

# Environment, Development and Transport Committee

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Recycling Centre Sites and Service Provision</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>9 November 2018</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b> The County Council provides 20 recycling centres across Norfolk in its statutory role as a Waste Disposal Authority. Planning for replacement sites and identifying site improvements and service enhancements will allow the delivery of an improved service.	

## Executive summary

The report provides a preferred location adjacent to the Broadland Northway for a replacement for the Mile Cross Recycling Centre in Norwich which is due to close in 2021.

To enhance the network of recycling centres and make them more efficient and suitable for planned growth, a range of proposals is provided, which includes the intention to provide four more reuse shops, to move the Ketteringham Recycling Centre closer to Norwich, to replace Wymondham Recycling Centre with a site to serve the A11 corridor, to improve welfare facilities on sites and install defibrillators at all recycling centres.

The report also outlines the ongoing steps being taken to make the recycling centre service easier for customers to use and provides an update on the recent hazardous waste day events and the possibility that the King's Lynn Recycling Centre may be moved to a site on the same business park to facilitate delivery of an adjacent power station.

### Recommendations:

Members are recommended to:

- 1. Support continued negotiations to agree terms for the acquisition of the preferred site to replace Mile Cross Recycling Centre and ask Business and Property Committee to approve the acquisition.**
- 2. Support the schemes being put forward for the capital programme to replace Ketteringham Recycling Centre, expand Sheringham Recycling Centre and replace Wymondham Recycling Centre.**
- 3. Support an additional reuse shop at Wereham Recycling Centre alongside the reuse shops planned for Wells, Bergh Apton, and Snetterton.**
- 4. Approve the installation of defibrillators across all 20 recycling centres.**

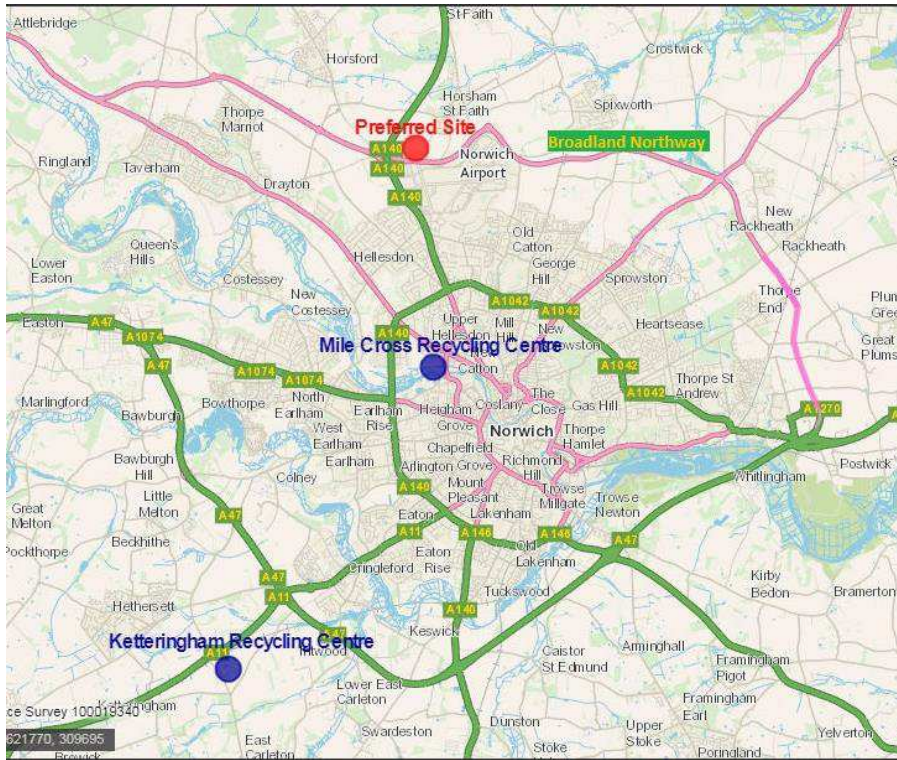
## 1. Proposals

### 1.1. Norwich Recycling Centre Replacement

1.1.1 A replacement for Mile Cross Recycling Centre in Norwich is required from September 2021 when the existing Mile Cross contract comes to an end.

