 2024 supports economic development and job creation. Continued landfill operations maintain strategic waste infrastructure necessary for regional economic stability.
- 9.6 Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities (Paragraphs 96-108): The landfill's proper management and eventual restoration will enhance community safety, mitigate health risks, and improve public accessibility and recreation, aligning with the NPPF's community-focused objectives.
- 9.7 Making effective use of Land (Paragraphs 124-130): The landfill proposal aligns with NPPF guidance on effective land utilization by maximizing the existing landfill void and avoiding the need to establish new landfill sites elsewhere.

- 9.8 Achieving Well-Designed Places (Paragraphs 131-141): Restoration activities will deliver improved landscapes and biodiversity enhancements, contributing positively to local character and environmental aesthetics as envisaged by the NPPF.
- 9.9 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (Paragraphs 187-201): Ongoing landfill operations and restoration practices ensure compliance with environmental safeguards, contributing positively to local biodiversity and habitat enhancement.
- 9.10 At a regional level, London Plan policy SI 8 'Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency' specifically supports maintaining strategic waste facilities. This proposal continues an existing landfill site, ensuring that London's waste management needs are sustainably met.
- 9.11 Havering Local Plan Policy 35 'Waste Management' and Joint Waste Development Plan Policy W4 explicitly support landfilling where necessary to achieve restoration and after-use objectives. The proposed extension aligns with these strategic aims by using existing landfill void space effectively.
- 9.12 The application site lies within the area designated under Policy SSA17 of the Havering Site Specific Allocations DPD, which allocates the former Rainham Landfill for restoration to a public open space and recreational asset, supporting ecological, leisure and environmental education objectives. Policy SSA17 seeks the creation of "a high quality, sustainable public open space providing opportunities for informal recreation, biodiversity enhancement, and educational activities," with a phased programme of public access delivered across the site as restoration progresses.
- 9.13 In considering the current proposal, it is recognised that a failure to complete the approved landfill restoration would result in a sub-optimal landform and significantly impair the site's long-term ability to deliver the quality and extent of public open space envisaged by Policy SSA17. A partly-restored site would undermine the policy objectives of ecological enhancement, public accessibility, and recreational provision.
- 9.14 The proposed extension of time to allow for the continued operation of landfill and composting activities until 31 December 2029, with final restoration completed by 31 December 2031, is therefore considered acceptable in planning terms. The extension would enable the delivery of the desired restoration contours and landform necessary to create a sustainable, accessible public open space, in line with the aspirations of Policy SSA17 and the wider London Riverside regeneration framework.
- 9.15 In summary, the proposals are considered to be in line with the policies of the NPPF 2024, London Plan 2021, Havering Development Plan 2021 and with the Joint Waste Development Plan for the East London 2012. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle subject to satisfying other relevant policies of the development plan.

## LANDSCAPING

- 9.16 The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which updates the original 2012 LVIA submitted in support of the recently expired permission. The updated LVIA considers changes to the baseline conditions, including more recent photographic evidence and planning context, and assesses the effects of the proposed five-year extension to landfill operations and associated restoration to 2031.
- 9.17 The site's existing landform and visual appearance are significantly influenced by ongoing landfill and associated waste management activities. The site currently exhibits an unfinished landform, characterised by varied contours, elevations, and exposed operational infrastructure.
- 9.18 The approved restoration contours for the landfill site, established under permission ref. P1566.12, define a domed final landform to ensure surface water runoff management and stability, thus reducing risks associated with leachate generation and landfill gas management. The applicant's submitted restoration drawings (Drawings 3462-01-06 and 3462-01-07) illustrate pre-settlement and post-settlement contours, respectively. The approved restoration profile indicates final post-settlement elevations reaching up to approximately 35 metres AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) at the site's highest central points, grading gently downwards towards the site boundaries and riverbank.
- 9.19 At present, deviations from the approved pre-settlement landform have occurred locally due to operational constraints. The proposed development seeks to regularise these deviations and deliver the previously approved landform within an extended operational timeframe. This is necessary because approximately 1.085 million cubic metres of landfill void remain to be filled, a consequence of reduced residual waste volumes available for landfill disposal over recent years.
- 9.20 The application proposes no changes to the maximum height or the fundamental profile previously approved, instead focusing solely on delivering the already consented restoration contours through additional landfill activities extended to December 2029, with final restoration by December 2031. Importantly, the proposal does not seek to increase landfill heights beyond those approved previously.
- 9.21 The submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) accompanying the application assesses visual impacts and concludes limited additional visual effects due to the proposed time extension, largely attributed to the retention of existing landfill infrastructure and operational patterns rather than any significant new structures or landform modifications. Views of landfill operations are predominantly distant and intermittent, limited mainly to users of the adjacent public footpath along the Thames riverside and longer-range viewpoints from elevated positions in Erith, approximately 930m south-west across the River Thames.
- 9.22 It is considered that the visual impacts associated with continued landfill operations are moderate and localised in nature, remaining consistent with current conditions experienced at and around the site. Furthermore,

