



North Northamptonshire Council HWRC Options Appraisal

HWRC Option Appraisal

North Northamptonshire Council

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Basis of Report

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Executive Summary

SLR Consulting Ltd has been commissioned by North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) to conduct a review of its Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) ahead of the expiry of the current contract provisions. The service review and options appraisal has been developed using information gathered from site visits to each of the facilities during July 2023 and is supported by information supplied by NNC and broader desk-based research. A summary of the project deliverables are detailed below:

To explore whether:

- The current service has capacity to meet the needs of a growing population in North Northamptonshire;
- The current infrastructure will be fit for purpose up until 2040;
- There are opportunities and any implications for financial savings for NNC; and
- Options exist to improve and future-proof the HWRC.

To review and assess:

- In-house or outsourced delivery models;
- The optimum location and number of HWRCs to meet future service requirements in accordance with industry standards, best practice, affordability, and the Council's local requirements;
- Current opening days and hours to maximise efficiency, increase user/customer satisfaction;
- Electronic booking system or other similar options to manage access at peak times and discuss associated benefits (advantages) or detriment (disadvantages);
- The current e-permit scheme and recommend other schemes and their benefits; and
- Options for the locations of any new/replacement facilities

To Provide Councillor engagement session(s)

- These were delivered in the form of two Councillor workshops held on 19 July 2023 and 4 September 2023

Service background

The existing HWRC service is a product of a long-term legacy contract developed and procured by Northamptonshire County Council. During this term the sector and demands on HWRC services have changed considerably. The advent of new and emerging legislation and broad financial pressures experienced by Councils have resulted in the need for HWRC facilities to adapt and change significantly within the last decade.

For the HWRCs located within North Northamptonshire this has involved a reduction in the original contracted requirements, including the closure of the Wollaston HWRC, reduced opening hours and removal of meet and greet services across all remaining sites to make cost savings.

The current network of HWRCs is well distributed to serve the local population and in many areas deliver good quality and value for money services. Two of the four HWRCs (Corby and



Wellingborough) need immediate attention to ensure they are retained and enhanced to manage the demands of the coming new services period.

Approach

This report contains a detailed review of each of the four HWRCs and assesses the current provision, performance, and policy approaches to produce current service assessments. The assessment information is then used to explore options for the future service delivery beyond the expiry of the current contract. A summary of each of the key report areas are detailed in the table below.



Report section	Summary findings
<p>HWRC network assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current annual arisings from the HWRC service comprise c.27,000 tonnes of a total of c.170,000 tonnes of materials managed by NNC (16%). Typically, the HWRCs on an annual basis achieve a reuse, recycling, and composting performance of >65%. • Analysis of drive times suggests that the existing locations of HWRCs are good and can be accessed by the vast majority of residents within 20 minutes (c.95%). • 98% of the NNC population are located within 30 minutes of a HWRC within the NNC area. • Modelling indicates that the existing network capacity is acceptable based on current demand but would not cope with a reduction from four to three HWRCs in their current design. None of the remaining facilities could feasibly absorb the forecast displaced material volumes should a site close. • Forecast housing growth data provided by NNC indicates a significant increase in housing numbers and consequential service pressures over the next envisaged service period. • Waste flow modelling detailed in Section 7.3 suggests a potential increase in tonnage demand on the HWRC service of c.26% /c.7,000 tonnes by 2040, which will put pressure on the existing HWRC provision and layout configurations. Details of potential adaptations to existing HWRCs to respond to this demand are detailed in section 5.0
<p>Benchmarking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the purpose of comparison, SLR worked with the Council to identify a selection of local authorities which are considered to be reflective of the circumstances applicable to North Northamptonshire, and therefore provide a reasonable basis for benchmarking of the HWRC service which the Council currently provides. The level of feedback provided by other Councils was poor. Therefore, supplementary information was used to produce comparisons. • Based on the total area served and the total number of households alone, the current provision/ number of HWRCs provided by NNC appears reasonable in comparison to similar/ benchmarked Councils. Focusing on total households per HWRC, NNC does have one of the higher ratios (One HWRC per 39,000 households) which coupled with anticipated housing growth could suggest the need additional HWRCs in future. However, the need for new infrastructure will be a product of the Councils ability to deliver short to medium term improvements at its existing HWRCs.



Report section	Summary findings
Best practice review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HWRC service, based on a range of qualitative and quantitative assessment criteria is deemed to provide good performance but could benefit from some improvement in some areas to meet best practice. Namely the provision of split level facilities and the operation of meet and greet services to improve performance. • Corby and Wellingborough HWRCs are not split level and are constrained to challenging site footprints. This makes access for site users and adaptation to future service demands more challenging. • There are currently no controls over cross border HWRC usage from neighbouring Councils. This represents a point of exposure to NNC in respect of cost control with several surrounding Councils implementing resident only schemes. Bedford, Milton Keynes, and Rutland Councils all require proof of residency to access their HWRC facilities.
Infrastructure assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of the existing HWRCs present opportunities for adaptation and expansion to cope with future service demands. • Changes at the Corby and Wellingborough HWRCs should be prioritised to ensure the service is capable of managing future demand. These include the expansion of the existing site areas to develop improved access and future proofing capabilities. • Indicative costs to deliver the basic level of improvements required to manage future demand range between £1.5m-£3m in the medium term (2-5 years).
Future service delivery options appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of forecast cost differences between contracted out and insourced options indicated that in both instances the cost of new service provision is anticipated to increase. • Contracted out services are projected to cost c.10% more than the service baseline and a fully insourced service c.15-17% more per annum. • A high-level assessment of the likely governance, transition arrangements, projects and activities required to insource HWRC services suggests a period of between 18-24 months as a minimum would be required to allow NNC to bring the service in house.

Recommendations/ next steps

Based on the assessment and options appraisal conducted, the following recommendations have been provided:

Short term (0-1 years)

1. Based on the time available until the current contract expiry and the limited resources available within the existing waste service structure dedicated to the HWRCs, bringing the service fully inhouse appears to be a significant challenge for the Council. The formation of the two unitary Councils and disaggregation of the waste teams has produced a knowledge and capability gap within this particular area of service delivery.



This represents a significant barrier to the development of an adequate programme with supporting projects to deliver the change from the existing contracted service delivery model to a fully insourced function within the remaining time period.

Based on the information gathered as part of this commission and the high-level modelling and assessment conducted it appears prudent that based on the timescale, internal resources and capability, and indicative cost differences, that a contracted service delivery model should be the preferred approach to the next phase of service delivery.

Should the Council's objectives regarding delivery of inhouse services become more pronounced then the term of any future contract could be designed accordingly. This would allow a suitable transition period for the Council to adequately prepare and support inhouse delivery.

2. A rationalisation of the existing provision is not recommended in the immediate term. This is based on the anticipated future demands as a product of a growing population within the Council area. Benchmarking also suggests the current HWRC provision in NNC, based on a total number of households per HWRC basis, appears comparable to similar geographic and demographically matched Councils.
3. Explore and secure an extension to the Corby HWRC lease. The term of the lease is linked to the end of the existing contract. It is understood that Council officers have commenced engagement with the landlord. Confirmation of the use of the facility (or not) should ideally be in place at the point of formal tender release to provide certainty over bidding

Medium term (2-5 years)

1. It is recommended that the Council engages and establishes a formal business case approach to delivering infrastructure improvement over the short and medium term. Indicative costing suggest improvements with a range of £1.5-£3m would be required to deliver the immediate improvements required at Corby and Wellingborough.

Securing funding for these improvements could involve entry of schemes into the internal Council capital programme or exploring the delivery of infrastructure via a contracted service provider.

A formalised infrastructure improvement commitment and associated delivery programme is required to make improvement in existing HWRCs. This will ensure the network of HWRCs is fit for purpose for the next service delivery period and beyond.

2. To ensure the HWRC service remains capable of providing good value and quality services to NNC residents, the evolution and development of future service policy is recommended. This should consider the current absence of cross border restrictions and the need to manage traffic volumes at constrained HWRCs potentially with the use of booking systems or other restrictions.
3. The existing commercial waste offering could be better utilised, and a series of market research and promotions, targeted at potential local commercial waste customers may help to generate additional income for NNC.

Long term (5+ years)

1. As a new Unitary Council, the incorporation of waste collection alongside waste disposal functions presents an opportunity to the Council when considering infrastructure development. SLR's experience suggests that there are clear synergies that can be achieved when considering the requirements of the waste collection, transfer and HWRC provision. Therefore, the development of a capital programme may



wish to consider a wider more holistic view of waste services infrastructure development.

Next Steps

Early engagement with internal procurement and legal departments will be essential in developing a new contract opportunity. The use of technical advisers may also be required for certain aspects of the contract design and tender evaluation processes. The following considerations need to be established by the Council.

1. Confirm and commission all hand back arrangements with the incumbent contractor including:
 - a. Any condition surveys or handover plans required as part of existing contractual terms;
 - b. Complete and agree asset registers with the incumbent contractor to determine the extent and potential cost of new assets and equipment; and
 - c. Produce a viable cost estimate for the level of capital expenditure required to deliver a new service – number of containers and bespoke equipment.
2. Develop a procurement strategy which includes well planned market engagement, assessment of the condition of the HWRCs, the extent of asset ownership and engagement with key NNC stakeholders to define key service outcomes and priorities including:
 - a. **Preferred procurement route** considering the likely changes required to the existing cost and risk profiles;
 - b. **Contract design** – including term and key contractual clauses, including but not limited to; change in law, liabilities, and extension provisions
 - c. **Specification design** - to deliver the desired service outcomes;
 - d. **Payment and performance mechanisms** – designed to reflect the change in market conditions, the potential to deliver greater transparency and to incentivise the desired contractor behaviour;
 - e. **KPIs** - design of realistic and proportionate performance measures, which will be monitored for the contract duration;
 - f. **Bidder information** - collating and producing essential service information to assist bidders in delivering well informed pricing; and
 - g. **Asset decisions** - determining how service assets should be provided and how ownership and lease arrangements should be managed.
3. Establish and confirm the governance and approval pathway within internal democratic structures. This will ensure key approval dates can be aligned within the design of the procurement process.



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Appendix B	Benchmarking Questionnaire
Appendix C	Key Assumptions
Appendix D	Travel Distances



Acronyms and Abbreviations

HWRC	Household Waste Recycling Centre
NNC	North Northamptonshire Council
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
Kg/hh	Kilograms per Household
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
DRS	Deposit Return Scheme
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
WUDS	Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating



In 2023/24, the Council has a budget full year spend of £2.7 million. A high-level breakdown sourced from the Council's budget book is shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 High level NNC HWRC Budget 2023/24

Account Description	Full Year Budget (£)
Building Repair and Maintenance	4,000
Rents and Leases	55,650
Waste Disposal	155,998
Specialist Waste Disposal	353,917
Landfill Tax	663,735
HWRC Contracts	1,539,130
Waste Transportation	322,020
Internal Recharges	7,110
Cost recovery from Outside Bodies	-384,060
Issue of Certificates, Permits and Licences	-24,010
Total service spend	2,693,490

1.2 Arisings

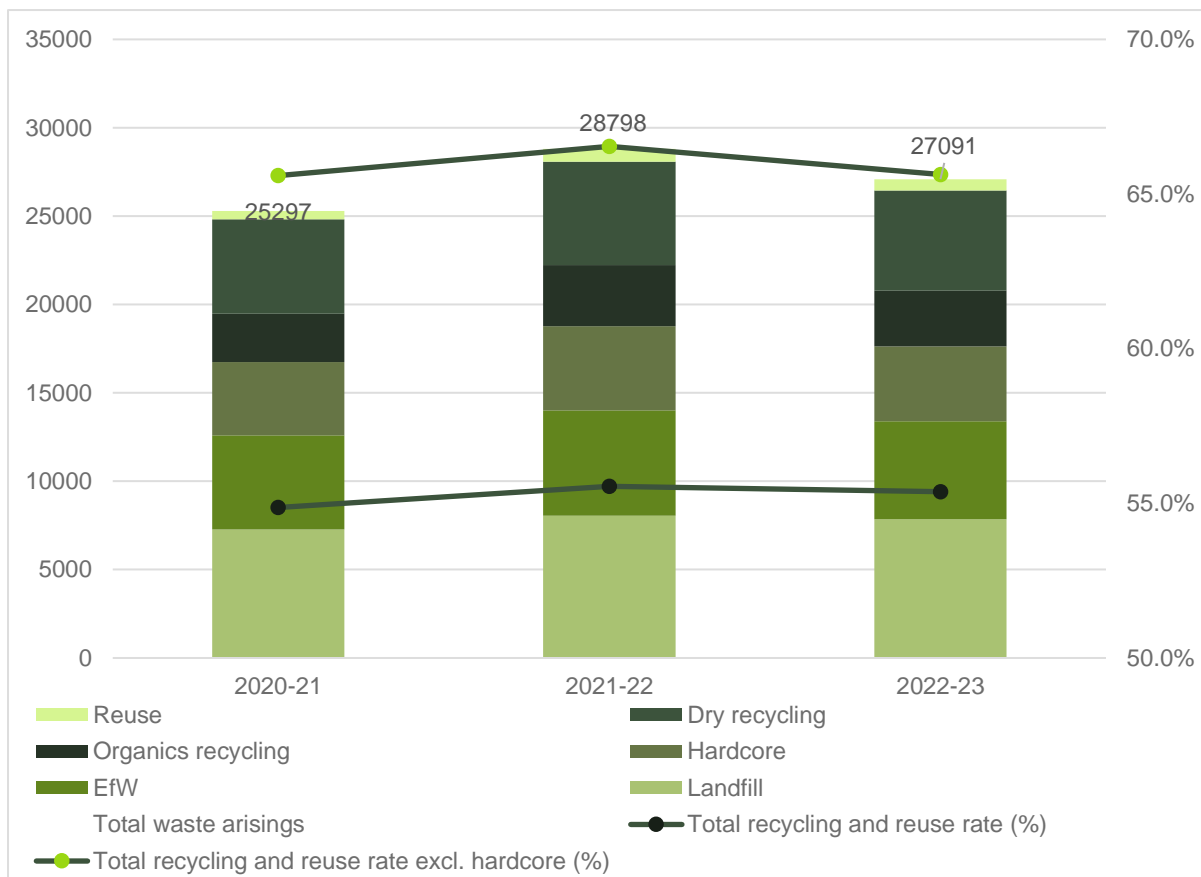
In 2021/22, NNC generated 562.9 kg/hh of residual waste compared to the English average of 547 kg/hh, suggesting that households within NNC generate slightly more residual waste than other households across the country. However, within the East Midlands the yield is significantly higher with 605 kg/hh residual waste generation. NNC recorded a recycling rate of 45% in 2021/22, compared to the English average of 44.1%¹.

When focusing on the HWRC throughput within NNC, total arisings over the past three years peaked in 2021/22 at 28,798 tonnes, as demonstrated in Figure 1.2.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202122/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results-202122>



Figure 1.2 NNC HWRC throughput



Material arisings from Council services have fluctuated significantly in the past three years primarily owing to the disruption to services and broader impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. This has made future projections typically more challenging in comparison to pre-pandemic years. Societal behaviours have changed, which influence the amounts and types of materials produced. Initial slumps in arisings during 2020/21 rebounded in 2021/22 and for many Councils have declined in 2022/23.

HWRCs play a key role in providing outlets for household waste and improvements in these facilities, with a focus on increasing diversion through reuse and recycling of materials, has the potential to make significant contributions in achieving a wide range of objectives.

The current annual arisings from the HWRC service comprise c.27,000 tonnes of a total of c.170,000 tonnes of materials managed by NNC (16%). Typically, the HWRCs on an annual basis achieve a recycling and composting performance of >65%.

1.3 Housing Pressures

Population increases within the Council area between census periods suggest that the population growth is above the national average. This has a knock on impact to housing demand and the area is experiencing a significant build of residential properties. Using planned development data provided by the Council, an indicative forecast can be made on the possible future demand for HWRC services. Three scenarios have been developed to illustrate the possible growth in households and resulting impact on arisings from households, based on the following growth assumptions:

- **Low** – Assumes the net number of new properties completed per annum is 20% below the average observed over the past 10 years



- **Moderate** – Based on continuation of the average net number of new properties completed per annum over the past 10 years
- **High** – Based on achieving 75% of the projected net number of new properties scheduled to be completed up to 2030/31, then from 2031/32 onwards continuation of the average annual completions between 2023/24 and 2030/31

Table 1.2 Forecast HWRC Tonnage Increases

Scenario	Forecast % change in HWRC tonnage to 2038/39 compared to baseline (2022/23)	Potential additional annual HWRC tonnage by 2038/39
Low	18%	4,860
Moderate	21%	5,670
High	26%	7,020

The forecast suggests that the Council should expect to manage between c.5,000 and c.7,000 extra tonnes per year via its HWRC network. The forecast is subject to a range of factors such as economic conditions, consumer behaviour, the impact of legislation and the continuation of above average population growth within the area.

1.4 Relevant Legislation Strategy and Policy

The key English legislation and policy drivers currently in effect, or due to be introduced in the near term, are summarised in Table 1.3. Each of these will link to and present an opportunity for, or otherwise impact on, the current HWRC service, as also highlighted in the table.

Table 1.3 Legislative Overview with HWRC Service Impacts

Legislation / Strategy / Policy	Overview	Potential HWRC Service Impact
Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)	The Waste Framework Directive sets the basic concepts and definitions related to waste management, including definitions of waste, recycling, and recovery	Clear direction on the way in which waste should be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy. Currently the existing HWRCs have been designed to move materials primarily from disposal to recycling. Many facilities however do not promote interception of materials suitable for reuse or repair, which goes hand in hand with the duty to 'promote high quality recycling'. This is an area which will require growing focus as the legislative measures of success become more focused upon carbon reduction and social value.
Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018)	Published by the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), this strategy supersedes the previous Waste Strategy for England (2007) and Waste Management	The strategy contains the following five strategic ambitions: •To work towards all plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025 •To work towards eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030



Legislation / Strategy / Policy	Overview	Potential HWRC Service Impact
	<p>Plan for England (2013). The document builds on the direction set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan and presents England's commitment to eliminate avoidable waste, promote resource efficiency and move towards a circular economy – specifically, the RWS defines broad aspirations and objectives for waste management in England, aligning with targets defined by the Circular Economy package.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To eliminate avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25 Year Environment Plan •To double resource productivity by 2050 •To eliminate avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050. <p>All five strategic ambitions impact the way in which a HWRC should be designed to move materials primarily from disposal to recycling. Facilities should promote interception of materials suitable for reuse or repair. This aims to eliminate avoidable waste, improve resource productivity etc.</p>
<p>Circular Economy Package (CEP) (2018)</p>	<p>A UK wide legislative framework for the reduction of waste and long-term ambitions for waste management and recycling by turning waste into a resource. Broadening the definition of municipal waste to include some businesses and public sector organisations</p>	<p>Previous studies have indicated that an additional ~29,000 tonnes of recycling per annum could be achieved. This recognition and associated research help support the potential these services have in contributing toward national targets. At a council level this provides the opportunity for councils to review and justify upgrades and changes to existing facilities</p>
<p>The Environment Act (2021)</p>	<p>The legislative basis to support the implementation of a range of policies designed to protect and improve the environment, including the prevention or reduction of waste. Producer responsibility, resource efficiency, managing waste and waste enforcement under part three of the act all provide the legal foundation for significant change in the waste industry.</p>	<p>Extended producer responsibility</p> <p>Producer responsibility is where manufacturers of products that end up as waste i.e., packaging, pay towards their collection and disposal. The government is proposing to increase the items that need to be paid for and make sure that manufacturers pay the full cost. This proposal also includes the intention to improve information that tells us about the recycled content of products, and whether they can be recycled to help us make informed decisions when buying products. This legislation is due to be implemented in 2025. It could create more opportunity for the UK to make better use of recyclable material and encourage better design of packaging</p>



Legislation / Strategy / Policy	Overview	Potential HWRC Service Impact
	<p>The future implementation of a DRS and/or EPR scheme is likely to reduce the tonnages of in-scope materials being received at HWRCs (e.g., plastic containers, glass bottles, steel, and aluminium cans) and therefore impact on potential Council income streams.</p> <p>However, the quantum of this financial impact may be offset or even exceeded by the potential savings derived from a reduction in these materials within the mixed residual waste stream, as householders are incentivised to segregate at source.</p>	<p>that prioritises waste prevention, re-use and recycling rather than disposal.</p> <p>Deposit Return Schemes These may require a person supplied with an item to pay a deposit which is refunded when that item is collected, e.g., a deposit paid on a drinks bottle that is refunded when the drink is consumed, and the bottle returned. There have been significant delays regarding the implementation of DRS and currently this sees implementation in October 2025.</p> <p>Digital Waste Tracking The Act allows for future regulations to be made, to introduce an electronic waste tracking system. The system may require information about waste to be entered onto an electronic system by waste controllers (e.g., anyone who imports, produces, keeps, treats, manages or disposes of waste), or waste regulation authorities (e.g., the Environment Agency) about the processing, movement or transfer of waste.</p> <p>Plastic Packaging Tax The tax is intended to provide a clear economic incentive for businesses to use recycled material in the production of plastic packaging to drive demand for this material. The tax complements a reformed packaging producer responsibility system. The tax applies to businesses that produce (and sell in the UK) or import plastic packaging which uses insufficient recycled content (less than 30%), taking effect from April 2022. For those materials which do not comply, there will be a tax incurred at a rate of £200 per metric tonne of plastic packaging that contains less than 30% of recycled plastic.</p>
<p>Waste Management Plan for England (2021)</p>	<p>In January 2021, Defra published a National Waste Management Plan for England to replace the previous one from 2013. The Plan is a</p>	<p>This continues to highlight the clear direction on the way in which waste should be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy.</p>



Legislation / Strategy / Policy	Overview	Potential HWRC Service Impact
	<p>high-level document and provides an overview of waste management in England. It explains the current waste management situation in England, the measures being taken to improve waste management and an assessment of existing waste collection schemes.</p>	<p>The plan does not introduce new policies or change how waste is managed in England. Its aim is to bring current waste management policies together under one national plan.</p>
<p>The Persistent Organic Pollutants Regulations 2007</p>	<p>Regulations governing the production, usage, and safe destruction of persistent organic pollutants.</p>	<p>Although the regulations have been in place since 2007 with limited impact on HWRC services, recent research, and Environment Agency activity in England is beginning to have huge operational and cost impacts for all HWRCs. This is due to segregation from other materials etc.</p>
<p>EU Transition / EU Revocation Bill</p>	<p>Ongoing negotiations between UK government and the EU Commission, which are likely to impact on the strategic direction for waste in 2022 and beyond. The EU Revocation Bills seeks amongst other items to include revocation, re-enactment, or amendment at Ministerial discretion. Producing the potential for significant divergence from existing EU environmental laws</p>	<p>The EU Revocation Bill has the potential to change much of the existing and long-established legislation which underpins the methods of operating HWRC services. It is currently unknown to what extent this will affect the HWRC service, but it could represent a broad range of changes in overarching strategy, compliance and operations which will need to be understood and managed</p>
<p>DIY Waste Charging at HWRCs</p>	<p>The government set out plans in April 2022 to ban charges for DIY waste at household waste and recycling centres (HWRCs) as part of efforts to crack down on fly-tipping. On the 18th June 2023 it was confirmed these plans would be put into place later on this year.</p>	<p>The government estimated that around a third of local authorities charge for certain types of DIY waste and so the ban will impact a large proportion of HWRCs. It will mean Councils may see a reduction in income from their waste. One way to combat this may be through further policing of trade waste at HWRCs through the implementation of booking systems, vehicle registration permits etc.</p>



Legislation / Strategy / Policy	Overview	Potential HWRC Service Impact
Controlled Waste Regulations 2012	These Regulations came into force on 6 April 2012 and apply to England and Wales. They help to classify waste as household, industrial or commercial waste, and as a result further determine the meaning of "controlled waste".	This introduces disposal charges at HWRCs to some non-domestic household waste producers and some premises formerly classified as producers of household waste are now identified as producers of commercial waste.
Waste Wood EA Position statement (RPS 249)	RPS 249 allows site operators to accept small amounts of certain waste types that would test as hazardous (specifically fence posts and decking), store and classify such materials as non-hazardous and move the materials under a waste transfer note.	RPS 249 will remain in place until April 2024, during which time operators will be required to either introduce an agreed sampling and testing programme to demonstrate that hazardous waste wood is no longer present or apply for a permit variation to handle hazardous waste wood. Once RPS 249 is withdrawn, hazardous waste wood will be required to be segregated on site and consigned as hazardous.
Segregating waste upholstered domestic seating that may contain POPs at HWRCs: RPS 266	Only mix waste upholstered domestic seating with waste type 'mixed, residual, (or bulky) household waste' – not any other waste stream like wood or metal	<p>This means Councils must describe the waste as 'mixed waste with waste upholstered domestic seating containing POPs' in waste transfer notes.</p> <p>NNC must send waste upholstered domestic seating and any mixed, residual, (or bulky) household waste with which it has been mixed with, for destruction to a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • municipal waste incinerator • hazardous waste incinerator • cement kiln <p>The need to manage waste containing POPs separately has represented an unbudgeted burden to Councils with domestic seating believed only to be the start of potential future separations. The impact on Councils is yet to be fully understood in the longer term, but the requirement to separate has placed pressures on many Councils with constrained HWRCs both in a practical and financial sense.</p>



1.5 Current Contract Provisions

North Northamptonshire Council is a new Unitary Authority. April 2021 saw the amalgamation of services and functions provided by the former Borough Councils of Corby, Kettering, and Wellingborough and the District of East Northamptonshire, as well as half of the former Northamptonshire County Council.

