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|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Committee Date</b>                                 | 13.06.2024   |                                    |
| <b>Address</b>  | Borough Council Depot<br>Churchfields Road<br>Beckenham<br>BR3 4QY   |                                    |
| <b>Application Number</b>                             | 24/00159/FULL1   | <b>Officer</b> - Susanna Stevenson |
| <b>Ward</b>   | Clock House  |                                    |
| <b>Proposal</b>                                       | Erection of fire suppression tanks and pump house with associated alterations to the drainage layout at the site, like for like repair and replacement to the slab, push walls and works associated with the refurbishment and repair of the waste transfer station. Elevational alteration to front boundary wall to provide pedestrian access gate within existing wall. |                                    |
| <b>Applicant</b>                                      | <b>Agent</b>   |                                    |
| Miss Aimee Rayner                                     | Tarun Cheema   |                                    |
| Civic Centre<br>Stockwell Close<br>Bromley<br>BR1 3UH | 104C St. John Street<br>London<br>EC1M 4EH<br>United Kingdom   |                                    |
| <b>Reason for referral to committee</b>               | <b>Councillor call in</b>  |                                    |
|   | Council site – outside of delegated powers   | No                                 |

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>RECOMMENDATION</b> | PERMISSION |
|-----------------------|------------|

|   |
|---|
| <p>KEY DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>Article 4 Direction<br/>Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area<br/>Flood Zone 2<br/>Historic Flooding<br/>London City Airport Safeguarding<br/>Smoke Control SCA 30<br/>Views of Local Importance</p> |
|---|

| <b>Land use Details</b> |  |                       |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|
|                         | Use Class or Use description             | Floor space (GIA SQM) |
| Existing and proposed   | Council waste/recycling centre and depot | N/A                   |

|                                    |  |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Representation summary</b>      | The application was advertised by way of a site notice.<br><br>Letters were sent to neighbouring residents/properties on 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2024. |  |
| Total number of responses          | 8  |  |
| Number of neutral/general comments | 1  |  |
| Number in support                  | 0  |  |
| Number of objections               | 7  |  |

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

- The proposal would provide site enhancements to improve the efficiency and fire safety of the site
- While the development would be close to an existing river, no objections are raised by the Environment Agency
- The works to the site would be of a design and appearance consistent with the function and character of the site – the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on visual amenity
- There are no technical objections with regards to drainage and highways matters
- The proposal would not result in an intensification of, or change to, the use of the site and would not give rise to greater impact on residential amenity
- There are no objections to the proposal from an Environmental Health perspective

## **2. LOCATION**

2.1 The application site lies on the south eastern side of Churchfields Road. The overall site has an area of approx. 1.17 hectares.



Figure 1 – site location

- 2.2 To the north east of the application site is Churchfields Recreation Ground which is designated as Urban Open Space (UOS). The south eastern boundary of the site is with the Chaffinch Brook (west branch) which is a designated main river. Beyond the river lies a large area of open ground which is understood to be used as an electricity distribution site. To the south west of the site is Churchfields Primary School and grounds, also designated as Urban Open Space.



Figure 2 – Aerial view of site

- 2.3 The site has been used for some considerable time as a London Borough of Bromley Household Waste and Recycling Centre. The site itself is designated as a Waste Site and lies within Flood Zone 2 (majority of the site) and Flood Zone 3 (rear part of the site, closest to the river). The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and a Thames Water easement bisects the site.

