

**MILTON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE**

**To:** Environment and Sustainability Committee

**Meeting Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**From:** Steve Cox, Executive Director Place and Economy

**Electoral division(s):** Waterbeach, Histon and Impington, Kings Hedges, Arbury, Castle, Chesterton, Abbey, Newnham, Market, Romsey

**Forward Plan ref:** 2020/013      **Key decision:** Yes

**Outcome:** Maintain the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) at its current location on Butt Lane Milton independently from the adjacent landfill site, expand and redevelop the HRC.

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to support the recommendation in 2.5 to take forward design Option 3 for public consultation and planning submission.

Members are asked to delegate responsibility to The Executive Director – Place and Economy in consultation with the chair of Environment and Sustainability Committee to:

- a) work with the landfill operator to minimise the impact of retaining and expanding the Household Recycling Centre at Butt Lane Milton on the landfill site operations,
- b) prepare an application to decouple the Household Recycling Centre from the landfill and make the Household Recycling Centre permanent in its current location,
- c) carry out a pre-application consultation with the local community on the preferred site design,
- d) submit a planning application to retain, expand and upgrade the Household Recycling Centre, and
- e) submit a section 73 planning application to make the necessary amendments to the restoration profiles for the landfill site to allow the Household Recycling Centre to remain in its current location.

<b><i>Officer contact:</i></b>	<b><i>Member contacts:</i></b>
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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Milton Household Recycling Centre (HRC) located on Butt Lane receives the second highest number of visits in the network with over 4,200 vehicle movements per week which equates to 15% of all HRC vehicle movements. Milton handles approximately 10,000 tonnes of waste a year. The site is a single level design that requires residents to climb steps to deposit their waste and recyclables in some of the containers.
- 1.2. The Milton landfill site, including the area occupied by the HRC, is owned by the County Council and leased to FCC Environment on a 99 year lease that will expire in 2092. The lease contains a right for the County Council to occupy part of the land, as reasonably required, for the operation of an HRC.
- 1.3. The current planning consent for the landfill is due to expire in December 2026 and planning conditions require that the HRC is removed within 12 months of expiry to allow that area to be restored.
- 1.4. The planning consent for the HRC at Milton is covered by the consent for the adjacent landfill site. The landfill site operator, FCC Environment, has recently obtained an amendment to extend the planning consent for the landfill until 2026, at which point it is expected that the landfill will have reached the end of its operational life. FCC Environment's amendment to the landfill planning consent automatically extended the life of the HRC until December 2025, after which the HRC would need to be removed to allow the landfill restoration to be completed.
- 1.5. The landfill and the HRC are both located in an area designated as Green Belt land. Planning policy allows for landfills to exist on Green Belt land, but only allows HRCs under extraordinary circumstances. A property search and assessment of available sites ranked the current location of the HRC on Butt Lane as the most suitable location for a HRC to serve residents in the surrounding communities and in the north of Cambridge city.
- 1.6. Estimates indicate that the population of Cambridgeshire will increase by 105,000 by 2031, with a potential increase in waste production of up to 63,000 tonnes. The existing recycling infrastructure and capacity will need to adapt and evolve to manage the estimated increase in population and demand for the HRC service in the catchment area of the Milton site.
- 1.7. Officers have commissioned external consultants with experience of gaining planning permissions on Green Belt land to assist with the preparation of a planning application to decouple the HRC from the adjacent landfill site to allow a continuation of service in line with current growth predictions, and to design enhancements to the HRC to manage the forecast increase in demand.

## **2. TECHNICAL**

- 2.1. A property search was carried out in 2017 (and refreshed in 2019) to identify any suitable land that could be acquired and developed to replace the Milton HRC. The current Milton HRC on Butt Lane and the sites identified in the search were assessed for suitability using the criteria in the Supplementary Planning Document (The Location and Design of Waste Management

Facilities) and the Minerals and Waste Development Framework. The assessment of sites ranked the current location of the HRC on Butt Lane as the most suitable location.