In May 2018 Committee agreed that to secure a replacement site, searches for suitable and deliverable alternative sites should be undertaken.

The preferred location is on land immediately to the north of the Broadland Northway, accessed off the roundabout junction of the A140 and Broadland Northway as shown on Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1 Preferred Site Location**

The site is well located to serve the needs of Norwich residents and future housing growth in the North East Growth Triangle. In addition it is easily accessible for residents along the A140 corridor towards Aylsham thereby improving service coverage for that area.

1.1.2

The site is jointly owned by Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council. An agreement in principle has been reached for the acquisition of part of the site for the development of a recycling centre.

To gain access to the site requires construction of a suitable access road across adjacent land under private ownership which is being promoted by a developer and has been identified within the local plan for business park use. To facilitate delivery of the recycling centre by September 2021 the construction of an access road would need to be brought forward and delivered by the County Council.

It is recommended that members support continued negotiations on this site and that Business and Property Committee is asked to approve the acquisition at their meeting in January 2019. Planning work would be carried out during 2019 with a planning submission expected in autumn 2019.

1.2

**Recycling Centre Service Improvements**

1.2.1

**Additional Reuse Shops**

The County Council already provides a network of nine successful and popular reuse shops and the proposal is to provide four new reuse shops.

In 2017/18 the recycling centres diverted 1,203 tonnes of materials for reuse through a network of nine shops and bric-a-brac collections from the remaining sites. The sale of this material generates an income to help offset the costs of the service and also supports a local charity which is currently the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

Three of the new reuse shops will be delivered at Wells, Bergh Apton and Snetterton Recycling Centres in spring 2019, subject to securing planning consent.

A further reuse shop is proposed for Wereham Recycling Centre which will significantly offset the £14,000 costs of an additional staff member to assist in managing the site operations. Wereham is the busiest part time site and in 2017 received around 44,000 visits, which exceeds some full time sites.

Sites without a reuse shop will be part of a set of trials to maximise income generation from reuse, through exploring the use of auction houses and transporting reuse items to recycling centres with a reuse shop.

#### 1.2.2 Defibrillator Installations

It is recommended that defibrillators are installed at all 20 recycling centres in winter 2018. Sites receive large numbers of visitors (over 1.2m a year) and are generally in isolated locations. Providing defibrillators on sites will provide a local resource for many parts of rural Norfolk. Defibrillators would be registered with the ambulance service so that the local community surrounding the site would benefit. Staff would be trained to use the equipment in emergency situations.

#### 1.2.3 Staff Welfare Facilities

The recycling centre service is provided year round in all conditions and improvements are planned to staff welfare facilities where required to provide suitable drying areas for wet clothing and, where space allows, providing additional space for staff to take their breaks.

### 1.3 Recycling Centre Network Improvements

1.3.1 Following the selection of a preferred replacement site for the Mile Cross Recycling Centre to the north of Norwich, a wider recycling centre improvement programme is proposed. This will lead to the following schemes being put forward into the capital forward plan.

#### 1.3.2 Ketteringham Recycling Centre Replacement

A new improved recycling centre is proposed to replace Ketteringham Recycling Centre and provide a larger, modern site with easy access for residents living in and to the south Norwich. The proposed location is on part of the current Harford Park and Ride site, using available spare space with an allowance for daily peak usage. The site would complement the proposed replacement for Mile Cross Recycling Centre to the north of the Norwich. Subject to securing funding a planning application and design would be progressed in 2019/2020 with delivery of the new site possible in 2020/21 with a continuous service provided.

#### 1.3.3 Sheringham Recycling Centre Expansion

An extension to the existing Sheringham Recycling Centre is proposed to provide a more efficient and modern site with improved accessibility. Planning and design would be progressed in 2019/2020 with delivery of the new site possible in 2020/21.

