Non-technical summary

This permit variation application is for the addition of a second timber treatment autoclave at the Alexanders Timber Design (ATD) site, along with the necessary infrastructure. The new autoclave will process an additional 150m³ of timber per day and will treat the wood to Use Class 1, which is for internal use and kept dry. The treatment process involves:

- Storing untreated timber.
- Loading the timber onto a trolley winch system.
- Moving the timber into the pressure treatment vessel.
- Sealing the vessel and introducing a water-based preservative.
- Treating the timber to allow shallow preservative penetration.
- Removing the chemical using a pump and opening the vessel.
- Using a trolley winch to remove the treated timber.
- Drying the timber on a rack.
- Packaging and storing the treated timber before dispatch.

The treatment uses low pressure, and the preservative chemical Protim ME7 as detailed in within the application documentation.

The treatment chemicals used on site are water-based and classified as Relevant Hazardous Substances (RHS) because they contain biocides and/or fungicides, which can harm the environment if released.

The treatment area has an impermeable surface, a ramped inlet, kerbed perimeter, and containment sumps to capture all treatment solutions under normal and abnormal conditions. Wood preservative deliveries are made by bulk tanker within the bunded area, and chemical tanks have high-level alarms and volume indicators. Anti-foam is delivered in sealed, labelled containers. Timber treatment chemicals are stored in a bunded area, and treated wood only leaves the site once it's dry and drip-free, as per draft Sector Guidance Note 11.

The main environmental risk is the potential release of chemicals or residues to soil, groundwater, or water sources. Controls to prevent this include impervious flooring, kerbs, bunding, and the operation of the process in a covered area.