

**Waste Core Strategy
Site Options Consultation**

Waste Site Assessment

Appendix C.84: Site 542 - Railway Corridor

October 2009

Site Maps and Images

Site Map



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Aerial Photo



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Site Images



Locational Information

Site Details

District	Gloucester		
Parish	Gloucester Non-Parish		
Easting	384465	Northings	218164
Approximate Site Area (hectares)	36		
Reasons for inclusion <i>NB: Slight anomalies in site boundaries may have arisen from 'clustering' of sites from more than one source and/or the absence of detailed site plans in source documents.</i>	The site was listed in Gloucester City Council's Employment Land Review, identified in the Gloucester Local Plan, was a site in the Gloucestershire Waste Local Plan and contains existing waste management facilities.		
Date of WPA officer visit	10th September 2008		

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<p>Broad Description of Site (including current activities on site, location and neighbouring uses)</p>	<p>Large site (sites) including the whole of the Railway Triangle (Strategic Site 11 in WLP). Also including current Allstone Sand & Gravel site, Gas works / holder and land to the rear of the Irish Club car park which is owned by BRB Residuary. The Railway Triangle itself is accessed through a low tunnel under the northern railway line. The land is raised / undulating in places, but fairly flat, mostly scrubby and heavily overgrown, but with dotted disused industrial buildings / railway sidings. The land opposite the hospital, behind Great Western Road is flat and open, barely vegetated, rails & buffers, areas of patchy hardstanding with disused sidings and various miscellaneous railway equipment, brick buildings, various small businesses e.g. a fence panel business, a motor garage, removals. Strong views to the Cathedral. Visually most sites somewhat dominated by the Gas holder, particularly when at full extent. The Railway Triangle is disused, although used for access by Railways maintenance vehicles etc. Allstone site is used for C&D and C&I waste processing and sorting – busy site with very regular skip deliveries. Also aggregate processing and sales. The land behind the residential properties on Great Western Road is currently mostly unused, but there is a timber yard operating and some railway related activity and car parking. Poor access to the Allstone site via Myers Road, due to the fact that Horton Road is busy and traffic backs up when the level crossing is down. Great Western Road is narrow and not helped by issues with parked cars, current business and levels of traffic to the hospital. No current good access to the Railway Triangle itself – only under a low bridge via Blinkhorns Bridge Lane.</p> <p>Residential properties e.g. in Armscroft area, Swallow Park and Great Western Road. Irish social club is very close. Armscroft Park including children's playground near Allstone. Gloucester Royal Hospital close by. Screening may be limited on much of the site although the Allstone shed is well screened on the North boundary by very large coniferous trees. Most of the area is very visible from the elevated Metz Way.</p> <p>Additional Sensitive Receptors: 4 clubs, 2 churches, clinic, playing field, children's playground, games court, 2 community centres.</p>
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Site Assessment Factors/Criteria for Consideration

Landscape	
Comments	The site is located on land that has been developed and is not within or adjacent to a national landscape designation such as AONB.
Landscape Character	Gloucester Urban.
Green Belt	
Comments	The site is outside of the Gloucester/Cheltenham Green Belt.

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Highways <i>(Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Highways Development Co-ordination team)</i>			
Routes to access Strategic Network <i>This denotes the assumed roads that would be used in order for vehicles to travel to and from the proposed site and the wider road network.</i>	A4302		
Proximity to Strategic Highway Network <i>Assessment of the proximity of the site to different types of road (as specific entrance points are not known have made assumptions about where entrance might be), with reference to the GCC Advisory Freight Route Map (notwithstanding obvious changes arising from new roads etc).</i>	Medium	Definition	Access from (or in close proximity to) routes identified for local journeys (A and B roads).
Sustainable Transport <i>Potential for operational access to the site to be by (or involve) non-road modes of transport, based on broad consideration of distance from water/rail and general location, rather than knowledge that it may or may not be technically practical.</i>	High	Definition	Site has potential for rail and/or water based transport to play a significant role (site will generally back directly on to water/rail).
Employee Accessibility <i>Potential for employees to be able to access the site using non-car modes.</i>	High	Definition	Site located close to substantial urban areas allowing significant scope for non-car trips.
Other Transport Issues <i>This column comments on any other relevant transport issues for the site, which will have partly arisen from discussions with area/stakeholder managers.</i>	Railway surrounds site, but prominent location, residences/offices nearby.		
Recommendation <i>This category provides an overall view of the potential of the site to be used as a strategic waste facility in transport terms.</i>	Possible	Definition	Site has some concerns from a transport perspective, and could still be taken forward depending on views of other disciplines, but may require significant mitigation.