#### 1.3.4 Wymondham Recycling Centre Replacement

A site for an improved larger recycling centre with easier access along the A11 corridor is being sought for the replacement of Wymondham Recycling Centre to accommodate significant forecast housing growth around Wymondham and Attleborough. Subject to securing funding a planning application and design would be progressed in 2020 with delivery of the new site possible in 2021/22 with a continuous service provided.

#### 1.3.5 South Norfolk Options Appraisal

A replacement site along the A140 corridor in south Norfolk or significant enhancement to the existing Morningthorpe Recycling Centre is required in the longer term to address significant constraints on the existing site and forecast housing growth in the area.

#### 1.4 **King's Lynn Recycling Centre Move**

EP UK Power Development Limited's project to deliver a new power station on land at the Willows Business Park to the south of King's Lynn has led to it identifying a need to move the existing King's Lynn Recycling Centre at that location.

As a consequence it has submitted a planning application to Norfolk County Council for a new recycling centre on the same Business Park on a nearby vacant plot of land owned by the County Council. An application to the Environment Agency for a permit to operate the new site has also been submitted.

The principle of the application is a like for like replacement with a larger reuse shop, improved drainage and staff parking and welfare facilities. A consultation exercise was undertaken to raise awareness and seek feedback on the proposal.

A planning decision is expected in early 2019 and the final investment decision by the developer will be subject to the outcome of Government's electricity capacity market auction. Subject to progress on the power station development the relocated recycling centre is expected to be delivered in summer 2019 at the earliest. The existing site will remain operational until a new site is ready to open to the public.

#### 1.5 **Service Update and Improvements**

##### 1.5.1 **Hazardous Waste Days**

The 2018 hazardous waste events saw an increased focus on reuse, with collections of good quality paint from four recycling centres delivered to Wayland Prison, extending the successful trial from last year which took paint from the event at Ketteringham Recycling Centre.

The hazardous waste events have been provided as a free of charge service for 15 years as a lower cost service option for providing residents with a disposal option for unwanted household chemicals and paint. Data from the recent events is being collated with early indications showing that the events ran smoothly with an estimated 256 tonnes of materials accepted for safe disposal.

##### 1.5.2 **Service Improvements**

Refinements and changes to improve ease of use for service customers is ongoing. Currently areas of focus include:

- a) Pay As You Throw prices were simplified in March 2018. Prices cover the cost of transport and disposal of the material and are per item or sack, e.g. one fence panel is £3, an 80 litre bag of rubble is £3 and metals are free ([www.norfolk.gov.uk/diywaste](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/diywaste)). Previously charges were applied to the size of vehicle or number of axles on a trailer and the new pricing, as well as being simpler also offers better value for customers.
- b) To make assessing site options easier for customers the distinction between 'Main Plus' sites and 'Main' sites will be removed. This will mean sites are either full time or part time, which is simpler to explain and understand and reflects the extension of facilities such as the reuse shop network and Pay As You Throw service which is now available across all

the sites since April 2018.

- c) Sites will also be referred to as 'Recycling Centres' and not 'Household Waste Recycling Centres' or 'Civic Amenity' sites. This change simplifies the branding and highlights the main focus of the service, changes to signage will only be made as required or when opportunities arise.
- d) Service information is being refined and highlighted to emphasise clearly all the household materials that remain free of charge at the recycling centres e.g. mattresses, carpets, fridges and freezers, electrical items and garden waste as well as many other recycled items.
- e) An improved search engine format is planned for the County Council website to help people quickly get a simple answer to whether an item is free or charged for. This will complement a search engine format being developed for the Norfolk Waste Partnership which is in the early stage of development and aims to provide customers with a wider range of options for an item they want to dispose of by prioritising reuse. Rather than just providing the location of the nearest recycling centres it will for example highlight charities that may pick up an item for reuse or accept it at a local charity shop.