- 2.2. If a planning application to retain an HRC at Milton were successful it is highly likely that conditions would be imposed requiring the HRC to be improved to be suitable for the increased demand that is forecast. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) best practice guidance recommends that higher tonnage sites, such as Milton, are of a split level design to provide ground level access to deposit waste into containers and allow segregation of the public from vehicles servicing the site to minimise disruption and improve site safety. This type of design can also enhance the experience of the public on sites of all sizes, making it easier for both users and staff to focus on recycling.
- 2.3. Planning and design principles have been based on an assessment of forecast population growth and associated site demand over the next 70 years, however the planning application is to be based on projected growth in demand up to 2046 giving an initial forecast over a 26 year period which is in line with future local plan projections.
- 2.4. A process of design iteration has been followed through consultation with Council Officers and Amey as the site operator. Three initial designs, shown in **Appendix 2**, were developed to incorporate the key requirements of ensuring capacity over the extended 70 year period, improved site operations and safety through the use of a split level site and improved segregation of site users and operations, improved customer parking and throughput to maximise site efficiency, increased opportunity for material recycling and reuse (including provision of a more permanent reuse shop) and facilities to allow the acceptance of trade waste from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) for a charge.
- 2.5. An assessment of estimated construction costs suggested that the largest of the three designs is likely to be the cheapest due to the use of a natural drop off in landfall to create a split level site, rather than the use of elevated structures. This design (Option 3 - see **Appendix 2**) is therefore proposed to be taken forward for public consultation and subsequently planning permission.
- 2.6. Supporting baseline studies have been undertaken and will be reassessed against the final facility design when completed. These cover ecological, landscape, transport, visual, noise and air quality impacts.
- 2.7. Agreement is required with FCC Environment regarding the additional land take associated with an expanded HRC and amendments to the landfill restoration profile to allow the HRC to remain in its current location and be extended. Discussions are already underway with FCC Environment.
- 2.8. The landfill restoration profiles will require planning amendment through submission of a S.73 notice to allow the HRC to be retained and extended. Void lost by retaining the HRC will be redistributed over the whole landfill area to support the restoration of the site to agreed landform levels.

### **3. FINANCIAL**

- 3.1. Financial details are confidential and contained within **Appendix 3**.

## **4. RISKS**

- 4.1. There is a risk that the decision on an application to decouple the HRC planning consent from the landfill is called in by the Secretary of State due to the location of the site in an area designated as Green Belt. This could delay a planning decision by approximately seven months.
- 4.2. In the event the planning application to decouple the HRC consent from the landfill and retain the HRC is rejected there is a risk that there will be no HRC site provision for residents in the north of Cambridge City, Milton and the surrounding communities from an HRC site on Butt Lane.

## **5. TIMESCALES**

- 5.1. FCC submit an application to amend the landfill end date - December 2018.
- 5.2. Decision made on FCC's planning amendment – March 2020.
- 5.3. Engagement with South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Council on outline proposals – October 2020
- 5.4. Public consultation on HRC proposal prior to submission of planning amendment – late October 2020.
- 5.5. CCC submit an application to decouple the HRC permission from the landfill and make the HRC permanent –December 2020. (This is subject to a number of milestones being achieved in relation to preparing and submitting the planning application).
- 5.6. Decision made on CCC's HRC planning application – April 2021 to December 2021 (depending on whether the application is called in by the Secretary of State).

## **6. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

### **6.1. A good quality of life for everyone**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **6.2. Thriving places for people to live**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **6.3. The best start for Cambridgeshire's children**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **6.4. Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050**

The function of HRCs is to aid reuse to extend the life of products, improve recycling and prevent landfilling. The approved Climate Change and Environment Strategy identifies that Cambridgeshire's waste is managed in Cambridgeshire and mechanisms are developed to support the local circular economy. Provision of Milton HRC will form part of the circular economy as it collects materials for re-use that can be repurposed and provides a wide range of recycling and composting services to compliment the kerbside collections residents receive. This also reduces carbon emissions from landfilling or the extraction of raw materials using fossil fuels to make new products.

## 7. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1. Resource Implications

The resource implications are set out in confidential **Appendix 3** of the report.

### 7.2. Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 7.3. Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 7.4. Equality and Diversity Implications

A Community/Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and has shown that there are no significant implications within this category.

### 7.5. Engagement and Communications Implications

Prior to submission of a planning application there will be consultation with the local community with an event(s) in Milton.