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Public Rights of Way (Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) team)	
Score	+
Score Definition	No Public Rights of Way network present on site; or Presence of Public Rights of Way network with opportunity for existing route to be enhanced.
Additional Comments	No Path.
Map Legend	 Public Right of Way
PRoW Map	

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Aerodrome Safeguarding (based on safeguarding maps provided by Gloucestershire Airport and the Ministry of Defence (MOD))	
Comments	The site lies within the Gloucestershire Airport zone for - All buildings, structures, erections and works exceeding 15 metres in height (49.2 feet) plus all applications involving major tree planting schemes, mineral extraction or quarrying, a refuse tip, a reservoir, a sewage disposal works, a nature reserve or a bird sanctuary and all applications connected with an aviation use.
NB. Where a site lies across more than one safeguarding zone the entire site has been defaulted to lowest height category for consultation.	

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Ecology/Biodiversity (Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Ecologist and the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER))	
Score	0
Score Definition	Overall impact on biodiversity could be potentially negative, uncertain or positive. Identified important ecological constraint up to and including 250 metres distant.
Additional Comments	Scores with * indicate designated aquifer fed/surface water/flood water dependent site(s) over 1km distant which may be affected, site as named above.
Nearby Internationally & Nationally Designated Sites Recorded	None
Other Internationally & Nationally Designated Sites (wetlands)	None
Ecology Legend	<div> <div></div> SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest <div></div> Key Wildlife Site - area <div></div> SAC Site <div></div> Ramsar Site <div></div> SPA Site </div>
Constraints Map	

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Archaeology and the Historic Environment

(Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Archaeology team)

Score	--
Score Definition	The site fulfils one or more of the following:- * Contains a SAM, or non-designated remains of national importance * Contains a Listed Building * Is within a Conservation Area * Is within a Registered Park or Garden of Special Historic Interest * Is within a Registered Battlefield
Additional Comments	Designated -- as contains Picton House Listed Building. This is only found at one end of a huge site and its setting is already affected by recent development.

Contaminated Land

(Based on information provided by the appropriate district council)

Comment	The site or adjoining land is not classified as 'contaminated land' under the Environment Act 1995, but Gloucester City Council identified the site or adjoining area as a site of potential concern. Gloucester City Council also provided the following information in relation to the site "Located on former railway land and depots. Recent SI has identified much contamination. Development of a waste facility would enable remediation."
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Flood Risk

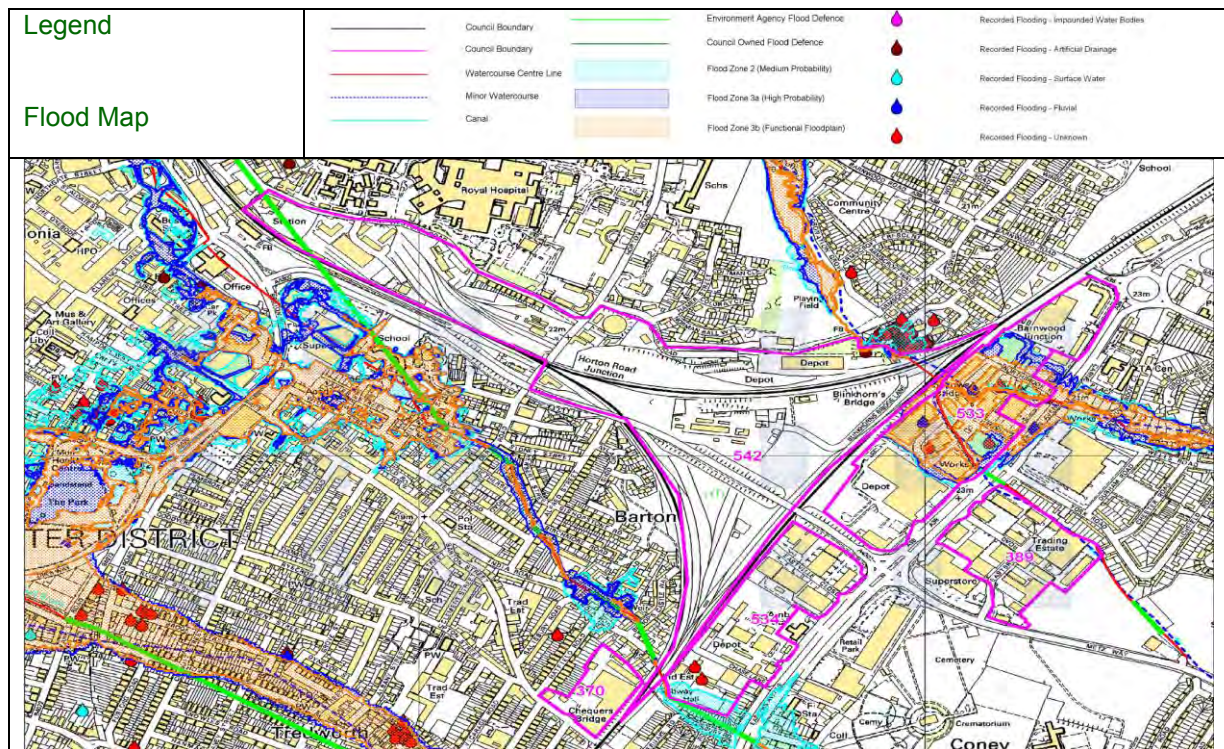
(Based on information provided by Halcrow)

