

Waste Core Strategy – Forum event

Friday 6 May 2011, Northgate House Conference Centre, 10.00am

Attendees: Derek Greedy (WCC), Tony Lyons (WCC), Adam James (WCC), Eva Neale (WCC), A Ambrose (ALP Ambrose Minerals Planning & Development Consultancy), A Bulpin (Waste Recycling Group), S Cartwright (Environment Agency), G Fleet (WCC), M Hammond (Friends of the Earth Rugby), N Hansen (Highways Agency), K Kondakor (Friends of the Earth Nuneaton and Bedworth District), R Scawin (Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Ltd), M Spruth (Sita UK), Sue Broomhead (WCC)

Welcome and Introductions

Derek Greedy welcomed everyone to the event and gave a brief introduction on the current situation on the Waste Core Strategy and the position to date.

Everyone then introduced themselves and shared information on their own individual interests and their reasons for attending.

Although an agenda had been put together and distributed it was made clear that the agenda and the event would be flexible and attendees were encouraged to ask questions as the presentation and event progressed.

Current position/context

TL gave an overview of the Waste Core Strategy and confirmed that it should be concise, flexible and easy for people to understand.

The Revised Spatial Options document was due to go out for consultation in 2008 but it was delayed at the very last minute due to the spatial implications of Project Transform. These issues have been resolved to some extent and therefore, it was decided to progress with the Waste Core Strategy and the plan has been re-written. Although the RSS has been abolished it will continue to be a consideration in decision making until the Localism Bill becomes law. Once this happens, the RSS will not hold any weight.

DG gave a brief overview of some of the issues around Project Transform. These mainly revolved around strategic sites.

The key issues contained within the consultation document have been developed from feedback received during previous consultations and changes to policy.

The policy principles give an indication of the direction in which the policies will be developed. The policies will be firmed up in more detail once a preferred option has been confirmed

Treatment Gap/Strategic Sites

There is more waste being produced in urban areas which will therefore require most of the facilities. This is one of the key objectives.

At this point, a suggestion was made that under the Waste Management Principles, Reduce, Recycle and Reuse should be seen as a priority and moved to the top of the list. TL explained that the list was in no preferential order. DG explained that there can be difficulty with the waste prevention side as it is difficult to develop policies against which their success can be measured.

A point was also raised around transport and that there is no mention of this under the key issues and policy principles. TL advised that transport is covered under the locational strategy but it was still felt that transport was not clear enough.

Evidence Base

AJ explained that the most up to date evidence has come from the WM RTAB. A map has been produced using data from AWM and a Landfill Diversion Strategy to show the C&I arisings information at lower super output area (1,000 plus population). As might be expected, the highest arisings are located within the urban areas. The map is to confirm and back up this analysis.

In the RSS, Warwickshire has been identified as having a treatment gap of 600,000 tonnes but this only includes Commercial & Industrial Waste and Municipal Waste. Work has been undertaken to work out the permissions for which Warwickshire currently has and this has identified that there is enough current capacity to cover the treatment gap.

AJ presented a graph which shows the key tonnages for the key dates of diverting waste from landfill for MSW and C&I wastes. The data used was taken from the RSS Phase 2 Preferred Option. At this point, concern was raised over the data and whether it was a true reflection of the waste situation over the last couple of years. It was suggested that there is more up to date data such as the Annual Monitoring Report which shows that waste is declining and not increasing as shown on the graph. AJ confirmed that the latest AMR information is contained in the consultation document.

It was agreed that the RSS evidence base would be re-examined and any new and more up to date data would be considered. WCC to look at this as a point of action.

Spatial Options

The consultation document now contains 5 spatial options rather than 7 as previously, which were based on the principle of a North/South and West/East corridor.

The first three options in this consultation are similar to the old options and each of the options set out the advantages and disadvantages. Option 3 is mainly

concentrating on the main settlements, however there may not be enough capacity. Option 4 is the main settlements of over 6,000 population but with a 5km radius. It is felt that this option allows scope for other activities but is still close enough to the urban areas.

A point was raised around the cut off figure being 6,000 for the population and the reasons for this figure being chosen.

