

# Rutland Local Plan - Developing a Spatial Strategy for Waste Management

## Introduction

1. The purpose of this note is to give additional background information on how the spatial strategy for waste in the Rutland Local Plan 2021 - 2041 has developed and how the local context was taken into consideration.

## National guidance

2. The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) states that Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs) should identify, in their Local Plans, sites and/or areas for new or enhanced waste management facilities in appropriate locations. Furthermore the Government's policy direction as established in the NPPW regarding identification of suitable sites and areas highlights the need to: consider waste management alongside other spatial planning matters; enable communities and businesses to take more responsibility for their own waste; plan for the disposal of waste and the recovery of mixed municipal waste in line with the proximity principle; recognise the relationship between catchment areas and economic viability; support opportunities for co-location of waste management facilities together and with complementary activities; and give priority to the re-use of previously-developed land, sites identified for employment uses, and redundant agricultural and forestry buildings and their curtilages.

## Available strategic approaches and the local planning context

3. There are a number of ways that a local plan can identify sites and/or areas for waste management development. The adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and Site Allocations & Policies DPD were adopted in July 2011 and October 2013 respectively. The Issues & Options (I&O) consultation paper (June 2022) stated how the Local Plan would build on the approach to identifying locations for new waste facilities outlined by the NPPW, whilst considering the local context. Options considered through I&O paper included continuing with the adopted spatial strategy and locational elements or amending this in some manner.
4. The adopted approach sets out a spatial strategy that identifies areas/locales where waste management capacity should be focussed where the specified forms of management may be appropriate and can be related to surrounding land use and infrastructure networks; this is complemented by identification of site-specific allocations (three sites) and development criteria (unallocated sites are able to come forward through this mechanism where appropriate). The adopted approach is set out in the Core Strategy DPD (Policy CS25 – Waste management and disposal) and the Site Allocations & Policies DPD (Policies SP4 – Site for waste management and disposal, and SP28 – Waste-related development).
5. Of the adopted site-specific allocations one (Cottesmore, Burley Road) has been brought forward and granted planning permission for the waste management use

it was allocated for, leaving one existing allocation for small-scale preliminary facilities (Greetham, Wood Lane) and one for inert disposal/recovery (Ketton Cement Works and its quarry).

6. Approaches to identify locations for waste development can be summarised as:
  - Allocating specific sites - By far the clearest option for identifying locations for waste management development is to specifically allocate sites in the Plan for such use; this could be based on such sites being put forward by the industry and assessed as appropriate or through some other means.
  - Identification or designation of specific areas for development - This option works on the basis that certain types of locations, for example general industrial area locations, are appropriate in principle for waste management use, and that such areas should be designated within the Plan and shown on the policies map.
  - Identification of broad areas of focus - This option is less geographically specific than an allocation or designation, both of which are shown on an Ordnance Survey map; this could be through broadly identifying on a non-OS based map favoured areas and locations for waste development or to describe such favoured locations in policy or in the explanatory text.
  - Identification of policy criteria - Which could direct different types of waste management development to suitable locations, in appropriate (and specified) circumstances.

A spatial strategy for waste management could comprise a single, or a combination of the above options.

7. An approach of not giving any geographical direction in the Plan and simply relying on a generic strategic policy on which applications for waste development would be determined is not considered appropriate. This is because it would effectively move the waste element of the local plan into being no more than guidance on what matters were to be addressed in determining a planning application, rather than giving any plan-wide steer on where proposals should actually be directed to. In addition, such an option would not be consistent with national policy.
8. There are pros and cons to the various approaches referenced above, and this is also dependent on whether it is appropriate to pursue a flexible approach to the location of waste management facilities; the particular circumstances of the plan area, including constraints; the opportunities for development; and the extent of the capacity gap identified and the consequential quantum of facilities to be planned for.
9. The potential sustainability effects of these options were tested against the sustainability objectives through the Sustainability Appraisal process in order to assess potential contribution towards achieving sustainability outcomes and addressing key issues.
10. In the case of Rutland, the Local Waste Needs Assessment, prepared to support the preparation of the Local Plan, concluded that the capacity gap is relatively small for the various waste management streams to be managed over the period to 2041. Over the plan period there is a small capacity gap for built facilities for

preparing for re-use & recycling and biological treatment for waste arising predominantly from the municipal and commercial & industrial waste streams, estimated at two small-scale facilities. A capacity gap is also identified for advanced treatment of such wastes, however the existing municipal waste contract reduces the available waste arisings considerably to the point where economic viability of such a facility in the county is unlikely, particularly over the short-term of the plan period. Over the mid to long-term, the development of a small-scale advanced treatment facility may become viable especially where the treatment capacity forms an ancillary activity to industrial operations. There is a potential need for non-hazardous disposal and hazardous waste management, however the county is not considered appropriate to accommodate such uses and hazardous waste tends to be managed at a regional or national scale.

