

Update on proposals for improved recycling and waste disposal facilities for residents

Walsall Council are preparing planning applications to:

Build

Build a new, larger Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Middlemore Lane.

Move

Move the Waste Transfer Station (WTS) from Fryers Road to Middlemore Lane.

Upgrade

Upgrade the existing HWRC at Fryers Road.

Close

Close Merchants Way HWRC when work at Fryers Road and Middlemore Lane is complete.



Queuing at Merchants Way HWRC

Local Authorities must make planning applications in the same way, and follow the same procedures, as any other person. Once submitted, the planning applications will be determined in accordance with national and local planning policy just like any other planning application. They will be submitted early in 2022.

Pre-planning Public Engagement

During September 2021 we held four public drop-in events, two in Aldridge and two in Bloxwich, and an on-line survey. Overall, 138 residents attended the four events and 150 responses were received via the online survey. This newsletter provides further information about the concerns raised.

There will be further opportunity to comment on the proposals as part of the planning process.

The concerns you told us about

The concerns related to the following issues:

Traffic – You wanted more information about how vehicles will be managed. Additional Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGVs) were the main concern, especially along Leighswood Road and at the junction of Middlemore Lane and Leighswood Road which local residents feel is unsuitable for HGVs. There were concerns about cars using the HWRC causing queues along Middlemore Lane.

Smell & Noise – There were concerns these issues would affect nearby properties.

Other Sites – You said the site was not suitable and other locations should be considered.



What we have done since the public engagement

Traffic and HGVs

In the worst-case scenario the proposals may generate up to 145 council and contractor vehicle movements per day. Typically, this will be during Christmas when grey and green bins may be collected weekly and everyone has more waste to dispose of.

During a normal working week (Monday to Friday) the current average number of council and contractor vehicle movements per day at the existing WTS is 113, of which 85 are HGVs and 28 are non-HGVs.

Some of the vehicles using the existing WTS already use the local roads around Middlemore Lane. On average 24% of our HGVs and 30% of our non-HGV vehicles are in the Middlemore Lane area on a daily basis. This is the equivalent of 20 HGV and 8 non-HGV movements already on the local roads. Some of the new vehicles will be the articulated wagons that take waste away from the site.

The site already has planning permission for industrial/storage uses (planning application reference 17/0485), which is likely to generate up to 100 daily HGV trips.

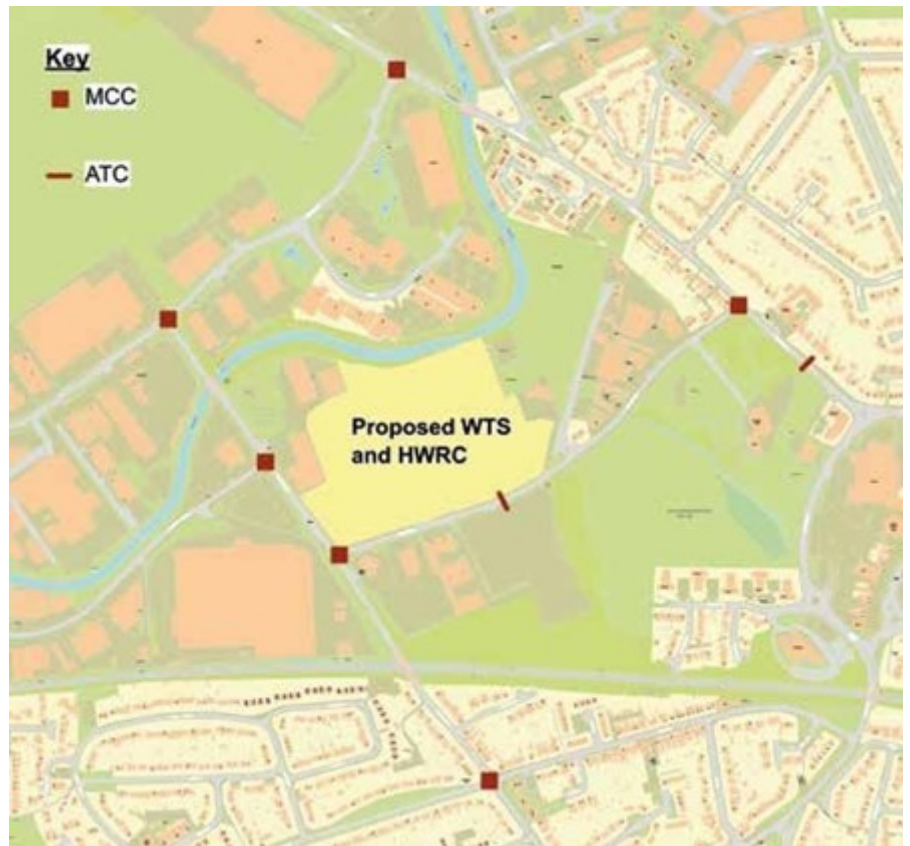
An initial Transport Assessment had already been undertaken that assessed the potential impact of the proposed WTS generating 145 council and contractor vehicle movements per day on the highway network, by looking at the vehicle movements and the capacity of the junctions surrounding the site.