Option 5 is very similar to option 4 but does take into account Coventry. Coventry has been included due to the relationships and flows in and out of the county and also the Local Economic Plan (LEP). A comment was also made about Solihull and the reasons as to why this has been missed off. It was suggested that if people felt that Solihull should be included in the Spatial Options they could make comments during the consultation and put this suggestion forward.

There were a number of comments regarding the need for Coventry to be included in the areas identified and the fact that all major roads go through this area. It was not clear as to the exact stage of Coventry's Core Strategy. At this point, cross boundary movements should be taken into account into and out of Coventry. Further, it was suggested that there could not be a 'one size fits all' approach. For example, the location for a composting facility is completely different to a location for an enclosed transfer station.

The point about railheads was raised and the need to consider these within the Warwickshire Core Strategy as a reasonable means of transport. There were concerns though that by using the rail it would be more likely to attract waste into Warwickshire. Further, it was suggested that to be able to make the rail a viable option there would need to be around 900 tonnes of waste per train movement being transported and there is already very little capacity left on the rail network.

Concerns were raised over the evidence base (if any) for the options and what implications there may be in terms of transporting waste. A discussion took place around transport and the likeliness of significant impacts on other road networks if the major routes were to become congested. The Highways Agency would like to have discussions around the potential transport issues at this stage and it was agreed that contact would be made so that potential issues can be resolved.

The Highways Agency confirmed that similar discussions between Warwick District Council and Stratford District Council had taken place around potential transport issues in their core strategies. The transport issues will be dependant on the scale and the type of waste. TL advised that comments from stakeholders such as the Highways Agency will enable 'problem' locations to be identified at the outset.

It was confirmed that the ADAS data is based on the amount of waste per employee.

Treatment Capacity

The RSS identified a capacity gap of 600,000 tonnes over the plan period but it was not specific about the type of treatment that had to be delivered. DG reported that a wide range of different permissions have been granted within Warwickshire.

Therefore, Warwickshire are not intending to undertake a site allocations document. Although the capacity has been met, there will still need to be a strategy in place which is flexible for sites to come forward where there is a requirement for them. It is also necessary to be mindful of the fact that not all sites will be delivered.

The capacity gap identified is purely just for Municipal and Commercial and Industrial waste. Hazardous and Construction and Demolition waste is not included and therefore, there also needs to be a strategy in place for dealing with these types of waste.

The point was raised that care should be taken if past trends are used to project MSW and C&I waste arisings figures as the recession has impacted on levels of waste in recent years. It can not be predicted with any certainty as to what will happen in the future.

Allocations document

A discussion took place as to whether a site allocations document was needed. The following points were made:-

- Generally it would involve costs for both businesses and the council and it is likely that most of the general public won't want an allocations document anyway.
- It is important to maintain flexibility and by providing allocations this provides less flexibility.
- There were allocations in Warwickshire's local plan but none of these were actually taken forward because they were not in the locations of where the facilities were actually needed.

Generally it was agreed that a site allocations document was not required.

It is the quality of the vision and the policies that is of most importance.

Strategic sites

WCC felt it was important to identify the definition of a strategic site in order to look at a hierarchical approach. It was suggested that the wording be changed to state 'move waste up the hierarchy' rather than 'reduce the amount of waste disposed to landfill'. In terms of transport, rather than say 'good' transport links, the preference would be for 'sustainable' transport links to be included.

It is important to remember that strategic facilities and strategic locations are not the same thing and this should be recognised. There may well be more than one site which may be of collective value. There is also the need to be mindful of neighbours as they will not want multiple sites.

The following question was asked 'If strategic sites are identified would there be a need to protect/safeguard them?'. It was confirmed that this is the reason that there needed to be a set of criteria which could be followed and then which could go through the hierarchical approach.

It was suggested that if an allocations document was being produced then there would also be a need to identify strategic sites but if not then there is not really a need for them.

Conclusion

DG thanked everyone for attending and for the valuable contributions everyone made. It was confirmed that the consultation will end on the **20th May 2011.**

Glenn Fleet asked whether a presentation could be made to the Waste Recycling Group in June 2011. Glenn will send the information on to Planning Policy.