

6.0 KEY POLICIES

Sustainable Waste Management

WLP 1

To achieve sustainable waste management all proposals for waste development will be considered in the context of achieving the best practicable environmental option taking into account regional self-sufficiency, the proximity principle and the waste hierarchy.

6.1.1 The Government, in PPG10, has clearly outlined the role of WPAs in contributing towards sustainable waste management. Their task is to determine future waste management proposals having regard to the four principles of sustainable waste management:

- Best Practicable Environmental Option
- the Proximity Principle
- the Waste Hierarchy
- Regional Self-Sufficiency

These principles are outlined in Chapter 5.

6.1.2 In applying the principle of BPEO the Government advises, in 'Waste Strategy 2000', that local authorities will need to:

- obtain advice from waste management companies and others with relevant experience
- use the lifecycle assessment tool currently being developed by the Environment Agency
- involve local communities as appropriate
- take full account of local considerations such as land-use planning
- be aware of the social dimensions of waste management when taking decisions

6.1.3 Proposals will also be considered having regard to local and regional requirements for the management and disposal of waste. Policy WLP 3 relates to the Need for Waste Development and the Movement of Waste.

6.1.4 Policy SP1 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 1995 (Keynote Sustainable Development Policy) provides for sustainable development concepts and implications to be treated as material considerations in determining planning applications and formulating policies and proposals in local plans. The Structure Plan sets out the requirements that environmentally sustainable development is expected to meet. All proposals for waste management development should have regard to this policy and other relevant policies of the Structure Plan.

6.1.5 In accordance with Structure Plan Policy SP1 district planning authorities are encouraged to ensure that development proposals of all kinds make provision, as appropriate, for the sustainable management of waste generated by new development.

Resource Recovery - Materials and Energy

WLP 2

All waste development proposals will need to demonstrate that, wherever practicable, they contain integrated proposals to recover resources from waste.

This may be through recycling, composting, or energy recovery (including, for example, combined heat and power, anaerobic digestion and/or landfill gas extraction with beneficial utilisation).

6.2.1 Resource recovery is set against the broader background of sustainability and the prudent use of resources. Recovery from waste incorporates those processes that seek to get some value from waste, i.e. recycling, composting and energy. These processes involve the separation of materials from waste and/or their reprocessing to produce marketable products. Obvious examples of resources that can be reclaimed include metals, paper and card, fuels, energy and compost. This policy will apply to all waste development proposals requiring planning permission, where resource recovery is practicable.

6.2.2 The WPA will endeavour to ensure that resource recovery from waste is maximised, wherever this is practicable and consistent with the principle of BPEO. This has the following benefits:

- extends the life of existing materials and can reduce the need for virgin raw materials
- leads to energy savings
- reduces the requirement for disposal
- and can in some instances involve public participation and promote public awareness and understanding of environmental issues

Recovery may not always be BPEO, for example, when considering the disposal of clinical waste incineration without energy recovery in some cases this may be the BPEO.

6.2.3 Notwithstanding the benefits of resource recovery, it will not take place unless it is economically viable. This may lead to the establishment of strategic waste management sites, which have a range of integrated waste management facilities i.e. where more than one method of waste management is used. Alternatively, recovery may take place on individual sites that are linked to other facilities, thus still achieving integration of waste management practices.

6.2.4 Smaller operations can also make a valuable contribution to resource recovery, for example, village shredding or mulching schemes, or small composting facilities.

Waste Reduction and Reuse.

- 6.2.5 A land-use plan does not have the capability to directly influence all aspects of waste management. For example, waste reduction and reuse relates to a number of activities outside the influence of the WPA e.g. reducing the amount of waste produced through careful product design, the Packaging and Packing Waste Directive, and home composting. These matters are dependent on activities undertaken by the EU, the Government, local authorities as waste collection and disposal authorities, the private sector, individuals, or partnership initiatives.

The Need for Waste Development & The Movement of Waste

WLP 3

The WPA will only permit proposals for major new waste development or a major extension of existing waste development where there is a demonstrated need within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. To ensure that excessive provision is not made within the Plan area, which could result in unacceptable importation of waste, planning permission will be dependent upon applicants entering into binding restrictions on catchment area, tonnages and / or types of waste.

Permission may be granted for waste development involving the importation of waste where this is demonstrated to be the BPEO taking into account regional self-sufficiency, the proximity principle and the waste hierarchy.