Site Description	Site lies predominantly in Flood Zone 1. Two watercourses are located within the site. The Wotton Brook is culverted through the north eastern corner of the site beneath the railway line. A small section of open channel lies within the site downstream of the railway by Blinkhorn's Bridge Lane. The River Twyver is generally flows parallel to the western boundary of the site, but is culverted for a short distance through the south western corner of the site between SO 8369 1866 and SO 8448 1744; and, the north western corners of the site between SO 8379 1581 and SO 8369 1866. A railway line runs through the northern half of the site.
Watercourse(s)	Wootton Brook and River Twyver
Flood Zone	1, 2, 3a and 3b 1
Flood Zone Information (Method used to derive Flood Zones & Confidence in Flood Zone information)	Modelled flood outlines produced as part of the Wotton Brook Strategic Flood Risk Mapping Study (March 2007) for Flood Zones 2, 3a, 3b and the 100 year climate change event. High confidence in Flood Zone maps. Modelled flood outlines were produced as part of the River Twyver SFRM study. These indicated that there is no fluvial flood risk to this site. There is a high confidence in the Flood Zone maps at this location. The modelled 100 year climate change outline does not show fluvial flood risk to the site.

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Fluvial Flood Risk Posed to Site (including climate change)	<p>The north eastern corner of the site is marginally affected by Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b along Blinkhorn's Bridge Lane (SO 8493 1824). A number of properties located just outside the site boundary are shown to be affected by flooding from the Wotton Brook. The modelled outline for the 100 year climate change indicates that the extent of flooding increases marginally during this event. The embankment running along the left bank of the watercourse appears to be holding back the floodwater preventing it from entering the site.</p> <p>Flood Zone maps for the River Twyver do not extend into the site and the risk of flooding from this watercourse is low. The modelled 100 year climate change outline does not affect the site.</p>
Historic Flooding/Flooding From Other Sources	<p>Historic flood outlines for the Wotton Brook indicate that a small part of the site was affected by flooding during the summer 2007 event. The extent of the site affected was marginal due to the presence of the embankment on the left bank of the watercourse. Incidents of flooding from sources other than fluvial have been recorded to the east of the site along Blinkhorn's Bridge Lane. This was reported to have occurred as a result of blockage to drains by debris from the flooded watercourse.</p> <p>There are no records of historic fluvial flooding from the River Twyver within the site.</p> <p>Records of flooding from other sources including groundwater and surface water have not been recorded within the site.</p>
Canals (Raised - breach/overtopping)	No canals exist in or adjacent to the site.
Flood Defences (Location/Type/SoP/Residual Risk)	No formal EA defences are known to exist in the site. A series of embankments are located along the left bank of the Wotton Brook at the north eastern corner of the site which appears to retain floodwaters. The residual risk of failure of the embankment is unknown without detailed modelling.
Culverts (Location/Type/Watercourse/Residual Risk)	The Wotton Brook is culverted beneath the railway line upstream of the site. Detailed modelling indicates that the railway embankment is acting as a barrier to flow and water is backing up behind the embankment. The effect of blockage to this culvert has
Score	+
Score Definition	Site is mainly in Flood Zone 1 but affected by Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b.
Additional Comments	Suitability criteria reduced to 4 due to the impounded water that would occur on Wotton Brook upstream of the site in the event of a flood. The ability of the railway to act as an informal defence would have to be investigated in detail as part of an FRA.