continuation of landfilling activity is critical to achieving the final domed landform as consented, which is essential for safe and sustainable management of surface water, leachate, landfill gas, and long-term landscape stability.

- 9.23 Upon completion of landfill operations, the proposed restoration scheme would result in substantial landscape improvements, including the creation of and substantially enhanced open space integrated with the wider London Riverside Conservation Park. This restored landscape would provide measurable biodiversity net gain exceeding 10% and will significantly enhance public access, local ecology, and recreational value.
- 9.24 Overall, the landscape impacts of extending landfill operations by five years are deemed acceptable, given the strategic necessity of completing the consented restoration profiles. Subject to appropriate conditions ensuring timely restoration delivery and robust site management, the proposed development aligns with London Plan Policies G5 and G6 and Havering Local Plan Policies 27 (Landscaping), 29 (Green Infrastructure), and 30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity). The proposed continuation and finalisation of the landfill operation is therefore acceptable in landscape terms.

### **IMPACT ON AMENITY**

- 9.25 Policies D3, D6 of the London Plan 2021 requires development to protect, and where possible improve, the amenity of surrounding existing and future residents as well as the amenity of the surrounding public realm.
- 9.26 As stated above, the application site is located some 1km away from the nearest residential receptors which are on the south side of the River Thames and some 1.5km away from the nearest Havering residential receptors to the north of the site. The proposal, given these significant separation distances is not considered to cause any substantial harm to nearby residential amenity.
- 9.27 The application site adjoins the Momentum Freightmaster site to the south, an established commercial operation. Representations have been received from Momentum raising concerns about potential impacts associated with the continued landfill operations, including odour, pests, noise, dust and general disturbance affecting the operation of their business.
- 9.28 Impacts on neighbouring commercial premises are not directly covered by Havering Local Plan Policy 7, which relates to the protection of residential amenity. However, it remains necessary to consider general planning principles to ensure that neighbouring uses are not unacceptably harmed. Environmental matters such as pests, odour, dust and waste management are primarily regulated through the site's Environmental Permit issued by the Environment Agency, which provides controls over operational emissions.
- 9.29 It is acknowledged that since the original permission, the operational activity of Momentum Freightmaster adjacent to the landfill boundary has increased. The continued operation of the landfill could, without appropriate management, give rise to environmental impacts affecting nearby businesses. To provide additional local safeguards, planning conditions and obligations within the



Section 106 Agreement are proposed, requiring the continuation of the Odour Management Strategy, Waste Input Monitoring, and Aftercare Management Plans.

- 9.30 Overall, with the safeguards provided by the Environmental Permit and the additional planning controls proposed, it is considered that the development would not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring commercial operators. The proposal would remain consistent with the relevant provisions of the London Plan, national planning policy on environmental protection, and local planning principles.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS (NOISE, DUST, AIR QUALITY)**

### Noise

- 9.31 Havering Local Plan 2021 policy 33 'Air Quality' and policy 34 'Managing Pollution' set out the requirements for new development with regard to acceptable environmental impacts.
- 9.32 A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. The assessment considers the likely effects associated with the proposed five-year extension of landfill and composting operations at the Rainham Landfill site. The assessment includes baseline noise monitoring, identification of the nearest noise-sensitive receptors (including residential areas in Erith, Wennington and Rainham), and comparison of predicted operational noise levels with relevant criteria.
- 9.33 The methodology follows recognised standards including BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 and considers both day and night-time operational periods. It is noted that no material changes to the type or intensity of activities are proposed; rather, the existing noise environment would be prolonged for an additional five years.
- 9.34 The assessment concludes that operational noise levels from the continued use of the landfill and composting facility would remain below the threshold of significance at all sensitive receptors. The predicted rating levels are considered to result in *low or negligible impacts* when assessed against the prevailing background noise levels. Mitigation measures are already in place (e.g., controlled operational hours, bunding, and distance to receptors), and no additional measures are considered necessary. No significant cumulative noise effects have been identified.
- 9.35 It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with London Plan Policy D13 (Agent of Change) and Policy D14 (Noise), which seek to manage noise impacts through early identification and design mitigation. The proposal also aligns with Havering Local Plan Policy 33 (Air Quality and Noise), which seeks to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise-generating development. Given the limited operational changes and the temporary nature of the time extension, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of noise and would not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on residential amenity or sensitive ecological receptors. In respect to 'agent of