In response to the concerns raised about the junction of Middlemore Lane and Leighswood Road, additional junctions have now been surveyed to consider how the HGVs can be routed.

The surveys were a combination of Manual Classified Counts (MCC) and Automatic Traffic Counts (ATC) and were carried out at:

- Middlemore Lane/ Dumblederry Lane
- Middlemore Lane/ Leighswood Road
- Redhouse Lane/ Dumblederry Lane/ Station Road/ Paddock Lane crossroads
- Dumblederry Lane/ Middlemore Lane West
- Dumblederry Lane/ Westgate/Wharf Approach
- Wharf Approach/ Stubbers Green Road
- Middlemore Lane
- Leighswood Road

We are able to enforce these routes through the site operating rules and other methods.



Middlemore Lane Traffic Assessment locations



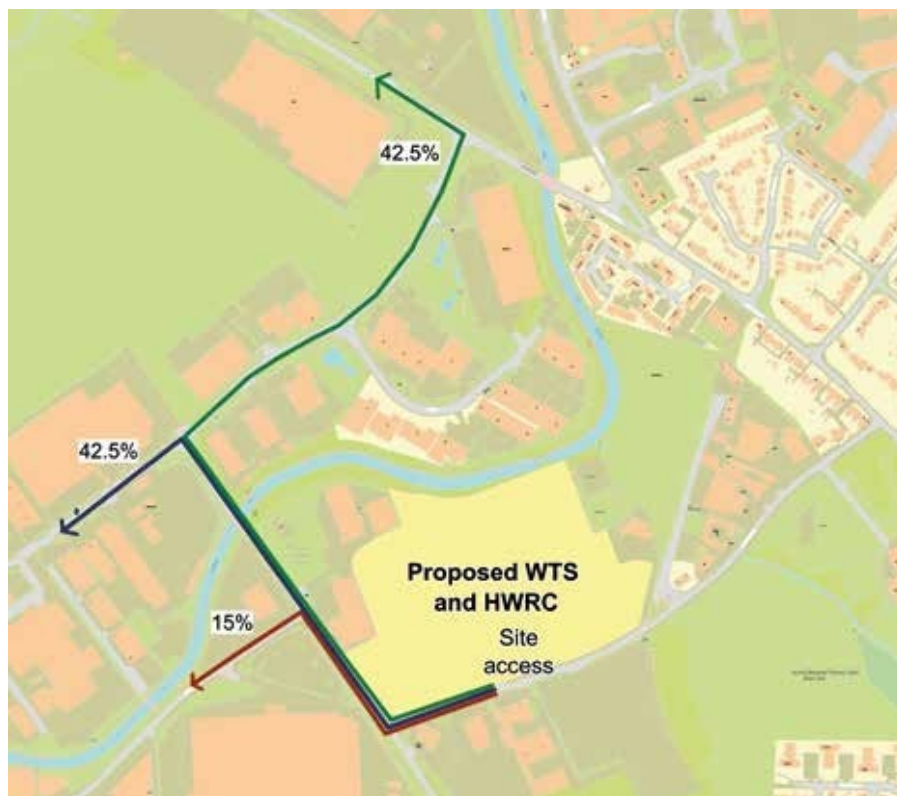
What we propose

We are suggesting that all HGVs leaving the WTS turn right towards Dumblederry Lane.