The Need for Waste Development

- 6.3.1 Need can be defined as 'circumstances which require a course of action' i.e. in this instance if need is demonstrated, planning permission for waste development would normally be granted, subject to compliance with other criteria and policies in the Development Plan.
- 6.3.2 An assessment of need is considered necessary for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is acknowledged that waste development, is likely to have adverse effects on the environment. It is therefore considered correct to weigh these adverse effects against the need for the proposed development, as well as other material factors.
- 6.3.3 Secondly, an assessment of need is considered necessary in order to regulate the provision of facilities, and to prevent over provision of facilities. For example, an over provision of landfill facilities during the Plan period could prejudice the chances of sites identified under WLP 18: Major Waste Management Facilities coming forward. These sites are intended to provide alternative means of waste disposal to landfill, where this represents the BPEO. If they do not come forward it would adversely affect the likelihood of achieving the Principal Objectives of this Local Plan, as well as achievement of national and EU targets in respect of waste management. It could also give rise to importation of waste in conflict with regional self-sufficiency and the proximity principle.
- 6.3.4 Excessive provision would arise where planning proposals would result in the capacity of waste management facilities in the Plan area significantly exceeding :

- the capacity required to deal with a quantity of waste equivalent to the Plan area's own arisings of different types of waste
- any additional contribution by the Plan area to meeting regional need that may be set out in a future agreed regional strategy
- where proposals for major waste management facilities are likely to cater predominantly for waste brought in from outside the Plan area

Consequently, in assessing need regard will be had to relevant factors that include:

- the Plan area's requirements for waste management facilities to meet its own needs
- regional self-sufficiency, including any agreed Regional Strategy
- the proximity principle
- actual and forecast waste arisings - amount and type
- the number, type and capacity of other existing, allocated or committed sites in the locality
- the categories of waste being handled at existing facilities

6.3.5 An 'extension of existing development' will be taken to include a major extension in site area, and/or a major intensification of the existing use, relative to that already existing. Major waste management facilities are defined as those making a substantial contribution to the long-term management of waste in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. By definition these are strategic facilities.

The Movement of Waste

6.3.6 The Waste Local Plan Background Paper 'Controlled Waste Management 1998 - 2001', confirmed that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough currently receive a significant amount of waste from elsewhere, around 0.5 million tonnes of mixed putrescible waste per annum. A large amount of this waste is known to be imported from London. The continued importation of waste, especially at this scale and from outside the Region, is considered to be contrary to regional self-sufficiency and the proximity principle.

6.3.7 Notwithstanding the above, the WPA recognises that the movement of waste may be appropriate, where it forms part of regional self-sufficiency. For example, it would be wasteful of resources to seek to develop a particular facility within the Plan area for which a regional need has been identified, if a similar facility with significant spare capacity already exists close by. Use of this facility would also be appropriate if it would significantly reduce the transport of waste. The WPA will take such considerations into account when assessing the need for development, and proposals involving the movement of waste.

6.3.8 The Government is requiring WPAs to determine planning applications having regard to regional self-sufficiency. At present WPAs have few powers to restrict the movement of waste and the only option appears to be the use of legal agreements, which could be applied to future planning permissions to restrict the catchment areas of new facilities, tonnages and / or types of waste entering the site. The WPA will therefore pursue the use of such agreements as part of any planning decision for a major new waste development or major extension of existing development.

- 6.3.9 In the future regional self-sufficiency and the proximity principle will also be considered by the Regional Planning Conferences, informed by work done by Regional Technical Advisory Bodies. Regional waste management strategies will be developed, which will consider a range of issues including the movement of waste. Any proposals for facilities of a regional nature should accord with an agreed Regional Waste strategy. This may include, for example, facilities for waste processing which are likely to have a catchment area of a regional, and possibly inter-regional nature.
- 6.3.10 An agreed regional waste management strategy would help ensure that waste management practices are in general conformity with the proximity principle, and help define when the movement of waste might be appropriate. However, until such strategies exist, the WPA will determine what is acceptable under the principle of regional self-sufficiency and the proximity principle, having regard to Government advice in PPG10 and elsewhere.
- 6.3.11 A key aspect of regional self-sufficiency is also the definition of the 'region'. Until April 2001 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough formed part of the East Anglian Region, together with Norfolk and Suffolk. However no regional waste strategy was prepared to cover that region. In April 2001 the East of England Region was established, which also incorporates Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire. As the first regional waste strategy to include Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be developed on the basis of the East of England Region; it is the East of England region that the WPAs regards as the 'region'.

Local Transport Plan

- 6.3.12 The Cambridgeshire and the Peterborough (Local) Transport Plans 2000-2005 provide the framework to help deliver integrated transport for the Plan area. The Plans' provisions should be incorporated into decisions regarding the location, form and nature of waste management development.