### 3. PROPOSAL

3.1 Figure 3 below shows the application site, with the areas where development/alteration is proposed numbered in red.

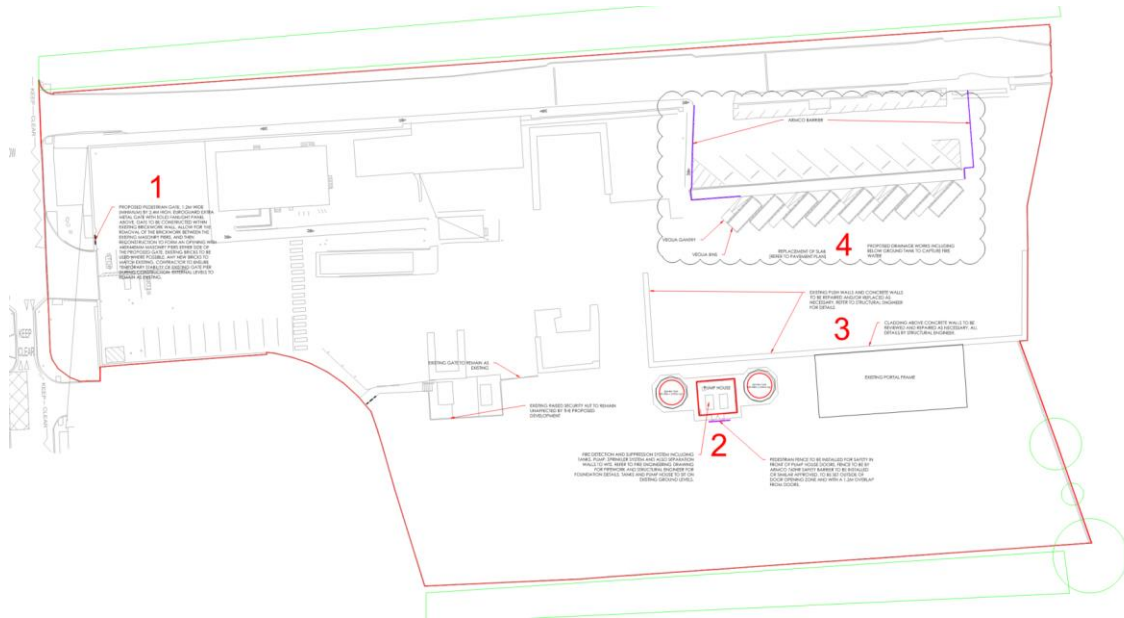


Figure 3 – Site wide proposals/general arrangement

3.2 At No. 1 indicated on the Fig. 3 above, it is proposed to install a new pedestrian gate associated with the staff access to the site.

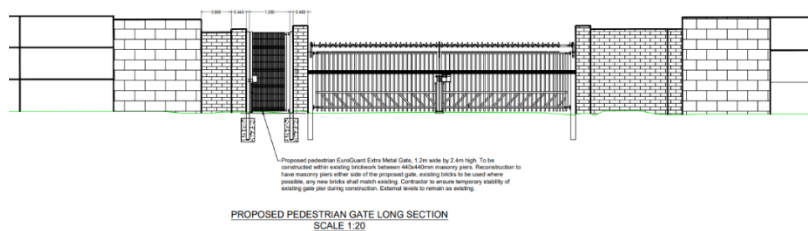


Figure 4 – Proposed pedestrian gate



Figure 5 – Photograph of existing shared pedestrian/vehicular access

3.2 At No. 2 on Fig. 3, it is proposed to install 2 no. surface sprinkler tanks which would be 5.5m in diameter and 3.56m high. A pump house would be installed between the tanks. The system would be subject to weekly testing which would include a 30 minute run of the diesel pumps.



Figure 6 – example of sprinkler tank external appearance

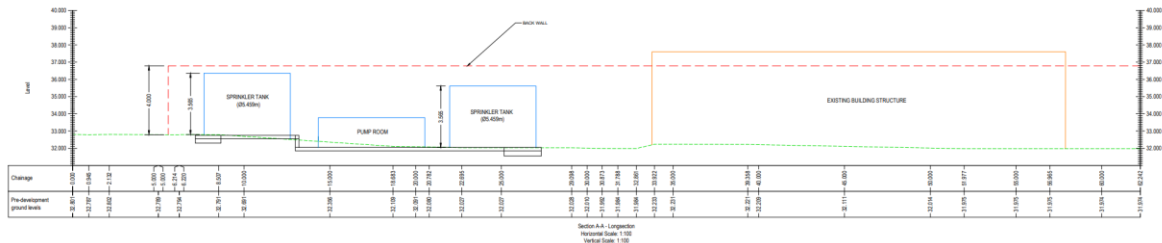


Figure 7 – section of pump house and tanks



Figure 8 – Location of proposed tanks and pump area (in front of shed to left)

- 3.3 At No. 3 on the numbered site plan (Fig. 3), it is proposed to repair/replace existing push walls and concrete walls as existing. Cladding above the concrete walls will also be repaired.