### 7.6. Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 7.7. Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

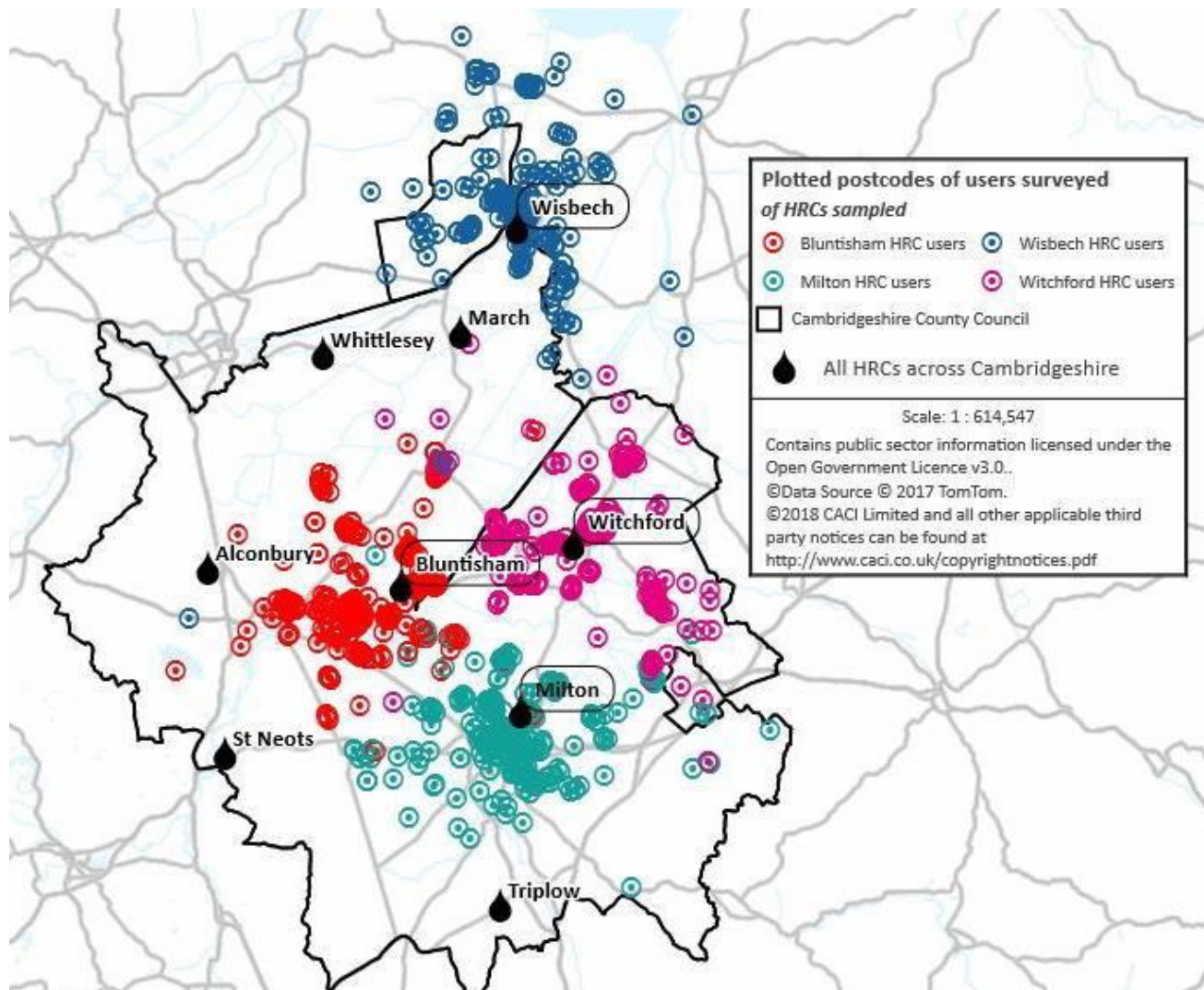
Implications	Officer Clearance
<b>Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?</b>	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood
<b>Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Gus De Silva
<b>Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?</b>	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

<b>Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Elsa Evans
<b>Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Eleanor Bell
<b>Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Quinton Carroll
<b>Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health</b>	Yes Name of Officer: Iain Green

