

The Greater Manchester Waste Development Plan Document

**Sustainability Appraisal /
Strategic Environmental Assessment
Adoption Statement**

April 2012

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (referred to hereafter as the 'Waste Plan') has been produced by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) on behalf of the ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities. It sets out a waste planning strategy to 2027 for Greater Manchester which enables the adequate provision of waste management facilities in appropriate locations for municipal, commercial and industrial, construction and demolition and hazardous wastes.
- 1.2 The Waste Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on 28 February 2011. Mr Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ was appointed as the Planning Inspector who would undertake an independent examination into the Waste Plan. The Hearing sessions on the Waste Plan took place between June and September 2011.
- 1.3 The Examination closed on 22 September 2011 and on the 4 November 2011 the Greater Manchester authorities received the Binding Report from the Inspector. The Inspector's report concluded that, subject to a number of minor changes which had been proposed by the Councils, the Waste Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the associated Regulations, and meets the tests of soundness set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning. He therefore concluded that the Waste Plan is sound.
- 1.4 The Waste Plan has been formally adopted by each of the ten Greater Manchester authorities and came into force on 1 April 2012. It therefore forms part of the statutory Development Plan for each authority and will be used alongside district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications.
- 1.5 The European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" (the Strategic Environmental Assessment or 'SEA Directive') introduced a statutory obligation to conduct an environmental assessment of certain plans. The Regulations apply to a range of UK plans and programmes prepared by public bodies, including the Waste Plan which meets the relevant criteria in that:
 - It is "prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and is required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions" (Article 2(b)); and
 - It concerns "town and country planning or land use... which sets the framework for future development consent of projects" (Article 5.2(a)).
- 1.6 Under Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, where a Local Planning Authority is preparing a new Development Plan Document (DPD) it is also mandatory for the plan to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) throughout its production, to ensure that it is fully consistent with, and helps to implement, the principles of sustainable development. While SA and SEA are distinct processes, many of their requirements overlap and undertaking a SA essentially involves extending the breadth of (predominantly environmental) issues required to be considered under SEA to cover the full range of aspects (including social and economic) for sustainability.

- 1.7 The Waste Plan has been subject to SA, incorporating the requirements of SEA, at each stage during its production. The SA has performed a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan. It has informed the evaluation of alternatives and the Inspector's Report concludes that the "SA has been carried out and is adequate".
- 1.8 Upon adoption of the Waste Plan, the SEA regulations require the preparation of a statement which sets out:
- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan;
 - How the environmental report has been taken into account;
 - How opinions expressed in response to consultations have been taken into account;
 - The reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered; and
 - The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan.
- 1.9 This SEA adoption statement considers each of these matters in turn. However, as noted above, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act widens these considerations from environmental to broader sustainability issues. This statement therefore provides information on the wider SA process, which incorporated SEA.

2.0 How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan

- 2.1 An essential part of the process of preparing the Waste Plan has been to undertake a SA to ensure the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the development of the Waste Plan objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies. The requirements of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 have been incorporated into this SA.
- 2.2 The SA commenced during the pre-production and evidence gathering stage. Stage A of the SA process involves establishing the framework for undertaking the SA – essentially a set of sustainable development objectives and sub-objectives against which the Waste Plan can be assessed – together with the evidence base that will help to inform the appraisal. The SA framework established for the Waste Plan considers the environmental factors listed in the SEA Directive and includes issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. The SA framework and evidence base are documented in a Scoping Report which was produced by the Greater Manchester Geological Unit (GMGU) in February 2007.
- 2.3 Stage B in the SA process involves the main body of appraisal work. With respect to the Waste Plan this involved testing the plan's objectives and the various options generated against the SA framework in order to predict and evaluate the effects of the Plan, identify measures to mitigate adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects, and propose ways to improve the sustainability of options as the Waste Plan evolved.

- 2.4 The preparation of the Issues and Options and the public consultation on these, was undertaken in two stages. Strategic issues were identified in the Stage One Issues and Options Report (2007) and assessed in the accompanying (Interim) SA to that report. The Stage One SA Report documented the appraisal of the objectives and options proposed by the Joint Committee in the Stage One Issues and Options Report and summarised their potential economic, social and environmental implications.
- 2.5 More detailed development management and site-specific issues were addressed in the Stage Two Issues and Options reports on Built Facilities (2008) and Residual Waste Disposal (2009). These Stage Two Issues and Options reports were accompanied by their own SA Reports which documented the appraisal of the future waste management requirements, development management policy options and the site / area options for waste management facilities/residual waste disposal.
- 2.6 In addition, a SA Review was undertaken to provide a summary assessment of the sustainability merits of the Preferred Option and make recommendations for its improvement.
- 2.7 Stages C and D of the SA process relate to preparing the SA Report and consulting on the DPD and its associated SA Report. A SA report summarising the potential economic, social and environmental implications of the Publication Waste Plan was undertaken in June 2010. This report demonstrates that sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development of the Waste Plan and provides an appraisal of the significant changes to the Plan following the public consultation on Preferred Options, and any new policy options which may have emerged since the Preferred Options Document was prepared.
- 2.8 The methodology used to undertake the SA was considered by the Inspector and found to satisfy the relevant soundness test.