The current HWRC management contract commenced in April 2010 and is a fifteen-year contract, ending on the 31st of March 2025. The current contract was procured by the former County Council for the whole of Northamptonshire and comprises a network of nine HWRCs.

The current Contract is managed by a dedicated Waste Management Officer working for the Council and remains as one contract under a hosting arrangement with West Northamptonshire Council, until it expires in 2025. The contracted provisions are delivered by Urbaser Ltd.

There are four North Northamptonshire HWRCs located in Corby, Kettering, Rushden, and Wellingborough. Kettering and Rushden both have weighbridges and accept Trade Waste as part of a service operated by the current contractor. Of the four sites, three are Council owned land, but the Corby site is currently on leased land, owned by SUEZ.

1.6 Individual HWRC Overview

Information relating to the existing provision of HWRCs by NNC has been developed using material held by the Council and has been supplemented with site visits conducted during July 2023 and subsequent analysis by SLR. The following section provides headline performance information and an overview of each facility.

A breakdown of arisings and performance seen at each HWRC across North Northamptonshire in 2022/23 is shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 HWRC Performance Overview

	Rushden	Wellingborough	Kettering	Corby	Total
Total HWRC Arisings (t)	9,494	5,111	6,842	5,644	27,091
Contribution	35%	19%	25%	21%	
Diversion to Landfill	69%	72%	71%	74%	71%

Figure 1.4 **Error! Reference source not found.** highlights the headline arisings from each HWRC in NNC, demonstrating that Rushden HWRC has the largest throughput. Figure 1.4 highlights the proportion of headline arisings managed at each HWRC, suggesting that Kettering HWRC collects the largest proportion of dry recyclables and Corby collects the highest proportion of organics.



Figure 1.3 Total Headline Arisings from Each HWRC (tonnes) - 2022/23

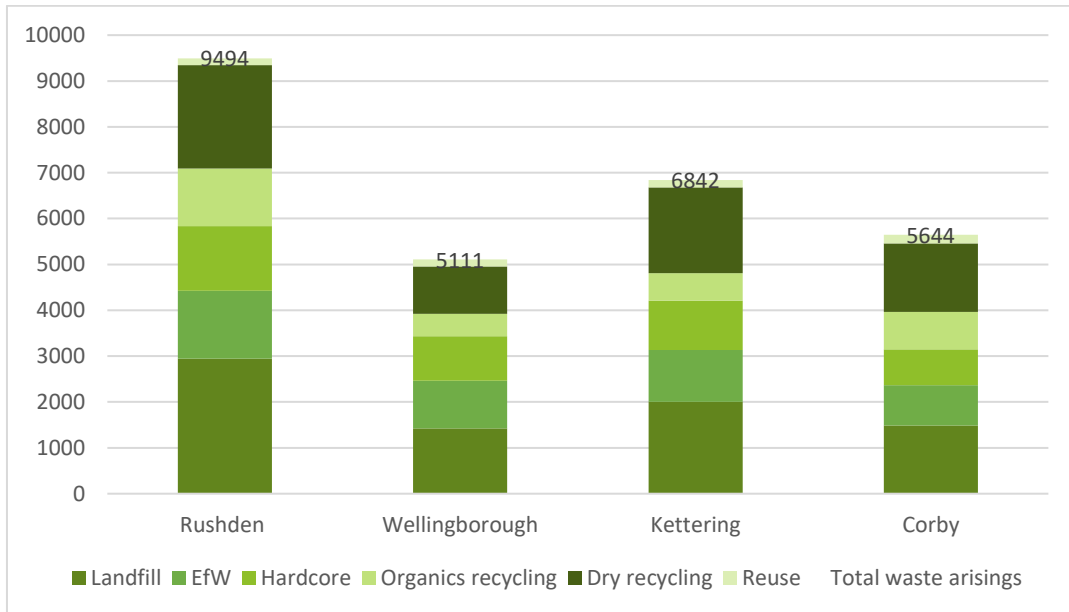
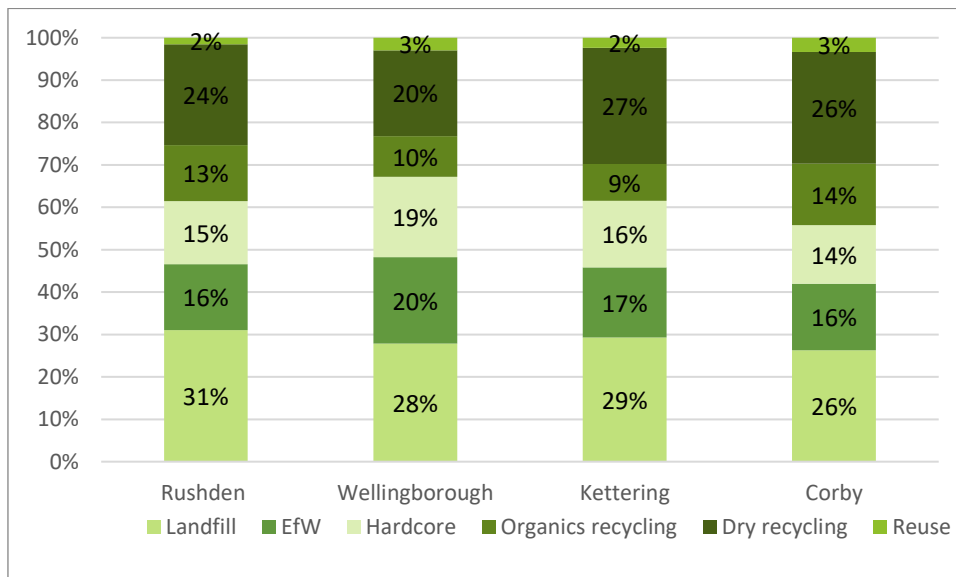


Figure 1.4 Proportion of Headline Arisings Managed at Each HWRC – 2022/23



1.7 Usage

All four HWRC sites within NNC have automatic number-plate recognition (ANPR) systems installed. Table 1.5 highlights the ANPR Data analysis available on a site-by-site basis and this is discussed further in Section 2.2.1.1.



Table 1.5 ANPR Data Analysis by Site ²

	Corby	Kettering	Rushden	Wellingborough	All Sites
Total visitor numbers (52 weeks)	98,503	92,985	167,450	99,628	458,566
% of total visitors	21%	20%	37%	22%	100%
Average (52 weeks)	1,894	1,788	3,220	1,916	8,819

1.8 HWRC Descriptions

1.8.1 Corby HWRC

The Corby HWRC is the only facility which is not owned by the Council. It is similar in nature to Wellingborough, with containers and access ramps organised on the same level. Traffic enters the HWRC via a small access road before circulating in a clockwise direction around the main bulk material containers.

During the site visits a small shoot off lane and low-level skip was being used for the delivery of garden waste close to the start of the circulation loop. This facility appeared to create a bottle neck of traffic at the site which has the potential to back up on the fast-moving connecting road. Since the visit it is understood that the site has been re organised to mitigate this issue. Figure 1.5 highlights the level on congestion seen on the site, at the time of site visit.

Figure 1.5 Corby HWRC Congestion



Small, less bulky materials are segregated around the outside of the traffic circulation route and large containers, access ramps and plant activity are contained within the central area of the site. The condition of the facility, both in terms of the built environment and containers,

² Taken using the most recent 52 weeks of ANPR data provided from 20/06/22-12/06/23



appeared to be in poorer condition in comparison to the other HWRCs and are anticipated to be close to or at the end of their operational life.

1.8.2 Kettering HWRC

In 2011/12 the Kettering HWRC was relocated to a split-level site. There is a one-way circular system around the split-level site, with a weighbridge to accept trade waste and good signage throughout. Background information suggests that the site can suffer from traffic build up in the connecting roads, which has led to temporary site closures in recent months.

The site has a large footprint, although observations from site visits suggest the use of the entire area is underutilised in certain areas. An example of this is illustrated in Figure 1.6, which shows a low area of the site currently used for bring bank type collection of materials including textiles and glass.

A large area on the operational side of these collection points appeared under used. There is also additional space within the middle of the site. This is currently used for plant movement and storage but could potentially be used better, either in terms of traffic control or additional material collections. These areas represent space that could be developed in the future to provide additional capacity for materials or stacking traffic.

Figure 1.6 Additional Space Available on the Kettering HWRC



Additionally, the site is home to an education block, which currently isn't used but could be utilised in a different way as a reuse shop, repair centre or a contractor's office location, if the service was to be contracted out moving forward³. The education block is shown in Figure 1.7.

³ It should be noted that during the site visits the interior of this block was not observed therefore its overall suitability for future development should not be progressed without further investigation.



Figure 1.7 Kettering HWRC Education Block



1.8.3 Rushden HWRC

The Rushden HWRC was upgraded most recently in 2015. This renovation incorporated an additional traffic lane, which has been beneficial in handling additional traffic. The site follows a horseshoe shaped one way system, and traffic stacking is available for approximately 30-40 cars. The unloading bays are displayed in Figure 1.8.

Figure 1.8 Rushden HWRC Unloading Bays



The site is split over two levels with a lower operational area housing the large material skips and plant activity. The higher level contains a range of smaller, less bulky collection points and is well organised. This is displayed in Figure 1.9.



Figure 1.9 Split Level Site



The signage on the site is good, but the overhead signage is likely to need updating as this has become faded over the course of time.

The site also has a weighbridge (see Figure 1.10) and accepts trade waste. A dedicated lane on the entrance route is used to control trade traffic and administer the relevant charging scheme. This service is operated by the contractor who is contractually obligated to share a proportion of income with the Council. Observations from site visits suggest that there is some potential at the site for expansion within the existing footprint, details of which are discussed in Section 4.2.

Figure 1.10 Rushden Weighbridge



1.8.4 Wellingborough HWRC

The entrance of the Wellingborough HWRC is on an industrial estate, next to the entrance of a steel manufacturer, where large freight often queues outside the site and can block the entrance to the HWRC, which can lead to further congestion at the entrance of the HWRC.

The size of the site restricts the operations, capacity and capabilities of the HWRC, and measures have been put in place to create as much space as possible. However, there is very limited car stacking capabilities on the site and congestion can build up quickly.



Residents were observed to mostly park their vehicles by driving forward into the designated parking spaces. This inherently requires a large proportion of traffic movements to occur in reverse, potentially increasing the risk of collisions on site.

Once parked, site users then unload their vehicles and carry bulk items across the traffic lane and up the access ramps. This activity is likely to be strenuous for many users and does not represent best practice in HWRC design by modern standards.

Figure 1.11 Parking and Access Ramps at the Wellingborough HWRC



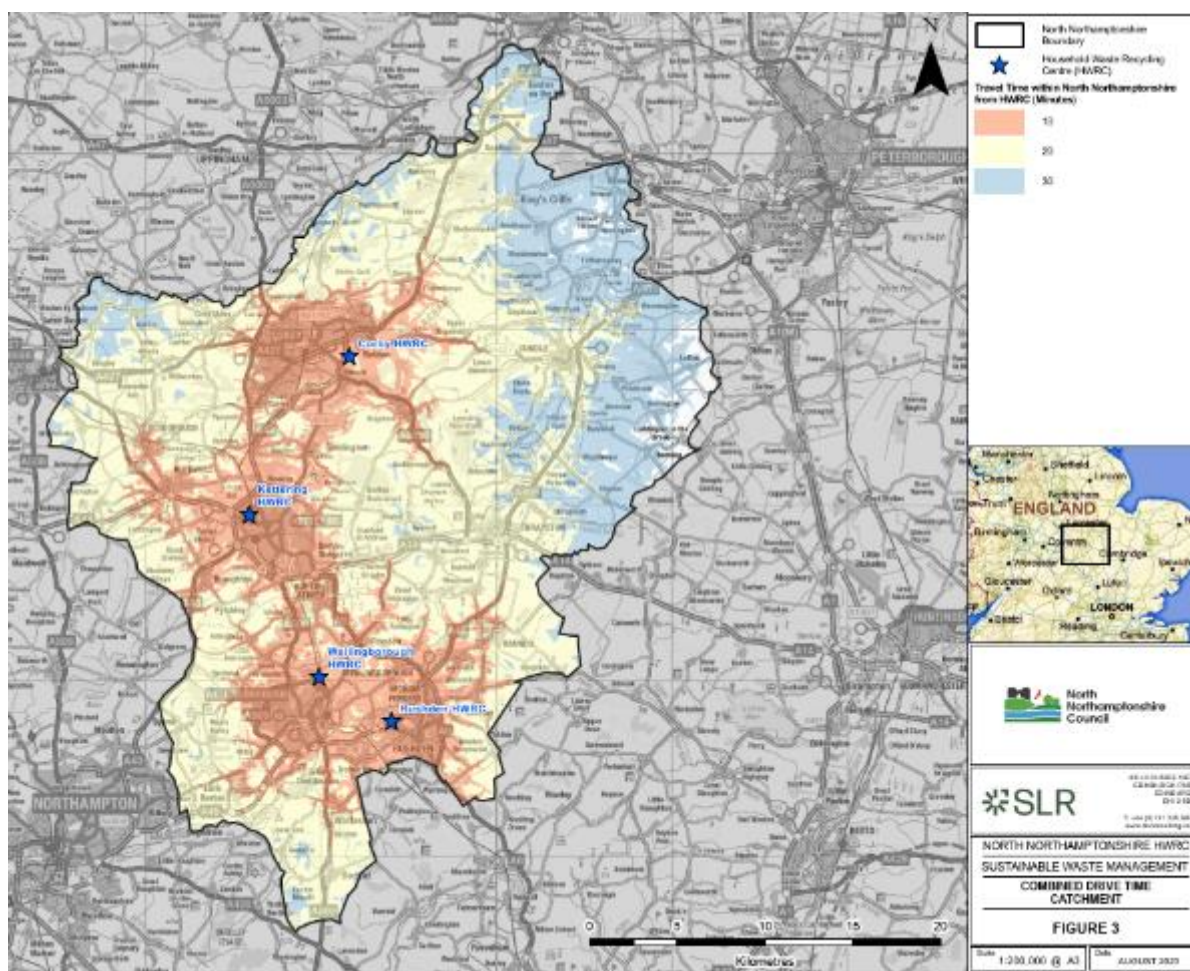
1.9 HWRC Drive Time Analysis

Customer drive time to an HWRC can be used to assess the extent and overlap of service provision, which can be helpful in determining whether the distribution of HWRC is sufficient for the Council's population.

An analysis of the existing network has been conducted using NNC housing and road network information. Drive times of 10, 20 and 30 minutes have been calculated and plotted to illustrate how long NNC residents need to travel to reach their nearest HWRC, as shown below in Figure 1.12.



Figure 1.12 Total HWRC Network Drive Time Analysis



The distribution of HWRCs within the NNC boundary is concentrated in the mid to southern area, with an HWRC being present in each of the four most highly populated towns. This positioning has been influenced by legacy decisions reaching back to pre-unitary status and historic standards of facility design and operation.

The drive time analysis results displayed in Table 1.6, suggest that 98% of the population is located within 30 minutes of a HWRC within the NNC network, which is likely due to the good road across the Council area. WRAP HWRC Guidance 2018⁴ suggests 'maximum driving times for the great majority of residents in good traffic conditions should be 20 minutes, rising to 30 minutes in very rural areas.'

Analysis of drive times suggests that the existing location of HWRCs is good and can be accessed by the vast majority of residents within 20 minutes. An area to the northeast of the Council area is not as well served, but the concentration of households in this area is relatively sparse. A full illustration of each HWRCs drivetime sphere can be viewed in Appendix D - Travel Distances. Table 1.7 highlights the drive time analysis for each individual HWRC.

⁴ <https://wrap.org.uk/resources/guide/household-waste-recycling-centre-hwrc-guide>



Table 1.6 Drive Time Analysis from all HWRCs

	Total Count and Percentage of Households			
	0 to 10 Mins from HWRC	10 to 20 Mins from HWRC	20 to 30 Mins from HWRC	>30 Mins from HWRC
No. of HH	119,321	29,833	6,102	661
% of HH	75.91%	18.98%	3.88%	0.42%
Cumulative %	75.91%	94.8%	98.68%	99.1%

Table 1.7 Drive Time Analysis from each HWRC

Household Waste Recycling Centre		Total Count and Percentage of Households			
		Drive Time (Minutes)			
		0 - 10	10 - 20	20 - 30	>30
Kettering HWRC	% of HH	25.38%	58.19%	12.30%	4.12%
	Cumulative %	25.38%	83.57%	95.87%	100%
Rushden HWRC	% of HH	32%	31%	29%	6.91%
	Cumulative %	32%	64%	93%	100%
Corby HWRC	% of HH	18.82%	35.53%	42.42%	3.24%
	Cumulative %	18.82%	54.35%	96.77%	100%
Wellingborough HWRC	% of HH	23.34%	47.31%	23.32%	6.02%
	Cumulative %	23.34%	70.65%	93.97%	100%



2.0 Current HWRC Policy

NNC currently operates a number of policies at their sites which are in line with neighbouring authorities and best practice. This information has been based on information published on the NNC website supported by feedback from site visits.

2.1.1 Vehicle Access

Introducing a policy to control vehicle access enables restrictions to be placed on the types of vehicles which can enter the HWRC.

NNC currently operates an e permit scheme for vans and larger vehicles which help to reduce the risk of 'Trade waste abuse', based on the assumption that larger vehicles are predominantly used as commercial vehicles. This type of intervention encourages site managers to take responsibility for acknowledging the presence of all vans entering site and requesting photo ID and proof of residency.

In areas where the proportion of the population with privately owned cars may be lower, it is important to remember that a resident may have hired the van, and in such cases, they should be requested to provide proof of hire.

NNC currently has an e-permit system in place for all commercial-type vehicles including hired vehicles accessing the sites. This is in line with NNC's neighbouring authorities, seven out of the eight of which have a vehicle permit scheme in place. However, where in many cases the permit applies to vans and trailers only, in other authorities (including Bedfordshire Council) a permit is required for any vehicle entering and disposing of waste at the HWRC.

2.1.2 Cross Border Policies

NNC does not have any formal arrangements in place with any neighbouring authorities to allow for residents from other authorities disposing waste at NNC HWRCs. This prevents additional disposal fees, discourages border traffic from out of the Council area and reduces site congestion, resulting in smaller queuing times for residents. In addition, this is a complementary step to further reduce Trade waste abuse from businesses.

In other neighbouring authorities where permits have been put in place for all vehicle types, the permit usually also requires the permit holder to be a resident of the respective authority area. This is seen in Rutland Council whose website states, 'you need to be a Rutland resident and register your vehicle on our automatic number plate recognition system (if you've not already registered this) to use the centres⁵.'

2.1.3 Material Acceptance

The table below (Table 2.1) highlights the list of materials accepted throughout the NNC HWRC network. This is an extensive list, and the current segregation of materials is considered good. However, there are opportunities to provide improved recycling outcomes for smaller or traditionally more difficult materials.

⁵ [Household waste and recycling centres | Rutland County Council](#)



The Council has indicated that the level of contamination found in their cardboard is high and to deal with this have put fencing, with a letterbox style gap, to prevent contamination and enforce flat packed cardboard.