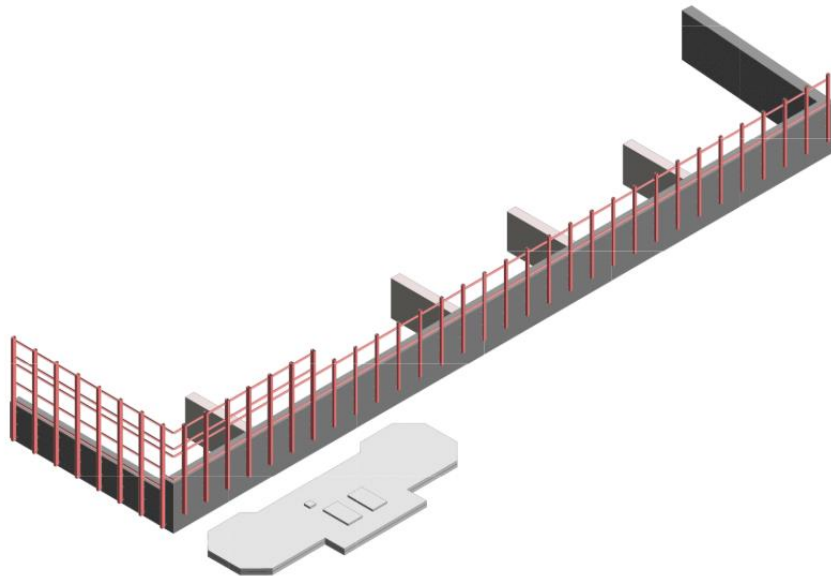


Figure 9 – aerial view of push walls, cladding and location of tanks/pump



Figure 10 – existing cladding and walls (tanks to be sited adjacent)

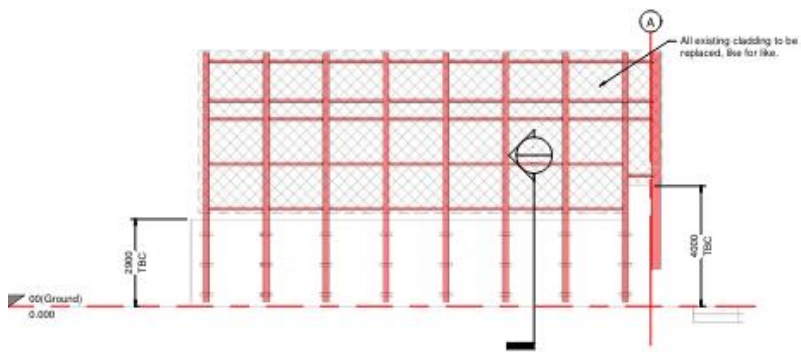


Figure 11 – proposed cladding repair/replacement like for like



Figure 12 – existing push walls

- 3.4 At No. 4 on Fig. 3 (and the wider site), it is proposed to replace the existing concrete slab in conjunction with below ground site-wide tanking/drainage works to capture fire water and improve the drainage system at the site.

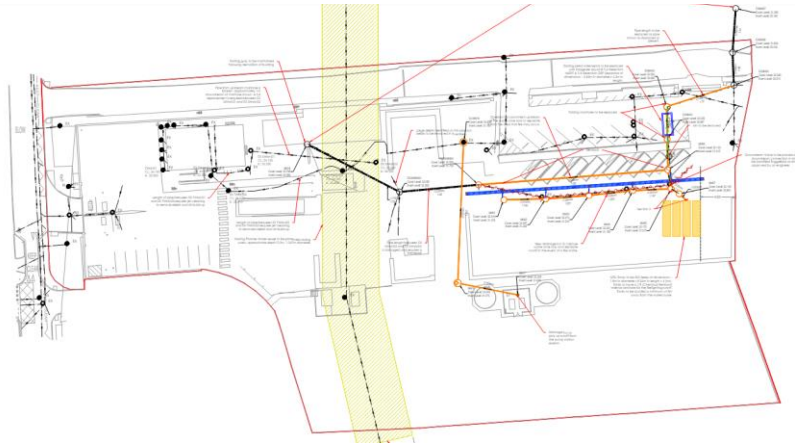


Figure 13 – Site drainage system

## 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

### 10/01601/VAR

Variation of Condition 3 (boundary treatment) relating to permission ref 08/03991 to provide planting to screen the approved boundary wall rather than a bamboo screen.