3.0 How the environmental report has been taken into account

- 3.1 The findings of the SA have informed the preparation of the Waste Plan and been integrated into each stage of its preparation.

Stage One Issues and Options

- 3.2 The Stage One Issues and Options report set out options for the development of the strategic aims and objectives of the Waste Plan. It also put forward the issues and suggested options available for the development of waste management policies for Greater Manchester. The Issues and Options SA tested the strategic aim options, strategic objectives, future waste management needs issues and options, and options for providing sites/areas for waste management facilities against the SA Framework. The findings from this SA were used to inform the development of the Stage Two Issues and Options and Preferred Options reports.

Stage Two Issues and Options Built Facilities

- 3.3 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Built Facilities Report provided an appraisal of the future waste management requirements, development

management policy options and the sites/areas for waste management facilities and their distribution. The appraisal considered whether the impact was likely to be positive, neutral or negative. The potential cumulative, synergistic and secondary impacts and the likely timeframes and geographical scales of the impact of the issues and options were also assessed.

- 3.4 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Built Facilities Report provided an appraisal of the sustainability and general suitability of 109 sites/areas across Greater Manchester for waste management facilities. This process resulted in each potential site/area being attributed a banding from 'A' (most sustainable) to 'D' (least sustainable). These findings of the SA had a major impact of the development of the Plan with all sites considered to fall within Bands D being considered to be unsuitable for waste management facilities and therefore excluded from the plan.

Stage Two Issues and Options: Residual Waste Disposal

- 3.5 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Residual Waste Disposal provided an appraisal of the future waste management requirements for residual waste, development management policy options and the sites/areas for waste management facilities and their distribution. The appraisal considered whether the impact was likely to be positive, neutral or negative. The potential cumulative, synergistic and secondary impacts and the likely timeframes and geographical scales of the impact of the issues and options were also assessed.

- 3.6 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Residual Waste Disposal provided an appraisal of the sustainability and general suitability of a number of sites across Greater Manchester for residual waste disposal facilities. This process resulted in each potential site being attributed a banding from 'A' (most sustainable) to 'D' (least sustainable). These findings of the SA were taken into account when determining which sites for residual waste disposal should be taken forward in the Plan.

Preferred Options

- 3.7 The Waste Plan Preferred Options SA report was published alongside the Waste Plan Preferred Options document for public consultation in November 2009. The SA report concluded that the proposals in the Preferred Option of the Waste Plan were broadly sustainable with positive effects outweighing negative effects. It observed that where negative effects or improvements have been identified these are primarily the result of how the policy has been formulated and whether it is worded strongly enough or includes sufficient detail to give it the necessary weight to ensure positive effects on the sustainability objectives. As such, the SA report suggested a number of improvements and alterations to the Preferred Option and mitigation that could be put in place to make the final Plan more sustainable. These recommendations were incorporated into the Plan and are summarised in chapter 4 of the SA Report.

Publication

- 3.8 The Waste Plan Publication Report was issued for consultation in October 2010 alongside its accompanying SA Report. This SA Report tested the strategic aim, objectives and policies against the SA framework. The SA Report recommended a series of minor mitigation measures to improve the sustainability of the Waste Plan and its implementation. These

recommendations were incorporated into the Plan and are summarised in chapter 6 of the SA Report.

4.0 How opinions expressed and results of public consultation have been taken into account

4.1 The Waste Plan was prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended 2008). It was also produced in line with the relevant Statements of Community Involvement (SCI). Details of consultation on the joint DPD are available in the Statement of Consultation (October 2010).

4.2 Article 5.4 of the SEA Directive requires consultation with authorities with environmental responsibilities when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report (SA report). The required consultees at the time the SA Scoping Report was produced were the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England. Each of these bodies was consulted on the draft SA Scoping Report for a period of five weeks commencing in September 2006. In addition, responses were sought from a range of other organisations including the National Trust, RSPB, Network Rail, United Utilities, the Highways Agency and Manchester Airport.

4.3 A total of 13 representations on the draft Scoping Report were received, including responses from all three statutory SEA bodies. The comments received during this consultation period were incorporated into the Scoping Report and a table detailing these changes can be found at <http://www.gmwastedpd.co.uk>. This Scoping Report is available to view at the same web address.

Stage One Issues and Options

4.4 The results of the initial informal SA of the Issues and Options report was published for consultation alongside the Waste Plan Issues and Options report in May 2007. Twenty-three responses were received as a result of this consultation. None of these responses related directly to the SA.

Stage Two Issues and Options Built Facilities

4.5 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Built Facilities Report was made available for a six-week period of public consultation in October 2008. A total of 29 responses were received as a result of this consultation. None of the comments related directly to the SA itself. However, additional information submitted on a number of sites/areas was used to inform a re-appraisal of several sites through the SA process.