Table 2.1 North Northamptonshire HWRC Material Acceptance

Material	Corby	Kettering	Rushden	Wellingborough
Car & automotive parts	X	X	X	X
Cardboard	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cartons	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aerosols	✓	✓	✓	✓
Antifreeze	✓	✓	✓	✓
Asbestos	X	X	X	X
Bricks	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cooking oil	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fire extinguishers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fluorescent tubes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foil	✓	✓	✓	✓
Food tins & drink cans	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fridges & freezers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Garden waste	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gas canisters	✓	✓	✓	X
General waste	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hardcore & rubble	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hard plastics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Large appliances	✓	✓	✓	✓
Low energy bulbs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mixed glass, bottles & jars	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oil filters (automotives)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile phones	✓	✓	✓	✓



Material	Corby	Kettering	Rushden	Wellingborough
Paint	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paper	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plasterboard	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plastic bottles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Portable batteries	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scrap metal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sharps	X	X	X	X
Shoes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Small electrical appliances	✓	✓	✓	✓
Soils	✓	✓	✓	✓
Textiles	✓	✓	✓	✓
TVs & monitors	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tyres	X	X	X	X
Upholstered domestic seating	✓	✓	✓	✓
Used engine oil	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weed killer	X	X	X	X
Wood and timber	✓	✓	✓	✓

2.1.4 Trade Waste Enforcement

Trade waste enforcement is a key consideration at HWRCs as, if Trade waste is allowed to enter the site unchecked, problems can arise including:

- congestion on site, deterring householders from using the site;
- associated reporting problems with Trade and household waste segregation;
- additional capacity pressures to current waste and recycling streams;
- the significant cost of additional disposal; and
- lack of separation into different recycling streams.

NNC accepts Trade waste at two HWRC sites, Kettering and Rushden. The two sites are the only sites with weighbridges and trade waste is accepted as part of a service operated by the current Contractor. The sites do not accept trade waste at weekends and therefore the service is only available 3 days a week, which potentially adds to site congestion at busier times.



Trade waste is subject to a fee, which is highlighted in Table 2.2. This can provide an additional source of income for Councils, but transactions on the site must be monitored to ensure Trade waste is not being disposed of by residents without paying.

Table 2.2 North Northamptonshire HWRC Trade Waste Fee

Material	0 to 80kg	81 to 150kg	151 to 250kg	251 to 500kg	501 to 750kg	751 to 1,000kg	>1,000kg (per tonne, pro-rata increase of 500kg)
Hardcore & rubble	£7	£15	£21	£22	£25	£38	£19
Garden waste	£7	£13	£23	£36	£49	£67	£34
Plasterboard	£17	£30	£46	£89	£129	£171	£87
Wood & timber	£12	£17	£27	£44	£61	£96	£48
Mixed paper & card	£5	£11	£15	£16	£28	£33	£17
General waste (exc. upholstered seating)	£26	£41	£59	£109	£152	£187	£88
Upholstered seating	£59	£93	£133	£246	£343	£422	£199

The Council's e-permit allows for vans up to 3.5t (but not tippers) to enter the HWRCs. This is a 'large transit' van size, and is the largest vehicle permitted on a full driving licence. To combat Trade waste users, other neighbouring authorities visually check vans / transits for Trade waste or do not permit vans, trailers or tipper vehicles on the site.

2.2 Policy Review

Variation amongst HWRC provision often relates to the suite of policies developed by individual Councils in response to a variety of service pressures including budgetary and regulatory challenges. As NNC progresses toward a new period of service delivery an opportunity to review, update or amend its approach to certain policies exists. A review of existing policies using available background information supplied by the Council and supplementary desk based research is discussed in the following sections.

2.2.1 Opening Hours

Opening hours of HWRCs have received increased attention over the past 5 to 10 years across the UK as Councils seek to strike an appropriate balance between availability to serve their populations and finding ways of reducing operating costs.

As a result, there is now a wide variety of approaches to how access to HWRCs is provided, with some local authorities choosing to reduce their overall availability. In some instances, this has resulted in the implementation of reduced hours or closures during weekdays, whilst retaining the longest daily opening times during weekends.

NNC currently provides HWRC availability from 10am to 6pm all year round, five days a week, with Corby and Wellingborough closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays and Kettering and Rushden closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. There is no reduction in opening hours during winter months.



In comparison to authorities bordering NNC, this level of availability represents below average opening hours (Table 2.3). The full list of neighbouring HWRC facilities opening times can be viewed in Appendix A. Detailed analysis of opening times, taking into account variations across individual days, shows that of the eight neighbouring authorities, NNC ranks joint 6th for its summer opening hours and 6th for its winter hours in terms of total hours available.

The average typical availability for a week (Mon -Sun) during the summer period across the neighbouring authorities is 51 hours and NNC provides 40 hours. The average winter availability is 45.5 hours and NNC provides 40 hours. A summary of the total number of hours at NNC HWRCs and those of its neighbouring authorities is presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 NNC and Neighbouring Authorities - Total Availability Hours

HWRC Total Availability Hours		Sum of Hours	
		Summer	Winter
North Northamptonshire	Corby	40	40
	Kettering	40	40
	Rushden	40	40
	Wellingborough	40	40
Rutland	Cottesmore	32	24
	North Luffenham	48	36
Harborough	Kibworth	50	50
	Market Harborough	50	50
West Northamptonshire	Brixworth	40	40
	Daventry	40	40
	Farthinghoe	56	56
	Ecton Lane	40	40
	Sixfields	40	40
	Towcester	40	40
Milton Keynes	Bleak Hall	84	63
	Newport Pagnell	84	63
	New Bradwell	84	63
Bedford	Barkers Lane	58	56
Huntingdonshire	Alconbury	63	53
	Bluntisham	63	53
	St Neots	70	70
City of Peterborough	Fengate	70	49
South Kesteven	Grantham	35	35



Increasing the existing hours of availability would likely increase cost to the Council and could potentially cause confusion to HWRC users during a period of transition. The opening hours policy should be reviewed in conjunction with clear service priorities and objectives. The Council should also consider monitoring footfall to identify particularly 'light' periods or as discussed, a booking system could be used to optimise throughput of users.

2.2.1.1 Traffic Flows and Usage Analysis

The ANPR data available for the four HWRC sites is useful to provide a review of user visits on a daily and seasonal basis, to help identify whether changes to opening hours or staff provision would be beneficial. Table 2.4 suggests that the Rushen HWRC is the busiest NNC location, accounting for 37% of the total HWRC visits within the past year.

Table 2.4 ANPR Data Analysis by Site ⁶

	Corby	Kettering	Rushden	Wellingborough	All Sites
Total visitor numbers (52 weeks)	98,503	92,985	167,450	99,628	458,566
% of total visitors	21%	20%	37%	22%	100%
Average (52 weeks)	1,894	1,788	3,220	1,916	8,819

When summer and winter ANPR data is compared (as displayed in Table 2.5), this suggests that the average number of visits to each HWRC drops in winter compared to summer (a total of 255,255 visits recorded across all sites in the summer months (c.9,800 visits per week), compared to 204,311 visits in the winter months (c.7,900 visits per week), a reduction of 24.4%).

Table 2.5 ANPR Data Analysis by Site and Summer / Winter Opening Hours⁷

	Corby		Kettering		Rushden		Wellingborough	
	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter
Total visitors (52 weeks)	54,752	43,751	50,336	42,649	92,745	74,705	56,422	43,206
% of total visitors	22%	21%	20%	21%	36%	37%	22%	21%
Average (52 weeks)	2,106	1,683	1,936	1,640	3,567	2,873	2,170	1,662

This could represent an opportunity to consider whether winter availability should be reduced and summer availability increased, without changing the overall annual availability.

To Note: In August 2023 the ANPR camera at Kettering was to be intermittently obscured by foliage which had impacted the recording of visitor numbers. As such traffic number were reviewed in the weeks since the foliage has been cutback, this shows the number of vehicles at Kettering has increased by about 200+ vehicles a day, this alters the visitor spread over the sites, and puts Kettering as the second busiest site.

Corby	Kettering	Rushden	Wellingborough
21.52%	23.02%	33.72%	21.74%

⁶ Taken using the most recent 52 weeks of ANPR data provided from 20/06/22-12/06/23

⁷ Taken using the most recent 52 weeks of ANPR data provided from 20/06/22-12/06/23
Summer opening hours is assumed to be from (01/04-30/09), Winter (01/10-31/03)



2.2.2 Permit Schemes

2.2.2.1 NNC Permit Scheme

NNC currently has an e-permit system in place for all commercial-type vehicles including hired vehicles accessing the sites, as shown in Figure 2.1⁸. The e-permit applies to residents taking their waste to HWRCs in the unitary authority area and limits commercial-type vehicles and trailers to six visits over a 12-month period. NNC uses the scheme working with its current contractor to minimise the impact of commercial vehicles and commercial being delivered to the HWRCs.

Figure 2.1 NNC Current E-Permit Scheme

The screenshot shows the 'Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) E-Permit Scheme' web interface. At the top, there are logos for North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. Below the title, a navigation bar contains five steps: 'Start', 'Permit Type', 'Contact Details', 'Vehicle Details', and 'Submit'. The 'Permit Type' step is currently selected. The main content area contains the following text:

HWRCs are provided for householders to dispose of their waste from their own home, safely and conveniently for free.

Unfortunately, some traders use the HWRCs to illegally dispose of their commercial waste, leaving the council-tax paying residents of Northamptonshire to foot the bill for tens of thousands of pounds for its disposal. Consequently, like other councils, North Northamptonshire Council, in partnership with West Northamptonshire Council has taken the decision to introduce a simple electronic permit (e-permit) scheme to reduce trade waste abuse.

Commercial type vehicles are more likely to be carrying trade waste than a standard car visiting the sites. Therefore, from 1st October 2018 residents using commercial type vehicles, or a car towing a trailer to take waste to any of the 9 household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) in the county will need to apply for a free permit.

What do you want to do?

- Apply for a new permit
- Renew an expired permit
- Edit an existing permit
(if you have moved house or changed vehicle)

A 'Next' button is located at the bottom left of the form.

Milton Keynes is the only neighbouring authority which does not operate an e-permit on vans and trailers, suggesting that NNC is currently aligned to its neighbours. However, permits are used in different ways by different Councils. For example, Rutland County Council requires all residents to have a permit to enter the site and both Huntingdonshire District Council and Peterborough City Council allow vans and trailers 12 visits within a 12-month period.

NNC has an ANPR system in place across the four HWRCs. This system is used to count cars but also has the advantage that each car is recorded, enabling monitoring of the frequency of visits, whilst distinguishing between vans and cars. The permit system could be used for more accurate identification of residents, helping to reduce loopholes for abuse from users from outside of the NNC area. Furthermore, a resident's permit could also have the potential to broaden the NNC communications reach via the permit web pages and associated email confirmations.

⁸ <https://selfserve.northamptonshire.gov.uk/HWRC-E-Permits/>



In Councils where trade waste abuse is significant, further tightened restrictions can be put in place. This could include issuing permits for one site only (being the site in closest proximity to the residents' property) and, where applicants repeatedly do not provide the required documentation, refusing their application without eligibility to reapply for a defined period (e.g., six months)⁹.

2.2.2.2 Current Trade Waste Offering

As discussed in Section 2.1.4, NNC offer Trade rates for recyclable and compostable materials. Dry recyclables, including plastic bottles and mixed glass bottles and jars, are also charged at £5 per load.

Some items cannot be disposed of under the trade waste service and for such cases NNC recommends other Trade waste management companies to be contacted for disposal.

Materials not accepted include:

- asbestos;
- clinical waste;
- engine oil;
- hazardous waste (such as chemicals and radioactive materials);
- motor vehicles and tyres; and
- waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).

The current use of this service appears limited. Two of the HWRCs are well equipped to separately measure trade waste, with dedicated traffic lanes and weighbridges. Should the Council wish to enhance its customer base, a range of communication and awareness activity could be implemented to target new customers. This could include on site signage or adverts in local trade publications or social media platforms.

2.2.3 Existing Charging Policies for DIY Waste

On the 18th June 2023, Defra¹⁰ announced that households will no longer have to pay to dispose of DIY waste. The changes mean councils will treat DIY waste in the same way as household waste and remove any charging mechanism currently in place.

Four criteria were published to determine the nature of waste being presented:

- the waste is produced by householders whilst carrying out small-scale construction or demolition works at their home;
- the waste does not arise from activities that generate an income for the person who carried them out;
- the waste is not produced on a regular basis requiring HWRC visits more frequently than once a week; and
- the volume of waste is no greater than 300 litres (based on the approximate boot size of a family car).

⁹ <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/trade-waste-abuse-sees-flintshire-tighten-hwrc-rules/>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/council-diy-waste-charges-abolished#:~:text=The%20Government%20clarified%20the%20law,DIY%20household%20waste%20disposal%20either.>



NNC does place a restriction on the permitted number of deposits of DIY waste by the type of vehicle but makes no charge within the scope of the policy for the material deposited at the HWRCs. Amounts above those allowed within the visit limits are charged.

- a small car can make up to eight free DIY waste trips every 60 days and larger vans, MPVs, 4x4s and campervans can make up to four trips in the same period; and
- larger vehicles including cars towing trailers, pick-ups, vans under 3.5 tonnes and any medium vehicle towing a trailer must apply for an e-permit, where they can make six free DIY waste trips every 365 days.

If more trips are required, the Council will then classify residents waste as trade waste, and such waste can only be disposed of at a cost.

This current policy stance suggests that NNC is currently compliant with the recent change brought in by Defra. However, the Council may wish to consider the extent of enforcement of the existing policy to ensure that loopholes are not in place and the current offering is not being abused.



3.0 Benchmarking

For the purpose of comparison, SLR worked with the Council to identify a selection of local authorities which are considered to be reflective of the circumstances applicable to North Northamptonshire, and therefore provide a reasonable basis for benchmarking of the HWRC service which the Council currently provides.

The identified authorities (Central Bedfordshire, Shropshire County, North Somerset, Leicestershire County and Staffordshire County Councils) were shortlisted following consideration of the existing provision of HWRC services (seeking to include a mix of in-house and contracted service authorities), and suitable comparability in terms of rurality and housing numbers.

SLR, working with NNC, approached each council with a questionnaire regarding several different topics including staff costs, waste throughput, performance and contract costs. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix B

Only Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) provided responses, which we have used to compare to NNC's current HWRC service. Contacts were established for each of the shortlisted councils but, owing to the time of the information request (Aug 2023), it is suspected that resource availability within councils was likely low due to staff holidays, resulting in a poor response rate. Table 3.1 compares NNC to CBC responses. Similarities exist in terms of tonnage throughput and number of operational staff. However, the performance of CBC is slightly higher than NNC, particularly regarding landfill diversion.

Table 3.1 Benchmarking Review, Central Bedfordshire Questionnaire (2022/23)

Local Authority	NNC	CBC
Number of HWRC sites	4	4
Breakdown of operational staff per HWRC (FTE)	3 or 4 Operatives 2 Agency staff (2 sites) 0.75 Drivers	4 Operatives 2 Reuse shop (1 site only) 1.25 Drivers
Breakdown of management staff for HWRC service (FTE)	1 Supervisor 1 Administrator 1 Assistant Ops Manager 1 Ops Manager 1 Waste Service Officer 1 Waste Performance Officer 1.5 Waste Contract Officer	1 Contract Development Manager 1 Head of Environmental Services 1 Data Development Officer 1 Finance Officer 1 Operations Manager 1 Contract Supervisor
Total tonnage received inc. rubble	27,091	29,888
Household recycling rate	Rushden: 64% Wellingborough: 66% Kettering: 65% Corby: 69%	Amphill: 67% Biggleswade: 69% Leighton Buzzard: 69% Thorn Turn: 58%
Landfill diversion rate	Rushden: 69%	Amphill: 89%



Local Authority	NNC	CBC
	Wellingborough: 72% Kettering: 71% Corby: 74%	Biggleswade: 88% Leighton Buzzard: 88% Thorn Turn: 82%
Operate a booking system?	No	No

SLR has also undertaken a high-level benchmarking exercise using data provided WasteDataFlow¹¹ and GOV.UK dwelling stock statistical tables¹².

This analysis seeks to provide an indication of the number of households per HWRC within any one Council area, which is often dependent on the rurality of a council, whereby more rural areas typically have lower numbers of households per HWRC. This information is displayed in Table 3.2.

The number of households per HWRC ranges from between 10,000 (which is significantly low compared to the other benchmarking authorities) and 39,000.

The area covered per HWRC varies between authorities, but ranges between 13,000 hectares and 25,000 hectares.

Table 3.2 Benchmarking Review, High Level

Local Authority	No. HWRC sites	Total No. HH	HH per HWRC	Area (Hectares)	Hectares per HWRC
NNC	4	156,576	39,144	98,651	24,663
Central Bedfordshire Council	4	127,680	31,920	71,566	17,892
Shropshire Council	5	149,263	29,853	123,400	24,680
North Somerset Council	3	100,944	33,648	39,112	13,037
Leicestershire County Council	14	135,501	9,679	208,092	14,864
Staffordshire County Council	15	395,268	26,351	262,420	17,495

Based on the total area served and the total number of households alone, the current provision/ number of HWRCs provided by NNC appears reasonable in comparison to similar/ benchmarked Councils. Focusing on total households per HWRC, NNC does have the greatest ratio which coupled with anticipated housing growth which could suggest the need additional HWRCs in future.

¹¹ [WasteDataFlow Waste Management](#)

¹² [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



4.0 Best Practice Service Review

Based on the information gathered from the site visits, and a review of the existing best practice evidence, an assessment of the entire service provision and individual site has been conducted. There are a number of opportunities that NNC may wish to consider as it designs its next period of service delivery to achieve best practice, which are documented throughout the assessment.

4.1 The HWRC Service

The following ratings have been applied for each category to represent SLR's judgement on NNC's current service provision.

Table 4.1 Table Key

Best Practice Rating	Description
	Considered to be inadequate to deliver high performance in this category area and requires improvement to meet best practice
	Provides reasonable performance within this category area but could benefit from some improvement to meet best practice
	Considered to represent best practice

Table 4.2 HWRC Best Practice Summary

HWRC Best Practice	NNC Baseline	Explanation to Position	Comments / Recommendations
<p>Range of materials separated for recycling</p> <p>The wider the range of materials that are targeted for recycling, the higher the recycling rate, especially bulk materials with high tonnage, such as garden waste, metal, wood, cardboard, and rubble.</p>		The Council provides a good range of materials for recycling at all but one of their HWRCs. However due to space restrictions some bulky items are not separated at Corby and Wellingborough.	The Council could improve the number of materials which are collected at its sites, where there is the space to do so. This would positively influence residents to bring a wider range of materials to the sites for recycling and a larger range of materials which can be recycled, also often have a positive influence on recycling behaviour by reinforcing the impression that the prime function of HWRCs is recycling.
<p>Split-level architecture</p>		Two of the HWRCs sites already use split-level architecture. However,	A split-level design often impacts positively on recycling at bigger sites,



HWRC Best Practice	NNC Baseline	Explanation to Position	Comments / Recommendations
<p>A split-level can help sites with higher throughputs to manage materials more efficiently, making it easier for the focus to be on recycling, through easier access to recycling containers and more efficient container servicing.</p>		<p>Wellingborough and Corby operate using ramps. The ramps at the Wellingborough site are particularly steep and could be seen as a barrier by some users.</p>	<p>benefitting both staff and residents. Providing ground-level access to deposit materials into containers or bays makes it easier for the public to focus on recycling. This allows for site vehicle movements to take place away from customers, resulting in less disruption and more efficient container servicing. Manual handling issues are reduced, as people no longer need to carry bulky loads up ramps to load skips or attempt to throw materials from ground level.</p>
<p>On-site communication signage Signage that is easily readable and readily understood encourages site users to recycle with confidence and can help reduce contamination into the residual waste stream.</p>		<p>The signage at all sites is relatively well placed and plentiful. An opportunity exists to update the older signage with new for the next period of service delivery.</p>	<p>WRAP provides signage templates which would be recommended to be used at all NNC sites. Reference to this guidance could be provided in service specifications. Additionally, there should be signage for directions and instructions on what materials should be recycled where. Signs should also be positioned where all site users can see them, usually elevated and with larger lettering. Symbols and pictures, following a colour coding system are also an easier way to communicate where materials should be placed. This also caters for site users where English is not a first language.</p>



HWRC Best Practice	NNC Baseline	Explanation to Position	Comments / Recommendations
<p>Formal re-use systems A well-run and prominent re-use system on site raises public awareness, which helps to reinforce the impression that the site's primary focus is the recovery of materials, whether for re-use or recycling</p>	<p style="background-color: #FFD700;"></p> <p style="background-color: #90EE90;"></p>	<p>The Council operates a reuse service at its HWRCs. Items collected at HWRCs are currently intercepted, stored and taken off site by reuse agents.</p> <p>There is a well established network of local shops which sells items recovered for reuse. The overall tonnage capture across all of the HWRCs is considered good in comparison to other systems.</p> <p>However, the systems in place appeared less formal than the core operations, and without meet and greet services repairable and reusable items may be being missed.</p>	<p>Reuse facilities can influence behaviour and so it would be recommended that the Council develops a more formal reuse facilities at or close by to HWRCs. The facilities should be well organised, and a repair workshop potentially at Kettering could also be beneficial.</p>
<p>Number of site staff The presence of more site staff can increase opportunities to direct site users and help them to increase their recycling efforts e.g., through a 'meet and greet' service</p>	<p style="background-color: #FFD700;"></p>	<p>The contractor currently has a minimum of three staff members on site at any one time. Additional staff are deployed during the summer months.</p>	<p>Adequate staffing levels are vital in running a successful HWRC. A sufficient volume of staff is required to manage the segregation of recyclables, police Trade waste, service containers, keep the site safe and tidy and interact with the public.</p> <p>An increase in the number of staff at each site would allow for the engagement with residents to be improved and the capacity for a 'meet and greet' service to be introduced.</p> <p>A 'meet and greet' service can improve operational efficiency with staff informing / encouraging material separation.</p> <p>Deployment of multiple staff members also allows for staff to rotate jobs, increasing experience, competence and interest.</p>



HWRC Best Practice	NNC Baseline	Explanation to Position	Comments / Recommendations
<p>Site-staff / contractor incentives</p> <p>Financial incentives to site staff are associated with higher recycling rates. Well-motivated staff are more likely to engage with residents in a bid to improve recycling rates.</p>	n/a	Detail relating to current staff incentivisation has not been established during the study period.	<p>Motivating and training staff can make a significant contribution to improving HWRC efficiency. Incentives linked to recycling rates can be useful to encourage staff to interact with the public to maximise recycling.</p> <p>It is recommended if any new policies are introduced at the sites which will involve more work from the operatives, e.g., black bag policy / sort, an incentive related to recycling rate could be introduced to motivate staff to interact with residents and help in the separation process.</p>
<p>Public awareness-raising measures</p> <p>This looks at changing the way residents view the site, away from a 'tip' or 'dump' and towards a recycling centre.</p>		The NNC website still refers to the sites as HWRCs (Household waste and recycling centres) and could consider future rebranding of the service to identify a focus on resources, repair, reuse and community.	<p>Existing examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource centres • Community resource centre • Community recycling centre
<p>Compaction of bulk materials</p> <p>Compaction can reduce the number of bulk containers on site, freeing up space to collect other materials to be recycled.</p>		All site uses mobile plant for the purpose of compaction and where possible materials are stored to facilitate good levels of size reduction	n/a
<p>Black bag policies</p> <p>A black bag sort can significantly impact the recycling rate at a site. This can prevent recyclable material from entering the residual waste stream and focus on recycling.</p>		The four HWRC sites do not operate a public facing black bag sort policy. However, the website asks for waste to be pre-sorted to reduce queues on site.	A black bag / residual waste interception policy could be introduced at the HWRCs. 39% of the incoming material in 2022/23 (c.10,500 tonnes) was residual waste, contributing to a significant proportion of the service running costs (c£1.1-1.25m pa). A black bag sort policy



HWRC Best Practice	NNC Baseline	Explanation to Position	Comments / Recommendations
			aims to reduce this, asking residents to sort their black bag waste, ideally prior to accessing the HWRC, or at the site at a sorting area. This aims to reduce the level of residual waste collected, as a volume of this will actually be recyclable, but it will also reiterate to residents the purpose of the site for recycling.
<p>Cross border control A well monitored cross border policy prevents additional disposal fees, discourages border traffic from out of the council area and reduces site congestion, resulting in reduced queuing times for residents.</p>		<p>The Council currently does not have a cross border policy in place.</p> <p>The Council currently has a camera and ANPR system in place across the HWRC network.</p>	<p>Introducing a permit system and/or booking system to control cross border usage, with the ANPR system could help to reduce operating costs.</p> <p>The use of electronic systems removes the need to check proof of residency manually.</p>
<p>Vehicle access policies A policy to control vehicle access enables restrictions to be placed on the types of vehicles which can enter the HWRC and helps to prevent Trade waste from entering the HWRC.</p>		<p>The Council currently has a vehicle access policy in place using a permit system.</p>	<p>A permit system for vans and trailers is seen as HWRC best practice.</p> <p>However, Trade waste could still slip through using this process and so spot checks from staff are still required.</p>

4.2 Site Specific Assessment

A range of qualitative assessments have been conducted for each HWRC following feedback from the site visits. Each of the assessment categories has been compared to notional best practice from across SLR's experience and best practice examples from the sector. These are 'point in time' judgements using the same RAG (red, amber, green) scale applied to the full service review above, to indicate fit with best practice standards.

