

# Esh Construction to build £9.1m depot development in Sunderland

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County Durham construction company Esh Group will start work on a £9.1 million development project in Washington after planners gave it the green light.

Parsons Vehicle Workshop and Depot in Washington is set to be transformed in a contract which will help Sunderland City Council achieve carbon neutral status for Sunderland by 2040.

The existing workshop will be demolished to make way for a new building which will house workshop spaces and office accommodation.

A fuel station, electric charging hub, and a large barn which can store up to 7,500 tonnes of gritting salt will be constructed, as well as a security gatehouse to service the entrance and lead to fleet, staff and visitor parking facilities.

Work will begin in Summer 2021 and will be delivered by Esh Construction, part of the Durham-based construction group, in partnership with Howarth Litchfield Architects, Portland Consulting Engineers and Desco.



An aerial view of how the former Parsons depot in Washington will look

(Image: Esh Group)

Gary Dobson, divisional director at Esh Construction, said: “We’re delighted with the planning outcome and look forward to working with Sunderland City Council, one of our long-standing and valued clients in the region, to deliver this development. It is an exciting time for the city with a number of transformational projects recently unveiled.

“As a local contractor we will harness the benefits of a strong regional presence and supply chain to deliver quality social and economic value for Sunderland throughout this scheme.”

Howarth Litchfield director Keith Handy said: ‘Howarth Litchfield is delighted to have been involved with a project which sets the benchmark on sustainability and the management

of local authority fleet vehicles.

“The facility will not only support the current outgoing fossil fuel vehicles but is also heavily designed around the incoming electrical vehicle fleet both in terms of the vehicles’ everyday maintenance as well as providing a centralised electrical charging hub.”

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Councillor Graeme Miller, leader of Sunderland City Council, added: “As we move towards our aim of being a carbon neutral city, it is fantastic to expand our capacity for specialist

electric and other low carbon emission vehicles.

“At the same time, future-proofing and investing in our depot facilities ensures we can continue to deliver quality frontline services to residents.”

To drive forward Sunderland’s green energy targets, the depot will include solar photo voltaic and battery storage system, which is being match funded by the European Regional Development Fund, which will take energy produced by the solar PV and provide a charging facility for the councils growing electric vehicle fleet.