change' the proposals are the continuation of an existing use and not proposing a new use in this location. Also the nature of the adjoining uses such as at the now Momentum Logistics Park have not changed and are still used for warehousing and industry, thus the impacts are not significantly different.

### Air Quality

9.36 London Borough of Havering was declared an Air Quality Management Area in 2006. An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) has been submitted in support of the application, which evaluates potential air quality impacts associated with the proposed five-year extension of operational activity at Rainham Landfill. The site lies within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) designated by the London Borough of Havering due to exceedances in nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), primarily from road traffic sources.

9.37 The assessment uses detailed dispersion modelling to quantify potential impacts from both on-site operations and associated traffic. Receptors assessed include residential properties in Rainham, Wennington and Erith (located approximately 900m to 1.5km from the site), and ecological receptors within the adjacent Inner Thames Marshes SSSI and RSPB reserve.

#### 9.38 Road Traffic Emissions

The development would not alter the existing number or routing of HGVs. The current average traffic flow is approximately:

- 100 HGV movements per day (50 in / 50 out) associated with landfill operations.
- An additional 30 HGV movements per day related to the composting facility.

9.39 No increase in daily vehicle numbers is proposed. These levels are consistent with those previously assessed and permitted under the extant planning consent.

Modelled concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> at worst-case receptor locations were predicted to be:

- NO<sub>2</sub> annual mean: 24.8–28.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (well below the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> objective)
- PM<sub>10</sub> annual mean: 17.2–20.1 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (below the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> objective)
- Daily mean PM<sub>10</sub> exceedances: <10 days/year above 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (threshold is 35 days)

9.40 These results indicate that the proposal would not result in new exceedances or significant changes in pollutant concentrations.

### **Composting and Bioaerosols**

9.41 The open windrow composting facility remains in place and is proposed to operate for the same five-year extended period. Bioaerosol concentrations have been assessed based on Environment Agency guidance. The nearest residential receptor is over 900m away (in Erith), while the nearest ecological receptor (SSSI) is approximately 200m away.

- 9.42 Modelling and risk assessment confirm that bioaerosol levels would remain within acceptable limits, particularly as operational controls (e.g. turning restrictions, windrow spacing, and on-site irrigation) would continue to be enforced. No additional mitigation is considered necessary.
- 9.43 The assessment identifies and evaluates the potential impacts from both road traffic emissions and on-site activities, including ongoing waste operations and the composting facility. Baseline air quality data, including recent monitoring results, have been used alongside dispersion modelling to assess impacts at the nearest human receptors (residential areas in Wennington, Rainham and Erith), as well as ecological receptors including the adjacent SSSI and RSPB reserve.
- 9.44 The AQA confirms that no change in the volume or nature of vehicle movements is proposed, and there are no alterations to the existing waste throughput or operational practices. As such, emissions from traffic and on-site operations are expected to remain consistent with the current consented use.
- 9.45 Predicted concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM10 at identified receptors remain below the relevant air quality objectives, both for human health and ecological protection. The continued operation of the composting facility has also been assessed, with bioaerosol risk evaluated using Environment Agency guidance. The assessment concludes that there would be no significant risk to health or amenity, and existing control measures remain adequate.
- 9.46 It is considered that the proposed development complies with the air quality objectives set out in London Plan Policy SI 1 (Improving air quality), which requires developments to be air quality neutral and to minimise exposure to poor air quality. The proposal also complies with Havering Local Plan Policy 33 (Air Quality and Noise), which seeks to avoid significant adverse impacts on air quality, particularly within AQMAs.
- 9.47 Further, the proposal is consistent with the aims of the Havering Air Quality Action Plan (2018–2023) and the Mayor of London’s Air Quality Strategy, which seek to reduce emissions from waste and transport sources. While the AQA indicates that the development is not required to undertake a formal air quality neutral assessment (as there is no material increase in emissions), the proposal is considered to be consistent with the principle of minimising emissions and exposure.
- 9.48 As such, the proposed development is not considered to result in any unacceptable impact on air quality and would not hinder the borough’s objectives to improve public health or meet its legal air quality obligations.
- 9.49 Havering Environmental Health Team advised that the proposal is considered acceptable in amenity terms subject to a number of noise, dust, air quality and excess emissions planning conditions.