## **2. Evidence**

2.1 Norfolk's 20 recycling centres diverted 77.3% of waste from disposal in 2017/18, an increase in performance on the previous year's figure of 75.7%. Service improvements that contributed included:

- a) Operational improvements at Mile Cross Recycling Centre, including a reuse collection and an additional member of staff interacting with the public to separate materials for recycling.
- b) Two new reuse shops at Ashill and Strumpshaw Recycling Centres.

2.2 The annual customer satisfaction rate for 2017/18 established in March showed 85% of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service, compared to 88% in the previous year.

The biggest change to satisfaction levels was linked to opening hours and facilities provided at the site. Although there were no opening hours changes during this period the levels of satisfaction with the service are likely to have been impacted by the communications of changes to the DIY charging policy which were introduced in April 2018.

2.3 A consultation was carried out from 8 June to 27 July 2018 seeking views on what facilities people would like to see at a replacement for the Mile Cross Recycling Centre and received 884 responses. The facilities that were viewed as important or very important to a new site included plenty of parking, bins that were at a lower level (or a raised platform) and provision of a reuse shop.

In addition, feedback was provided on additional services residents would like to see at a new site including hazardous waste and paint disposal. Feedback from the survey will be considered throughout the design phase.

## **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 A saving of £39,000 has been included in the budget for recycling centres in 2019/20 which relates to the introduction of three reuse shops at Wells, Bergh Apton and Snetterton Recycling Centres. Income from reuse shops varies between sites and helps keep the cost of the service down but the average income from a reuse shop in 2017/18 was £13,000 a year. An additional reuse shop at Wereham Recycling Centre would help offset the

costs of an additional member of staff.

- 3.2 £2.75m capital funding has been allocated for the provision of a replacement for Mile Cross Recycling Centre in Norwich. Around £7.2m of additional funding will be sought through the capital programme in January to facilitate the wider improvements and developments to recycling centres as outlined above in Section 1.3 of this report.
- 3.3 The cost of defibrillators and welfare upgrades will be met from the existing revenue budget as part of the ongoing programme of maintenance and improvements at recycling centres.
- 3.4 The potential relocation of King's Lynn Recycling Centre is being funded by EP UK Power Development Ltd.

#### **4. Issues, risks and innovation**

- 4.1 Failure to secure a replacement site for the Mile Cross Recycling Centre would place surrounding sites under pressure with capacity and queueing, which could compromise the County Councils ability to deliver an efficient service under its statutory duty as a Waste Disposal Authority and to comply with planning and permitting requirements.
- 4.2 Failure to secure the preferred site to replace Mile Cross Recycling Centre or reach agreement for delivery of an access road to the preferred site would make the preferred site undeliverable. This would require the project to focus on an alternative site which would not offer the wider benefits associated with the preferred site but would allow for a standalone recycling centre to be put forward for planning.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 Norfolk County Council provides 20 recycling centres across the county for the free disposal of household waste and paid disposal of non-household waste. Trade waste is accepted for payment at seven recycling centres.  
  
The service budget is £6.4m and it handles around 75,000 tonnes of waste a year with around 1.2m customer visits. The busiest site, Mile Cross Recycling Centre, accepts around 19% of that waste.  
  
19 of the sites are operated by NEWS under a service level agreement contract. The Mile Cross Recycling Centre in Norwich is operated by FCC Environment under a contract which ends in September 2021 and £2.75m capital funding has been approved for its replacement.
- 5.2 Committee reviewed the recycling centre service in September 2015 and agreed to increase the number of large modern sites with full recycling and reuse facilities, which included looking at upgrades or replacement sites for Sheringham and Wymondham Recycling Centres.
- 5.3 Charging at recycling centres for all but the smallest amounts of DIY construction and demolition type waste has been in place since 2001. A change in charging policy for construction and demolition waste at County Council recycling centres was introduced earlier this year alongside the removal of the free concession of one item or one 80 litre sack equivalent.  
  
The recent change to charges was made in preference to looking at closing sites or reducing opening hours further as part of the drive to reduce the County Council's costs. The prices now are simpler and better value for money and the Pay As You Throw service for construction and demolition waste has been extended to all sites rather than just the eight larger sites.

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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