

<b>Subject:</b>	Waste Transfer Station	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Full Council	<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Environmental Services	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	Yes	Attached: Yes
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## 1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 That Council agrees, to move forward with the redevelopment of Plot 4 on Futures Park and builds a new Waste Transfer Station.
- 1.2 To deliver this, that the Council enters into an agreement with Caulmert Ltd to project manage the build process via a compliant procurement framework.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Head of Legal, Director of Resources and Head of Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services to procure any consultants and Contractors necessary and enter into any agreements related to this project.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The current arrangements for Waste Processing are not tenable past April 2026. Due to the changes in the Waste Exemptions Systems – detailed in the “Reforming the waste exemptions system” Policy Paper published on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 by Central Government.
- Options for utilising bulking up facilities at either Farrington or another central East Lancashire location are not financially sustainable.
- The existing Waste Transfer Station at Henrietta Street could be redeveloped to accommodate Food Waste, Recycling and other Waste Streams but there is considerable local opposition and site risks along with significant additional cost.
- The Futures Park site is owned by RBC and a realistic proposal addressing neighbourhood and environmental concerns has been tabled.
- Planning Permission has been secured on the site.
- A decision to move forward is required to minimise significant additional costs from any delays.
- The estimate of the capital cost to deliver a new transfer station is currently in the region of £6.2m, plus ancillary costs
- A Waste transfer station at Futures Park will deliver a revenue saving for the Council currently estimated to be c.£1.2m.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 **Why is a new Waste Transfer Station needed** – To give some background, Rossendale Borough Council has operated a Waste Transfer Station at its Henrietta Street Depot since 1997, this operation is licenced by the Environment Agency and the licence was granted in 1997. The purpose of a Waste Transfer Station is to “bulk up” the Waste for transport to the final processing centre and this minimises the number of vehicles on the Road.

In the case of Rossendale, the Council is responsible for the collection of waste and recycled material in a range of vehicles including 26-tonne wagons. In addition the Council deal with cleansing materials including litter bins, road sweeping and leaves alongside some household waste from remote/difficult to access properties. The vehicles return to Henrietta Street and offload the materials so it can then be loaded onto vehicles including 44-tonne articulated lorry and taken away for processing to a range of sites outside of the borough.

Currently the majority of general (residual) waste is taken directly to landfill by our refuse wagons. Lancashire County Council (LCC) (who are responsible for disposing of waste) have taken the decision (from April 2026) to no longer use Whinney Hill landfill and have instructed the Council to take all waste to either Farrington (in Leyland) or another central location in East Lancashire (to be confirmed by LCC). As a result of this decision, the service is faced with the decision to either drive every refuse wagon to Leyland (or other location specified by LCC) when it is full or bring the waste back to our transfer station to be loaded on a large articulated lorry which will then take it to Leyland (or another location specified by LCC) for processing.

In addition to this, the waste service currently collects all food waste as part of general waste collection. Central government has introduced the requirement to collect food waste separately from April 2026 and as such the Council will be introducing this with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.

The Council's current waste transfer bays and skips at Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station are outside and open to the elements which results in a number of issues that the waste service are currently managing as per its waste transfer licence which is regulated by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency has proposed changes to waste permitting meaning that the Henrietta Street WTS will no longer be compliant unless significant money is invested to move waste inside. This approach was rejected following the Planning Consultation at the end of 2024.

Following the decision to not proceed with the redevelopment of the waste transfer station at Henrietta Street, it was agreed to move the focus to Plot 4 Futures Park. The Futures Park site had already been identified as a possible location as part of the scoping exercise conducted by LCC and was found to be suitable. Caulmert were appointed in April 2025 to undertake the RIBA 0-3 design stages, this included site feasibility, initial designs and the preparation of associated documents to make a planning application, which was following approval of £6m in the capital budget for the 2025/26. This budget will have to slip into 2026/27 and will be pending appropriate planning approvals being in place.

### 3.2 **LCC Offer** – LCC has offered a temporary solution to the problem of processing residual waste only resulting from LCC's decision to end the contract at Whinney Hill.

The LCC offer has been made for a period of 2 years (with a 1+1 extension possible) and would cover from April 2026 to April 2028 for the disposal of residual waste only. Government policy has expanded the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) to include incinerators from 2028, meaning that there will be a new carbon tax on incinerated waste. LCC have made it clear that to minimise the impact of this new tax it is essential that they undertake moisture loss at Farrington for residual waste prior to it being incinerated, as such all residual waste will need to be transported to Farrington by 2028.

Accepting this offer would still leave the challenge of dealing with food waste and would not address the issue of Environment Agency regulatory changes relating to Henrietta Street. The Council would be faced with the scenario of having to transport food waste, recycling, street sweepings and public litter bin / fly tipped waste to a central location / Farrington at significant additional cost.