The following assessment guidance (Table 4.3) was used to provide a best practice judgement for each HWRC.



Table 4.3 Best Practice Assessment Guidance

Category	HWRC Best Practice Judgement
Entrance	Access to an HWRC should be well designed to facilitate good two way traffic flow and obvious directional routes. Eliminating or reducing the need for traffic to queue onto the public highway.
Layout / design	A split-level can help sites with higher throughputs to manage materials more efficiently, making it easier for the focus to be on recycling, through easier access to recycling containers and more efficient container servicing.
Communication materials	Signage that is easily readable and readily understood encourages site users to recycle with confidence and can help reduce contamination into the residual waste stream.
Opportunities for reuse	A well-run and prominent re-use system on site raises public awareness, which helps to reinforce the impression that the site's primary focus is recovery of materials, whether for re-use or recycling.
Capacity	The ability to manage surges in material volumes and sustain reasonable time periods without the need for container servicing.
Flexibility	The ability to reconfigure or add additional storage capacity at an HWRC to facilitate additional separation of materials for reuse, repair, recycling etc.
Condition	The built environment is in good condition maintained to modern standards and produces a clean and safe environment for site users and operators.
Trade waste	Provides the ability for Trade waste to be accepted efficiently without disruption to members of the public. Effective duty of care, charging and payment systems are in place to administer Trade customers.
Staffing	The presence of more site staff can increase opportunities to direct site users and help them to increase their recycling efforts, e.g., through a 'meet and greet' service.
Operations	Operations are well managed, and the facility operates with no or limited disruption to core operational activities whilst still receiving household waste deliveries.

4.2.1 Corby

Table 4.4 Individual Site Best Practice Assessment – Corby

Category	Comment	Rating
Entrance	Traffic queues onto main road	
Layout / design	Constricted layout with bottle necks	
Communication materials	Obscured by site design	
Opportunities for reuse	Present but restricted effectiveness due to wider site pressures	



Category	Comment	Rating
Capacity	Limited capacity for garden waste and expansion for future materials	
Flexibility	Constrained footprint and layout limit options to adapt	
Condition	Surface breakup and poor container condition	
Trade waste	Limited scope for effective Trade waste management	
Staffing	Understaffed for traffic pressures	
Operations	Effective within the site context and constraints	

4.2.2 Kettering

Table 4.5 Individual Site Best Practice Assessment - Kettering

Category	Comment	Rating
Entrance	Traffic queues possible into surrounding industrial estate – limited stacking based on entire footprint	
Layout / design	Split level but some remote material locations	
Communication materials	Good clean and visible signage	
Opportunities for reuse	Limited promotion of reuse opportunities	
Capacity	Good capacity with the ability to manage large volumes of material	
Flexibility	Ability to exploit unused space to future proof against increasing demands	
Condition	Site in good condition	
Trade Waste	Weighbridge, dedicated office and traffic lane for Trade waste. Potential to interfere with public traffic	
Staffing	Considered adequate for current needs	
Operations	Effective within site context and constraints	

4.2.3 Rushden

Table 4.6 Individual Site Best Practice Assessment - Rushden

Category	Comment	Rating
Entrance	Some concerns with short link to main road	
Layout / design	Good ability for traffic stacking on site – circulation loop and split level	
Communication materials	Good visible signage	



Category	Comment	Rating
Opportunities for reuse	Limited promotion of reuse opportunities	Yellow
Capacity	Good capacity with multiple containers for some materials	Yellow
Flexibility	Ability to reconfigure container locations and signage	Green
Condition	Site is good condition	Yellow
Trade waste	Ability to weigh and manage Trade waste in isolation	Green
Staffing	Large site to manage and effectively monitor all areas with existing staffing resource	Yellow
Operations	Well managed	Green

4.2.4 Wellingborough

Table 4.7 Individual Site Best Practice Assessment - Wellingborough

Category	Comment	Rating
Entrance	Limited stacking capacity within site, interface with surrounding business entrances	Red
Layout/Design	Ramp access to containers via a long walk/ carry from parking spaces. Large amounts of car reversing witnessed	Yellow
Communication Materials	Clear and visible signage	Yellow
Opportunities for Reuse	Active reuse interception but located on the exit route	Yellow
Capacity	Limited capacity for local demand	Red
Flexibility	Restricted within small public area	Red
Condition	Site in reasonable condition	Yellow
Trade Waste	Limited or no ability to manage and accept Trade waste separately	Red
Staffing	Challenging environment to monitor public activity	Yellow
Operations	Effective within site context and constraints	Yellow



5.0 Infrastructure Review

Forecast housing growth data provided by the Council indicates a significant increase in housing numbers and consequential service pressures over the next envisaged service period. Waste flow modelling detailed in Section 7.3 suggests a potential increase in tonnage demand on the HWRC service of c.26%, which will put pressure on the existing HWRC provision and layout configurations. This is likely to be felt most at HWRCs least capable to stack traffic and service user visits expediently. In view of the anticipated demands of the service, a high-level review of the built infrastructure has been conducted with a view to identifying and indicatively costing¹³ potential facility improvements, which are aimed at building site capacity and improving traffic stacking and flow in the short to medium term. A notional cost has also been provided for the development of a new HWRC to help provide a comparison and scale to the site specific suggestions.

5.1 Corby

The Corby HWRC is a leased facility which is close to expiry. The site and surroundings hold the potential to provide future development solutions for the HWRC. Its current footprint is constrained which reduces the site's ability to stack traffic and facilitate an expedient flow of traffic through the site.

Should the Council consider the location of the Corby HWRC to be fit for the longer term (with agreeable lease terms) an expansion of the existing site area could be investigated.

Information from the site visit indicates that an area of land immediately outside of the existing HWRC boundary could be suitable for site expansion. Investigation would be required to ensure the proximity to the neighbouring closed landfill site and associated infrastructure do not constrain any expansion. Should these possible constraints be satisfied a range of ground works and surfacing activity could be completed to expand the access, traffic stacking and container arrangement at the facility.

The images below were taken around the perimeter of the existing site, detailing historic infrastructure and engineering which may reduce the burden of development cost. Expansion of the northern and eastern site border could double the site footprint and allow the design and construction of a more 'fit for purpose' facility to serve Corby.

Careful liaison and terms would need to be considered with the landowner, which would need to be balanced against the Council's preference for infrastructure ownership longer term.

¹³ The indicative costs based on SPONS Price Database and SLR's knowledge of similar facilities. The figures presented are for guidance only and can vary depending on the current market conditions, inflation, efficient working, the scale of the project, site difficulties, location, and tender climate, etc.



Table 5.1 Potential Indicative Costs - Corby

Measure	Indicative Cost	Comments
Expand site footprint resurface existing site and reorganise traffic flows and container locations	£1,548,250	Partial redevelopment without full redesign and surfacing
Total site redevelopment – with expansion into surrounding area	£3,298,000	Redevelopment of an expanded site into a split level site
Replace all site signage	£5,000-10,000	Poles and boards - WRAP signage

Figure 5.1 Area Surrounding Existing Corby HWRC



Figure 5.2 Redundant Area / Possible New Access Surrounding Existing Corby HWRC



5.2 Kettering

The Kettering HWRC represents a well-designed facility, with many aspects that represent best practice for modern recycling centres. However, site visits flagged several underused areas which could be repurposed or developed to improve services in the future.

5.2.1 Existing Container Bay Expansion

The need to provide increased capacity at HWRCs can be aided by increasing the ability to provide safe access to bulk containers. The existing row of containers which represent the main material drop off area at the site could be extended at its western extent to accommodate a further two RORO containers and elevated access walkway. This would provide the ability to offer additional parking space and material storage capacity.

Recent regulatory changes in relation to Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDs) have illustrated the need to provide additional separate storage, and an enhancement such as this within the existing site footprint could aid the capability of the facility by providing future proofing capability. Any works would need to consider the interaction with the existing split-level ramp and associated ground and surface conditions.

5.2.2 Repurposing the Education Facility

An unused, two storey modular building at the HWRC potentially represents a facility which could be repurposed for a range of activities relating to the service.

Some UK councils have developed a range of solutions for providing repair and reuse initiatives at, or in close proximity to, HWRCs. These often require undercover storage,



presentation and workshop space. Although the internal suitability of the buildings was not observed and would need to be assessed should this represent a viable option to the Council, the location and space in this area of the site hold potential for development. An indicative cost for the redevelopment of the existing building has been provided below.

5.2.3 Redesigning the Lower Service Area

The existing entrance and traffic flow takes a clockwise route around the site. The western extent of this route is at a lower level and uses two lanes to separate household waste and trade waste traffic. The trade waste capability is supported by a small weighbridge office located in the lower operational area. This area also contains an array of bring bank style collection containers for glass, clothing, and other items.

The operational yard immediately adjacent to this section of site appears to be underused and only occasionally used for the servicing of the bring bank containers. The area could be repurposed to provide improved internal traffic stacking capability, noting the issues with traffic occasionally overwhelming the facility to the point of temporary closure.

Additionally, should the Council wish to enhance its Trade waste offering, a dedicated trade waste area could be developed in this section of the site. This would likely involve demarcating a small, dedicated internal circulation loop for commercial vehicles and possible relocation of the existing weighbridge to ensure disruption to household waste traffic is minimised. An indicative cost for this work would be c.£132,500.

Table 5.2 Potential Indicative Costs - Kettering

Measure	Indicative Cost	Comments
Repurpose existing 'green building' for reuse and repair hub	£20,000	Repainting, modifications to walls, etc.
Extend container bay and walkway / split level area to accommodate more containers in the row	£50,000	Some walls, fill and surfacing
Develop increased traffic stacking capability within the existing footprint SW corner – resurfacing / lines etc	£7,500	Line marking and some fencing / barriers
Develop a dedicated trade waste drop off area in the currently underutilised area in front of the entrance - relocation of weighbridge / construction of block bays	£55,000	Walls, Legio blocks and road markings plus relocating the weighbridge

5.3 Rushden

The existing Rushden facility receives the greatest number of visits and tonnage of the NNC HWRC network. Its ability to stack traffic off the connecting highway and service visits efficiently make this a user-friendly facility. This ease of use, coupled with forecast increasing demand and a neighbouring facility which requires ramp access, suggest the future pressure on the facility could be significant.

To provide additional bulk containers and access capability, the existing row of container bays could be extended. Detailed services and structural inspection would be required, but an area to the eastern extent (currently a grass bank) of the existing row could be developed to accommodate more containers and would help future proof the HWRC for further demands to separate additional materials.



The visual screening / vegetation surrounding the site could also be considered for reduction where permissible, to provide additional land area for complementary repair and reuse buildings / structures.

Table 5.3 Potential Indicative Costs - Rushden

Measure	Indicative Cost	Comments
Expansion into highlighted grass area to extend the number of containers in the split level	£100,000	Dependant on ground conditions and disruption of utilities etc
Slip road redesign to allow better queuing off the highway	£50,000	Improvement to gate area to increase visibility and turning
Small reuse and repair building	£150,000	

5.4 Wellingborough

Similar to the Corby HWRC, Wellingborough operates within a constrained footprint with the use of access ramps to the main bulk containers. These features represent access and accessibility issues put pressure on these sites currently and will continue to do so in the future as the demand for their services increases.

Owing to the existing constrained footprint, whereby containers and traffic are tightly packed into a small area, expansion of the facility where feasible could be investigated. The area immediately north and northeast of the site is currently not developed and could represent an opportunity to expand the existing site footprint. This would allow the construction of a split-level facility, to better manage traffic and improve access to bulk containers for site users.

Information requested as part of this commission has not established the definitive ownership and tenure of the surrounding land. This would need to be investigated further by the Council to determine feasibility.

Table 5.4 Potential Indicative Costs - Wellingborough

Measure	Indicative Costs	Comments
Extend site footprint surrounding area - ground works, surfacing, line painting.	£1,819,000	Redevelopment of an expanded flat site
In conjunction with the above build a split-level facility to remove the need for ramp access	£3,220,000	Redevelopment of an expanded site into a split-level site
Re organise site layout to reduce 'carry distance between cars and bins' and remove the need for extensive car reversing - resurfacing and lining	£10,000	Mainly road marking and barriers

5.5 Longer Term Requirements

Sections 5.1 to 5.4 have explored the potential of adapting existing HWRCs to meet the immediate, short and medium term forecast demands for the service. These enhancements should be considered and incorporated within the Council's capital programmes or other suitable delivery mechanisms to future proof existing infrastructure against the existing pressures and growth forecasts.



Should the projected population and housing growth be realised, the total capacity of the HWRC network may not be sufficient to accommodate the longer-term tonnage growth forecasts. This would be particularly exacerbated should extensions to the existing facilities at Corby and Wellingborough not be realised in the medium term.

High end arising scenarios discussed in section 1.2 suggest up to a potential 26% increase in HWRC tonnages by 2038. Should these future trajectories become reality, it is highly likely that additional provision and expansion of HWRCs (above those already detailed) would be required to manage the demand.

Currently the HWRCs are located in the principal, most populous settlements within the Council area. Drive time analysis indicates that the current distribution provides c.96% of the current population with a drive time of less than 20 minutes to access a HWRC, which suggests that these locations represent good positions for current and potential future HWRCs.

Spatial analysis shows an area of higher drive time toward the northeast of the Council area. Although no large towns are located within this area, the potential of a smaller facility to serve the Council's rural areas could be considered to help reduce demand on the other HWRCs in future. A theoretical location within the Oundle area for instance could provide the following coverage within the area.

Figure 5.3 Theoretical new HWRC location

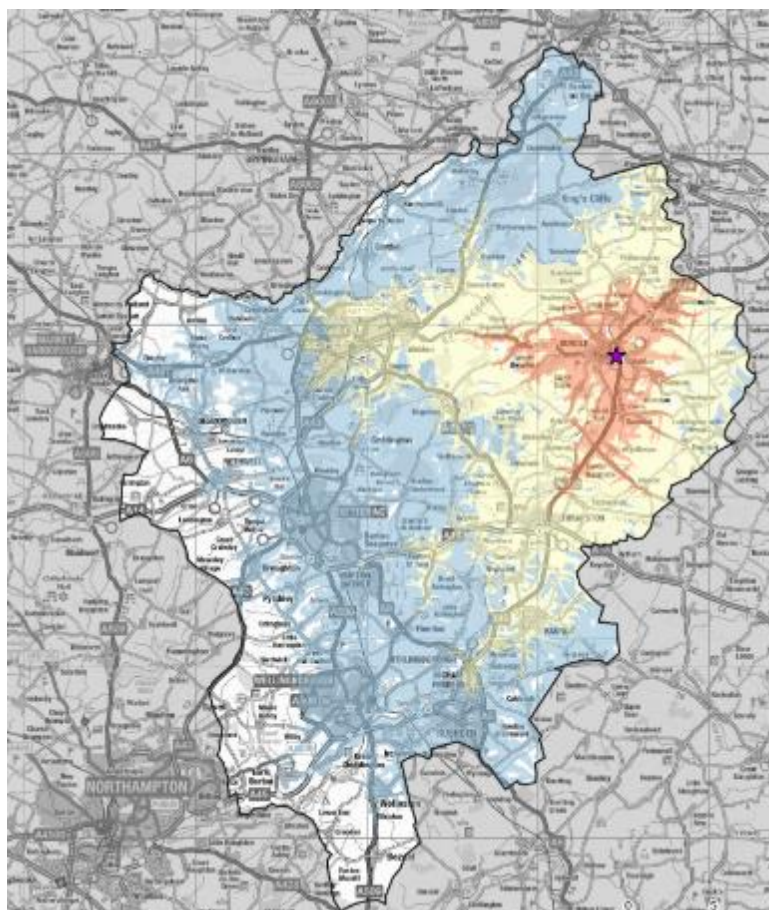
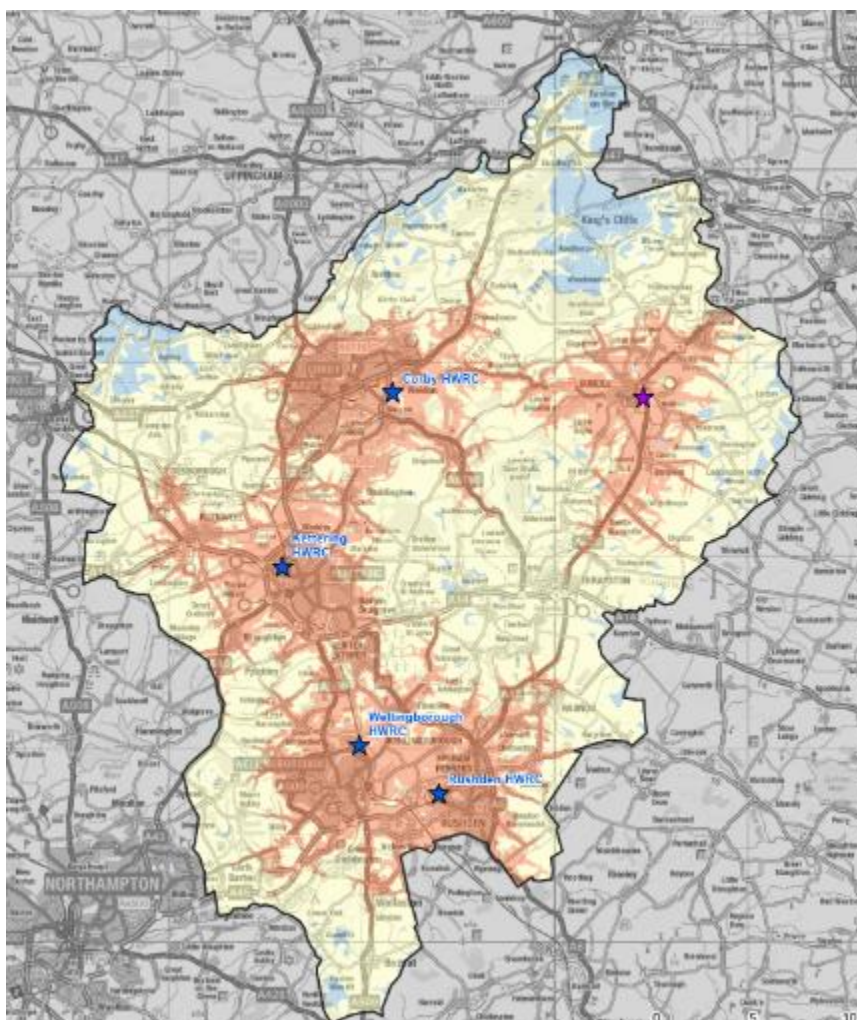


Figure 5.4 Additional HWRC - theoretical network drive time



5.6 Indicative New HWRC Costs

The development an HWRC is dependent on a wide range of factors which ultimately influence the cost of delivery. Regulation, and resulting amendments to operating requirements in recent years, have increased focus on fire prevention and improved drainage at HWRCs, which have increased development cost.

For comparison with the improvement options suggested for each existing HWRC, SLR has provided a 'default' HWRC construction cost to provide a modern fit for purpose HWRC handling between 7,500 and 10,000 tonnes per annum. These estimates exclude any cost associated with site acquisition, planning or permitting. A breakdown of the forecasts is detailed below in Table 5.5.



