



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 4 November 2025

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by A Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/W/25/3369666

West Green Recycling, West Green Way, Monk Bretton, Barnsley S71 5SN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Eric Lidster against the decision of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2023/0758.
 - The development is the installation of aggregate wash plant, erection of store, erection of substation, erection of enclosure for external pipework, laying of concrete slab, and construction of boundary treatment; and cladding to exterior of structure for filter presses.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During the Council's determination of the application, planning permission was granted separately for the substation¹. I have therefore not considered this part of the scheme.
3. The recycling business has been in situ for many years and the most recent planning permission relating to this operation was granted in 2001 which related to the screening, crushing and processing of inert waste. The land on which the operation currently operates, and as shown on the plans, is larger than that shown on the plans permitted by the 2001 planning permission. However, the Council are content that, due to the passage of time, the operation of the business on this extended area is immune from enforcement action. The development subject of this appeal therefore mostly relates to the installation of additional plant and ancillary works at the site.
4. During the appeal, the Council advised that revised flood maps had been published by the Environment Agency (EA) which showed a greater part of the site than previously shown to be in Flood Zone 3, including that part on which the store is sited. In response, the appellant provided an update to their Flood Risk Assessment to confirm that the floor level of the store is above 41.6m AOD as required by the EA. The EA confirmed by letter that, on that basis, it will be suitable for the lifetime of the development. I have no reason to disagree and so give this matter no further consideration.

¹ Ref 2024/0329

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:

- i) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; including in respect of the aggregate storage bays and a quarantined/rejected load bay; and
- ii) whether the development prejudices the potential development of the allocated Shaw Lane, Carlton Masterplan site, including in terms of the living conditions of its future residents with regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The site is positioned just east of the built up part of Monk Bretton and close to the roundabout junction at the southern end of West Green Way. There are some houses and a Fire Station close to this roundabout. However the land surrounding the site, and that on the west side of West Green Way near the site is undeveloped and used, at least in part, for grazing. The elevated railway lines to the east and north of the appeal site are flanked by vegetation and in visual terms they act as a landscaped backdrop to the site when seen from positions along West Green Way, which is from where the development is most readily seen.
7. There are manmade stockpiles of material both within the appeal site and on the adjacent land to the north. Those on the neighbouring land are substantial in height, but have some ruderal vegetation on parts of them so their industrial appearance is muted. Those within the site are comprised of the material processed by the plant so are more obviously industrial in nature, but they are lower in height. Also their height varies as the material is processed.
8. The area is therefore broadly consistent with the appraisal of the wider Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield National Character Area 38, within which the appeal site is located, whose key characteristics include a mixed pattern of industrial land, built-up areas and farmland, influence of transport routes and a cultural identity arising from heavy industry. On a more local scale, the site is within the Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor Local Character Area. Key characteristics here include a diverse range of land uses including industrial and pastoral, small areas of trees often associated with dismantled railway lines and new development of large scale buildings in a relatively open landscape.
9. Clearly, the site is an established industrial operation with some mobile plant of significant size. The development provides additional plant, but the character of the site remains industrial, and so the character of the wider area is largely unaffected.
10. However, in visual terms, the development, and in particular the filter press structure, is prominent in views across the open land to the southwest of the site from a significant length of West Green Way (between viewpoint 1 and viewpoint 10 as shown in the appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment), and even from positions at the eastern end of Burton Road by the roundabout.
11. The filter press building is around 40m long and 10.5m high. Though there are some trees close to the southwest boundary of the site, these do little to screen

the massing of the structure, and similarly the boundary wall, at 2.4m high does little to mitigate the visual impact of the filter press structure. In addition its position close to the southwest boundary of the site means it stands apart from the vegetated railway line behind the site. Likewise, it is detached from the stockpiles of materials and its built appearance contrasts with the more organic nature of those stockpiles as well as the more mechanical design of the other plant.