Cllr Roberts from LCC has recently written to RBC advising that if RBC were to build a WTS, LCC may be unable to collect as it would be “outside the approved LCC infrastructure”. LCC Officers have since confirmed that there is no “LCC approved infrastructure” but they could instruct us to take waste directly to Farrington (or another location). RBC have confirmed that LCC Officers were not aware of this letter and no other Borough Councils have received it – including Burnley, who are also in the process of building their own WTS.

### 3.3 Cost assessment of options -

Annual costs				
Rossendale	Delivery of all waste within 30 miles	Farrington Costs	New Bacup Waste Transfer	Current
Residual & Recycling Waste	£2,811,682	£3,661,251	£1,877,008	£2,690,964
Food Waste	£856,296	£1,290,339	£573,454	£744,640
Bulky, sweepings, fly tip and contractor transport	£1,100,638	£1,331,166	£658,435	£838,567
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,768,615.63</b>	<b>£6,282,755.38</b>	<b>£3,108,897.44</b>	<b>£4,274,171.04</b>
<b>Cost difference to Current</b>	<b>£494,444.58</b>	<b>£2,008,584.34</b>	<b>£1,165,273.60</b>	
<b>Cost difference to New Bacup WTS</b>	<b>£1,659,718.19</b>	<b>£3,173,857.95</b>		<b>£1,165,273.60</b>

## 4. DETAILS

### 4.1 Design & Build Process

The consultants currently engaged on the project (Caulmert) have successfully completed the RIBA 0-3 design phases and are currently concluding the RIBA 4 stage. Following the successful granting of planning permission the Council is now in a position to instruct main contractors, with a view to them commencing work on site in the new year. It is proposed to either engage Barnfield Investment Properties under the existing Joint Venture with the Council or conduct a tender exercise. Specialist equipment including the active carbon filtration and fire suppression will be sub-contracted to specialist providers.

Caulmert will be retained via a compliant procurement framework (Bloom) to manage the RIBA 5 – 6 stages of the build process, ensuring contract and quality compliance and ensuring budget adherence. Assuming building works can commence in the early new year the service hopes to be operational by the end of 2026.

### 4.2 Operating Model

The building will be utilised primarily as a waste transfer station, it will store waste collected on a daily basis by refuse vehicles for bulking up and collection for onward transfer to LCC's designated waste disposal location the following working day. All waste will be loaded and

unloaded inside of the waste building and will be segregated into the different waste streams in specific bays.

The building will also house a workshop facility to maintain the Council's fleet of vehicles along with the Green Spaces equipment. Green Spaces equipment will be stored securely at this site whilst the refuse vehicles will be stored overnight at the old LCC highways depot. Staff welfare facilities will be located at the old LCC highways depot for the Waste Crews.

The facility will operate Monday to Friday from 6.30am until 5pm, there will be occasional use of the site on Saturdays by Town Centre Caretakers. Vehicles will leave the site around 7am, returning to unload between 11am and 12 noon and then returning at the end of the day between 3.30 and 4pm. This is outside the peak rush hour times of the local roads and there will be minimal increases in vehicle movements as the majority of vehicles already pass the site to access the wider valley.

#### **4.3 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

Whilst the management arrangements for the collection of waste in Rossendale will undoubtedly change under any of the models of LGR the practical day to day arrangements are unlikely to change significantly.

Any new council structure will still operate as a waste collection authority and will have the responsibility of collecting domestic waste from local residents. The collection arrangements will still involve a fleet of RCV's (and other vehicles) collecting waste from doorsteps (and other locations). The nature of RCV's will remain unchanged, they will still be limited in size (given the nature of the valley and local roads) and will still be inefficient with limited range (Diesel, Hydrogen or EV) in comparison to 44 tonne articulated lorries.

The nature of the Rossendale Valley means that it would not be economically viable to site a full waste disposal facility in the borough and as such waste will need to be transferred out of the valley. Even if the new structure is a waste disposal authority all waste will need to be taken out of Rossendale for onward processing.

As can be seen from the above costings, whether the ultimate disposal site is Farrington or is on the M65 Corridor (at best) it is still more cost effective to bulk up the waste locally and transport it via articulated lorries out of the valley (rather than running individual collection vehicles). Indeed, this will deliver an overall recurrent revenue saving. It is also (for the same reasons) significantly better for the environment, reducing carbon emissions.

In addition to the obvious financial and environmental benefits the development of a modern waste transfer station will also help to protect front line jobs under LGR. It is likely that a local WTS would result in front line collection staff being based from the facility.

#### **4.4 Design Considerations**

Noise - The proposed facility will store waste inside a purpose-built building, with noise screening to minimise any disturbance. Since waste is not processed on site, the main source of noise will come from vehicle movements. These will be significantly reduced because loading and tipping will happen inside the building.

