

By: Mike Austerberry, Corporate Director, Enterprise and Environment

To: Bryan Sweetland, Cabinet Member for Environment Highways and Waste

Subject: Authority to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of land at Brunswick Road, Ashford.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks approval for the making of a compulsory purchase order for land at Brunswick Road, Ashford to enable the provision of a waste transfer station. In accordance with the Property Management Protocol, the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform has been obtained.

Introduction

1. Under the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Kent County Council as the waste disposal authority has a duty to arrange for the disposal of controlled waste collected in its area by the waste collection authorities. In the absence of a waste transfer station, where waste and recycling can be transferred to larger vehicles (bulked-up) for onward haulage, waste is transported in refuse collection vehicles to the Allington Energy from Waste plant and other destinations.
2. The Council's Medium Term Strategy, Bold Steps for Kent has as one of its aims; "Delivering the themes and priorities set out in the Kent Environment Strategy". This includes (EF3.2) reducing key wastes going to landfill and (CC 5.2) cutting carbon emissions. This also contributes directly to two ambitions in the Community Strategy – Vision for Kent; "Grow the Economy" and "Put the Citizen in Control". Similarly, the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007 contains policies supporting the provision of waste infrastructure.
3. As a result there are financial, logistical and environmental consequences. Haulage in refuse collection vehicles is inefficient and time consuming compared to bulk haulage; deploying vehicles away from local collection rounds. Importantly, the provision of a local waste transfer station by Kent County Council will support improvements in Ashford Borough Council's recycling rate from 15.9%, being the lowest rate nationally, to achieve a rate above 40% which is consistent with that of other local authorities in Kent.
4. Since 2007/8 Kent County Council has been searching for a potential waste transfer station site in the Ashford area. Multiple sites have been

identified as unsuitable for a range of reasons e.g. highway network access limitations and physical constraints.

5. Kent County Council operates a Household Waste Recycling Centre at Brunswick Road, Ashford. This facility is already overstretched with frequent queues of cars using a narrow shared access. A further problem is the health and safety risks posed by heavy goods vehicles and private cars using the same access. However, an adjacent piece of undeveloped land already in Kent County Council ownership in conjunction with the piece of land to be purchased can be utilised to produce an operational waste transfer station and significantly improve the Household Waste Recycling Centre.

6. A new access route is required between Brunswick Road and the land already owned by Kent County Council. This will bring a brown-field site back into use on the existing Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate. It will reduce the cost total land acquisition costs which would be associated with a completely new location to provide a transfer station and a replacement household waste recycling centre. Further, by utilising the entire site more effectively it will also be possible to provide a household waste recycling centre with improved access, greater vehicle throughput capacity and fewer health and safety risks.

7. The land which is proposed as the new access route is the subject of the proposed compulsory purchase order. It runs from Brunswick road to the land owned by Kent County Council, and would be sufficient to provide the necessary weighbridge. It has been sold relatively recently and the new owner is aware of the proposed compulsory purchase order. A planning application for the development of the new waste transfer station and the improved household waste recycling centre has been submitted.

8. It is intended that the development will be completed ahead of Ashford Borough Council's re-letting of its household waste collection contract in 2013, such that the contract specification can take account of the local waste transfer facility, and enable redeployment of refuse collection vehicles to provide kerbside recycling.

Financial Implications

9. The indicative land value through compulsory purchase is up to £450k including compensation costs. There is an existing provision of £5m in the waste capital programme for the provision of the Ashford waste transfer station. The associated revenue costs will be met from the existing budgets in the medium term financial plan. The business case is predicated on the closure of the obsolete Hawkinge incinerator site, which is currently operated as a legacy waste facility, once the Ashford waste transfer station is operational.

Customer Service and Delivery

10. A new waste transfer station and household waste recycling centre with greater capacity will improve the recycling capability in the locality, both at the facility itself and through kerbside collections.

Environmental and sustainability implications

11. The environmental impact is positive in respect of the fact that refuse would be bulked for onward haulage and refuse collection vehicles would not have to drive the 40 mile round trip to Allington on a daily basis and there would be a saving of an estimated 400 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. Additionally, the design of the new transfer station buildings will incorporate appropriate environmental features.

Consultations

12. Consultations on the proposal to build a Waste Transfer Station are being undertaken as part of the statutory process of obtaining planning permission.

Local Members

13. Local Members have been informed and are consulted as part of the planning application process for the changes to the site.

Conclusion

14. As set out above a household waste transfer station and an improved household waste recycling centre are required to serve the Ashford area. If it was to be located on a completely new site it would be more expensive than the solution proposed, because it would not bring back into use existing Kent County Council owned derelict land. In any case extensive searches have failed to identify any feasible sites with the prospect of obtaining planning permission and especially in relation to highways issues for freight vehicles. The alternative of continuing as previously is untenable as it would not support Ashford Borough Council in providing kerbside recycling.

Recommendations

15. In the light of the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform, The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste is requested to:

- (1) Approve the making of a compulsory purchase order for land at Brunswick Road, Ashford for the provision of a waste transfer station to serve Ashford area; and
- (2) Delegate to the Corporate Director of Enterprise and Environment and the Director of Law and Governance the authority to execute the compulsory purchase order or to acquire the land by informal negotiation.

Background Documents: Statement of Reasons for the compulsory purchase order

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