Table 5.5 Budget Estimate - HWRC Construction Cost

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Cost
	General Items				
1	Contract Management & Site Supervision, Insurances, traffic management, Health and Safety, Welfare and Health and Safety File	52	wks	£ 12,500.00	£ 650,000.00
2	Construction Testing	1	sum	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
3	Service Provision	1	sum	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
	Civils				
4	General Site Clearance	1	sum	£ 30,000.00	£ 30,000.00
5	Demolition	1	sum	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
6	Earthworks including Sub-Base	1	sum	£ 150,000.00	£ 150,000.00
7	Site Entrance Works	1	sum	£ 50,000.00	£ 50,000.00
8	Modular Office	175	sqm	£ 750.00	£ 131,250.00
9	ReUse Office - Steel Frame Building	306	sqm	£ 1,170.00	£ 358,020.00
10	Earthworks	1	sum	£ 75,000.00	£ 75,000.00
11	Concrete Hardstanding	3500	sqm	£ 70.00	£ 245,000.00
12	Asphalt Areas	1500	sqm	£ 60.00	£ 90,000.00
13	3m high retaining wall bays	250	m	£ 700.00	£ 175,000.00
14	Canopy	300	m	£ 275.00	£ 82,500.00
15	Weighbridges	1	No.	£ 45,000.00	£ 45,000.00
16	Drainage and Controls	1	sum	£ 150,000.00	£ 125,000.00
17	Firewater Tank	1	sum	£ 100,000.00	£ 100,000.00
18	Road markings, Bollards, Barriers, Lighting, etc	1	sum	£ 50,000.00	£ 50,000.00
19	Fencing	315	m	£ 150.00	£ 47,250.00
20	Landscaping	1	sum	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00
21	Meet and Greet Shelter	1	sum	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00
22	Signage	1	sum	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
	Mechanical and Electrical				
23	CCTV, Solar Panels, Traffic Control, Cabling, Fire Detection, external Lighting, etc	1	sum	£ 200,000.00	£ 200,000.00
	Operational Costs				
24	Containers	10	No.	£ 7,000.00	£ 70,000.00
25	Containers Spare	4	No.	£ 7,000.00	£ 28,000.00
26	Containers, Other plus Cage, Tanks, etc	1	sum	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00
27	Computer Equipment, Printer, etc	1	sum	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00
28	Mobile Plant	1	sum	£ 150,000.00	£ 150,000.00
				Total	£ 2,973,520.00
	Contractor Planning/Design Costs (6% of Total of Construction Cost i.e. Total minus Operational))				£ 162,781.20
	Site Investigation				£ 30,000.00
	Contingencies (10% of total)				£ 297,352.00
				Total Budget Cost	£ 3,463,653.20



6.0 Future Service Policy Considerations

A review of existing service policy has been conducted in section 2.2. The following section explores potential additions to the suite of policies which the Council could consider as it designs and implements a new period of service delivery.

6.1 Cross Border Policies

A cross border policy to prevent non NNC residents using the HWRCs would seek to limit additional disposal fees, discourage border traffic from outside of the Council area and reduce site congestion, resulting in smaller queuing times for residents. In addition, this is a complementary step to further reduce Trade waste abuse from businesses.

This could be implemented in conjunction with a booking system or existing e-permit system, where residents must provide proof of residency to access the HWRCs. Table 6.1 below highlights the cross border policies in place at the Council's neighbouring authorities and suggests that NNC is potentially an anomaly within the region in lacking a defined policy or statement relating to cross border usage.

Table 6.1 Neighbouring Authority Cross Border Policies

Council	Cross Border Policy / Approach
NNC	No policy
Rutland	e-permit scheme where residents are asked to register with proof of residency to area
Harborough	No current mention of policy on website
West Northamptonshire	No current mention of policy on website – Currently a similar position to NNC as the same contract in place
Milton Keynes	Booking system in place, where proof of address is required
Bedford	Proof of address required
Huntingdonshire	Mentions the sites are for residents, but does not mention needing to provide proof of address
City of Peterborough	No current mention of policy on website
South Kesteven	Mentions the sites are for residents, but does not mention needing to provide proof of address

6.2 Booking Systems

NNC does not operate a HWRC booking system at any of its four sites. There are a number of advantages to a booking system and reasons why this policy could be considered across all HWRCs within NNC, including to manage traffic accessing the sites, which can often cause disruption to important local roads and surrounding businesses.

Booking systems grew in popularity during the COVID 19 Pandemic and a number of councils have retained the use of such systems and report the broad benefits that these systems can provide, including:

- Hampshire County Council reports the following: "It allows site staff to plan operational activities with confidence, while the public can book a slot at their nearest site at a



convenient time, safe in the knowledge that they will be able to attend the site efficiently and not wait in a queue to get in”¹⁴; and

- Kent County Council (KCC) following the introduction of a booking system has seen significant annual savings, due to the reduction in queues, improved communications and freed up staff. Additionally, KCC has seen a 42% increase in positive sentiments post-implementation, with a 10% increase in recycling rates. This is because staff have more time to help citizens rather than managing traffic due to the new controlled demand, resulting in less contamination.

Booking systems are often favoured by contracted providers, owing to the extension of control and certainty that they bring to operational activity.

A booking system may be of particular interest to NNC to manage traffic congestion. Currently, when the HWRCs are experiencing a high number of visitors, the sites will temporarily close to disperse traffic queuing on the road. A booking system could help to prevent the need for temporary closure.

Of NNC’s eight neighbouring authorities, only Milton Keynes currently has a booking system in place. The system was introduced to its three HWRC sites during the pandemic and the council has continued using the service after seeing savings of approximately £200,000 in a 12-month period¹⁵, due to the throughput in tonnage dropping across the HWRC network and a comparative increase has not been seen at the kerbside.

NNC and the other seven neighbouring authorities use a permit system instead, which is discussed in Section 2.2.2. A summary of the general advantages and disadvantages of using booking systems is detailed below.

Table 6.2 HWRC Booking Systems- Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier access and less disruption for neighbouring businesses and other road users • Reduced idling of cars waiting in queues to access HWRCs – contributing to improved local air quality • More efficient visits improving the customer experience of an HWRC visit • Potential to broaden the NNC communications reach via the booking system web pages and associated email confirmations • More accurate identification of residents – reducing loopholes for abuse from users from outside of the NNC area • Should any form of payments be implemented across the service transaction, these can be made in advance to remove the need for payments at HWRCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in resident choice – no longer can resident choose when to visit an HWRC • Possibility of technical issues - if technical issues are experienced and not resolved quickly this could result in poor customer service • Retention of personal data – compliant personal data would need to be held in order to administer the booking system • Requirement for online bookings – the most efficient means of administering the system is via electronic means which is not accessible to all residents • Perception of fly-tipping – concerns relating to increased levels of fly tipping

¹⁴ https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s90072/Decision_Day_Report.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/milton-keynes-saves-200000-with-hwrc-booking-system/>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of frequent users – data from the booking system can be used to monitor and communicate with high frequency users to ensure HWRCs are not being abused • Scheduled maintenance – where HWRCs need to experience closures for works to take place booking systems can be modified accordingly to limit access and prevent any disruption to customers • Longer term data can be used to advise service planning and operational activity to provide efficient servicing and reduced disruption to residents 	

The government has recently (18th June 2023) announced a ban for DIY waste charges at HWRCs in order to combat fly-tipping. The updated legislation clearly defines DIY waste and sets specific conditions for it to be treated as household waste. The parameters include the scale of construction, whether the activities generate income, the frequency of HWRC visits and the quantity of waste produced per visit¹⁶.

The use of a booking system could be used to deal with the new legislation, as a council can track the number of times a particular resident is visiting a site. Using this information, staff can be made aware of particular vehicles to which closer attention needs to be paid to understand whether there is any trade waste abuse, in the form of DIY waste.

6.3 Commercial Waste Opportunities

The current use of this service appears limited. Two of the HWRCs are well equipped to separately measure trade waste with dedicated traffic lanes and weighbridges. Should NNC wish to enhance its customer base, a range of communication and awareness activity could be implemented to target new customers.

This could include on site signage or adverts in local trade publications or social media platforms. Understanding and profiling the existing customer base may also help identify opportunities to target particular business types which align well with the offering provided by the HWRC facilities.

The Kettering HWRC represents a facility which could be adapted to provide an improved commercial / trade waste offering. Further details regarding these considerations are discussed in section 5.2.3.

6.4 Black Bag Inspections and Splitting

Increasing in popularity over recent years, councils are asking their residents to separate their waste before arriving at the site and are otherwise asked to sort on site, at a sorting area, or risk being refused entry to the site. The policy has the potential to boost recycling rates achieved at individual sites and significantly reduce disposal costs incurred by the Council.

Interception and sorting areas provide the opportunity for recyclable items to be captured and diverted to other containers and away from the residual waste bins.

¹⁶ <https://resource.co/article/government-scraps-diy-waste-charges>



However, such an approach will require approximately one additional FTW/ dedicated per HWRC and broad management hierarchy support, including political backing to be successful. This form of policy during inception is likely to prove unpopular with some site users but, if sustained, has the potential to influence the behaviour of all site users and change the perception of the HWRCs.

Figure 6.1 Sorting Table Example - Bristol Waste



Case Study

In 2019, the Vale of Glamorgan in Wales introduced a policy which ended the acceptance of any unsorted bags and introduced the splitting of black bags across its HWRCs.

The change produced an increase of c.10% in the HWRC recycling rate and reduced residual waste by c.60% in the first five months, including a 15% increase at a single HWRC from 69% to 84% and an associated residual waste cost saving of c.£25,000 per month.

Communication with residents asked them to sort their materials before arriving at the HWRCs so that they could achieve a swift turnaround. A deadline was also published for all bagged waste. Beyond this date, all bagged waste would need to be sorted at the HWRC by the residents. Dedicated sorting areas were installed across the network, alongside reconfigured access to residual waste containers, making it more intuitive and easier to recycle items before considering disposing of them.

6.5 Novel Materials

The Council already provides a broad range of different material streams which are collected and sorted at the HWRCs. This compares well with UK wide opportunities and therefore the addition of new items is likely to have a lower overall impact on recycling rates in comparison to other options.

Other novel material streams which could be made available at the sites may include unwanted medical equipment. Lincoln City Council introduced a successful pilot survey to their HWRCs, which saw collection of unwanted medical equipment suitable for reuse and recycling, allowing for perfectly good medical equipment that was cluttering living rooms (or ending up in domestic waste) to be reused or recycled. By working together, the council and residents were able to help those patients who need it most, reduce the NHS carbon footprint and work more cost effectively.



As a further example, Newport County Council has partnered with Terracycle to accept and recycle all brands of crisps packets at their sites, a material notoriously hard to recycle¹⁷.

Additionally, Northumberland County Council has developed one of the first HWRCs to offer a vape tube for recycling. The devices contain lithium batteries which can be highly flammable and should never be disposed of in general waste. Councillor John Riddle, cabinet member for local services, said: "We have a contract with a local company who can break down the vapes into their component parts and recycle the batteries and metal parts." The Council hopes the bin will help tackle the disposal of one of the fastest-growing waste streams in the country¹⁸.

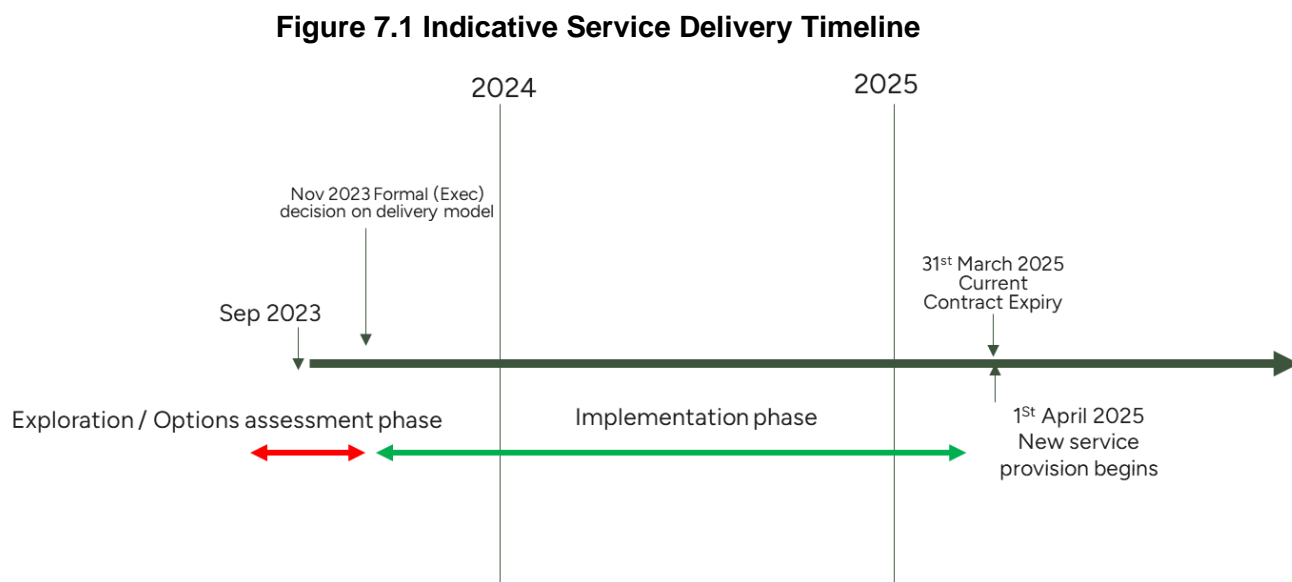
¹⁷ <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/kpsnacks#@54.39586446195522:-2.83447377734376zoom:5>

¹⁸ <https://www.hexham-courant.co.uk/news/23540560.northumberland-county-council-offer-vape-tube-recycling-bins/>



7.0 Future Service Delivery Assessment

The Council is within two years of its existing contracted provision expiring and needs to plan for the next phase of service delivery. Figure 7.1 illustrates an indicative timeline for the delivery of the new service arrangements.



As part of this commission, SLR has provided a high-level assessment of two headline service delivery options for the next service phase as follows:

- **A contracted out service** – whereby the delivery of HWRC services continues in a similar form to the existing provision, with limited changes to the existing ‘client side’ Council officer structure. The operations, transportation and material marketing remain the responsibility of the contracted service provider.
- **A fully inhouse service** – this option sees the full responsibility for operating and managing the HWRC service brought within the Council’s remit of systems and processes. It would involve the TUPE of all in scope existing contracted staff to the Council, with responsibilities for material marketing, technical compliance, transportation, and health and safety needing to be provisioned within Council staffing structures.

It is acknowledged that variants to each of the headline options exist and are in operation within the UK. For example, the establishment of arm’s length Council companies or subdivisions of contracted services, whereby site operations are delivered inhouse and transportation and material marketing are delivered under contract. However, for the purpose of this high-level assessment this disaggregation of component services has not been considered.

7.1 Future Service Delivery Options - Qualitative Assessment

The following assessment compares, at a high-level, respective qualitative benefits and drawbacks or risks of inhouse, or outsourced service provision under the following themes;

- Service Delivery
- Revenue Generation & Retention



- Staffing
- Service Delivery Costs
- Customer Satisfaction
- Flexibility
- Service Management
- Risk Management (Financial/other)
- Governance
- Upfront Costs
- Maximising Recycling Performance

A summary of the detailed assessment under each theme is provided below, followed by the detailed comparison under each theme.

Table 7.1 Summary of Service Delivery Qualitative Assessment

Theme	In-house	Outsourced
Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of potential saving as contractor profit margin does not need to be accounted for • Council needs to clearly define the scope of the future service (e.g., include or exclude haulage services) • Limited certainty over future service delivery costs • Potentially limited access to supply chains and economy of scale to support equipment purchase and agreeing terms with offtakers of materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery costs well understood during the bidding stage, but will include a profit margin • Mechanisms for future cost increases established through procurement process and/or discussion with bidders • Sharing of management resource and overhead costs from support services across contracts can provide a cost benefit to the Council • Well established supply chains and economy of scale may be beneficial in purchase of equipment and agreeing terms with offtakers of recyclable materials
Revenue Generation & Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full potential to benefit from all revenue generating aspects of the service • Full exposure to associated market risks • Some limitations possible in securing competitive rates for materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-procurement would provide an opportunity for the Council to review its attitude to risk regarding revenue generation and retention and structure a new contract accordingly • Outsourcing likely to realise higher rates per tonne for recyclables
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key risk is the identification and appointment of suitably 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No particular issues for the Council to address



Theme	In-house	Outsourced
	<p>skilled and experienced management and supervisory staff to oversee and deliver the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of associated support services also needs to be factored in • Transferred staff would need to be aligned with Council terms and conditions of employment • Ongoing staff management requiring rapid response could be impacted by Council procedures • Transparency of staff costs required to facilitate TUPE transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor to demonstrate adequacy of staffing at bid stage • Access to wider pool of staff provides contingency • Transparency of staff costs required to facilitate TUPE transfer
Customer Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to a new delivery model could impact on delivery of services, particularly in the early stages • Reduced ability to incentivise staff behaviour in this context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required standards written into a contract • The Council also has the opportunity to distance itself from the Contractor in the event of service failures, to better manage reputational risk.
Flexibility to Introduce Service Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greatest flexibility to introduce changes as and when deemed necessary, in-line with internal governance procedure • Lack of ongoing wider market experience could see services stagnate over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential future service changes could be costed out as provisional items • Service changes subject to negotiation and potential cost variations
Service Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High potential level of flexibility, but subject to adherence to Council procedures • Need to ensure that the management and supervisory structure and appointed individuals are fit for purpose • Risk of service management methods remaining static 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management requirements written into a contract • Wider operational experience may provide ongoing improvement and innovation benefits
Risk management (Financial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% Council exposure to all financial risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater certainty of service delivery costs • A new procurement would allow the Council to fully



Theme	In-house	Outsourced
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited certainty over future service delivery costs 	revisit its preferred risk positions and establish a contract which reflects that position
Risk Management (Other)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% Council retention of other risks Access to service contingency arrangements may be restricted High reputational risk potential for the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new procurement would allow the Council to fully revisit its preferred risk positions and establish a contract which reflects that position
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More complex governance arrangements, potentially subject to political interference Most effective means of reflecting Council culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven mechanisms in place
Upfront Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant upfront costs and resource required in transferring staff, replacing, or refurbishing plant and equipment, rebranding the service and delivering a contract management team and all associated support services and systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially significant upfront costs including for procurement, contract mobilisation, replacement or refurbishment of plant and equipment, and rebranding of the service.
Maximising performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility to introduce changes at pace, in-line with internal governance procedure, may allow opportunities for enhanced performance to be realised more quickly Changes to infrastructure initiated by the Council will not attract compensation/ disruption issues Limited consequence or recourse for poor performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to form/ specify and implement performance mechanisms that reward increased performance and penalise below target performance Transparency of performance information Changes in wider waste services impacting arising and performance potential Any changes to built infrastructure may attract compensation or disruption payments to a contractor

It is recommended that further detailed cost modelling on each of the options should be conducted at a point in time where more detailed outsourced cost information becomes available.

7.1.1 Service Delivery

Table 7.2 Service Delivery Option Assessment



Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is limited ability to penalise poor performance. • The risk of poor performance remains solely with the Council. • Options to incentivise staff (e.g., performance related bonuses) to deliver improved services are limited within an in-house service delivery models.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a rigorous but fair and ‘on market’ performance management framework including contract specific KPIs should provide sufficient contractor incentive to maintain its own performance standards. • Well-developed contracts include appropriate termination provisions in the event of persistent poor service delivery, allowing councils to receive compensation including re-procurement costs. • A new procurement would allow the Council to introduce a ‘clean slate’ in terms of requirements and mechanisms for managing future performance.

There are performance management risks associated with both of the options, but it should be noted that any outsourced service will have greater flexibility to directly incentivise staff to deliver higher levels of recycling and/or reuse.

7.1.2 Revenue Generation and Retention

Table 7.3 Revenue Generation and Retention

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house service delivery models allow charges to be levied for eligible services to recover full service costs, but it is not legally permitted to make profits. • Under the in-house model, the Council would benefit from any income generated through any on site charging schemes and the sale of recyclable materials, but clearly 100% of the risk associated with fluctuating prices for those materials would then sit with the Council. • In-house options may not be able to attract and sustain competitive materials prices compared to externalised contracts with large, established firms who may have better purchasing power. • In-house options, due to the need to follow procurement procedures and internal policies, may also not be able to switch or amend material off-take arrangements with the same flexibility as could be achieved under externalised contracts, especially when commodity markets fluctuate or are under pressure.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential to receive a share of any income generated from the sale of recyclable materials would need to be explored and defined during the



Delivery Model	Comments
	<p>procurement process. This is already a feature of the existing contract and well understood within the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under current market conditions, contractors are unlikely to offer highly attractive proposals for income sharing, especially if they are required to manage or share materials price risk and may decline to bid if the Council's position is considered to be incompatible with contractor business aims. • The extent of such sharing of income is likely to be limited compared to the in-house delivery models. • Any sharing of income would partially offset contract costs.

As with performance management, the preferred option in the context of revenue generation and management will need to reflect the Council's position on acceptance of risk.

The in-house solution would give the Council greatest control and would remove any profit share arrangements with a contractor but would also mean accepting all of the associated risks (especially material price risks) across the network of sites.

Outsourcing is likely to require a level of compromise in order to attract sufficient interest from the wider market. It may however be able to deliver higher levels of income per tonne of recyclable materials, due to the economies of scale and ability to leverage existing contracts with reprocessors available to potential service providers.

7.1.3 Staffing

Table 7.4 Staffing

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current contractor staff would be transferred to the Council. • Potential for senior management staff of the current contractor not to transfer to the Council, therefore the Council would require appropriate recruitment to secure the services of suitably skilled and experienced individuals within required timeframes to ensure smooth transition. • Requirements for administrative and central support functions which could be delivered (or at least partly delivered) by existing Council staff carrying out similar duties (e.g., health and safety, payroll), but may require recruitment of new staff to deal with additional workloads. • Salaries, pensions, and benefits (e.g., holiday entitlements) of the contract management team and staff may need to be aligned with the Council's remuneration and pension scales. This may not deliver efficient staffing costs or effective salary differentials compared to outsourcing. • Staff absence rates are generally higher for in-house service delivery models, which can be challenging to address by relying solely on policies implemented by local authorities compared to outsourced delivery models. Higher staff absence rates can result in higher service delivery costs and/or affect service performance due to lower productivity levels. This leads to a reliance on costly Agency cover requirements
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current contractor staff subject to TUPE transfer to a new contractor following re-procurement.