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Source Protection Zones (SPZs)

Comments N/A

Groundwater/Aquifer details

Comments Site 542 is partially lying over a Minor Aquifer High (HU).

Land Ownership and General Deliverability Issues (Based on research undertaken in-house)

The landowners have been contacted and all areas are unavailable except for one area currently used for waste management and which the landowner has indicated could be available for residual MSW treatment.

General Comments

Officer Comments: There are deliverability issues associated with this site. The site, as it is the subject of a regeneration scheme led by GHURC. Further detailed discussion needed.

Safeguarding: Gloucestershire Airport may need to provide comments on safeguarding in relation to this site. This may be difficult for them to do so without knowing a specific technology for the site.

Ecology/Biodiversity/Archaeology: Further consultation would be required in order to assess any potential impacts upon the above mentioned areas.

Contaminated Land: Further investigative work will be required.

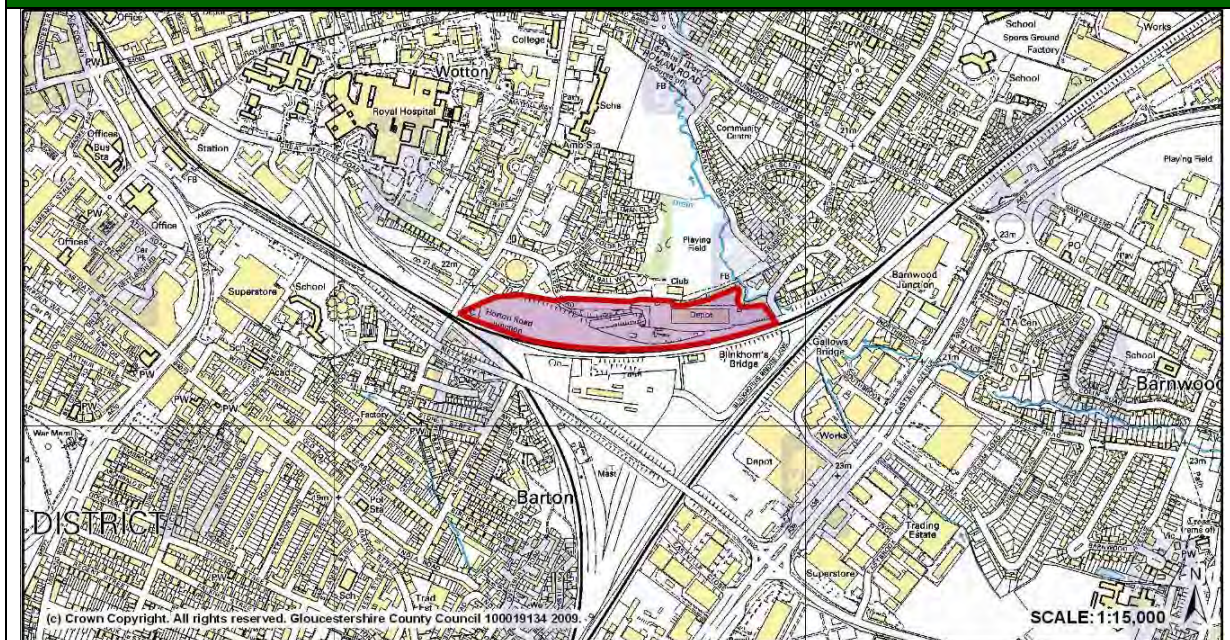
Groundwater/Aquifer: Information would be required from the Environment Agency as to the potential impacts upon the above mentioned areas.

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Potential for Further Discussion within the WCS

Further technical assessments should be carried out on the area which is potentially available for residual MSW treatment as detailed in the map below.

Amended Site Map



HRA Summary

The nearest European site is Cotswold Commons & Beechwoods SAC and the implication of this and the potential impacts on other European sites are detailed in: SA Reports under Objective 8: Biodiversity, HRA Baseline Reports and the Site Options HRA Report which forms part of this consultation.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Provided by Atkins)

Introduction

The purpose of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is to ascertain the potential effects of the proposals for a built Waste Facility, of two to five hectares within the Allstone site, on the landscape resources and impacts on the visual amenity of the area.

The assessment considered the possible building height and land take for three (3 No.) different facility sizes (2000-6000m², up to 20m height / 3000-7000m², up to 30m height / 4000-9000m², up to 40m height) each with a potential for an emissions stack of 40, 60 or 80m height.

The site is located in central Gloucester, close to the A38 and Gloucester Rail Station and is approximately 5.7ha. The Allstone site currently comprises a mix of light industrial uses including a cement manufacturing plant adjacent to the existing railway and disused brown field site.