## HIGHWAYS & PARKING

- 9.50 The NPPF emphasizes the role transport policies have to play in achieving sustainable development and stipulates that people should have real choice in how they travel. The London Plan seeks to shape the pattern of development by influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land uses such that it helps to reduce the need to travel.
- 9.51 The site is located within an area with a public transport accessibility (PTAL) rating of 0 (worst), with no convenient pedestrian access to bus connections or train station.
- 9.52 A Transport Statement (TS) has been submitted in support of the proposal to extend the operational life of the landfill and composting facility for a further five years, to 2029, with restoration by 2031. The Statement confirms that no physical changes are proposed to site access arrangements, routing, or vehicle numbers. Coldharbour Lane will remain the primary access route, linking the site to the A13 via Ferry Lane approximately 2.5km to the north. The lane also serves a number of commercial and waste-related premises, including the Freightmaster Estate (now Momentum) and adjacent recycling facilities.
- 9.53 Vehicular access is already established and accommodates Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) safely and efficiently. The continued operation of the site is not anticipated to introduce additional pressure on the local highway network. Existing operational volumes will be maintained, with a typical daily profile of:
- 100 HGV movements/day associated with landfill operations (50 in / 50 out), and
  - 30 HGV movements/day associated with the composting facility (15 in / 15 out).
- 9.54 This level of traffic remains within the capacity of the local road network and has previously been assessed as acceptable under the extant planning permission. It is considered that the proposal continues to meet the requirements of London Plan Policy T4, which seeks to ensure that developments do not result in unacceptable impacts on highway capacity, safety, or operational resilience. The TS notes that operational traffic is typically distributed across the working day and does not concentrate during peak hours, thereby minimising disruption to other road users.
- 9.55 The site also benefits from proximity to an existing jetty on the River Thames, which enables the importation of waste by barge. While the modal share remains modest, the retention of river access is consistent with London Plan Policy T7, which supports the safeguarding and increased use of wharves to reduce the number of freight trips by road. It is noted that the extension of time would continue to support operational flexibility and modal shift potential, in line with this objective.
- 9.56 Swept path analysis confirms that the access arrangements can continue to accommodate large vehicle movements safely. No alterations to the highway network, junction design, or visibility splays are required. The proposal is therefore considered consistent with Havering Local Plan Policy 23, which

supports development that provides safe, direct, and legible access to the highway network, and with Policy 24, which relates specifically to waste facilities and their need to demonstrate sustainable and well-managed transport arrangements.

- 9.57 There are no reported highway safety concerns associated with the site access, and no accidents of note have occurred that would indicate any current or future risk arising from the continuation of landfill or composting operations. Havering Highways and Transport Teams and Transport For London have been consulted on the scheme and have no objection.
- 9.58 The proposed extension of time would not result in any intensification of traffic or change to existing access arrangements. The development is considered to maintain a safe and sustainable transport profile and would not result in any unacceptable impact on highway capacity, safety, or amenity. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with London Plan Policies T4 and T7 and Havering Local Plan Policies 23 and 24, and is consistent with the objectives of the Mayor's Transport Strategy to promote efficient freight movement and protect highway efficiency and safety.

## **SUSTAINABILITY / ENERGY**

- 9.59 At national level, the NPPF sets out that planning plays a key role in delivering reductions to greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to climate change. The climate change policies as set out in Chapter 9 of the London Plan, policies of the Havering Local Plan 36 'Low Carbon Design & Renewable Energy' collectively require developments to make the fullest contribution to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change and to minimise carbon dioxide emissions.
- 9.60 The proposed development seeks a five-year extension to the operational life of the existing landfill and composting facility at Rainham, with completion of restoration by 2031. As the proposal does not involve any new built development or permanent above-ground structures, there is no requirement for submission of a formal Energy Strategy or BREEAM assessment. However, wider sustainability objectives remain relevant, particularly in relation to minimising environmental harm, promoting resource efficiency, and delivering a long-term beneficial after-use of the site.
- 9.61 The landfill facility forms part of the Borough's safeguarded waste infrastructure and contributes to regional self-sufficiency in waste management, consistent with the circular economy principles set out in London Plan Policy SI 7 (Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy). The continuation of operations on an existing, well-established site avoids the need for new land take or construction, thereby supporting efficient use of land and embedded energy.
- 9.62 The associated composting facility supports organic waste recovery and diversion from landfill and incineration, thereby contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the project. The retention of this facility until 2029 supports the waste hierarchy and aligns with London Plan

Policy SI 2 (Minimising greenhouse gas emissions) and SI 8 (Waste capacity and net self-sufficiency).