Delivery Model	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salaries and pensions for non-TUPE'd over staff can be set at prevailing market rates and therefore provides potential for cost savings compared to in-house service delivery. Central support functions are more likely to be delivered remotely (i.e., outside of NNC) and probably with the help of shared resources, delivering potential cost savings for the Council compared to in-house. Usually, outsourced service delivery models have lower staff absence rates as they tend to have greater ability to monitor and implement stricter measures for dealing with staff absence. Also, they usually have immediate access to a pool of competent staff and operatives (e.g., agency arrangements, other contracts) that they can access to address staff shortages.

Outsourcing delivers a solution that would not require significant input from the Council.

SLR's engagement with other Councils suggests that those who have been through a transition of HWRC service delivery model, provision of suitable staff and ongoing engagement with staff were raised repeatedly in the context of moving to an in-house service. Key points raised included:

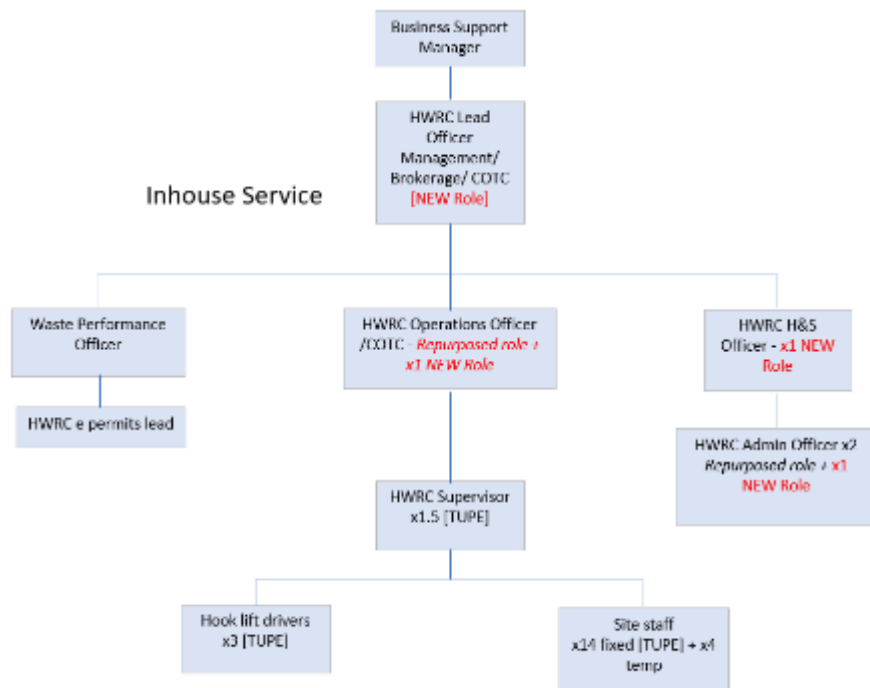
- the need to have experienced managerial / supervisory staff in place to manage the transition and future service (noting that the individuals currently in post with a private contractor may not wish to TUPE across to the Council);
- the amount of Council resource needed during the period prior to the handover of services and then thereafter to ensure continued engagement with site staff to achieve the required cultural change and ensure that Council policies, procedures and systems are embedded throughout the service; and
- the perceived benefits of an outsourced solution in terms of being able to respond quickly to staffing shortages, loss of senior staff etc compared to an in-house model where the procedures which must be followed to initiate such changes are considered to be more onerous and time consuming.

7.1.3.1 Envisaged Options Operating Structures

An indicative management structure for the two service options has been produced to illustrate the total number of staff required under each option and identify where new posts would need to be created, as shown in Figure 7.2.



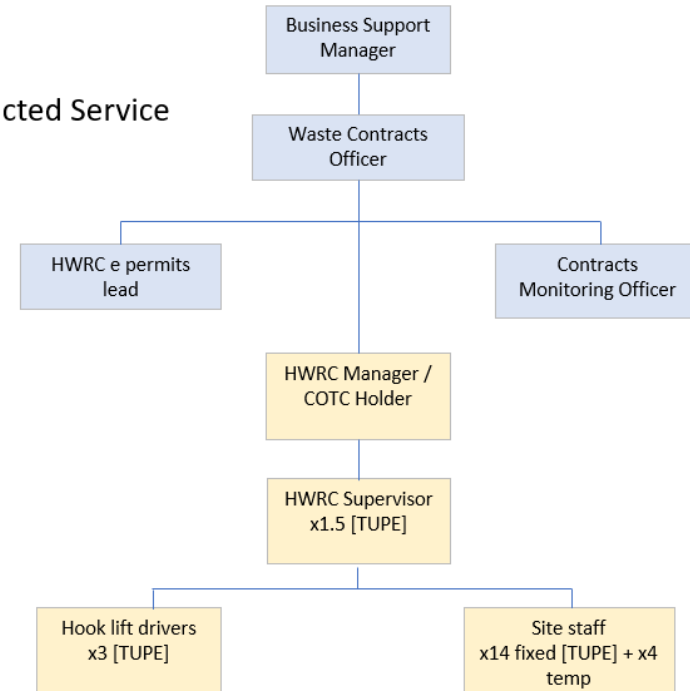
Figure 7.2 Inhouse and Contracted Service Envisaged Organograms



32.5 NNC FTEs

X4 Additional posts + TUPE'd staff

Contracted Service



4 NNC FTEs



7.1.4 Service Delivery Costs¹⁹

Table 7.5 Service Delivery Costs

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporters of the in-house service delivery model argue that it costs less to deliver in-house services, as a profit margin does not need to be accounted for and paid to an external service provider. • However, operating costs can be higher than outsourced alternatives due to limited expertise and/or experience in running similar contracts, limited established supply chains (e.g., for equipment purchase), limited economy of scale benefits and potentially higher staff costs (due to alignment with council, staffing policies, pay and pension scales). • Where absence and agency policies are particularly ‘generous’ or ‘long winded’ in comparison to private sector practices this may increase overall operational expenditure. • Meaningful benchmarking of actual services costs can be problematic with an in-house delivery model, making it more difficult to be able to demonstrate value for money. • The Council may also incur additional costs in ensuring the delivery of contract support (payroll, health and safety, administration, compliance etc) through either existing departments or the recruitment of additional staff.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the competitive nature of procurements, service delivery costs following re-procurement (with consideration to risks transferred to or shared with the service provider) should reflect best value that the sector can offer at a point in time. • Operating profit will form an element of the contract price, but the need to realise profits would ordinarily incentivise a contractor to drive operating efficiencies and reduce the Council’s costs within a competitive procurement process. • Service cost efficiencies are usually achieved through lower equipment costs (e.g., by using established relationships and purchasing power), implementation of advanced and cost effective service management and monitoring tools, application of innovations from other contracts, sharing of overhead costs (e.g., HR, H&S, maintenance) over several contracts and enhanced management of staff productivity levels.

A significant consideration for the in-house service delivery model relates to the total costs associated with potentially employing staff directly under the Council’s terms and conditions.

The delivery of HWRC services is relatively labour intensive and requires a significant amount of costly equipment to run the sites including on site plant/machinery.

7.1.5 Customer Satisfaction

Table 7.6 Customer Satisfaction

¹⁹ Excluding recyclables income



Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any change of service delivery model has the potential to cause disruption to the visible face of the service, particularly in the early months of transition, and could result in reduced customer satisfaction levels. Under an in-house model, the Council is likely to have greater flexibility in terms of responding to customer service issues but would have a reduced ability to incentivise or enforce the achievement of specific standards which would apply to a third party service provider.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction targets could be written into a new Specification, along with performance incentives / deductions within the Performance Management Framework as required.

Both of the options are considered to be capable of delivering high levels of customer satisfaction.

The decision to be made by the Council really hinges on whether the Council prefers to retain the responsibility for the delivery of that aspect of the service through its own management and training procedures or would prefer to have a clearly defined contractual requirement in place which ensures that failure to achieve the required target levels would incur a proportionate financial penalty.

Under an outsourced service delivery model, the Council also has the opportunity in some instances to distance itself from the Contractor in the event of service failures, to better manage reputational risk.

The greatest risk in this context lies in the potential change of service delivery model. Under either solution, there is an increased likelihood of service delivery issues arising on site, particularly in the initial months following transition, to which the Council should be ready to respond in order to minimise the potential impacts on customers and their perception of the service in general.

7.1.6 Flexibility to Introduce Service Changes

Table 7.7 Flexibility to Introduce Service Changes

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the main arguments put forward by advocates of the in-house service delivery model is the agile framework it provides for implementing service changes. There is a potential risk that service innovations which may become commonplace within private sector providers are overlooked and services 'stagnate' over time.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are well established and robust change mechanisms (e.g., open book accounting) within well-structured contemporary waste sector contracts to provide a similarly agile framework for introducing service changes. Depending on the nature of service change, variations can be implemented at a cost no greater than (or at least similar to) that incurred under an in-house service delivery model. However, most contracts would require mutual agreement between parties to be able to introduce service changes. In some instances, there can be difficulties in securing this mutual agreement, especially if the proposed change could affect the Contractor's envisaged profit levels or



Delivery Model	Comments
	<p>if the Contractor has incurred unrecovered losses or a reduction in profit over the term of the contract. In those circumstances, the contractor may try to recover these costs or losses (or at least a proportion of them) in tandem with the request for service variation. Such demands can constrain swift implementation of service changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreseen potential changes (e.g., site closures, reduced opening hours etc) could be mapped out as provisional items as part of a future procurement process.

It is generally accepted that the option of delivering an in-house service would provide the Council with the highest level of flexibility to refine and adapt the HWRC services as and when considered appropriate to do so. However, any changes must be in-line with internal governance procedures, potentially requiring exec sign or subject to EQIA which therefore could make for a 3-4 month process.

For outsourced services the Council should seek to secure provisional costs for any foreseen variations in the future services prior to making a commitment.

The benefits of an outsourced solution generally lie in the contractor’s ability to draw on its wider experience of service delivery to identify and adopt innovation and best practice as a natural evolution of working practices over time. Conversely an in-house solution may not be so readily able to recognise and apply similar improvements and there is an increased risk of services remaining static and potentially perceived as inferior when compared to other authorities within the region.

7.1.7 Service Management

Table 7.8 Service Management

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be essential to have in place suitably skilled and experienced managerial and supervisory staff who are able to manage the services in a way which minimises impacts on the quality of service delivered whilst also providing value for money to the Council. • The identification and/or recruitment of appropriate individuals is a key risk in ensuring that the services are managed effectively over a prolonged period of time. • Management support services (e.g., finance / payroll, health and safety, environmental compliance etc) would also need to be sourced either from existing Council staff or through the recruitment of additional employees to pick up this additional workload. • Subject to staff contractual terms and conditions, the Council would be able to readily redeploy its resources to provide ‘ad hoc’ services and/or support other Council activities if required.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist service providers have access to a wider pool of operating experience which can provide benefit in delivering continuous improvement and introducing innovative changes or best practice. • Alternative use of contractor resources would be possible to some extent but would be dictated by the terms of the contract. There can be limitations in redeploying staff to other service areas dependent on terms of liability cover. Also, such redeployment, if possible, may be subject to additional costs for the Council.



A key risk for the Council to consider is the level of confidence in ensuring that a suitable management structure and back office support system can be put in place at the appropriate time and then maintained to ensure continued delivery of high performing and cost effective services.

An in-house solution is likely to offer greater flexibility than outsourcing in terms of deployment of contract staff and resources to deliver Council services and respond to unforeseen circumstances.

External service providers can provide benefit in terms of having wider support networks, the ability to share personnel and associated costs across different contracts, and access to evolving learning / knowledge gleaned from delivery of similar services elsewhere in the UK.

7.1.8 Risk Management (Financial)

Table 7.9 Risk Management

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will be fully exposed to all financial risks and cost uncertainty of service delivery. Some of these risks include fluctuations to commodity prices, wages, pensions, claims, liabilities etc. There is limited long term certainty of service delivery costs compared to the other options. It should be noted that liability for death or personal injury due to negligence
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will have greater certainty of service delivery costs for the duration of the contract. The costs agreed at contract award will be adjusted in accordance with an agreed indexation mechanism (usually a basket of indices) and therefore the Council is protected to some extent from significant fluctuations in market rates. A major risk associated generally with HWRC service contracts is the recyclables price fluctuations. An outsourced contract can reduce the Council's exposure to this by providing competitive and sustainable rates (due to economies of scale commanded by the service provider) and a mechanism to share some of the recyclables price risk.

Clearly the Council's preferred option in this context will be a reflection of its agreed position on acceptance of risk.

The greater flexibility and independence offered by an in-house solution must be balanced against the understanding and acceptance of the fact that any and all financial risks would sit with the Council, with no scope to mitigate against those risks.

7.1.9 Risk Management (other)

Table 7.10 Risk Management (Other)

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk from insolvency of an external service provider is mitigated as the Council will own the equipment and all staff are Council staff. The Council would retain all other risks and liabilities associated with service delivery.



Delivery Model	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council may not have ready access to contingency arrangements (staff, materials outlets etc.) in the event of significant issues with delivery of services. • There is the potential for significant issues to arise (e.g., fly tipping) in the event of service failure for any period of time. • The Council will have higher reputational risk in the event of service failure or poor performance.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities exist for the Council to completely pass on or share some of the service delivery related risks (although this would come at a cost). • A well-run procurement process would test, establish, and commit to appropriate risk sharing mechanisms. • Provision of contingency arrangements and associated risks can be passed on to an external contractor through the procurement process. Contractors are likely to have access to suitable contingency measures (either via their own resources or existing relationships with sub-contractors) which would mitigate issues arising as a result of service failure. • Risk of contractor insolvency and potential recovery of Council's losses can be limited dependent on contract terms (e.g., Parent Company Guarantee or Bond). If the Council funds the purchase of equipment, the risk of contractor insolvency would be limited as it would be able to take over the equipment and continue service delivery. • Reputational risk to the Council from service failure or poor performance would be low compared to in-house delivery models.

As described above in the context of service management, the in-house option offers the Council a higher level of flexibility on deployment of resources to respond to other issues which may arise outside the scope of the HWRC service. However, in the event of significant issues within the HWRC service (e.g., high levels of staff absence, collapse of outlets for recyclable materials) the in-house model is unlikely to have the same ability to rapidly deliver suitable contingency arrangements.

7.1.10 Governance

Table 7.11 Governance

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This service delivery model will come under the standard governance arrangements of the Council. This has the potential for active interference from local politicians and trade union representatives in the delivery of services. • There is also a potential to be impacted by Council-wide decisions or strikes that are not directly associated with the services.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are established governance arrangements to discuss contract issues on a regular basis and provide service improvements and efficiencies. • These arrangements are usually light touch and effective.



Delivery Model	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition, this service delivery model will have access to a whole structure of senior management and central functions who sit above the local contract management level.

Perhaps inevitably there will be added complications associated with service governance for the in-house delivery model. In this case, the proposed governance structure would need to be carefully planned and robustly assessed prior to implementation.

Contract governance models for outsourced service contracts are well established and usually serve to minimise disruption to the delivery of services which could arise as a result of additional stakeholders, interfaces and decision-making stages being brought into the governance process.

7.1.11 Upfront Costs

Table 7.12 Upfront Costs

Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantum of upfront costs will be dependent on the extent of preparatory work and new plant and equipment required. Internal additional resource will be needed to identify the preferred service configuration and ensure that staff / systems are in place to monitor and manage service delivery. Avoids the need to carry out a major procurement exercise that would typically require an in-house procurement team to be established, with support from specialist advisors (e.g., technical, and legal). Ongoing smaller and multiple procurements would be required for material off takers and equipment purchasing.
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full re-procurement process would incur additional upfront costs (e.g., external advisors). Council may also wish to engage in market testing as a means of gauging interest and opinions to inform the development of an attractive contract and procurement that is most likely to result in a competitive bidding process. Upfront costs for replacing or refurbishing plant and equipment and rebranding the service would need to be considered.

All methods would incur potentially significant costs in establishing a ‘new’ service. Whilst it is possible to estimate the extent of costs associated with running a new procurement exercise, the costs involved with establishing a fully in-house service would be subject to a range of additional costs applicable to specific local / Council circumstances and therefore require detailed consideration.

7.1.12 Maximising Performance

Although high performance can be achieved across all forms of service model, with the correct HWRC configuration and policies there are aspects of each option which present issues when considering maximising performance.

Table 7.13 Maximising Performance



Delivery Model	Comments
In-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to introduce changes at pace may allow opportunities for enhanced performance to be realised more quickly – for instance the introduction of additional materials for recycling • Changes to infrastructure initiated by the Council will not attract compensation / disruption issues • Challenges in the ability to implement staff incentivisation schemes under standard Council terms • Limited consequence or recourse for poor performance • Limitations of local expertise and experience in developing innovative performance enhancing service changes
Outsourced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to form/ specify and implement performance mechanisms that reward increased performance and penalise below target performance • Potential to draw upon a wider pool of resources and experience cross company to implement and improve service performance • Careful consideration of payment mechanism design required to ensure mutually beneficial performance outcomes and proportionate penalties • Performance framework design and management to ensure performance is actively monitored (and is measurable) with associated rewards and penalties being applied at the appropriate intervals • Transparency of performance information • Changes in wider waste services impacting arising and performance potential - e.g., free garden waste services or increased kerbside collection of materials historically delivered to HWRCs • Any changes to built infrastructure may attract compensation or disruption payments to a contractor

7.2 Future Service Delivery Options - Quantitative Assessment

7.2.1 Service Delivery Model Options

A summary of each of the potential HWRC service delivery models considered by the Council is provided below.

7.2.1.1 Continued Outsourcing

The Council has a long history of delivering its HWRC services through a contract with an external service provider, currently Urbaser. This contract is a historic contract which also extends over West Northamptonshire Council. The contract ends in March 2025 and so, moving forward, a new contract would need to be procured.

The Council will be faced with undertaking a competitive re-procurement process to identify the most suitable contractor to deliver the Council's future aspirations for the service, if it chooses to continue outsourcing the HWRC service.

External advisory support (e.g., technical, legal) is likely to be required to develop robust and functional procurement and contract documents that provide best value for the Council.

Potential matters to be considered would include securing reliable TUPE information, funding of any major plant (e.g. compaction equipment or other mobile plant) required for the delivery of future services and sharing of price risk associated with recyclables (noting that in current market conditions, major service providers are reluctant to accept complete risk of



recyclables price fluctuations, but they would still typically assist in securing competitive and sustainable outlets for collected materials).

7.2.1.2 In-house Council Service Delivery

This model, which is currently used by a relatively small proportion of local authorities in England (the in-house delivery model is far more prevalent in Wales and Scotland) is to provide services using wholly in-house resources, i.e., staff employed directly by the respective Council using vehicles and/or equipment which are paid for by the Council.

As the Council is aware, several local authorities in England have brought HWRC services back in-house in recent years, including examples which operate a large number of sites.

The most common reasons cited for reverting to an in-house delivery model include having greater level of control over service costs and the ability to implement changes more readily to the provision of services, which under an outsourced arrangement would require formal negotiation and agreement with the contractor.

7.2.2 Modelling Approach

The model uses a high-level comparative approach to establish baseline costs and anticipated variation from the baseline for each service delivery option. The modelling baseline is based upon the Council's historical tonnage data and HWRC service budgets. Future costs have been forecasted in real terms based upon 2023/24 prices, therefore the impact of future inflation has been excluded.

The model includes a tonnage forecast mechanism based on potential household growth scenarios and assumptions regarding residual waste generation per household. Together these allow different growth scenarios to highlight the impact on future tonnages of residual waste and recycling received at the HWRCs – these are applied equally to the outsourced and inhouse service delivery model options.

From 2024/25 onwards, the outsourced and inhouse options have been modelled separately to account for key drivers of cost differential, particularly around staff costs and material income. This includes 'one-off' capital expenditure and ongoing operational costs.

The service delivery options have effectively been developed on a 'Business as Usual' basis, i.e., continuation of the service levels provided as of 2023/24 by the incumbent contractor. Where no significant change has been anticipated to a service area within an option, the baseline cost has been projected forward based on 2023/24 budget data.

The key assumptions incorporated within the modelling are described below.

7.2.3 Key Assumptions

This section summaries the key assumptions that have been taken forward through the options modelling process for both a contracted and inhouse service. This is helpful to highlight where significant differences are likely to occur between the two service models.

7.2.3.1 Historic Household Numbers and Future Growth

The model uses government publicised dwelling stock figures²⁰ for historic household numbers, as shown in Table 7.14.

²⁰ [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



Table 7.14 Historic Dwelling numbers

Year	Household Numbers
2020/21	153,249
2021/22	155,033
2022/23	156,576

The modelling baseline for future waste arisings is based on the average kg per household ‘generation rate’ observed between 2021/22 and 2022/23 (2020/21 is excluded to minimise distortion from the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic).

Using data from NNC’s 2022/23 Assessment of Housing Land Supply²¹, the baseline waste generation rate has been applied to three future household growth scenarios:

- Moderate – based on continuation of average net completions over the past 10 years;
- Low – assumes 20% below the average net completions over the past 10 years; and
- High – based on achieving 75% of the projected completions up to 2030/31, then continuation of average projected completions between 2023/24 and 2030/31.

7.2.3.2 Future Performance

The model assumes consistent kg/household generation rates for each waste stream across the growth scenarios, resulting in a continuation of current performance levels in terms of recycling and landfill diversion.

7.2.3.3 Operational and Management Staff Numbers and Salaries

Salary levels for each role have been estimated based on market intelligence including publicly available data on job advertisements and SLR’s internal databases. The key driver of cost differential between the contracted and inhouse service is the employer’s pension contribution. This is assumed to be 5% for the contracted service and 16% if an inhouse service was to be implemented, the latter of which SLR understands to reflect the Council’s standard level of contribution.

It is also assumed that some additional new staff will be required for the inhouse service, including a Material Broker and dedicated H&S Manager – functions that would be provided centrally within the outsourced service model. It is also assumed the inhouse service will require a higher level of Council-side management resource due to the additional scope of responsibility for service delivery. In practice the specific roles required will depend on the current level of experience amongst the existing waste service team and wider management support function at NNC.