The immediate landscape setting is urban development including residential and industrial areas with pockets of open green space.

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<p>Assessment Methodology</p>	<p>A desk study was carried out comprising a review of published texts and maps to develop an understanding of the site in terms of general landscape character, special values and interests, local value and its wider landscape context.</p> <p>Baseline information on the landscape of the area was collected through a preliminary desktop study of maps, plans and documents. Documentation used in the desk study included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Countryside Character Volume 5: West Midlands, Natural England; <input type="checkbox"/> Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment, Gloucestershire County Council; <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (Magic) website; <input type="checkbox"/> 1:50 000 Scale Digital Ordnance Survey Maps; and <input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography. <p>To identify those elements of the landscape which notably contribute to the character of the landscape, an assessment of existing landscape features was carried out.</p> <p>The desk study was followed by a field survey carried out by Atkins Consultants Ltd in June 2009, to identify key issues and constraints in respect of the impact of the development on views into the proposed site, effects on the landscape of the site and the relationship between the development and the surrounding landscape to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Validate and qualify the results of the desk study; <input type="checkbox"/> Identify key visual receptors; and <input type="checkbox"/> Record an assessment of the landscape on both an objective and subjective basis.
<p>Baseline Landscape Character and Designations: Desk Survey</p>	<p><i>Countryside Character Volume 5 West Midlands (Natural England):</i> Landscape Character Area: 106, Severn and Avon Vales <i>Key characteristics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes, united by broad river valley character. <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside landscapes with little woodland, often very open. <input type="checkbox"/> Variety of land uses from small pasture fields and commons in the west to intensive agriculture in the east. <input type="checkbox"/> Distinct and contrasting vales: Evesham, Berkeley, Gloucester, Leadon, Avon. <input type="checkbox"/> Many ancient market towns and large villages along the rivers. <input type="checkbox"/> Nucleated villages with timber frame and brick buildings. <input type="checkbox"/> Prominent views of hills – such as the Cotswolds, Bredon and the Malverns – at the edges of the character area.
<p>Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment(Gloucestershire County Council):</p>	<p>County Landscape Character Type: Urban County Landscape Character Area: Urban</p>
<p>Designations Relating to Landscape:</p>	<p>Landscape designations are applied to areas of special value at international, national, regional or local level in response to particular qualities or historical or cultural associations. No part of the study area is so designated; however the site is in close proximity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Various Scheduled Ancient Monuments known to be of Roman Remains, the closest is know as Glevum Roman Colonia. <input type="checkbox"/> A public footpath runs alongside the eastern boundary of the site along Blinkhorns Bridge Lane passing between terraced houses and running in a south west-north east direction to the southern section of the site. <input type="checkbox"/> An extensive area of land approximately 5km east of the site is designated under the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a nationally recognised designation.

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<p>Baseline Landscape Character and Features: Site Survey</p>	<p>The study area is within an urban landscape setting in the centre of Gloucester; it consists of two disparate land uses and character. The western section comprises of a disused brown field site and the other consists of an active industrial/commercial park including waste management operations largely within an enclosed building. A railway line passes alongside the southern boundary of the site and residential properties and a playing field are located adjacent to the northern and eastern boundaries.</p> <p>The site has a row of conifers and well established hedgerow lining the northern boundary, which forms an effective screen to the neighbouring properties and playing field.</p> <p>The topography of the study area and locality is flat at approximately 20m AOD, though the ground rises to the west along Myers Road, overlooking the lower brownfield site. The wider area is relatively flat with the land rising at the start of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); which is approximately 5km east of the site. Due to distance and the urban context of the study area development on the site would have a negligible impact on the AONB.</p>
<p>Landscape Quality, Condition and Capacity to Accommodate Change: Site Survey</p>	<p>The quality and condition of the western site has been significantly degraded due to the previous land uses and existing development. However, the developed area of the site to the east is relatively well screened with well established vegetation with the A4302 flyover screening much of the southern section.</p> <p>There are partial views into the site from an adjacent school to the north and several residential properties off Myers Road to the northwest of the site. In consideration to the current condition of the site, development of a waste facility would likely have minimal adverse impacts on the wider urban landscape of the area; this is due to the existing industrial uses combined with the substantial screening and surrounding urban character. For this reason the site would have a high capacity to accept change.</p>
<p>Potential Landscape Impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently alter the western section of the site in terms of land use and the pattern and scale of the landscape, as such the landscape character of the site. <input type="checkbox"/> Loss/damage to existing screen planting on site which forms an important screening function. <input type="checkbox"/> Erection of a medium – tall emission stack on the site would introduce is prominent incongruous landscape element. <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact on the visibility of the site from the A4302 and railway line.
<p>Potential Landscape Mitigation Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive site planning of facilities within the site to minimise impact on the landscape character. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of native and evergreen woodland planting around site boundaries to screen views into the site. On site screen planting could further benefit the wider area by helping to mitigate the impact of the development on the landscape. Planting should reinforce the existing vegetation and make good any gaps in the hedgerows. <input type="checkbox"/> On site buildings and infrastructure should reflect the local urban style and building materials in keeping with the wider urban landscape character.