12. The wash plant is a little further into the site and, due to its design, it has less bulk than the filter press structure. When seen alongside the other mobile plant, and considered alone, the wash plant does not have an unacceptable impact on the appearance of the area.
13. I recognise West Green Way may not be a popular walking route, but being close to dwellings and commercial properties means it is likely it is fairly well used by pedestrians. Also it most likely catches the eye of many motorists using this busy road, largely due to the length of road along which the development is prominent. As such, even if I were to agree that the sensitivity of the views from West Green Way was low due to its use as a transport corridor rather than a residential or recreational receptor, the change to the view resulting from the development is, in my view, substantial and the development harmfully contrasts with its setting.
14. There is a large building of an industrial appearance to the west side of West Green Way. However the part of that building which is visible from the road is smaller and has less visual mass than the filter press structure. It is also flanked by vegetation which it is similar in height to, which softens its visual impact. Though there are other industrial buildings in the wider area, none inform the visual context of the appeal site.
15. Supplementary planting could possibly be provided close to the common boundary, as part of any development on the land to the southwest. However although this may assist in screening the development to the extent that it may not unacceptably harm the outlook from any future dwellings which may come forward on that land, such planting would need to be substantial in scale to fully mitigate the general visual effect in wider views and would take considerable time to establish.
16. The fact that the site is within Phase 5 of the Shaw Lane, Carlton Masterplan area, which may provide housing and a train station at some point in the future, does not mitigate the harm in the short term and does not suggest that built form of the scale of the filter press is appropriate.
17. As such, the development unacceptably harms the appearance of the area. It therefore conflicts with policies WCS4 and WCS6 of the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (2012) which together seek to ensure that waste management development is sympathetic to its context and does not significantly adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area. It also contrasts with policy D1 of the Barnsley Local Plan (2019) which expects development to be of a high quality design, and fails to accord with Local Plan policy GD1 which requires that landscaped boundaries are provided where sites are open to the countryside.
18. The Council's fourth reason for refusal stated that they had insufficient details of the aggregate storage bays and quarantine bay at the north end of the site. Photos of these bays have now been provided, and the Council confirm they have no objection to the bays themselves. I have no reason to disagree.

Masterplan

19. Policy MU3 of the Local Plan allocates a large area of land to the west of the town for mixed use redevelopment. The policy states that the allocation would be subject of a Masterplan Framework, which was subsequently produced in 2021. This details the extent of the allocation which covers, at its southern end, the appeal site.
20. The site, along with land to the southwest owned by the Council, and land to the north within the appellant's ownership, together form Phase 5. This phase is identified to provide 288 homes and accommodate a new train station on the former railway line which demarks the eastern boundary of the appeal site. The masterplan has no timescales attached to it, other than it is anticipated that the development would commence across the plan period. The masterplan suggests Phase 5 would be the last to come forward, though also could come forward independently, notably because it is not contingent on the highway infrastructure that the other phases are.
21. There is no reference to the existing business at the appeal site in the framework, though I understand the Council met with the appellant on the site at the time that the framework was being developed, where the appellant advised they could be persuaded to relocate if necessary. However, the appellant may choose to remain, and they have confirmed that, even if this appeal were dismissed and the operations on site reverted to that before the wash plant and filter press were installed, it would remain to be a viable business.
22. Consequently, in spatial terms, the development subject of this appeal, places no additional constraint on the potential for the masterplan to be realised.
23. Were the masterplan realised as set out in the framework, housing would be constructed on land to the southwest and northwest neighbouring the site. A noise assessment has been undertaken to consider the likely impact of the development on the occupiers of those future houses.
24. As the development is retrospective, the assessment was able to measure the noise of the plant subject of this appeal and compare it against measured background noise levels and measured noise levels of the plant already permitted. It found that, when measured from a point in the field to the southwest, noise from the site does not exceed background levels, and that when measured from a point in the field to the northwest, the noise is not excessively above background levels.
25. It was agreed at the hearing that noise generated by the site is largely dependent on the material being brought to site. Whilst this cannot be controlled, it is also clear from the noise assessment that the noisiest plant on site is the crusher and trommel, which is not part of the appeal proposal. Indeed, this was my experience at my site visit. The noise assessment also shows that there is very little difference between the noise levels resulting from the plant permitted to be at the site and the addition of the plant subject of this appeal.
26. It is noted that no noise character correction was applied to the assessment, which the appellant states is because the dominant noise source at the receptors was traffic on the road and diesel engine noises, not that generated by the plant. The Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) commented that when he stood in the field to the southwest, roughly at same point at which the noise survey was

undertaken, he considered the dominant noise source was from plant on the site and not the road. However, even if a noise character correction of 3dB were added as suggested by the EHO, the development is only 2dB above background levels, which is not considered to constitute an adverse impact.