- 9.63 Operational energy use is expected to remain broadly consistent with current baseline levels. On-site energy generation continues via the existing landfill gas engines, which capture methane emissions for conversion to electricity. This supports carbon reduction and energy recovery goals in line with Havering Local Plan Policy 33 (Air Quality and Noise) and the Mayor of London's Environment Strategy, which promotes decentralised energy where feasible.
- 9.64 The restoration scheme proposes a mix of biodiverse habitats, grassland, and wetland features. These are designed to enhance ecosystem resilience, contribute to carbon sequestration, and support local biodiversity networks. These outcomes contribute positively to climate adaptation objectives and wider sustainability targets.
- 9.65 Although the proposal does not involve new built development, it supports several key sustainability principles through the continued operation of an existing facility, diversion of organic waste through composting, on-site energy recovery via landfill gas, and the delivery of a multi-functional restored landscape. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with London Plan Policies SI 2, SI 7 and SI 8, as well as the relevant objectives of the Havering Local Plan relating to sustainable resource use and environmental enhancement.

## **ARCHAEOLOGY**

- 9.66 Policy 28 'Heritage Assets' of the Havering Local Plan 2021 states that the council recognises the significance of Havering's heritage assets and further at part (vi) will support well designed and high-quality proposals which would not affect the significance of a heritage asset with archaeological interest, including the contribution made to significance by its setting.
- 9.67 The application site lies within an area of archaeological interest, with the Rainham, Wennington and Aveley Marshes historically associated with prehistoric, Roman, and later activity due to their proximity to the River Thames. However, the proposed development relates solely to the extension of time for ongoing waste disposal operations within an already engineered and operational landfill site.
- 9.68 No new excavation, groundworks or construction activities are proposed beyond those already permitted. The remaining activity involves the controlled placement of waste material to achieve final restoration contours within the central part of the site, which has already been substantially disturbed through historic landfill operations.
- 9.69 As such, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to any new archaeological impacts. There would be no further ground disturbance within previously undisturbed strata and therefore no potential to affect any buried heritage assets. The proposal is consistent with London Plan Policy HC1

(Heritage conservation and growth) and Havering Local Plan Policy 30 (Heritage Assets), both of which seek to protect the significance of archaeological resources.

- 9.70 Given the previously disturbed nature of the site and the absence of any proposed excavation, it is not considered necessary to secure any archaeological mitigation or monitoring. Historic England (GLAAS) and the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service would not typically be consulted in such circumstances unless new intrusive works are proposed.
- 9.71 The proposal would not involve any further ground disturbance beyond the engineered landfill operations already undertaken. As such, it is considered that there would be no impact on archaeological assets, and no further assessment or mitigation is required. The development is considered acceptable in archaeological terms and compliant with the relevant provisions of the London Plan and the Havering Local Plan.

## **ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY**

- 9.72 Policy 30 Biodiversity & Geodiversity of the Havering Local Plan seek to safeguard ecological interests and wherever possible, provide for their enhancement. The scheme is expected to deliver a biodiversity net gain.
- 9.73 An updated Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been submitted as part of the Environmental Statement in support of the application. The proposed development, which seeks a five-year extension of landfill and composting operations within the existing operational footprint, does not involve any new land take or excavation into previously undisturbed areas. As such, the baseline conditions are already substantially altered, and the site largely comprises engineered landform, with areas of ephemeral vegetation, neutral grassland, scrub, ditches and artificial waterbodies.
- 9.74 The application site lies adjacent to the Inner Thames Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which forms part of the wider RSPB Rainham Marshes reserve and supports a diverse assemblage of habitats and species. The assessment confirms that the proposed development would not result in any direct impact on the SSSI, nor would it affect its qualifying features. Potential indirect effects such as dust, noise, and lighting have been assessed as negligible, owing to the continuation of embedded mitigation measures already in place under the current operational regime, the temporary nature of the extension, and the separation distance of approximately 100–150 metres between the active working area and designated site boundary.
- 9.75 Surveys have been undertaken to establish the ecological baseline, with no evidence of adverse effects on protected species. The habitat types present on-site are predominantly of low intrinsic ecological value, consistent with the disturbed character of the landfill. Nonetheless, features such as field margins, ditches and transitional habitats have the potential to support invertebrates, ground-nesting birds and amphibians. The proposed continuation of existing operational practices, which already incorporate good environmental

management, is not considered likely to lead to any significant effects on these species.