11. The development of a sustainable waste management network requires a range of facilities aligned with the different levels of the waste hierarchy, including facilities for the preparation of wastes for re-use and recycling and other recovery as well as facilities for the disposal of residual wastes (including residues arising from the treatment of waste). Ideally facilities should be directed to locations where investment, and links to existing land uses and infrastructure networks can be optimised in order to support sustainable economic growth and development of sustainable communities. This may include the co-location of waste management facilities, or co-location with other compatible uses (e.g. mineral development, industrial development, etc.). However, the waste industry may also come forward with proposals that comply more with their business plan and opportunities, which may place more or less importance on these considerations.
12. Whatever option is taken forward there would need to be some form of spatial strategy to indicate where waste management development should be focused. Whether that is taken forward through the identification of specific locations, including making specific allocations in the Local Plan, depends on how much direction is sought and how flexible the Local Plan should be in responding to the needs and requirements of the waste industry; which is often led by making the most of opportunities that present themselves, including the availability of specific units or pieces of land that may become available.
13. As referenced above, the distribution of the network of facilities including the scale, and potentially catchment area of individual facilities, should ideally relate to Rutland's locational hierarchy and the general development strategy and relationships with areas of growth and constraint.
14. The key urban areas in the Local Plan area are the main town of Oakham and small town of Uppingham, with the Larger Villages that also provide a range of important functions and facilities within the plan area. The Smaller Service Centres and Small Villages comprise smaller villages with a limited range of facilities. There would be opportunities for waste development that is appropriate for a non-rural location to be sited in Oakham, Uppingham and Larger Villages, generally speaking on an industrial estate or in a new development area(s). Such proposals would need to be commensurate with the existing built environment of the settlement. Opportunities specific to Rutland were also identified, being the potential use of alternative fuels at the Ketton cement works, which is a nationally significant facility. It is also important to recognise that some facilities (e.g.

anaerobic digestion) may be appropriate to be sited in rural areas, due to the nature of operations or relationship with rural activities. In addition, Stamford, which is an urban location adjacent to the plan area administrative boundary, could potentially accommodate waste management development on its fringe but within the plan area.

15. The preferred approach identified through the Draft Plan (September 2023) was to continue with the adopted approach (refer paragraph 4), updating this where necessary in relation to local circumstances and national policy, and to undertake a review of site-specific allocations. The resulting approach reflects the settlement hierarchy and locally specific considerations outlined above (paragraph 14).

### **Industry interests**

16. To inform options and assess such interest in identifying specific sites for waste development, there was a call for sites where the industry, landowners and agents were requested to put forward sites for potential waste uses to be included as allocations in the Local Plan (and for those with sites already allocated to re-state their interest/support). Three sites were put forward for waste management, including one site allocated in the adopted plan; no other sites were identified at this, or subsequent stages. One of these sites were assessed as being appropriate and subsequently proposed as a site-specific allocation. The site identification and assessment process is set out in the Rutland Local Plan Site Appraisals (October 2023) document.

### **The proposed Spatial Strategy**

17. The proposed spatial strategy, development criteria and site allocations for waste management are set out in Rutland Local Plan Policies WST1 – Capacity requirements and spatial strategy for waste development, WST2 – Waste-related development, and WST3 – Sites for waste management. These elements were subject to public consultation as the Local Plan was developed. The Summary of Consultation Responses/Representations (for each consultation stage), sets out how these representations have been considered, which has influenced the Plans development.

### **Conclusion**

18. Returning to the reference to national policy (paragraph 2), it is considered that through the identification of a spatial strategy for waste, development criteria and site-specific allocations that the Local Plan meets the requirements of national policy and guidance. It does this in the following manner:
  - Waste planning authorities should identify, in their Local Plans, sites and/or areas for new or enhanced waste management facilities in appropriate locations - A spatial strategy for waste that identifies preferred locations and a site-specific allocation have been identified. In addition, the development criteria allow unallocated sites to come forward where appropriate.
  - Consider waste management alongside other spatial planning matters - The development of the spatial strategy is in line with both the growth

and investment agenda, and Rutland's emerging (non-minerals and waste) strategies, overall settlement/location hierarchy and constraints.

- Enable communities and businesses to take more responsibility for their own waste - The identification of a spatial strategy, development criteria and site allocation seeks to balance provision; in addition new strategic development areas will be expected to incorporate waste management facilities to enable communities and businesses to take more responsibility for managing their own waste.
- Plan for the disposal of waste and the recovery of mixed municipal waste in line with the proximity principle - The Local Waste Needs Assessment assessed future arisings and potential future facility requirements over the plan period against available capacity. Proposals will have to demonstrate support for the waste hierarchy; and by focussing waste management development at the existing or planned main urban areas, such development will be in line with the proximity principle.
- Recognise the relationship between catchment areas and economic viability and support opportunities for co-location of waste management facilities together and with complementary activities - The opportunity to co-locate waste management facilities together and with complementary activities will be supported particularly where relating to areas of new development, Ketton cement works, industrial estates, waste management sites, and mineral extraction and processing sites.
- Give priority to the re-use of previously developed land, sites identified for employment uses, and redundant agricultural and forestry buildings and their curtilages - Substantial weight will be given to the use of suitable brownfield land within identified urban areas.