

The application seeks permission for the erection of a new tractor storage building, the replacement of a dry mixed recycling enclosure, alterations to the existing office building and changes to the main reception entrance and external pedestrian entrance at the Borough Council Depot located on Knutton Lane.

The site lies within the Urban Area of Newcastle as specified on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map.

**The 8-week period for the determination of this application expires on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025.**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**PERMIT subject to conditions relating to:**

- 1. Time Limit**
- 2. Approved plans**
- 3. Materials**
- 4. Landscaping scheme**
- 5. Biodiversity Net Gain**

### **Reason for Recommendation**

The proposal is of a scale and design which is in keeping with the form, function and character of the existing depot site and would not result in any adverse impact to residential amenity or highway safety.

### **Statement as to how the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with this application**

This is considered to be a sustainable form of development that complies with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and it has not been necessary to request amended plans.

### **Key Issues**

The application seeks full planning permission for a new tractor storage building, the replacement of a dry mixed recycling enclosure, alterations to the existing office building and changes to the main reception entrance and external pedestrian entrance at the Borough Council Depot located on Knutton Lane.

There is a range of existing buildings and external storage on site, with staff and visitor parking to the front and waste and recycling vehicles to the side and rear.

The site lies within the Urban Area of Newcastle as specified on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map. It is close to the town centre of Newcastle, with a mix of residential, community, education and commercial uses surrounding the site.

The main issues for consideration are the design and visual impact, residential amenity and highway safety.

### **Design & visual impact**

Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework 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. Furthermore, paragraph 135 of the framework lists 6 criteria, a) – f) with which planning policies and decisions should accord and details,

amongst other things, that developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Policy CSP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) lists a series of criteria against which proposals are to be judged including contributing positively to an area's identity in terms of scale, density, layout and use of materials. This policy is considered to be consistent with the revised NPPF.

The tractor shed would be located close to the eastern boundary of the site and its modest footprint and mono pitched roof would reduce its overall mass and form. The area for the new garage is currently used for parking of vehicles and containers and the building would help to rationalise the space and provide secure enclosed storage. The scale and design of the building is considered to be in keeping with the character and appearance of existing buildings at the site and it would be well screened from Knutton Lane by the existing storage shed.

The proposed alterations to the pedestrian entrance route to the north of the site adjacent to Knutton Lane include the repositioning of the gate entrance, with an automated sliding gate and reused railings to close off the existing entrance point, with new benches and planting including a new tree, ornamental grasses and wildflower meadow. The proposal would enhance the site entrance and improve access arrangements and seating for staff. The development is relatively modest and would improve the character and appearance of the site frontage.

The proposed alterations to the office comprise new windows and doors along with changes to the main reception entrance, signage and enhancements to surfacing and railings at the front of the reception. The changes to the doors and windows are minor and would be viewed in the context of the existing building. Equally, the changes to the reception entrance would modernise and improve existing arrangements.

The replacement of the Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) waste storage enclosure to the south of the site is required due to the current open site arrangement whereby waste is blown about in the wind. The new enclosure would be positioned in the same location and would be a more permanent design with a canopy to cover and better contain the DMR waste. The replacement enclosure would not have a significant impact on the overall appearance of the site when viewed from public vantage points.

Overall, it is considered that there would not be an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, and the proposal complies with national and local planning policy.

### **Residential Amenity**

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF lists a set of core land-use planning principles that should underpin decision-taking, one of which states that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. It further sets out at paragraph 191 that decisions should also ensure that new development reduces potential adverse impacts resulting from noise and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life.

While the tractor store would be sited closer to the properties in Dunkirk Court than the existing development, the scale and design combined with the enclosure and rationalisation of the existing storage of vehicles in this part of the site would mitigate any impact on residential amenity. The existing boundary treatments would not be affected by the proposal.

Accordingly, it is considered that there would not be a significant impact on residential amenity.