### 08/03991/FULL1

Planning permission granted for “Installation of 3 metre concrete panel wall to side and front boundary at Churchfields Road entrance and detached single storey office building with associated storage units and parking, including the demolition of Nos 179, 181, 183 Churchfields Road”

### 90/02935/LBB

Planning permission granted for provision of solid screen to tipping wall and alterations to boundary walls and gates.

### 83/00605/FUL

Permission granted for works to increase the height of part of the south western boundary wall by 3 ft 3 inches and the rebuilding of part of the boundary wall to 15ft.

## 5. CONSULTATION SUMMARY

### A) Statutory



## **Environment Agency - No objection**

The proposals to upgrade the site infrastructure are welcomed. There are no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions and informatives relating to riverside setback, contamination and pollution prevention, and flood risk activity permits/the waste permitting process.

## **Highways- No objection**

## **Drainage - No objection**

## **Thames Water- Consulted. No comment.**

## **B) Local Groups**

N/A

## **C) Adjoining Occupiers**

### Transport and highways (addressed at paragraph 7.4)

- Vehicles often queue all along Churchfields Road in both directions
- Proposal will increase the already high volume of traffic on Churchfields Road, which is also a cycling path and hosts a school attended by hundreds of children.

### Noise, air quality, odours (addressed at paragraph 7.3)

- Noisy gates and noise from vehicles using Churchfields Road as a rat run, mixed with vehicles waiting to access the site
- No objection in principle so long as there is consideration of how to control air pollution in the surrounding area. This is the responsibility of Veolia. Drivers should be made to turn off car engines rather than allowing idling within the site.
- The open bays should be replaced with closed containers set into the ground, which would be more appropriate for a residential area
- Noise associated with the testing of the water pumps

Visual impact (addressed at paragraph 7.2)

- The proposed fence is an eyesore - should be lower and supplemented by evergreen planting along the park side, to hide the fence, filter pollution from idling cars etc as well as preventing rubbish from blocking from the recycling centre to the neighbouring park.

Drainage (addressed at paragraph 7.5)

- Concern at lack of drainage improvements within the southern part of the site.

Other matters (addressed at paragraph 7.6)

- Potential safety impact associated with children attempting to climb the 2.4m high fence to retrieve footballs
- Should be consideration of landscaping in front of the site and the potential of opening a second-hand shop to sell discarded items still good enough to use should be explored
- The site's location is incompatible with the location, so close to a school, park and homes. Repair and refurbishment of the facility indicates that a long term future for the use is envisaged – Bromley should instead explore the relocation of the centre to an alternative site, so that the current site could be developed, potentially for housing.

## **6. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)**

#### **NPPG**

#### **The London Plan**

- D3 Optimising site potential through the design-led approach
- D11 Safety, security and resilience to emergency
- D14 Noise
- G1 Green infrastructure
- G5 Urban greening
- G6 Biodiversity and access to nature
- SI 1 Improving air quality
- SI 5 Water infrastructure
- SI 9 Safeguarded waste sites
- SI 12 Flood risk management
- SI 13 Sustainable drainage
- SI 17 Protecting and enhancing London's waterways

- T1 Strategic approach to transport
- T2 Healthy Streets
- T4 Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
- T5 Cycling
- T6 Car parking
- T7 Deliveries, servicing and construction

## **Bromley Local Plan 2019**

- 32 Road Safety
- 37 General Design of Development
- 55 Urban Open Space
- 79 Biodiversity and Access to Nature
- 114 New Waste Management Facilities and Extensions and Alterations to Existing Sites
- 115 Reducing Flood Risk
- 116 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- 117 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
- 118 Contaminated Land
- 119 Noise Pollution
- 120 Air Quality
- 122 Light Pollution
- 123 Sustainable Design and Construction
- 124 Carbon Reduction, Decentralised Energy Networks and Renewable Energy
- 125 Delivery and Implementation of the Local Plan