27. Applying the same character correction to the calculations for the receptor to the northwest could result in noise levels being 7dB above background levels. But most of this exceedance is accounted for by the permitted plant at the site, not the plant subject of the appeal. In any case, the EHO also confirmed that when in the field to the northwest he could not hear the plant at the site, and I saw at my site visit that this land is further from the site than that land to the southwest and is separated by the elevated active freight railway line.
28. The development could result in an additional four HGV movements an hour if the inputs to the site rose to 150,000 tonnes per year (tpa). However the appellant considers such tonnages would be unlikely and indeed the inputs could be limited by condition to be 75,000tpa as allowed for by the existing Environmental Permit. It is unlikely there would be any material increases in traffic, and therefore noise from that traffic, if inputs were restricted in this way.
29. In light of the above and given there is no detail as to how close to the site houses would be, what mitigation may be put in place as part of that development, or indeed if houses are built here at all, I cannot conclude that the future residents would suffer unacceptably from noise generated by the development.
30. The Council's third reasons for refusal also referred to dust unacceptably affecting the residents of future housing. However the Council now accept, with a Dust and Emissions Management Plan in place, such impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.
31. As such, I do not consider the development prejudices the development of the masterplan area, either in spatial terms or by blighting adjacent potentially residential parts through unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance. It therefore does not conflict with policy MU3, as detailed above; policy GD1, which seeks to ensure development does not adversely affect the potential development of a wider area of land or significantly prejudice the future use of neighbouring land; and Local Plan policy Poll1, which expects development to demonstrate that it would not result in an increase in noise that would unacceptably cause a nuisance to people.

Other Matters

32. It is understood that there are no other facilities in Barnsley for processing the inert material that the site does, and few in the wider area. The South Yorkshire Waste Needs Assessment also shows there is a capacity gap, from next year, for inert recycling across south Yorkshire. Moreover the development does allow for up to 75,000tpa to be processed at the site, whereas at the moment only roughly 32,000tpa is taken. Nonetheless it appears that the main benefit of the development is a better quality of product not a greater volume. I give moderate weight to any increase in capacity that the development has facilitated, and the improvement in the quality of the material produced as a result of the development is a modest benefit in planning terms.

33. The recycling of inert waste and its diversion from landfill is consistent with the waste hierarchy and national policy, and the provision of a local source of aggregate which supports the use of more sustainable construction is a benefit. However the operation previously achieved all these aims without the development subject of the appeal.
34. The investment into an existing waste recycling business in an accessible location through the provision of innovative waste recycling technology plant is supported by policy WCS1 of the Joint Waste Plan. I give this significant weight.
35. As the proposal has not created any additional jobs, there is no economic benefit in this regard. Moreover, as the business would be sustained even without the development subject of the appeal, it is not directly supported by policies E3 or E4 of the Local Plan which seek to protect existing employment land and businesses.

Conclusion

36. Although I consider the development does not prejudice the implementation of the Shaw Lane, Carlton Masterplan, either in terms of its presence within that area or its effect on potential occupiers of future nearby houses, I find the development, and particularly the filter press structure, does unacceptably harm the appearance of the area to which I give substantial weight.
37. As such the development conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole. The other considerations, including those referred to above, do not lead me to a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. As such, the appeal is dismissed.

A Owen

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Robert Bruce	Freeths
Susan Crowley	HERA Planning
Andy Green	Spire Environmental
Carl Taylor	TPM Landscape
Anthony Lidster	on behalf of the appellant

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Helen Willows	Planning Officer
Adam Cattell	Environmental Health Officer

DOCUMENTS PROVIDED AT THE HEARING

Consultation response from the Environment Agency dated 30 October 2025

List of suggested conditions with tracked changes

Suggested noise condition