

11 July 2025

Hamish McTaggart
Development Coordinator
Muswellbrook Shire Council

By email: hamish.mctaggart@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au

Dear Hamish,

Subject: DA 2025-26 – Works Depot

Thank you for your email of 13 May 2025 referring DA 2025-26 for review in my role as Manager Waste Operations for Muswellbrook Shire Council. I appreciate the opportunity to provide referral comments for consideration.

The footprint of this development overlies current uses, nominated future uses, and passive infrastructure of the Muswellbrook Waste & Recycling Facility (MWRF) property. I itemise these below:

1. Heavy plant utilised at the MWRF requires periodic maintenance, servicing and emergency repairs This is conducted on the concrete pad toward the rear of the existing large shed (previously used as a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and named as such), where a shipping container is located for the storage of consumables and parts. The heavy plant, including the 32 tonne TANA compactor and the slightly lighter tracked loader, travels to this location from the gate on the southern landfill boundary, through the development footprint, to the rear of the MRF shed.
2. The transpiration area for the onsite wastewater system for the present office and amenities inside the MRF shed occupies a portion of the northeastern footprint of the proposed development.
3. Council has sought Expressions of Interest from proponents to operate the End of the Road Reuse Shop which is presently located in the MRF. Proponents request the use of some land area, inclusive of the rear of the MRF shed and the majority of the internal shed area. One proposal seeks a slip lane off the weighbridge entry and use of the existing roadway through the proposed development area to the southern gate to Coal Road, for customers to access the shop.
4. The proposed development area is used by Council's waste collection contractor for the overflow storage of hook lift transfer bins.
5. Landfill gas capture infrastructure (future use) is likely to require works in the vicinity of the proposed development where it abuts the landfill cell.

The development assessment ought to consider impacts to the above, in particular, the continuation of periodic servicing and repair of the MWRF heavy plant.

Regarding the landfill operations specifically; I am concerned that the proposed development footprint northward encroaches on the southern edge of the landfill void, with inadequate room for the future civil installations for the required final capping works.

Also, the location of the proposed development to the south of the operating landfill may place it in the shadow of a landfill, which will continue receiving and compacting waste at least until its forecast closure circa 2050, but perhaps longer. The final landform shape and height, I presume, are sufficient to shade parts of the proposed depot in the winter months. This interaction ought to be modelled to fully understand the implications of heating, cooling and amenity of the depot.

If it is possible to move the proposed development footprint toward the south, it may assist in avoiding negative interaction with the toe of the landfill and reduce the need to rework the Progressive Filling and Capping Plan for the landfill or reduce the landfill lifespan.

The Reuse Shop EOI for a partnership with a third party for operation has the best chance of success where good vehicle access exists to the MRF shed for customers, and an area of land for product display and loading is provided. It appears the proposed development has no connection to the MRF shed and blocks off access to this shed from the west with a security fence, which would appear to preclude any further pursuit of Reuse Shop growth in the MRF shed.

I am aware of discussions regarding an alternative proposed location at the eastern portion of the Muswellbrook Waste & Recycling Facility. This eastern location is well away from the landfill and has the potential mutual benefit of future integration to an upgraded entryway to the waste facility, which is conceptualised in the Waste Facility Master Plan (2015).

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'JP' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Joann Polsen
Manager Waste Operations