Non-Technical Summary

Frank Mercer & Sons Ltd Chequerbent Works, Manchester Road, Westhoughton, BL5 3JF

1. Introduction

Frank Mercer & Sons Ltd operates a plastic recycling and manufacturing facility at Chequerbent Works in Westhoughton. This application is for a bespoke environmental permit to allow the continued acceptance, storage, treatment and recycling of non-hazardous plastic waste. The recycled material is processed and used in the manufacture of building products.

2. Description of the Activity

The site accepts non-hazardous plastic waste from commercial and industrial sources. Activities carried out on site include receipt and inspection of waste, temporary storage within designated bays, sorting and segregation, shredding and granulation, processing into recycled raw material and manufacture of building products.

Waste is stored on impermeable hardstanding within clearly defined bays. Maximum stockpile sizes and separation distances are controlled in accordance with the Fire Prevention Plan.

3. Environmental Controls

The facility operates under a structured Environmental Management System. Procedures include waste acceptance checks, rejection and quarantine processes, routine inspections, staff training and incident reporting.

All operational areas are located on impermeable hardstanding to prevent contamination of soil and groundwater. Fuel storage is located within a bunded tank providing secondary containment.

4. Fire Prevention and Emergency Planning

A detailed Fire Prevention Plan has been prepared in accordance with Environment Agency guidance. Measures include maximum stockpile limits, minimum 6 metre separation distances, a dedicated quarantine area, routine inspections, 24-hour CCTV security and engineered fire water containment capacity.

Drainage isolation procedures are in place to prevent uncontrolled discharge during emergency scenarios.

5. Emissions and Pollution Prevention

The site does not operate combustion stacks or incineration processes. Potential risks such as fugitive dust, surface water runoff, noise and accidental spills are controlled through housekeeping, monitoring and spill response procedures.

An Environmental Risk Assessment has been completed. Residual environmental risks are considered low.

6. Climate Change and Resilience

The site has assessed risks associated with extreme weather including heavy rainfall, heatwaves, storm events and power disruption. Infrastructure and operational controls are in place to manage these risks and resilience is reviewed annually.

7. Conclusion

The proposed activities support recycling and resource recovery in line with the waste hierarchy. Engineering controls, management systems and monitoring procedures ensure pollution is prevented and risks to human health and the environment are minimised. Overall environmental risk is considered low and acceptable.