

Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 19 JULY 2011

OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: PREFERRED WASTE CORE STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

Report by Deputy Director (Growth & Infrastructure)

Introduction

1. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy will set out the vision and strategic objectives together with the spatial strategy, core policies and implementation framework for the supply of minerals and management of waste in Oxfordshire over the period to 2030. Detailed site allocations will be identified in a subsequent document.
2. In preparing the Core Strategy the County Council must carry out consultation before a proposed document is published for formal representations and then submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by an inspector. This should include consultation on the options that have been considered and on the Council's preferred strategy.
3. The Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group considered a suggested preferred strategy and policies for waste on 9 May 2011. The Working Group recommended that Cabinet agree a preferred waste strategy for consultation based on the proposed strategy and policies.

Draft Waste Planning Strategy

4. The waste strategy must make planning provision for the facilities that will be required for the management of all wastes in Oxfordshire over the period to 2030. This includes not only municipal waste, which is collected and managed by the District and County Councils, but also wastes that are produced and managed by the private sector, including: commercial and industrial waste; construction, demolition and excavation waste; hazardous waste; and radioactive waste. Annex 1 sets out the proposed draft preferred planning strategy for waste.
5. The vision and objectives for waste planning in Oxfordshire are set out in section 3. These provide the basis for the strategy, policies and proposals for waste in the draft strategy.
6. In recent years, on average a total of about 2.2 million tonnes of waste has been produced annually by Oxfordshire's residents, businesses and organisations. The amount of waste produced in Oxfordshire is expected to grow as the population and economy increase. The draft

strategy makes provision for dealing with an estimated 2.3 million tonnes of Oxfordshire waste each year by 2030: about 15% of this is municipal waste; 25% is commercial & industrial waste and 60% is construction, demolition & excavation waste (policy W1). Production of waste is expected to be concentrated at the main urban areas.

7. In addition, some waste is brought into the county from London and other counties for disposal at landfill sites. This waste is managed under commercial arrangements that are not within the control of the County Council. It is expected that this will continue but at a declining rate (policy W2).
8. The way that waste is dealt with in Oxfordshire has changed markedly in recent years. From a past position of most waste being disposed of by landfill, approaching half of all waste is now being recycled or recovered for other use. This is in line with national policy to reduce, re-use and recycle waste. This success is expected to continue as a result of recent and planned investment in new waste facilities.
9. To establish the requirement for new waste facilities that the strategy needs to provide for, the Waste Needs Assessment (May 2011) has been produced. This has been published on the County Council's website and is available in the Members' Resource Centre. The draft strategy includes targets for increased recycling and treatment of waste, such that by 2015 only waste that cannot be dealt with in these ways needs to be landfilled (policy W3); and it sets out the additional capacity that it is proposed to make provision for (policy W4).
10. The draft strategy addresses two main issues:
 - a) The planned energy for waste plant at Ardley will take all Oxfordshire's residual municipal waste but is expected only to take some of the county's residual commercial and industrial waste. There is a need for additional capacity for treatment of residual commercial and industrial waste, mainly in the southern and western parts of the county.
 - b) There are legacy radioactive wastes at Harwell and Culham from the decommissioning of nuclear research facilities. Provision needs to be made for storage of intermediate level radioactive waste and disposal of low level radioactive waste.
11. Other important issues the draft strategy addresses are:
 - a) Facilities to handle municipal waste are already being provided for in line with the requirements of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy. Additional requirements have been identified for: a new household waste recycling centre to serve Banbury (to replace the existing site at Alkerton); and transfer stations to move waste from southern and western Oxfordshire to the Ardley facility.
 - b) Additional capacity for recycling of commercial and industrial and construction, demolition and excavation wastes will be required in the latter half of the plan period, mainly due to the temporary status of many existing facilities.

12. The draft strategy sets out options for how and where the requirements for additional waste facilities could be met, at paragraphs 4.28 – 4.51 and 4.75 – 4.85. An initial assessment has been made of these options against the waste planning objectives and a proposed approach is put forward for each waste requirement. The draft strategy proposes the following additional provision for the main types of waste (policies W5 and W7):
- a) A household waste recycling centre to serve Banbury;
 - b) Two transfer stations for residual municipal waste in the Abingdon / Didcot / Wantage & Grove and the Witney / Carterton areas;
 - c) Additional permanent recycling plants for commercial & industrial waste at or close to Oxford and towns in the northern and southern areas of the county;
 - d) A plant for treatment of and recovery of resources for residual commercial and industrial waste in the Abingdon / Didcot / Wantage & Grove area;
 - e) Additional permanent recycling plants for construction, demolition and excavation waste at or close to Oxford and the large and smaller towns in the rest of the county; and temporary recycling plants at landfill and quarry sites;
 - f) Additional capacity for disposal of inert waste which cannot be recycled at quarries that require infilling for restoration.
13. For the legacy radioactive waste issue, the draft strategy proposes (policy W9):
- a) Continued storage of intermediate level radioactive nuclear legacy waste from sites in Oxfordshire at Harwell, pending removal to a national disposal facility;
 - b) Temporary storage of low level radioactive nuclear legacy waste at Harwell and Culham, but permission for disposal of this waste in Oxfordshire to be granted only if no other suitable site is available outside Oxfordshire.
14. Other proposed policies cover: criteria for selecting sites for waste facilities (policy W6); landfill (policy W7); hazardous waste (policy W8); and safeguarding waste facilities (policy W11). The strategy also includes policies (C1 – C8) that are common with the draft minerals strategy, on: flooding; water environment; environmental protection; biodiversity; landscape; historic environment and archaeology; transport; and rights of way.

Next Steps

15. Public consultation on both the draft waste strategy and draft minerals strategy is proposed to be undertaken in September/October 2011. The outcome of that consultation will shape the content of the Core Strategy document that will then be published for comment and submitted to Government for independent examination in 2012.

Sustainability Implications

16. Sustainability appraisal is being carried out as an integral part of preparation of the Core Strategy. A sustainability appraisal of the preferred strategy for waste is being prepared and will be made available alongside the consultation document.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

17. The Council has a statutory duty to produce the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy. It will contribute to the Council's strategic objectives of a thriving economy, healthy and thriving communities and environment and climate change.

Financial and Staff Implications

18. The programme of work for the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy is included within the Directorate work priorities. Funding for this project in the medium term financial plan will be under-spent in this financial year and will need to be re-profiled into the next year, by requesting a carry forward. This report does not raise any additional financial or staffing implications.

Risk Management

19. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy is a high risk project. The complexity of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework process and the potential implications for major waste management proposals emphasise the importance of good project management and regular reporting on risk management.

RECOMMENDATION

20. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) **Agree Annex 2 as the County Council's waste strategy options and draft waste planning strategy for the purpose of consultation.**
 - (b) **Delegate authority to finalise the consultation document to the Deputy Director (Growth and Infrastructure) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure.**

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Background papers:

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