### **Highway Safety**

The NPPF, at paragraph 116, states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Saved Policy T16 of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (NLP) states that development which provides significantly less parking than the maximum specified levels will not be permitted if this would create or aggravate a local on-street parking or traffic problem, and furthermore that development may be permitted where local on-street problems can be overcome by measures to improve non-car modes of travel to the site and/or measures to control parking and waiting in nearby streets. Such a policy is, however, of limited weight as it is not fully consistent with the Framework given its reference to maximum parking levels.

The proposal would not result in an increase in vehicular movements and seeks to make improvements to both pedestrian routes and existing parking arrangements. The Highway Authority raises no objections stating that the proposal is unlikely to generate a noticeable intensification of traffic and therefore would not cause a significant impact on the adjacent highway network.

### **Biodiversity Net Gain**

Paragraphs 180 & 185 of the NPPF set out that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. If development cannot avoid significant harm to biodiversity by adequate mitigation then planning permission should be refused.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is “an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before”. When applying biodiversity net gain principles, developers are encouraged to bring forward schemes that provide an overall increase in natural habitat and ecological features. The aim of BNG is to minimise losses of biodiversity and help to restore ecological networks. Sites must demonstrate a minimum of a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain as calculated using a Biodiversity Metric and a Biodiversity Gain Plan, with habitat used for net gain to be secured for a minimum of 30 years.

The application is accompanied by details of improvements to existing habitat, combining tree, shrub and meadow planting within the pedestrian entrance, and demonstrates onsite BNG of more than 10% can be achieved. The proposed BNG strategy would result in an increase of native species planting and enhancement on site over the existing arrangements. It is recommended that a condition is applied to ensure the implementation and management of the proposed planting.

### **Reducing Inequalities**

The Equality Act 2010 says public authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty in addition to the duty not to discriminate. The public sector equality duty requires public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. If a public authority hasn't properly considered its public sector equality duty it can be challenged in the courts.

The duty aims to make sure public authorities think about things like discrimination and the needs of people who are disadvantaged or suffer inequality, when they make decisions.

People are protected under the Act if they have protected characteristics. The characteristics that are protected in relation to the public sector equality duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

When public authorities carry out their functions the Equality Act says they must have due regard or think about the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

With regard to this proposal, it is considered that it will not have a differential impact on those with protected characteristics.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Policies and proposals in the approved development plan relevant to this decision:-**

[Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy \(CSS\) 2006-2026](#)

Policy ASP5: Newcastle and Kidsgrove Urban Neighbourhoods Area Spatial Policy  
Policy CSP1: Design Quality

[Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan \(NLP\) 2011](#)

Policy T16: Development – General parking requirements  
Policy T18: Development servicing requirements

### **Other material considerations include:**

[National Planning Policy Framework \(2024\)](#)

[Planning Practice Guidance \(2024 as updated\)](#)

### **Relevant Planning History**

15/00615/DEEM3	Proposed materials recycling facility – Approved
18/00511/FUL	Replacement of existing windows and doors with new uPVC double glazed windows and doors – Approved
19/00852/DEEM3	Partial demolition and reconstruction of existing building to accommodate new waste transfer working practices. Construction of new street sweeping bay - Approved
23/00949/DEEM3	Alterations to elevations of middle store consisting of; New roller shutter door, New double pedestrian door and bricking up of windows - Approved

### **Views of Consultees**

**The Highways Authority** has no objections.

**Coal Authority** has no objections.

**Cadent Gas** has no objections.

Comments are awaited from the **Environmental Health Division** and **Staffordshire Wildlife Trust** and if received, will be provided in an update.

### **Representations**

None received.

### **Applicant/agent's submission**

The submitted documents and plans are available for inspection on the Council's website via the following link: -

<http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/25/00120/DEEM3>

### **Background Papers**

Planning File

Planning Documents referred to

**Date Report Prepared**

26 August 2025