7.2.3.4 Operational and Transition Costs

Operational costs provided by the current HWRC services contract costs including site costs, site maintenance costs, utilities, plant hire / operating costs are assumed to remain equal between the service delivery options.

One key difference between the options is the ‘one off’ setup costs associated with transitioning to a new inhouse service compared to the cost of procuring a new contract, the former of which is assumed to be higher – in practice this cost will depend on both the scale

²¹ [North Northamptonshire Council: Assessment of housing land supply, 2022-23](#)



of change required to recruit / train the management and support the new team, the degree to which IT infrastructure and software may need to be upgraded, and how these costs are accounted for centrally.

An additional difference unique to the outsourced service is the level of contractor profit margin, which has been assumed to be 10%.

7.2.3.5 Material Income

Material income will vary depending on the sharing mechanism within any outsourced contract. The model assumes a similar level of income will be achieved ‘per tonne’ based on the current contract. However, this will of course be driven by underlying commodity prices.

Bringing the service inhouse, material income will no longer have to be shared, resulting in increased income for NNC, particularly when the secondary material markets are strong.

However, this is anticipated to be offset to some degree by less favourable rates likely to be achieved by NNC compared to a large waste contractor when trading on the material market (the contractor’s broker large volumes of material pooled from multiple contracts).

The model conservatively assumes an equal level of income for each option. In practice it is anticipated that net income to an inhouse service would increase compared with baseline levels where there are real terms increases in key commodity prices. However, this also exposes the Council to greater losses during periods of market downturn.

7.2.3.6 Overheads

For the outsourced service, the contractor’s central overheads are assumed to be 10% of the payroll cost, with the Council’s overhead set at 5%. It is assumed that the Council’s overheads remain the same in the outsourced service and baseline.

For the inhouse service, there are no contractor overheads, but the Council’s overhead is assumed to be slightly higher at 7.5% due to the additional staff and operational support needs.

7.3 Modelling Outputs

The modelling results are presented below in Table 7.15. This presents the 2023/24 baseline costs alongside the average annual cost across the modelling period for each service delivery option, with a variation from the baseline presented in the final two columns.

The costs have been grouped into four areas. ‘HWRC Contract / Service Delivery’ represents the operational cost of delivering HWRC services either as an outsourced contract or inhouse service – this includes staff costs along with site costs etc. but excludes income from material sales and Council overheads (which are shown separately).

‘Other Council Costs’ includes costs associated with the HWRC services – such as waste disposal and haulage – which are not included within the current HWRC contract.

Table 7.15 Service Delivery Modelling Outputs

Cost Area	Baseline (2023/24)	Average Annual Cost		Comparison from Baseline	
		Contracted	Inhouse	Contracted	Inhouse
HWRC Contract / Service Delivery	£1,830,000	£2,130,000	£2,190,000	£310,000	£360,000
Other Council costs	£1,150,000	£1,170,000	£1,210,000	£10,000	£50,000



Cost Area	Baseline (2023/24)	Average Annual Cost		Comparison from Baseline	
		Contracted	Inhouse	Contracted	Inhouse
Material Income	-£410,000	-£440,000	-£440,000	-£30,000	-£30,000
Council Overheads	£50,000	£50,000	£100,000	£0	£50,000
Total (net)	£2,620,000	£2,910,000	£3,060,000	£290,000	£430,000

Overall, the results indicate that it is likely costs for both an outsourced and inhouse service delivery model will be higher than the baseline costs, with an outsourced model anticipated to cost c.£140k less per annum than the inhouse option, primarily due to reduced staff payroll costs.

The outsourced option is anticipated to cost in the region of £2.9m per annum including annualised procurement costs, c.10% above the 2023/24 baseline cost. The inhouse service is anticipated to cost c.£3.0m per annum (including annualised internal setup costs), c.15-17% above the baseline cost.

It is important to note that the model results illustrate what is the most likely cost outcome, based on the assumptions set out in section 7.2.3. As discussed in section 7.1, there are financial risks associated with each delivery model which could affect the actual service cost – however an outsourced contract is considered likely to incur a slightly lower annual cost, assuming there is no requirement for significant contractual variations during the contract period.



8.0 Conclusions

8.1 Service Review

The existing HWRC service is a product of a long-term, legacy contract developed and procured by Northamptonshire County Council since then the sector and demands on HWRC services have changed considerably. The advent of new and emerging legislation and broad financial pressures experienced by councils has created a need for HWRC facilities to adapt and change significantly within the last decade.

This produced a reduction in the initial contracted requirement in respect of opening hours and days meet and greet services, to meet savings targets. Many of the aspects of the existing contract represent best practice in the delivery of HWRC services. For example, the extent to which risk is shared between NNC and the contractor for commodity values.

The current network of HWRCs is well distributed to serve the local population and in many areas delivers good quality and value services. Two of the four HWRCs (Corby and Wellingborough) need immediate attention to ensure they are retained and enhanced to manage the demands of the impending new services period.

A rationalisation of the existing provision is not recommended in the immediate term. This is based on the anticipated future arising demands as a product of a growing population within the Council area. High level modelling indicates that the existing network capacity is acceptable based on current demand but would not cope with a reduction from four to three HWRCs. None of the remaining facilities could feasibly absorb the displaced volumes within reasonable proximity to residents. Benchmarking activity also suggests that the current provision (on a total number of households per HWRC basis) appears comparable to councils with similar geographic and demographic characteristics.

Consideration should be given to the need to review and evolve existing HWRC policies to ensure that the Council is not left exposed to increase arisings and costs. The need to review the approach to cross border controls, in view of the existing and developing neighbour council positions, should be investigated alongside existing vehicle policies to ensure the correct balance of fair use and restricting abuse is matched to evolving vehicle types (crew cab pickups are currently unrestricted but are often registered and used as commercial vehicles).

Polices targeting improved performance by seeking to influence and change user behaviour could also be investigated further to increase performance and reduce disposal costs. Case study examples indicate that significant improvements in performance can be achieved with the correct policy transitions and overarching service support from service teams and elected Members, examples of which include black back sorting policies and the potential use of booking systems.

8.2 Future Service Delivery Options Assessment

8.2.1 Timeframe, Resources and Capability

A high level assessment of the likely governance, transition arrangements, projects and activities required to insource HWRC services suggests a minimum period of between 18 and 24 months would be required to allow NNC to bring the service in house. This would include a feasibility assessment to identify in detail the current condition of the HWRCs, the future asset and resourcing requirements and the activity required to transition contracted staff.



Based on the time available until the current contract expiry, and the limited resources available within the existing waste service structure dedicated to the HWRCs, bringing the service fully inhouse would appear to be a significant challenge for the Council.

The formation of the two unitary councils and disaggregation of the waste teams has produced a knowledge and capability gap within this particular area of service delivery. This represents a significant barrier to the development of an adequate programme with supporting projects to deliver the change from the existing contracted service delivery model to a fully insourced function within the remaining time period.

Additional resources and technical capability can be provided on a fixed term basis to deliver such change, but with existing governance and senior management positions still in flux a clear route with active programme sponsorship is not apparent.

8.2.2 Qualitative Assessment

The qualitative assessment of the two service delivery options is summarised in Table 7.1 based on a common list of themes to demonstrate the balance of control, costs and risks between the two options.

Both approaches have proven examples for delivering cost effective and efficient HWRC services across the UK. The decision between the two often relates to a council's corporate priorities and alignment to other service areas where synergies can often be achieved for both contracted and inhouse examples.

Early engagement activity conducted with elected Members as part of SLR's commission identified no strong preference toward either option in a qualitative sense.

8.2.3 Quantitative Assessment

The modelling approach detailed in sections 7.2 and 7.3 provides an indicative identification of the major cost differences between the two options (contracted or inhouse service delivery). In agreement with Council officers, this approach neutralised a variety of factors which were deemed to be similar or identical between each option, such as arisings and equipment costs and focused on key areas where the delivery models varied.

The cost of staffing and the likely incorporation into the Council pension scheme of TUPE'd staff at the appropriate time represented the most significant difference. However, full visibility of existing staffing costs has not been achievable and a range of proxy values and assumptions for labour costs have been developed with Council officers.

In addition to the pension burden, it is envisaged that a total of four additional roles would be required within the 'client' / new operational function of an inhouse service to manage the increased resource demand and to provide specific skillsets and capabilities required to operate the HWRC service.

In both instances, the cost of new service delivery is anticipated to increase by at least 10% for a new contracted service and between 15% and 17% for a fully insourced service. The cost difference between the two options per annum is in the region of £140,000, but this does not account for any differences in capital purchasing power or preferential commodity rates based on aggregated companywide volumes, which are likely to be achieved by a third party contractor.

8.2.4 Delivery Model Recommendation

Based on the information gathered as part of this commission, and the high-level modelling and assessment conducted, it appears that based on the timescale, internal resources and capability and indicative costs that a contracted service delivery model should continue to be the preferred approach to the next phase of service delivery.



This recommendation is however provided in the absence of early market engagement. It is therefore recommended that the Council arranges market engagement activity to confirm the market position and review this approach at its earliest convenience.

Should NNC's position move towards a preference for delivery of inhouse services then the term of any future outsourced contract should be designed accordingly, to allow a suitable transition period for the Council to adequately prepare and support inhouse delivery.

8.3 Infrastructure Development

A range of high level costed infrastructure improvements have been developed in consultation with SLR's civil engineering team and are detailed in section 5.0.

These suggested improvements are intended to indicate areas for potential improvement and enhancement at each of the existing HWRCs. The potential developments seek to provide additional capacity, service flexibility and accessibility in the short to medium term to allow the existing HWRC network to cope with the forecast demands on the services due to population growth.

Capital expenditure at each of the HWRCs would require enhanced feasibility investigation in most, if not all of the recommendations, to establish viability and achievability. Delivery of improvements at both Corby and Wellingborough HWRCs should be prioritised to address the issues identified at these facilities in section 4.2. Investments in these facilities alone (where viability and achievability have been validated via detailed feasibility work) total in the region £3.0-3.5m.

8.3.1 Capital Works

In line with the delivery model recommendation the Council could use a new contracted provision to commission the improvement and development of HWRC infrastructure across the Council area.

This approach has the potential to draw in the expertise and experience of the contracted provider in developing similar facilities, alongside overcoming any potential resourcing constraints and capacity within NNC.

Provision of the capital by both parties or a single party will need to be evaluated as part of any tender process. Understanding access to and availability of funding, including borrowing rates that each party can access, are important considerations.

8.4 Next Steps

The following sections provide an overview of the likely activity required to prepare and equip the Council for the delivery of the next HWRC service period. It is recommended that a dedicated programme or project is established and adequately resourced to manage and deliver the change.

8.4.1 Procurement

Early engagement with internal procurement and legal departments will be essential in developing a new contract opportunity. The use of technical advisers may also be required for certain aspects of the contract design and tender evaluation processes. The following considerations need to be established by the Council.

4. Conduct market engagement with relevant suppliers to establish service interest and contractual 'red lines'.
5. Confirm and commission all hand back arrangements with the incumbent contractor including:



- a. Any condition surveys or handover plans required as part of existing contractual terms; and
 - b. Complete and agree asset registers with the incumbent contractor to determine the extent and potential cost of new assets and equipment.
 - c. Produce a viable cost estimate for the level of capital expenditure required to deliver a new service – number of containers and bespoke equipment.
6. Develop a procurement strategy which includes well planned market engagement, assessment of the condition of the HWRCs, the extent of asset ownership and engagement with key NNC stakeholders to define key service outcomes and priorities including:
- a. **Preferred procurement route** considering the likely changes required to the existing cost and risk profiles;
 - b. **Contract design** – including term and key contractual clauses, including but not limited to; change in law, liabilities, and extension provisions
 - c. **Specification design** - to deliver the desired service outcomes;
 - d. **Payment and performance mechanisms** – designed to reflect the change in market conditions, the potential to deliver greater transparency and to incentivise the desired contractor behaviour;
 - e. **KPIs** - design of realistic and proportionate performance measures, which will be monitored for the contract duration;
 - f. **Bidder information** - collating and producing essential service information to assist bidders in delivering well informed pricing;
 - g. **Asset decisions** - determining how service assets should be provided and how ownership and lease arrangements should be managed;
7. Establish and confirm the governance and approval pathway within internal democratic structures. This will ensure key approval dates can be aligned within the design of the procurement process.

Via procurement design and contract mechanisms, NNC will have the ability to consider and potentially deliver improvements to the service which are discussed in full in sections 5.0 and 6.0. However, the objectives of any procurement should be carefully considered and managed to understand NNC's priorities in respect of the service.

A wide range of improvements to the HWRCs have been identified, but these must be set in the context of NNC's financial, political, economic, environmental, and social parameters. A significantly enhanced and highly flexible service may not deliver on the Councils priorities.

8.4.2 Secure an Extension to the Corby HWRC Lease

Spatial analysis and service demand has indicated that a need clearly exists for an HWRC within the Corby area. The expiry of the existing lease does however present an issue in the continuation of services from the existing location.

The term of the lease is linked to the end of the existing contract. It is understood that Council officers have commenced engagement with the landlord. Confirmation of the use of the facility (or not) should ideally be in place at the point of formal tender release to provide certainty over bidding.



8.4.3 Capital Works

It is recommended that NNC engages and establishes a formal business case approach to delivering infrastructure improvement over the short and medium term. This may involve entry of schemes into the internal Council capital programme or exploring the delivery of infrastructure via a contracted service provider.

A formalised need and sustained commitment to improving existing and future HWRC infrastructure is required to ensure the network of HWRCs is fit for purpose for the next service delivery period and beyond.

As a new Unitary Council, the incorporation of waste collection for waste disposal functions presents an opportunity to the Council when considering infrastructure development. SLR's experience suggests that there are clear synergies that can be achieved when considering the requirements of the waste collection, transfer and HWRC provision.

Therefore, the development of a capital programme may wish to consider a wider more holistic view of waste services infrastructure development.



Appendix A HWRC Opening hours

HWRC Sites		Opening Times						
		Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
North Northamptonshire	Corby	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Kettering	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Rushden	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Wellingborough	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
Rutland	Cottesmore	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	North Luffenham	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
Harborough	Kibworth	9am-7pm	Closed	Closed	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	9am-7pm
	Market Harborough	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	9am-7pm	Closed	Closed	9am-7pm	9am-7pm
West Northamptonshire	Brixworth	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Daventry	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Farthinghoe	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm
	Ecton Lane	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Sixfields	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
	Towcester	10am-6pm	Closed	Closed	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
Milton Keynes	Bleak Hall	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm
	Newport Pagnell	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm
	New Bradwell	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm	7am-7pm
Bedford	Barkers Lane	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-5pm	9am-7pm*	9am-5pm
Huntingdonshire	Alconbury	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm
	Bluntisham	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm	8am-5pm
	St Neots	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm
City of Peterborough	Fengate	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm	8am-6pm
South Kesteven	Grantham	9am-4pm	9am-4pm	Closed	Closed	9am-4pm	9am-4pm	9am-4pm



Appendix B Benchmarking Questionnaire



Appendix C Key Assumptions



Table 8.1 Project household numbers (moderate, low and high)

Annual household growth scenario	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	2026 / 27	2027 / 28	2028 / 29	2029 / 30	2030 / 31	2031 / 32	2032 / 33	2033 / 34	2034 / 35	2035 / 36	2036 / 37	2037 / 38	2038 / 39
Low	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337
Moderate	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671	1,671
High	2,210	2,343	2,169	2,152	2,457	2,139	1,754	1,428	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082	2,082

Resulting number of households	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28	2028/ 29	2029/ 30	2030/ 31	2031/ 32	2032/ 33	2033/ 34	2034/ 35	2035/ 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38	2038/ 39
Low	157,913	159,249	160,586	161,922	163,259	164,595	165,932	167,268	168,605	169,942	171,278	172,615	173,951	175,288	176,624	177,961
Moderate	158,247	159,917	161,588	163,259	164,930	166,600	168,271	169,942	171,612	173,283	174,954	176,624	178,295	179,966	181,637	183,307
High	158,786	161,129	163,298	165,450	167,907	170,046	171,800	173,228	175,310	177,391	179,473	181,554	183,636	185,717	187,799	189,881
Modelled household numbers	158,247	159,917	161,588	163,259	164,930	166,600	168,271	169,942	171,612	173,283	174,954	176,624	178,295	179,966	181,637	183,307



Table 8.2 Staff Salary assumptions – unit cost per FTE

Staff	Salaries	
	Contracted Service	In house Service
Administrator	£26,000	£26,000
Processing Operational Manager	£55,000	£55,000
Supervisor	£31,500	£31,500
Site operatives (Site Staff/Agency)	£25,200	£25,200
Operational Administrators	£26,000	£26,000
Drivers	£27,500	£27,500
Material Broker	£50,000	£50,000
H&S Manager	£35,000	£35,000
Waste Service Officer	£28,376	£28,376
Waste Performance Officer	£35,000	£51,026
Waste Contracts Officer		£30,209
Overtime	5%	5%
PPE	£450	£450
Training	£250	£250
Apprenticeship Levy	0.5%	0.5%
National Insurance	14%	14%
Pension (Contractor)	5%	
Pension (Council)	16%	16%
Holiday / sick cover	10%	10%

Table 8.3 Number of FTE

Staff (FTE)	FTE	
	Contracted Service	In house Service
Site Staff	14	14
Agency Staff	4	4
Drivers	3	3
Supervisors	1	1
Admin	1	1
Assistant Ops Manager	1	1
Ops Manager	1	2



Staff (FTE)	FTE	
	Contracted Service	In house Service
Material Broker	0.25	1
H&S Manager	0.5	1
Waste Service Officer	1	1
Waste Performance Officer	1	1
Waste Contracts Officer	1.5	2.5
Total	29.25	32.5

Table 8.4 HWRC Contract Cost (2024/25)

HWRC Contract Cost	Contracted Service	In house Service
Site costs (e.g., security, signage, consumables, permits etc.)	£48,000	£48,000
Site maintenance allowance	£40,000	£40,000
Utilities	£30,000	£30,000
Admin and office expenses	£6,000	£6,000
Plant hire and operating costs	£320,000	£320,000

Table 8.5 Other Costs to the Council (2024/25)

Council Costs	Contracted Service	In house Service
One Off Procurement costs	£200,000	£0
Annual Procurement costs	£0	£20,000
Internal Set Up Costs	£200,000	£500,000
Rents and Leases	£55,650	£55,650
Service Charges	£0	£0
Professional Fees and Hired Services	£0	£0
Payments to Other Local Authorities	£0	£0
Traffic Signs and Lines Maintenance	£0	£0
Waste Disposal	£155,998	£155,998
Specialist Waste Disposal	£353,917	£353,917
Landfill Tax	£663,735	£663,735
HWRC Contracts		



Council Costs	Contracted Service	In house Service
Waste Transportation	£322,020	£322,020
Internal Recharges	£7,110	£7,110
Cost recovery from Outside Bodies	-£384,060	-£384,060
Sales - General	£0	£0
Issue of Certificates, Permits and Licences	-£24,010	-£24,010
Building Repair and Maintenance	£4,000	£4,000
Grounds Maintenance	£0	£0
Contractual Income	£0	£0
Cleaning and Domestic Supplies	£0	£0
Profit Margin	10%	0%

Table 8.6 Material Income assumptions

Material Income	Contracted Service	In house Service
Mixed Paper and Cardboard	-£78.54	-£78.54
Cardboard	£0.00	£0.00
Paper	£0.00	£0.00
Household Batteries	£0.00	£0.00
Metal (Ferrous)	-£137.08	-£137.08
Metal (Ferrous) (2)	-£124.53	-£124.53
Chargeable DIY - Metal (Ferrous)	£0.00	£0.00
Metal (Non-Ferrous)	-£587.82	-£587.82
Chargeable DIY - Metal (Non-Ferrous)	£0.00	£0.00
Fridges & Freezers (Units x 45kg)	£0.00	£0.00
Fridges & Freezers (Units x 45kg)	£0.00	£0.00
CRT's (Units x 20kg)	£0.00	£0.00
Glass	-£15.79	-£15.79
Hard Plastics	£0.00	£0.00
Hard Plastics	£0.00	£0.00
Plastic Bottles	£0.00	£0.00



Material Income	Contracted Service	In house Service
Plastic Bottles	£0.00	£0.00
Textiles	-£132.41	-£132.41
Automotive Oil (1 gallon - 4.5461 litres)	£0.00	£0.00
Automotive Batteries	£0.00	£0.00
Automotive Batteries	£0.00	£0.00
Fluorescent Tubes (Container x 60kg)	£0.00	£0.00
Small Domestic Appliances	£0.00	£0.00
Large Domestic Appliances	-£137.09	-£137.09
Large Domestic Appliances (2)	-£124.40	-£124.40
Aerosols	£0.00	£0.00
Oil Filters	£0.00	£0.00
Paints	£0.00	£0.00
Chargeable DIY - Paints	£0.00	£0.00
Other Hazardous Chemicals	£0.00	£0.00
Plastics Contaminated with Oil	£0.00	£0.00
Mixed Road Fuel	£0.00	£0.00
Waste Oil Absorbents	£0.00	£0.00
Antifreeze	£0.00	£0.00
Waste Cooking Oil	£0.00	£0.00
Waste Packaging Contaminated with Cooking Oil	£0.00	£0.00
Tetra Packs	£0.00	£0.00
Carpet	£0.00	£0.00
Printer Ink Cartridges	£0.00	£0.00
Trade Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) - POPS	-£192.60	-£192.60
Trade (Recovered/Thermal treatment) - Wood	-£30.24	-£30.24
Total Trade	-£4.09	-£4.09