At the Middlemore Lane/ Dumblederry Lane junction vehicles would turn right, away from the 7.5T weight limited bridge in Dumblederry Lane. From here approximately 15% of HGVs would use Middlemore Lane West with the remaining vehicles split between Westgateor Wharf Approach/Stubbers Green Road. The 15% of vehicles using Middlemore Lane West will be limited to refuse collection vehicles which need to access nearby residential areas.

The routes would be vice versa for those arriving at the site.

We are able to enforce these routes through the site operating rules and other methods.



Routes for vehicles leaving Middlemore Lane

What we know from the transport assessment



The assessment shows:

- During the network AM and PM Peak periods the development will have a negligible impact on the road network.
- The operation of all junctions surrounding the site will not alter significantly as a result of the proposed development.
- The results for all of the assessed junctions including the site access junction demonstrate the forecast demand can be accommodated within the existing network and that the junctions would operate with a significant level of reserve capacity with minimal queuing and delay.
- We expect that HGV routes can be controlled by planning conditions should planning permission be approved.

The transport assessment has calculated the percentage traffic impact at each junction surveyed, showing the impact of the vehicle trips associated with the proposals on the capacity of the junctions surrounding the site.

Traffic – cars visiting the HWRC

Middlemore Lane is very near (670m) to the existing Merchants Way HWRC and visitors to the existing HWRC are already using the road network in Aldridge, so no significant increase in traffic is expected due to the relocation.

We expect that on the whole visitors will continue to use many of the same roads when visiting the new site as they do now.

Merchants Way HWRC is close to Middlemore Lane.

The new HWRCs are being designed to eliminate vehicles queuing on the road outside which is often a problem at both Fryers Road and Merchants Way. At Middlemore Lane there will be four times more queuing capacity within the site than at Merchants Way, and more spaces for residents to park and unload their cars. We don't plan to have every bay available all the time but at busy times the extra bays will be opened to keep queues short.



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Fryers Road concerns

Concerns were raised about the period when Fryers Road closes for redevelopment and everyone has to travel to Aldridge.



Queuing at Merchants Way HWRC

Residents in Aldridge were concerned about the increase in cars, whilst comments from Bloxwich were about a potential increase in flytipping in the area when Fryers Road is closed. A short-term plan will be produced to address the potential problems and may include a pre-booking system or post code arrangements to control access to the HWRCs, temporary changes to the bulky collection service, and contingency arrangements at Fryers Road.

What we propose

How we will deal with smells, noise and safety

The site must have an 'Environmental Permit' from the Environment Agency which, amongst other things, requires us to have procedures in place for the management of dust, odour and noise.

The application for the Environmental Permit is being currently prepared. Dedicated dust and odour management plans are being included as part of the application. The buildings will be equipped with roller shutter doors, which will only be opened when a vehicle enters or leaves the building, to prevent emissions of odour, dust or noise and, if required, odour and dust suppression systems may be fitted. Waste is not processed on the site, which minimises dust, odour and noise. Instead, it is