## **Bromley Supplementary Guidance**

Urban Design Guide (Bromley, 2023)

### **7. ASSESSMENT**

#### **7.1 Land Use - ACCEPTABLE**

- 7.1.1 The proposal would provide enhanced facilities associated with the operation of the wider waste/recycling facility, largely comprising works to repair/replace/make good degraded concrete slab, push walls and cladding. The proposal would also improve the fire resilience of the site, through providing enhanced fire suppression systems.
- 7.1.2 Policy 114 of the Bromley Local Plan relates to extensions and alterations to existing waste management facilities. It states that new or extended/altered facilities must demonstrate that they will not undermine the local waste planning strategy and will help the Borough move up the waste hierarchy.

7.1.3 London Plan Policy SI 8 (Waste capacity and net waste self-sufficiency) relates principally, in terms of the assessment of planning applications, to proposals for new waste sites and/or increased capacity of existing waste sites. Policy SI 9 relates to safeguarded waste sites and states that existing waste sites should be safeguarded and retained in waste management use. The intention of the application proposals is to improve the existing operation of the site.

7.1.4 It is noted that representations refer to the desirability of moving the waste/recycling facility, and the potential that the existing site could be redeveloped for housing. The application site is of longstanding established use as a waste/recycling facility and this application can only be determined on the merits of the specific proposals. The specific proposals do not seek to enlarge the site or increase the intensity of the use of the site, but rather to consolidate/repair and improve the existing facilities of the site, to respond to the need for maintenance to ensure that the site continues to be operational.

## **7.2 Design, Scale and Layout - ACCEPTABLE**

7.2.1 The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

7.2.2 London Plan and Bromley Local Plan policies further reinforce the principles of the NPPF setting out a clear rationale for high quality design. Policy D3 of the London Plan states that all development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites. Form and layout should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape. The quality and character shall respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character. locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.

7.2.3 The proposed works would be largely sited well within the site, largely involving underground or ground level works, a significant distance from public vantage points, and within an established waste site. In this context, the functional materials and design, would be of an appearance consistent with the function and visual amenities of the site. It would not appear incongruous or out of character with the site or its surroundings.

7.2.4 The proposed alterations to the front boundary would provide a dedicated pedestrian access to the depot's office and worker space (rather than a public access point) where at present access to the site offices is via the existing vehicular entrance with vehicle barriers. The appearance of the proposed works to the front boundary to provide a separate pedestrian gate would be sympathetic to the existing appearance of the front boundary and would have limited impact on the visual amenity of the street scene.

7.2.5 As originally submitted, the drawings indicated the installation of a 2.4m high green palisade fence round the boundary of the site. Subsequent drawings deleted this plan annotation and the proposal does not include this element of the original submission.

### **7.3 Neighbourhood amenity - ACCEPTABLE**

7.3.1 It is noted that representations have been received which raise on-going concerns associated with the operation of the site and its siting close to residential properties, as well citing potential future concern about aspects specific to the current application – i.e. noise associated with the testing of the pumps.

7.3.2 It is important to take into account that the use of the site is long-established, and it falls to consider the scope of these specific proposals relative to their impacts (if any) on the locality. While concern about the long-standing siting of the facility relative to residential properties is noted, along with the preference for an alternative site to be identified/secured, this is an established site and the application has been assessed on this basis.

7.2.6 Comments from the Environmental Health Officer were sought, and no objections are raised subject to a condition requiring the prior to the commencement of the development, details of the plant noise associated with the pump/fire suppression system operation/testing, along with a scheme of mitigation as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It is considered, taking into account the siting of the development relative to the nearest residential properties, the context of the existing established operation of the site and subject to the recommended condition, that the impact of the proposal on the amenities of nearby residential properties is capable of being satisfactorily controlled. The specific development proposals set out in this application would be of limited direct impact on neighbouring amenity (subject to information on noise as above), notwithstanding that local residents may have concerns over the site's existence and operational impact on the residential area.