Stage Two Issues and Options: Residual Waste Disposal

4.6 The SA of the Stage Two Issues and Options: Residual Waste Disposal Report was made available for a six-week period of public consultation between March and May 2009. A total of 2488 responses were received as a result of this consultation. None of the comments related directly to the SA itself. Nevertheless, in light of the comments received through the consultation process, the sustainability banding attributed to a particular site was reappraised through the SA process.

Preferred Options

- 4.7 The Preferred Options SA report was published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Report in November 2009. This consultation generated a total of 28 responses from individuals and 35 responses from organisations. None of the comments related directly to the SA itself. Nevertheless, a number of comments made reference to the banding classification attributed to particular sites by the SA. In the case of one site, Rugby/Ram Mill, the views expressed during the consultation exercise resulted in the site being subject to reassessment through the SA process.

Publication

- 4.8 The final SA Report prepared to accompany Publication version of the Waste Plan was made available for consultation in June 2010. In response to this consultation exercise a total of 48 representations were received from 23 organisations/individuals. None of the comments related directly to the SA itself.

5.0 The reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered

- 5.1 The SEA Directive requires the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan to be identified, described and evaluated. The Directive also stipulates that there should be a similar evaluation of all reasonable alternatives to the plan. In preparing the Waste Plan, a range of approaches to addressing the key waste planning issues facing Greater Manchester have been considered. This statement sets out the reasons for choosing the approach of the plan as adopted in the light of the other reasonable alternatives. More detail on the reasonable alternatives considered at each stage is provided within the Issues and Options and Preferred Options Reports.
- 5.2 At Issues and Options stage, the SA assessed the sustainability of three alternative Strategic Aims that had been developed for the Waste Plan. This assessment clearly indicated that elements of all three aims would have a positive impact on the sustainability objectives. Accordingly, drawing upon the findings of the SA, the chosen Strategic Aim incorporates aspects of all three alternatives. Similarly, the Waste Plan's Spatial Strategy is a combination of three alternative strategies which were considered at the Issues and Options stage and which were all found to have some positive impact on sustainability considerations.
- 5.3 In relation to the selection of sites/areas for waste management facilities and residual waste disposal, a number of sources of land use information were explored to identify land which was potentially suitable for waste uses. This land was then assessed against a list of exclusionary criteria and through site visits. Once a long list of alternative sites/areas had been identified, a SA was conducted on each site to establish how it performed against a series of environmental, economic and social factors and those deemed to perform badly in terms of their sustainability were eliminated.
- 5.4 Comments received during public consultation on these sites/areas were considered and, where appropriate, used to inform a further SA of the site/area. The selection of sites/areas also reflected the spatial distribution of waste management facilities as set out in the Waste Plan's Spatial Strategy.

The sites/areas identified in the Waste Plan were therefore chosen because they are in the 'right places' and are the most sustainable locations for future waste management development in Greater Manchester when considered against a range of environmental, economic and social factors.

5.5 The Development Management policies within the Plan were chosen because they were considered to be the most appropriate following the considerations of reasonable alternatives. For instance, in recognition of the need to provide protection for facilities that are important for the implementation of the waste strategy, the Waste Plan includes a policy that protects sites allocated for waste management in the Waste Plan and safeguards sites required for the delivery of the Municipal Waste Management Strategies. This approach was chosen in preference to the alternative approach of safeguarding all existing waste management facilities in Greater Manchester because it was recognised that existing waste management facilities have not been subject to the site assessment process or SA and it is therefore not known whether they are needed or if they are in the most sustainable locations. Similarly, the policy relating to the restoration and aftercare of residual waste disposal sites was chosen because it was considered that the alternative option of only promoting certain types of afteruse for landfill/landraise would be too prescriptive. Further information on the reasons for choosing the Development Management policies is contained within the Preferred Options report.

5.6 The Waste Plan, as adopted, has been found sound following examination by an independent Inspector and is therefore considered to represent a sustainable approach to key waste planning issues for Greater Manchester up to 2027.

6.0 The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan

6.1 The implementation of the Waste Plan will need to be monitored to ensure that the performance of the Plan can be assessed against its aim and objectives. The Greater Manchester authorities have therefore identified a series of indicators which will provide a consistent basis for monitoring the performance of the Waste Plan. This will help to ensure that objectives are being met and that policies are being implemented. Where, as a result of monitoring, indicators show that a policy is not working effectively or key targets and objectives are not being met, remedial action may be taken.

6.2 In order to satisfy the requirements of the SEA Directive, monitoring relating to the significant sustainability effects of the Waste Plan must also be undertaken. The Greater Manchester authorities have therefore developed a set of primary indicators to monitor the sustainability performance of the Waste Plan, which are set out in the Scoping Report. These SA Framework Primary Indicators, alongside the additional significant effects indicators which have been identified through the SA process, will be monitored to measure the economic, social and environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

6.3 This monitoring of the significant environmental effects of the Waste Plan will be undertaken concurrently with the monitoring of the output indicators of the Plan. It will be carried out annually and the outcome of this monitoring will be set out as part of individual district council's Annual Monitoring Reports.