- 9.76 The site restoration scheme, which would be implemented following completion of operations in 2031, has been designed to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain, in line with the requirements of London Plan Policy G6, which seeks to enhance biodiversity and secure ecological resilience. The final restored landform would comprise approximately 12 hectares of species-rich neutral grassland, 8 hectares of wet grassland and marginal wetland, new open water features, scrub planting, and hedgerow enhancement. These works would enhance habitat connectivity with the adjacent SSSI and support strategic green infrastructure objectives, consistent with London Plan Policy G1 and Havering Local Plan Policies 18 and 27.
- 9.77 The submitted restoration scheme forms a key component of the proposal and is designed to deliver long-term biodiversity net gain (BNG), in accordance with national policy and London Plan requirements. The restoration will create a mosaic of habitats, including:
- 12 hectares of lowland meadow and species-rich neutral grassland;
  - 8 hectares of wet grassland and marginal wetland habitat;
  - New open water features and ditches;
  - Scrub and hedgerow planting; and
  - Enhanced habitat connectivity with the adjacent SSSI and Wildspace landscape.
- 9.78 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment using the Defra Metric has been undertaken and confirms a net gain in excess of 10% in habitat units and 15% in hedgerow units relative to the existing site baseline. These outcomes meet the requirements of paragraph 180 of the NPPF, which expects development to secure net gains in biodiversity, and align with the Council's broader green infrastructure and climate adaptation goals.
- 9.79 Long-term management of the restored habitats would be secured through an aftercare and monitoring plan, with a minimum 30-year commitment to habitat establishment and maintenance. This approach is consistent with current national guidance and the emerging requirements of the Environment Act 2021.
- 9.80 The proposal would not result in any adverse effects on designated ecological sites or protected species, and would deliver a high-quality restoration scheme that secures a measurable biodiversity net gain. The development is therefore considered acceptable in ecological terms and consistent with the relevant provisions of the London Plan, Havering Local Plan, and national planning policy relating to biodiversity, ecological enhancement and strategic green infrastructure.



## FLOOD RISK

- 9.81 Guidance under the NPPF seeks to safely manage residual risk including by emergency planning and give priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems.
- 9.82 Policy SI 13 of the London Plan stresses that development should utilise sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) and should aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates and ensure that surface water run-off is managed as close to its source as possible. Information on how the drainage strategy will reduce discharge rates to the greenfield runoff rate is required. The attenuation should be provided in above-ground green SuDS where possible, which will also provide additional amenity and biodiversity benefits. Commitment to the inclusion of rainwater harvesting would be required.
- 9.83 In terms of local planning policies, policy 32 'Flood Management' states that 'the council will support development that seeks to avoid flood risk to people and property and manages residual risk by applying the Sequential Test and, if necessary, the Exception Test as set out in the NPPF. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should be used as a starting point regarding local flood risk guidance. In addition to the requirements set out in the NPPF, the Council will require site-specific flood risk assessments for development on:
- i. Sites where drainage problems have been identified by the Council;
  - ii. The Washlands Flood Storage Area (FSA); and iii. Sites deemed necessary by the Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 9.84 The application site lies within Flood Zone 3 as identified by the Environment Agency, indicating a high probability of flooding. However, the site benefits from existing flood defences and is covered by an Environmental Permit which governs water management, including leachate control and surface water drainage.
- 9.85 The proposed development relates solely to an extension of time for existing landfill and composting operations and does not involve any changes to the site footprint, operational processes, or surface water regime. As such, there would be no increase in impermeable area or alteration to runoff rates.
- 9.86 The Environmental Statement confirms that the continued operations would not increase the risk of flooding on- or off-site, and that the current drainage and environmental control measures would remain in place throughout the extended operational period. These include surface water management infrastructure, bunding, and controlled discharge points regulated under permit.
- 9.87 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the requirements of London Plan Policy SI 12 (Flood risk management) and SI 13 (Sustainable drainage), as well as Havering Local Plan Policy 32 (Flood Risk), all of which require developments to demonstrate that they will be safe for their lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