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Household Waste Recycling Centre Site Search Report; Community/Equality Impact Assessment	Room 209 Shire Hall, Cambridge

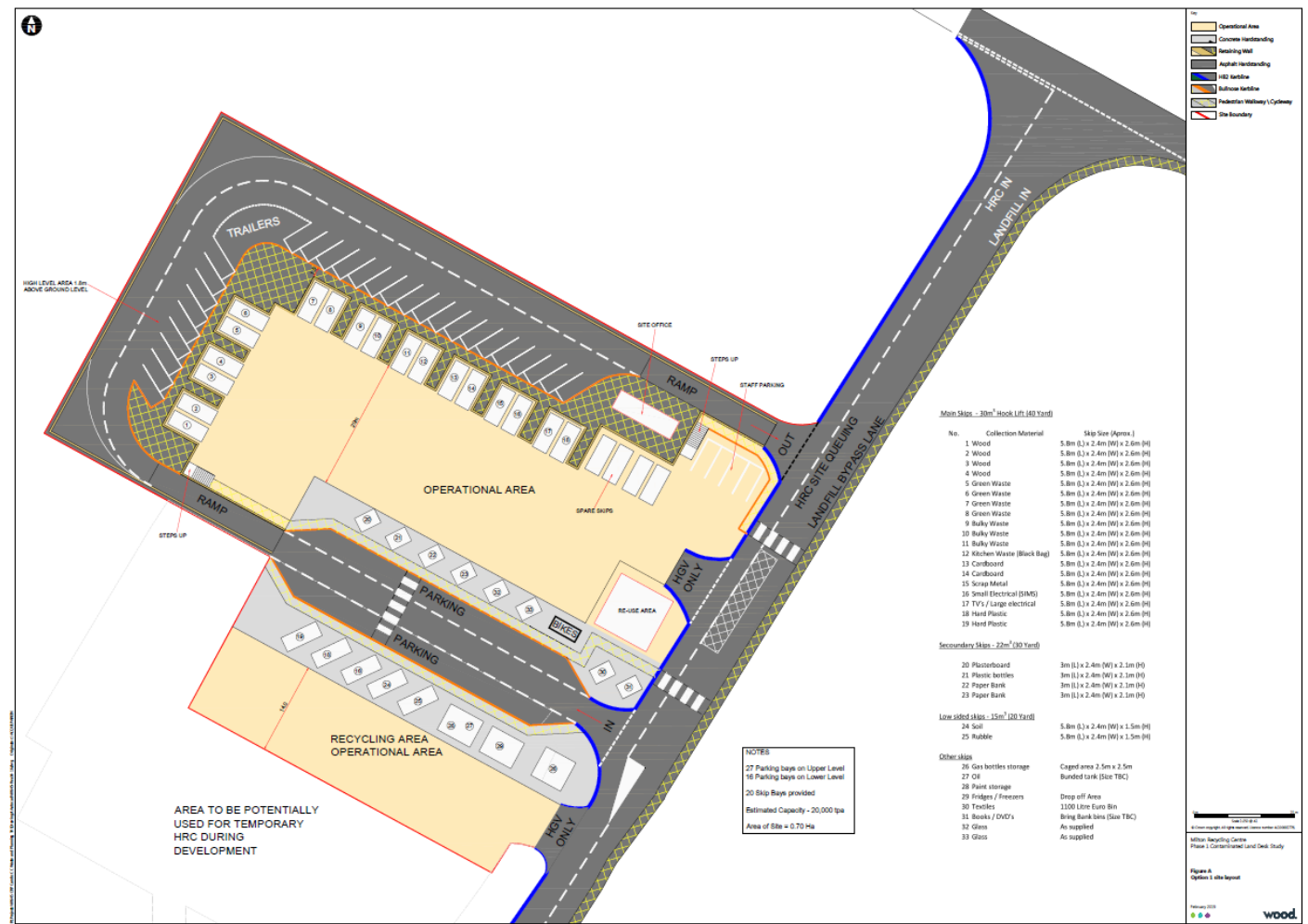
## Appendix 1

### Users visiting the Household Recycling Centres – August 2018 survey results



## Appendix 2

### Option 1 design



Option 2 design