### **7.4 Transport and highways - ACCEPTABLE**

7.4.1 The current proposals would not seek to increase the intensity of the use of the site, but rather to repair/replace degraded concrete and hardstanding, along with the push walls and bay cladding, as well as to provide a dedicated pedestrian access to the depot separate to the vehicular access, along with fire suppression measures aimed at reducing the risk of fire at the site.

7.4.2 The Highways Officer was consulted on the application and considers that in view of the proposals being related to enhancements of the existing site rather than intensification or changes to the existing operational management of the site, there would be no objections from a technical highways perspective.

7.4.3 It is understood that concern has been raised regarding the activities of vehicles in the site, referring to the actions of drivers in keeping their engines idling in

queues, and the necessity that Veolia address this directly with the customers/refuse vehicle drivers. That vehicles are at busy times likely to queue within the highway is also of concern, as well as the impact of all of these activities on health and road safety.

- 7.4.4 While these comments are noted, in regard to the specific application proposals, it is not considered that the development scheme would result in any greater adverse impact on transport, parking and highways safety than the existing situation. It may be that residents could liaise with the operators of the site/the Council's relevant officers, to suggest measures related to the operation of the site regarding queue management and circulation within the site. This would not be a planning consideration within the context of this specific application due to the limited scope of the proposals.

## **7.5 Drainage, Flooding and Ecology - ACCEPTABLE**

- 7.5.1 The site lies close to the open Chaffinch Brook, which runs to the east of the waste and recycling centre. The views of the Environment Agency were sought, prior to and during the course of this application, and the Drainage Officer has raised no objections to the proposals. The Environment Agency has welcomed the proposals to upgrade the infrastructure of the site, with the aim of supporting well maintained and managed waste management sites. If permission is forthcoming, a number of conditions have been requested.
- 7.5.2 A local representation referred to the drainage works being largely confined to the southern side of the site (although the submitted drainage scheme indicates much of the work being focussed on the underground pipework and drainage to the south of the surface recycling containers, to the north of the push walls.
- 7.5.3 As previously stated, the drainage scheme has been assessed by the Council's Drainage Officer, and the wider proposals as a whole have been considered by the Environment Agency. No objections have been raised by these consultees, and Members are advised that granting planning permission for the drainage scheme proposed would not preclude any other future submissions relating to other parts of the site, should these be considered necessary/appropriate.

## **7.6 Other matters**

- 7.6.1 As originally submitted the general arrangements plan included reference to the installation of high fencing associated with the boundary of the site, and a concern was expressed regarding the potential safety impact associated with children attempting to climb the 2.4m high fence to retrieve footballs. The scheme was amended at an early stage and the amended general arrangements plan no longer includes reference to boundary fence alterations.
- 7.6.2 It is noted that a representation referred to the desirability of the formation of soft landscaping areas to the front of the site, as well as the potential of operating a second-hand shop from the site to sell discarded items in good

working order/condition. These aspects both fall outside of the specific scope of the application for planning permission. It is not considered that the use of a planning condition to require increased landscaping would meet the tests for planning conditions, in relation to the need to be relevant to the specific proposal.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposal would have no significant impact on neighbouring residential amenity, nor on the visual amenities or character of the site and surroundings.
- 8.2 Subject to conditions, there are no objections to the proposals from the perspective of the Environment Agency. It is not considered that the proposal would give rise to increased risk of flooding, or harm to the watercourse.
- 8.3 The proposals would improve the operational efficiency and structural robustness of the application site, which is a designated waste transfer site.
- 8.4 It is recommended that planning permission be granted.

### **RECOMMENDATION: Application Permitted**

#### **Subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Time limit for commencement**
2. **Accordance with approved plans**
3. **Construction management plan pre-commencement**
4. **Acoustic assessment pre-commencement**
5. **8m set back to the river and no encroachment towards the river**
6. **Contamination – action if previously unidentified contamination is encountered**
7. **No infiltration/drainage systems other than those approved**
8. **Materials to match existing**

#### **Informatives:**

1. **Flood Risk Activity Permit required**
2. **Environmental Permit MP3390EC – permit holder to check whether variations to the permit required as a consequence of the works.**

**And delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director: Planning & Building Control to make variations to the conditions and to add any other planning condition(s) as considered necessary.**