Appendix D Travel Distances



Table 8.7 Drive Time Analysis – Wellingborough HWRC

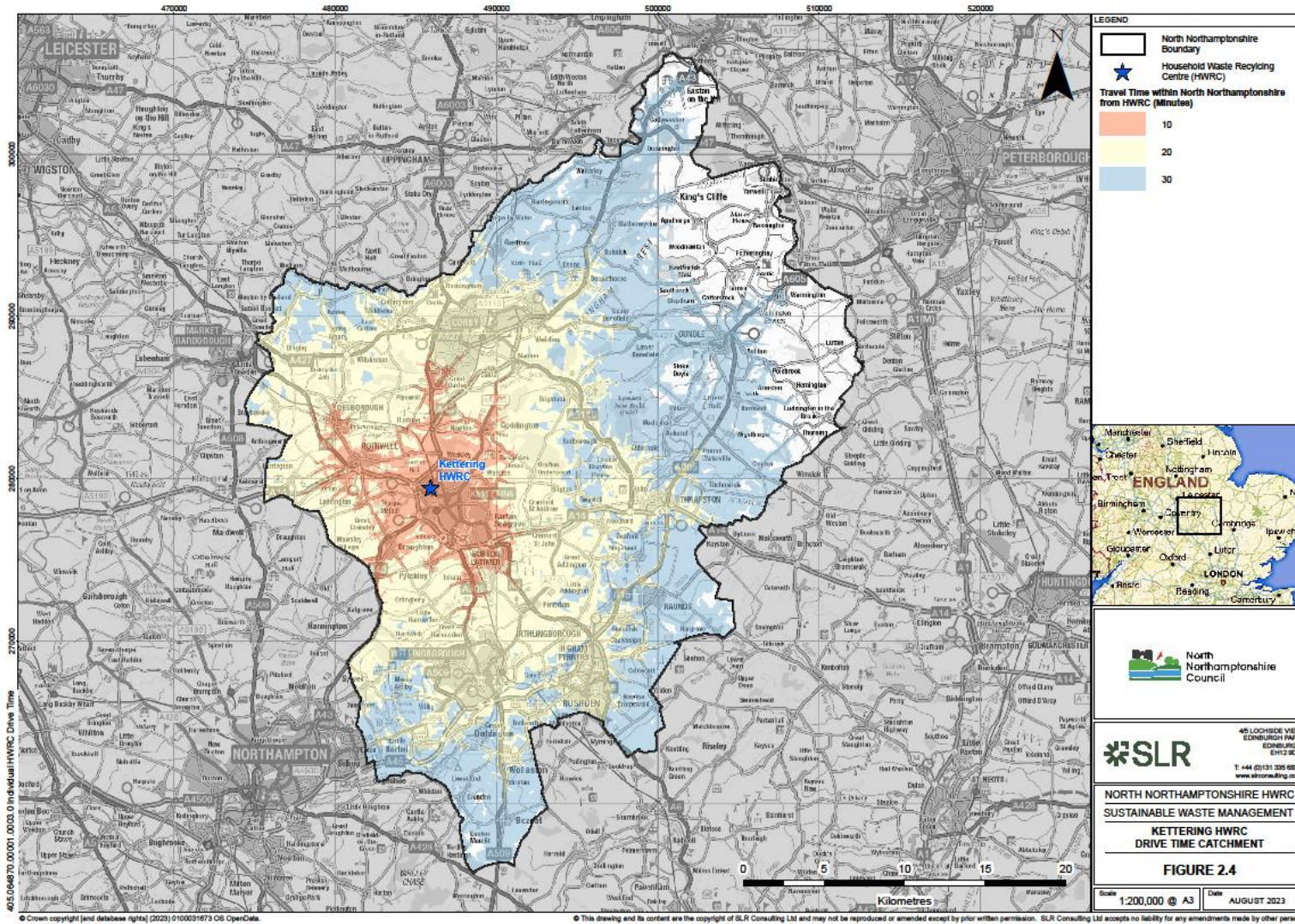


Table 8.8 Drive Time Analysis – Corby HWRC

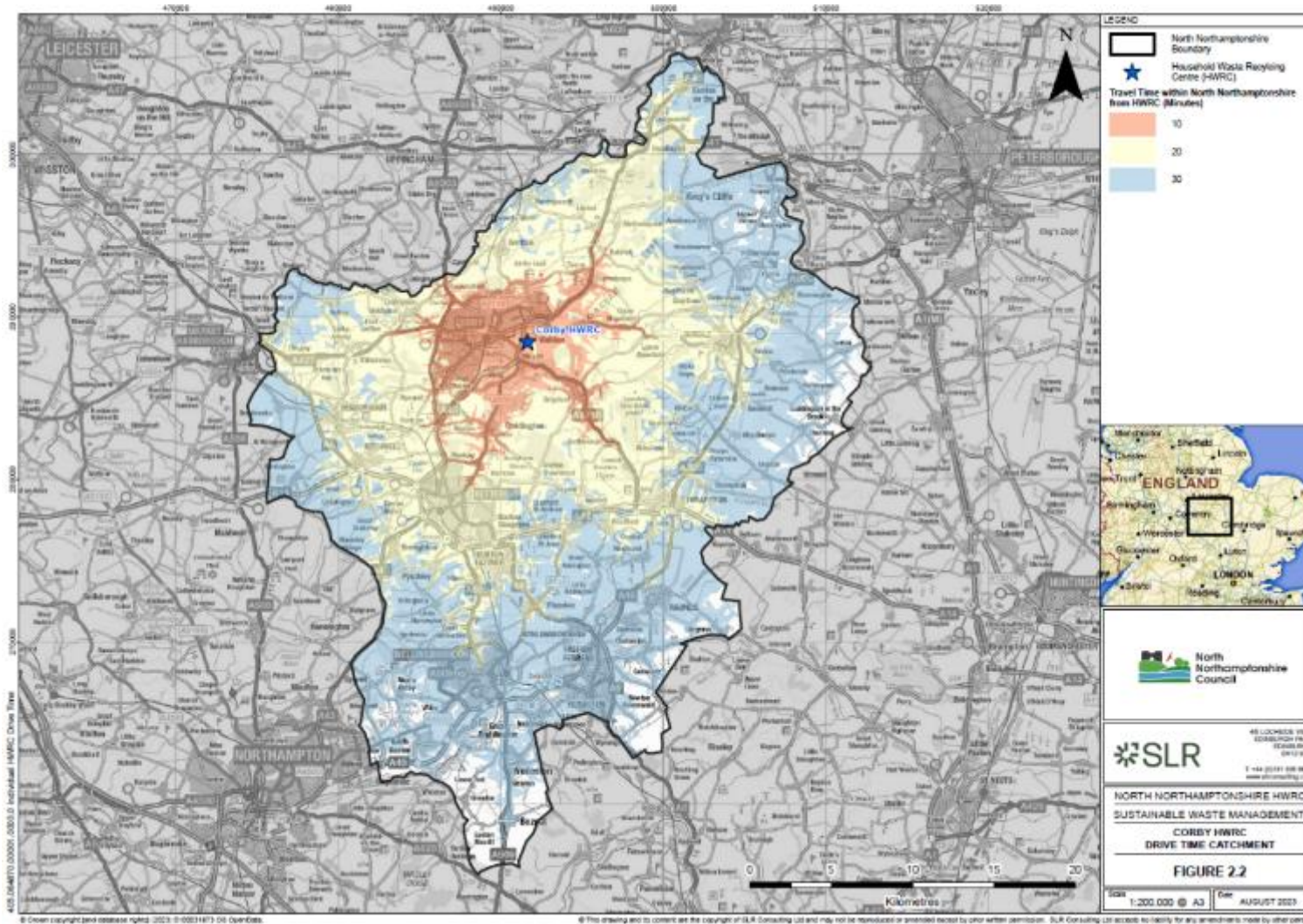


Table 8.9 Drive Time Analysis - Rushden

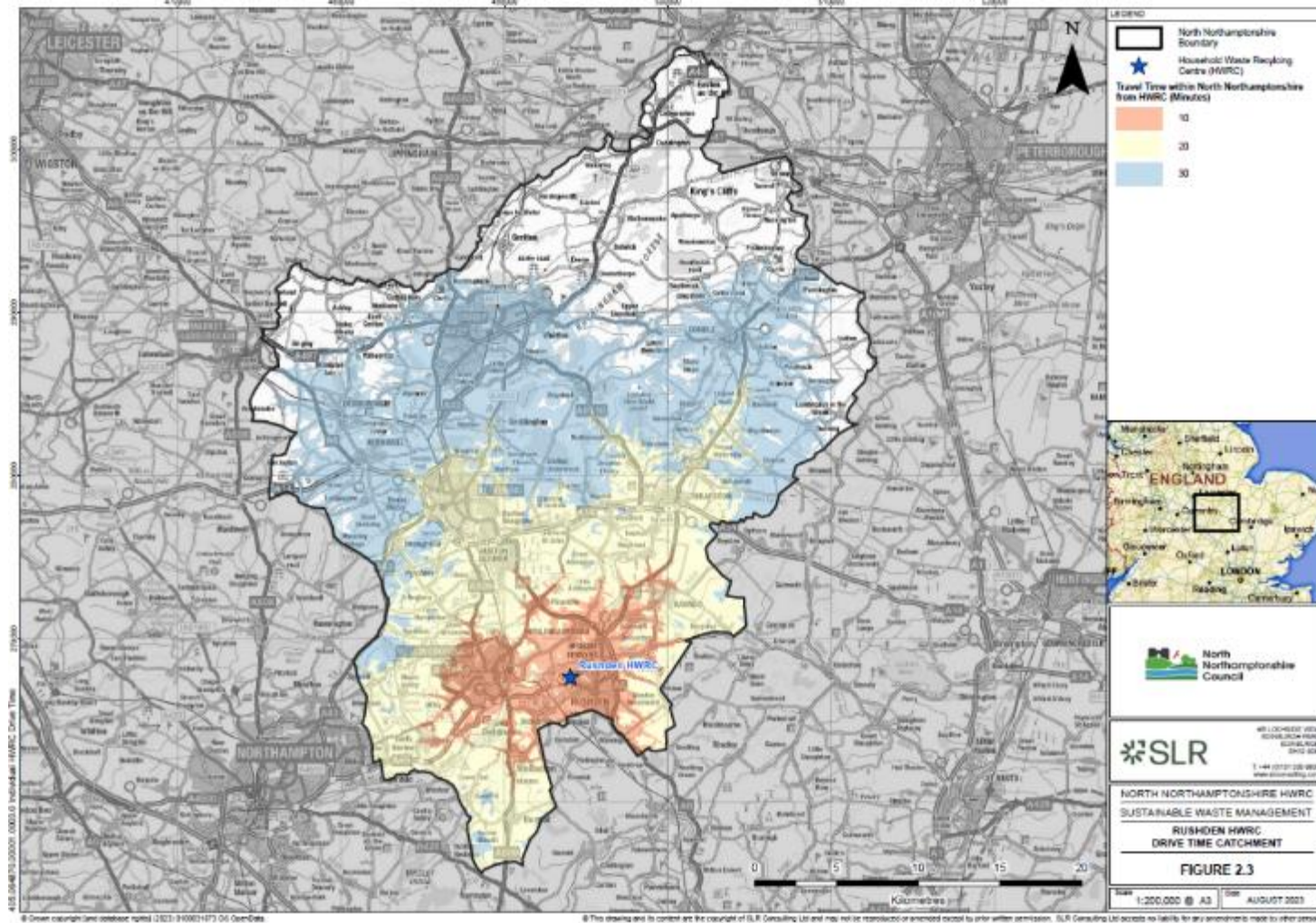


Table 8.10 Drive Time Analysis - Kettering

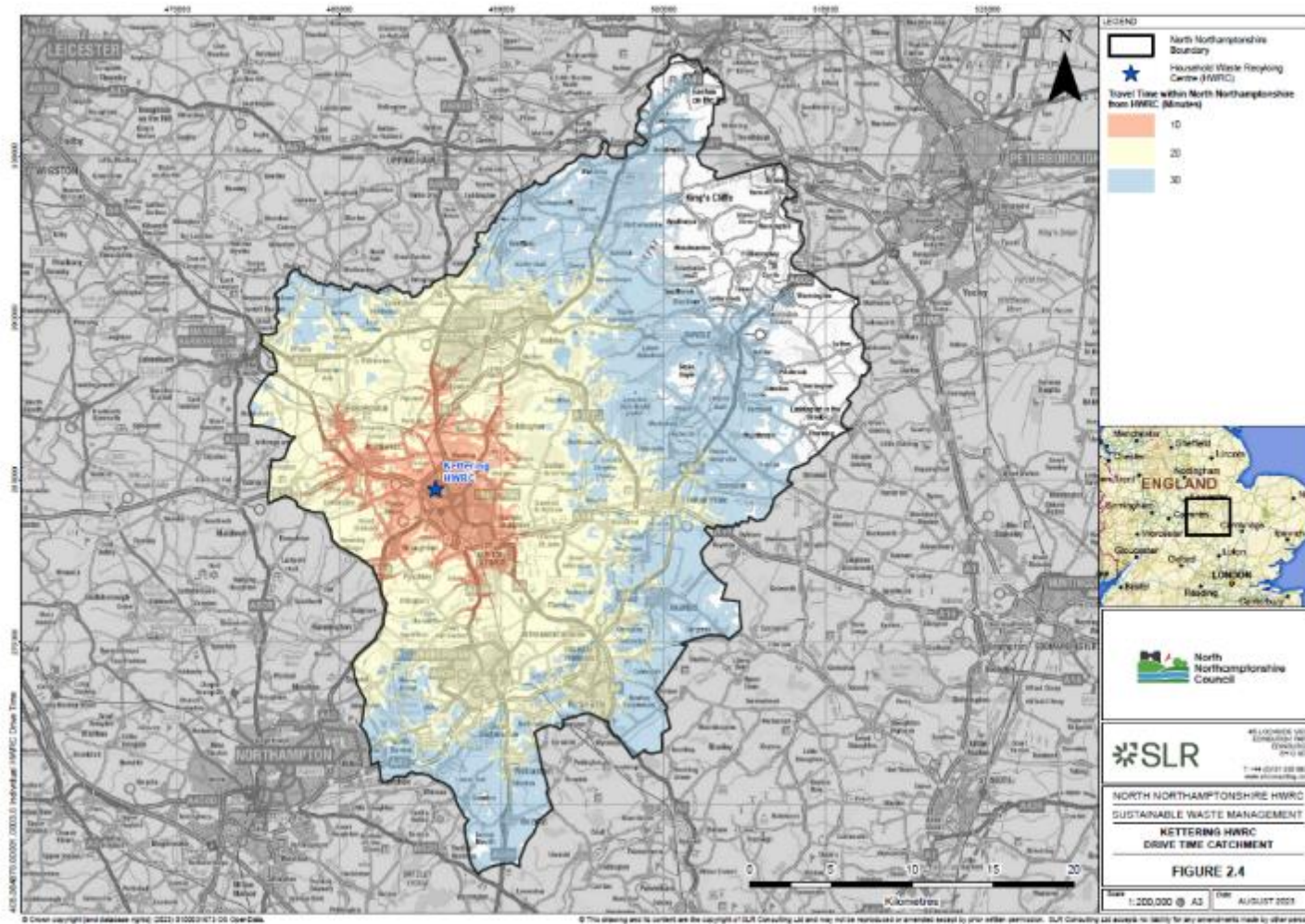


Table 8.11 Drive Time Analysis – Total HWRC Network

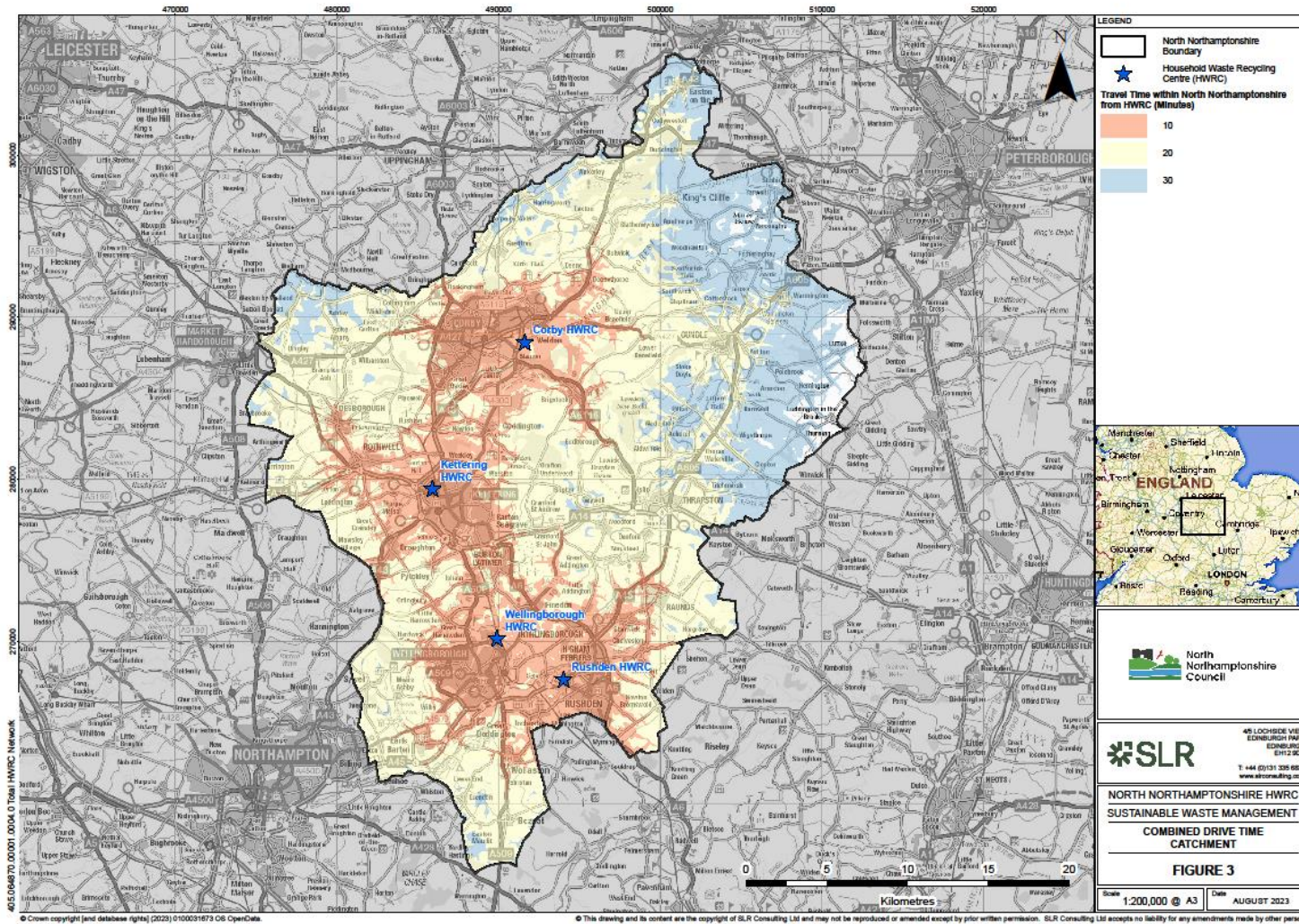


Table 8.12 Drive Time Analysis (HWRC Network including new site)

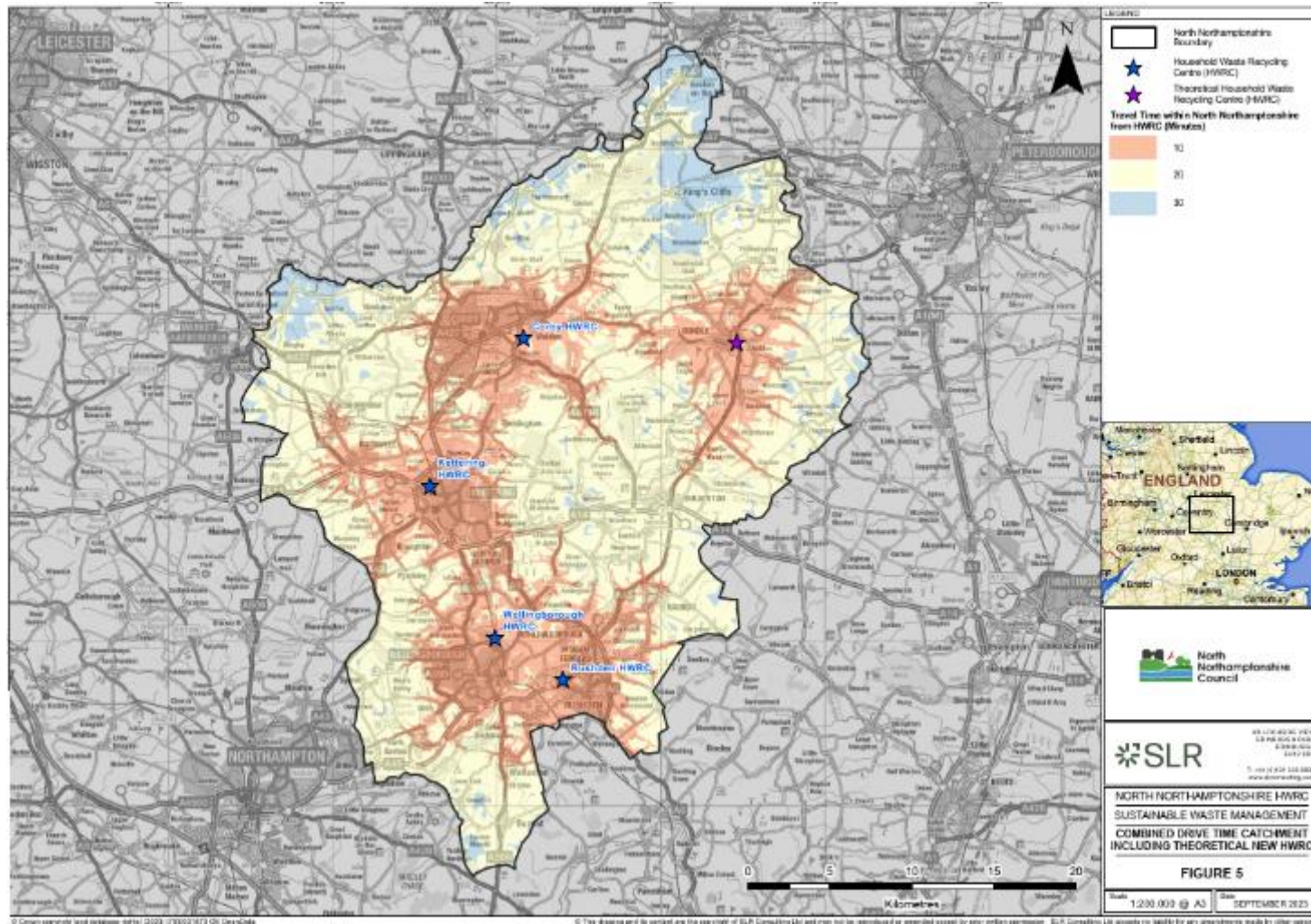


Table 8.13 New HWRC Site Drive Time Analysis