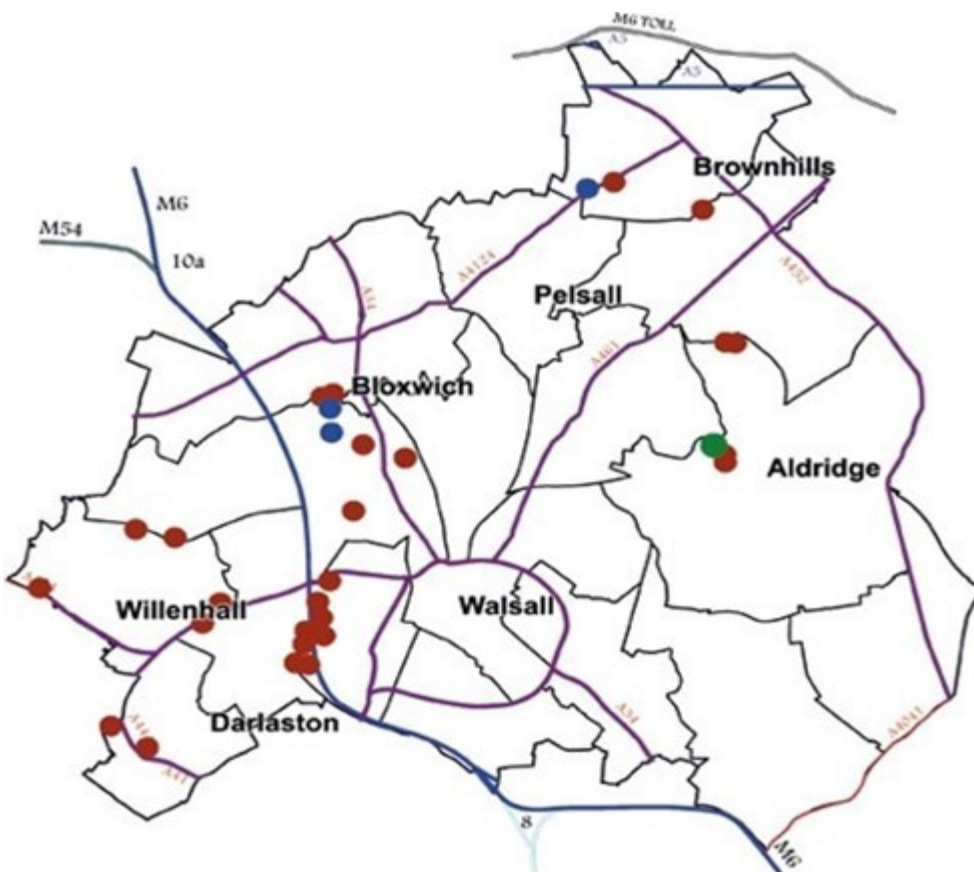
delivered by the refuse collection vehicles and quickly taken off site to treatment or disposal facilities, usually within 24 hours, minimising the risk of odour.

The new WTS will be continually monitored by the Environment Agency, just as the existing one in Fryers Road is currently.

The designs include landscaping and planting areas with native species and trees to combat CO2 emissions, support increased bio-diversity and provide natural barriers between the site and nearby properties. Following the public engagement, the planting will be increased where possible to provide extra screening.



Merchants Way HWRC



- Sites assessed as unsuitable
- Potential sites
- Preferred option – Middlemore Lane

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Why has this site been chosen?

The council has searched for a site, ideally looking for a piece of brownfield land big enough to build a WTS and HWRC on the same site.

A combined site is the most cost-effective option to operate and reduces the vehicle movements across the borough by reducing the amount that has to be moved to the WTS. The searches highlighted there are very limited options for the redevelopment of the facilities.

The sites were assessed against criteria including size, location, accessibility, site availability and financial viability. The below map shows the sites which were considered as part

of the site search exercise, including the preferred sites that were shortlisted.

A site large enough to accommodate a WTS and HWRC was identified at Fryers Road, Bloxwich, not far from the existing Fryers Road facility, but it was sold to other parties. Other options considered included using part of the existing Environmental Depot on Pelsall Road as a WTS, however the site is too small and would require the service to be split over three sites which is uneconomical. The possibility of purchasing other land around the existing Fryers Road facility was also considered. This was not financially viable

to pursue. Finally, Middlemore Lane was selected as it is the only other site that meets the required criteria.

The land in Middlemore Lane is an industrial site used by McKechnie Brass Ltd for many years. Since they closed the site has been derelict and subject to anti-social behaviour. This previous use makes it a brownfield industrial site. The buildings on site have now been demolished and the site remediated under the existing planning permission (reference 17/0485).

Proximity to residential areas

Concerns were raised that the site is unsuitable as it is close to residential areas.

The nearest residential properties are around 350 metres away in The Briars and Bonner Grove. By comparison the nearest properties to Merchants Way are

approximately 110 metres away in Lingmoor Grove and the nearest ones to Fryers Road are 193 metres away in Leamore Lane.

The nearest school to the new site is Aldridge School which is around 910 metres away.

All other schools are more than 1km away. By comparison the nearest school to Merchants Way, Leighswood School, is approximately 505 metres away while the nearest school to Fryers Road is approximately 456 metres away.

Economy, Environment and Communities

Clean and Green Services
The Environmental Depot
200 Pelsall Road
Brownhills
Walsall WS8 7EN