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Visual Receptors	Sensitivity of Receptor	Potential Impact on Receptor	Potential Visual Mitigation Measures
A4302 road users	Low	Slight Adverse due to the limited period of exposure to the view	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Reinforced structure planting around the site boundary</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive location of large structures to minimise visual impact on views into the site</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Development should limit the introduction of prominent urban elements</div>
Railway users	Low	Slight Adverse due to the limited period of exposure to the view	
Residential properties off Myers road to the northwest of the site.	High	Slight - Substantial Adverse depending on the location of facilities within the site	
School to the northeast of the site	Medium	Slight - Substantial Adverse depending on the location of facilities within the site	
Public right of way users along Blinkhorns Bridge Lane	Medium	Slight Adverse	
Summary: Residual Landscape and Visual Impacts	<p>Due to the potential for mitigation, evidenced by the existing screen planting, as well as the proximity to the A38 and surrounding urban development the site could accommodate change. The main visual impacts on the residential properties to the northwest and road users of the A430 could be almost entirely mitigated through sensitive site planning and screen planting.</p> <p>As far as possible, development within the northern section of the site should be limited. Large structures and visually intrusive elements should be restricted to within the southern area of the site. A significant planting buffer should be established around any development, the style of which should be in keeping with the locally characteristic hedgerows and shelterbelts.</p> <p>Site planning should avoid the loss of the mature vegetation within the site and along its boundaries.</p> <p>Mitigation should include clearing out any dead or diseased planting and replacement where gaps in the screening are present.</p> <p>As such, the Allstone site can be said to be of high landscape suitability for consideration as a potential strategic waste site, with a preference for any medium or larger facility to be located away from the existing residential development to the north of the site and taller structures to be restricted to the lower southern areas.</p>		

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Further Highways Assessments (Provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Highways Development Co-ordination team)	
Existing Site Usage	Current consent for 75,000 tonnes of waste per year (made up of 48k waste crushing and screening and 27k waste transfer). Also have an aggregate permission granted by Gloucester City. Also, small yards nearby (coal yard, batching plant) which have been recently acquired by Allstone
Predicted Net Traffic effect of new Strategic Waste facility	Net increase in traffic, as due to physical constraints assumed that existing uses would not be able to continue
Strategic Road Network Access	Access from the site to the strategic road network is difficult. Using current links traffic would need to use Myers Road and then probably Horton Road north (to avoid the level crossing) and then Barnwood Rd to the A38/A417 r/bout (Walls). It would be more appropriate to construct a direct access off Metz Way, although HGV's would still then need to use the A38.
Environmental and residential impacts	The site is likely to have a significant impact on the numerous residential properties that are in close proximity, in particular Horton Rd, and the existing railway level crossing (whereby the road can be closed for significant periods) could exacerbate air quality issues relating to the additional HGV's
Potential Junction Impacts	A number of the nearby junctions suffer with existing congestion, including Great Western Rd, Horton Rd and Wall's r/bout, although given existing constraints improvements may not be easy. A direct access from Metz Way would be beneficial but costly due to the likely requirement for a bridge or tunnel
Sustainable Transport potential (rail/water)	The site is adjacent to an operational railway, with the mainline connection to an adjoining loop still in place. It could therefore be relatively easy to be connected back into the network, although there would still be cost issues, and minor track repairs and renewals may first be required. Further investigation of the sidings would be necessary, alongside feasibility discussions with Network Rail, including issues relating to available freight paths
Employee Accessibility by Sustainable Modes	The site is well placed for employee access by non-car modes as there are numerous residences in close walking, cycling and bus distance. However, the nearby rail lines (and level crossing) do provide some constraints

Conclusion

This site is identified in the WCS Site Options Consultation document Site 7, Land north of Railway Triangle, Gloucester.