- 9.88 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended). The proposed development falls within Schedule 1, Part 9 of the EIA Regulations as it involves the continuation of waste disposal operations exceeding 100 tonnes per day. Accordingly, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a statutory requirement in this instance.
- 9.89 The ES, submitted in December 2024, provides an updated assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposal to extend the operational life of the landfill and composting facility at Rainham for a further five years (to 2029), with restoration completed by 2031. The ES supplements the original assessment produced for the extant planning consent and reflects updated baseline conditions, environmental guidance, and policy context. It draws upon site-specific surveys and professional judgement to determine whether the extension would give rise to new or materially different environmental effects compared to those previously assessed.
- 9.90 The ES is structured into technical chapters, supported by baseline data, figures and appendices. It addresses the following key topics:
- 9.91 Landscape and Visual Effects: The ES confirms that the extended duration of operational activity would result in a minor and temporary continuation of existing visual and landscape effects, particularly from elevated public rights of way and distant residential viewpoints. The completed restoration would result in long-term improvements to landscape character and visual amenity. No significant effects are predicted, consistent with GLVIA3 methodology.
- 9.92 Ecology and Biodiversity: No direct impacts are predicted to the adjacent Inner Thames Marshes SSSI or the RSPB reserve. Ecological survey data confirm that the continuation of landfill activity would not result in harm to protected species or habitats. The restoration scheme would deliver biodiversity enhancements, including the creation of diverse grassland and wetland habitats. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of over 10% habitat units and 15% hedgerow units has been calculated, in accordance with Defra's metric.
- 9.93 Noise: Noise monitoring and modelling confirm that the proposal would not result in exceedances of relevant noise thresholds at sensitive receptors. The continuation of operations for five additional years would result in no change in the type or pattern of noise emissions. Effects are assessed as not significant, with operational controls remaining in place.
- 9.94 Air Quality and Bioaerosols: Dispersion modelling predicts that emissions of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter would remain below air quality objectives at all nearby receptors. Predicted annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at the nearest receptors are below 30 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, well under the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> objective. Bioaerosol risk from the composting facility remains low, with standard operational mitigation maintained. No significant effects are predicted.

- 9.95 Transport and Access: The proposal does not involve any increase in HGV movements, which remain at approximately 130 vehicle movements per day (including composting operations). Access continues to be taken from Coldharbour Lane. The ES concludes that the local road network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the continued operations without adverse safety or capacity impacts.
- 9.96 Hydrology and Flood Risk: The site is managed under an existing environmental permit and includes active leachate and surface water management systems. No changes are proposed to drainage or hydrological processes. The extension of time would not increase flood risk on or off site.
- 9.97 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology: The proposal involves no new excavation or ground disturbance. The ES concludes that there is no potential for impacts on buried heritage assets or the setting of designated heritage features.
- 9.98 Cumulative Effects: The ES considers the cumulative impact of the proposed extension in combination with nearby development, including the Freightmaster Estate. It concludes that there would be no significant cumulative effects, given the limited and temporary nature of the extension.
- 9.99 The ES identifies no likely significant environmental effects arising from the proposed development, either individually or cumulatively, subject to the continuation of existing controls and the implementation of the approved restoration scheme. Where impacts are identified, these are assessed as temporary, localised, and not significant under the EIA Regulations.
- 9.100 The submitted Environmental Statement meets the requirements of the EIA Regulations 2017 and provides a comprehensive and proportionate assessment of the proposed time extension. The conclusions of the ES are robust and confirm that the proposal would not result in any likely significant adverse environmental effects. The environmental effects of the scheme are well understood and can be appropriately managed through the continuation of existing operational controls and delivery of a biodiversity-led restoration scheme. The conclusions of the ES are accepted.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

### Health Considerations

- 10.1 Policies GG3, S2 of the London Plan seeks to improve health and address health inequalities having regard to the health impacts of development proposals while the Council's Local Plan policy 12 seeks to deliver healthy and liveable neighbourhoods that promote active and healthy lifestyles and enhance people's wider health and well-being.
- 10.2 The proposed development has been considered in the context of its potential effects on human health and wellbeing, in accordance with London Plan Policy GG3, which seeks to create a healthy city and reduce health inequalities, and Policy S2, which requires development to assess and mitigate health impacts. The continuation of operations at Rainham Landfill and composting facility for a

further five years would not introduce new sources of emissions or intensify activity on the site. The submitted Environmental Statement confirms that there would be no significant adverse impacts in relation to air quality, noise, water, or amenity that would affect public health. Existing environmental controls, including those secured under the site's Environmental Permit, would remain in place, thereby ensuring that local communities are not exposed to harmful levels of pollutants.