Odour - The building will be equipped with a specialist odour control system which will filter the air inside the building through charcoal filters. All waste will be processed within the facility and therefore, odours will be kept to a minimum.

Vermin - The site is designed to minimise the risk of vermin. As waste is stored inside the facility, it will be enclosed and protected from birds, rodents, and other pests. As the building is fully enclosed, access can be closely monitored and managed, making vermin easier to control. In addition, the waste will only be stored for short periods which further reduces the risk of vermin.

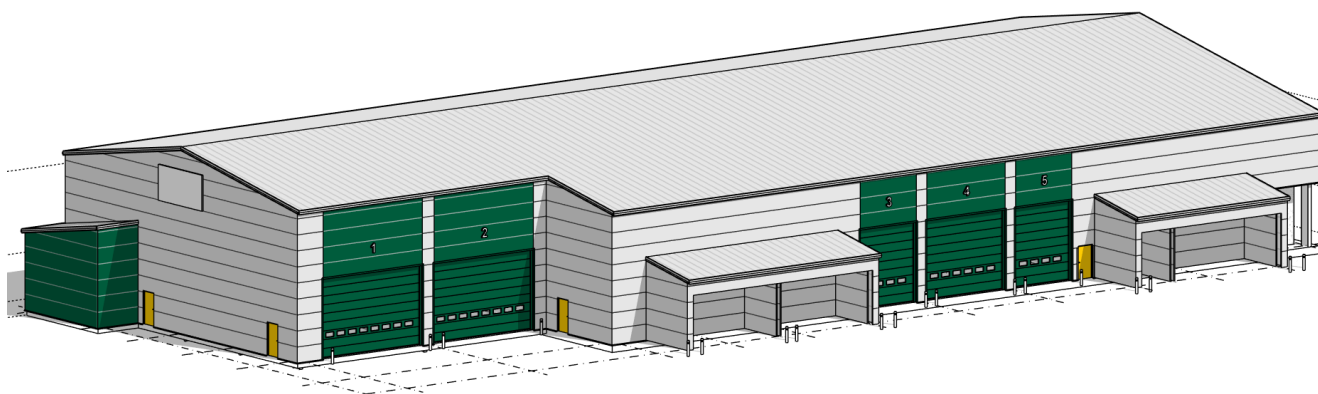
Environment - The facility will be built to meet the latest Environment Agency design standards, including a sealed high-strength concrete floor, push walls, and a specialist drainage system with interceptors, it will be a “bunded” building which will contain any liquids. The building will use solar panels to supply electricity. By keeping waste processing on site and reducing the number of vehicle trips, the facility will significantly lower fuel use and reduce the Council’s carbon footprint.

Fire - The new development has specialist fire suppression systems designed into the building. The system is based around a water canon model, which uses significantly less water than a traditional sprinkler system and as such minimises any pollution risk, fire prevention water will be retained in the building for appropriate disposal.

#### 4.5 Images







## 5. RISK

All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Environment Agency introduces the proposed changes to Waste Permitting meaning that the Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station is no longer compliant.
- Project experiences unexpected ground conditions at site
- Build element of project takes longer than forecast
- Issues obtaining EA Waste Permit
- Covenant restrictions relating to Homes England
- Build budget exceeded
- LCC refusal to collect from new Transfer Station

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 As demonstrated in the above information, the current waste transfer arrangements will not be fit for purpose from April 2026 and change will need to be implemented. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to identify the options available that are deliverable within the required timescales.

Any delay to decision making will result in significant and recurring monthly expenditure which would compromise the sustainability of the Council in the near future. It is essential that a decision is reached to move forward with the scheme to minimise costs and ensure continued

service delivery to local residents and the continued delivery of our statutory duty as a waste collection authority.

Whilst local government reorganisation will undoubtedly result in significant changes it has been clearly demonstrated that this solution will be the most cost effective and environmentally friendly solution to an ongoing waste collection requirement irrespective of the organisational structure.

## **7. FINANCE**

- 7.1 The financial implications of delivery or otherwise of a new compliant waste transfer station are included within the report. There will be some ancillary fees such as legal, project management and design fees which are as yet unevaluated which will need to be included in the final budget proposal subject to appropriate planning regulations compliance.

## **8. LEGAL**

- 8.1 Legal implications are covered in the body of the report. Under the terms of an existing joint venture agreement the Council is required to approach Barnfield Investment Properties in the first instance with respect to any opportunity such as this.

## **9. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 None

## **10. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 10.1 The proposed solution will deliver significant revenue savings to this and any future authority and the capital expenditure could be recovered in under 3 years when compared to the solution of delivering waste directly to Farrington.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	RBC Planning Portal