- 10.3 In the longer term, the approved restoration scheme would contribute positively to community wellbeing through the creation of accessible green infrastructure, new habitats, and enhanced landscape character. These improvements support the delivery of Havering Local Plan Policy 12, which promotes healthy and liveable neighbourhoods and encourages the enhancement of physical and mental wellbeing through improved environmental quality. Once restoration is completed, the site will form part of the wider Wildspace / London Riverside green corridor, with the potential to support informal recreation, biodiversity awareness, and engagement with nature—factors that have been widely recognised as beneficial to public health.

## **SECTION 106**

### Planning Obligations

- 11.1 The heads of terms of the Section 106 agreement have been set out above. These are considered necessary to make the application acceptable, in accordance with policy DF1 of The London Plan 2021 and policy 16 of the Havering Local Plan 2021.
- 11.2 The proposed development represents an extension of time to an existing planning permission granted in 2012, which was subject to a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. That agreement secured a range of obligations related to the phased restoration of the landfill site, long-term aftercare, environmental monitoring, and public access provisions as part of the strategic Wildspace vision for the London Riverside area.
- 11.3 As the current application proposes to vary the duration of landfill and composting operations and extend the final restoration date from 2026 to 2031, the existing S106 agreement will require formal amendment to reflect the revised phasing and timetable. The key provisions of the original agreement—such as delivery of the approved restoration scheme, biodiversity enhancements, and long-term site management—will remain in effect but must be updated to align with the proposed operational and restoration programme.
- 11.4 It is therefore recommended that any grant of planning permission be subject to the prior completion of a Deed of Variation to the original Section 106 Agreement, to secure continued compliance with the obligations previously agreed and ensure that restoration, aftercare, and community benefits are delivered in accordance with the extended timescales.
- 11.5 The proposal is not Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable.

## **EQUALITIES**

- 12.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides that in exercising its functions (which includes its role as Local Planning Authority), the Council as a public authority shall amongst other duties have regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- 12.2 For the purposes of this obligation the term “protected characteristic” includes:- age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.
- 12.3 Policy CG1 of the London Plan also seeks to support and promote the creation of an inclusive city to address inequality.
- 12.4 Therefore in recommending the application for approval, officers have had regard to the requirements of the aforementioned section and Act and have concluded that a decision to grant planning permission for this proposed development would comply with the Council’s statutory duty under this important legislation.
- 12.5 In light of the above, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with national regional and local policy by establishing an inclusive design and providing an environment which is accessible to all.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- 13.1 The presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is engaged.
- 13.2 The proposal is considered to comply with the strategic waste management objectives set out in the London Plan and the Havering Local Plan. London Plan Policy SI 8 promotes a circular economy and requires waste facilities to be safeguarded and efficiently utilised. The proposed extension of time allows the continued use of an existing, strategically significant waste site without the need for new land take, consistent with Policy SI 9 (Safeguarded Waste Sites). At the local level, Havering Local Plan Policy 19 supports the continued use and restoration of safeguarded waste sites where this does not result in unacceptable environmental or amenity harm. The temporary continuation of operations, combined with the proposed high-quality restoration, is considered to support the sustainable management of waste while also delivering long-term environmental benefits. The proposal also remains consistent with the Joint East London Waste Plan (JELWP), which identifies Rainham Landfill as a safeguarded strategic site for waste treatment and disposal.

- 13.3 The proposal is considered to align with London Plan Policies G1 and G6 by contributing to the strategic green infrastructure network and improving access to nature. Furthermore, the proposal supports Havering Local Plan Policies 27 through the integration of a high-quality landscape restoration scheme that reflects the local marshland character. The scheme is also consistent with Policy 18 in enhancing green infrastructure. While the operational extension prolongs visual impacts for a limited period, the residual effects are considered negligible following restoration and consistent with the Borough's long-term objectives for biodiversity, recreation and landscape enhancement in line with policy SSA17.
- 13.4 All material planning considerations, including the potential impact on neighbouring land uses, have been carefully assessed. It is acknowledged that the continued operation of the landfill could give rise to environmental effects; however, with appropriate controls secured through the Environmental Permit, planning conditions, and obligations within the Section 106 Agreement, it is considered that any impacts on neighbouring businesses and occupiers would be appropriately mitigated and managed. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with relevant local and strategic planning policies and guidance in this regard. It is therefore recommended that full planning permission should be approved.