



SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL / STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

of the Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Development Control DPD

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT
FOR THE REVISED PREFERRED OPTIONS
CONSULTATION**

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

July 2007

Enfusion *in association with*
Centre for Sustainability at TRL



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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT of the
Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Development Control DPD**

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SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT**

**NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY
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Prepared for: Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council

<i>date:</i>	July 2007	
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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1 This document is the summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Wiltshire and Swindon Development Control DPD (Revised Preferred Options Report 2007). It describes how the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was used to assist in planning for the development and the use of land for waste management, as required by planning legislation and Government guidance. The SA assists sustainable development through an ongoing dialogue and assessment during the preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPDs), and considers the implications of social, economic and environmental demands on spatial planning.
- 2 Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council are working jointly on the production of a Minerals and Waste Development Framework for the County and Borough and in 2005 commissioned the Centre for Sustainability at TRL and Enfusion to progress the SA and SEA work.

The Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF)

- 3 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) is part of the new system introduced by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and it takes the form of a portfolio of documents including Minerals and Waste DPDs (Core Strategy, Development Control DPD, Site Specific Allocations and where required, Area Action Plans), the Statement of Community Involvement, and an Annual Monitoring Report. The purpose of the Development Control Policies is to set out the development policies required to deliver the vision for Waste Management in Wiltshire and Swindon.

Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 4 Planning legislation requires that DPDs are subject to a SA, a systematic process that is designed to evaluate the predicted social, economic and environmental effects of development planning. European and UK legislation require that the DPDs are also subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a process that considers the effects of development planning on the environment. Where significant adverse effects are predicted, the SEA aims to identify means to avoid or mitigate such effects. Government guidance advises that these two processes should be carried out together and requires DPDs to be subject to a SA incorporating SEA. Wiltshire and Swindon's Minerals and Waste Development Framework Development Control DPD has been prepared in accordance with these requirements for a SA/SEA (The Minerals Development Control SA is contained in a separate report).

The Stages of Sustainability Appraisal

- 5 Government guidance requires a number of stages of SA work that need to be carried out as the LDF is being prepared:
- Stage A: Setting Context & Scope
 - Stage B: Developing Options & Assessing Effects
 - Stage C: Preparing the SA Report
 - Stage D: Consulting on the Plan & the SA
 - Stage E: Monitoring Implementation of the Plan
- 6 For the SA of the MWDF, Stages A-C began in January 2005, and in June-August 2006 a consultation (Stage D) was undertaken on the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy and Development Control DPD. However, the response from consultees, coupled with the emergence of several 'unsound' Core Strategies produced by other Authorities raised some concerns about the emerging MWDF. The Councils then decided to revise the previous Core Strategy Preferred Options document, which occurred in early 2007 and to re-consult in Spring 2007. This was followed by the revision of the Development Control Policies in Spring 2007, currently the subject of consultation. This has required the revisiting of SA Stages B-D.

The Character of Wiltshire and Swindon

- 7 Wiltshire and Swindon are located in the east of the region of South West England. The County and Borough covers an area of 3486 square kilometres, and has a population of approximately 630,600. The area is predominantly rural in character, with the majority of settlements being market towns. Swindon is the largest settlement, with a population of 159,000, followed by Salisbury (44,000), Trowbridge (36,000) and Chippenham (33,500).
- 8 Wiltshire has a high quality environment, with over two thirds of the plan area designated for its international, national and local environmental importance. This includes three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): the Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs, the North Wessex Downs and the Cotswolds. It includes 12 European designated sites of Nature Conservation Importance and over 130 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are also approximately 14,000 listed buildings, 10 Historic Parks and Gardens and more than 250 Conservation Areas.
- 9 The County and Borough population is expected to grow by approximately 13.6 per cent over the plan period 2006-2016, with Swindon, Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham being identified in the South West Regional Spatial Strategy as the main areas for growth. The Waste DPDs will need to account for the waste disposal needs of this growing population and consider a current growth in municipal waste at the rate of 4% for Wiltshire, and 3% for Swindon per annum.

SA Scoping & Issues for Sustainability

- 10 During late 2005 a Scoping process was carried out to help ensure that the SA covered the key sustainability issues relevant to land use planning for waste development in Wiltshire and Swindon.
- 11 Relevant plans and programmes were reviewed to develop a wider understanding of the issues and priorities for Wiltshire and Swindon, and information about the current and future social, environmental and economic characteristics of the County and Borough was compiled. From these studies, key sustainability problems and issues were identified, and include landscape protection, air quality, climatic factors and transport, biodiversity, cultural heritage, and waste production.
- 12 A SA Framework was compiled and included a list of 19 SA Objectives that aim to resolve the issues and problems identified. These SA Objectives were used to test the draft DPDs as they were being prepared:

Waste Development Framework SA Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote healthy exercise, especially daily exercise 2. Enable access to learning, training, skills and knowledge 3. Promote stronger more vibrant communities 4. Give people in the county access to satisfying work opportunities, paid or unpaid 5. Meet local needs locally 6. Balance the need for growth with the protection of the environment (Wiltshire County Council corporate objective) 7. Reduce vulnerability of the economy to climate change and harness opportunities arising 8. To improve our roads and make them safer (Wiltshire County Council corporate objective) 9. Protect habitats and species 10. Promote the conservation and wise use of land 11. Protect and enhance landscape and townscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness including rural ways of life 13. Maintain and enhance cultural and historical assets 14. Reduce vulnerability to flooding 15. Reduce non renewable energy consumption and greenhouse emissions 16. Keep water consumption within local carrying capacity limits (taking account of climate change) 17. Reduce the rate of landfill, increase recycling and open waste to energy facilities in Wiltshire (Wiltshire County Council corporate objective) 18. Minimise the use of non-renewable resources and where possible promote the use of renewable resources 19. Minimise land, water, air, light, noise, and genetic pollution
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Consultation and preparing the SA Framework

- 13 This approach and the proposals for testing the development planning process developed into a SA Scoping Report that was sent to a wide range of organisations and also made available on the Councils websites. Comments were invited and received from a number of these organisations, and these were incorporated into the SA Framework. The Framework would then be used to undertake Sustainability Appraisal of all Waste Development Plan Documents in the MWDF (a similar framework has been developed for the Minerals Documents).
- 14 Each stage of the preparation of the Development Control DPD was appraised systematically using the SA Objectives. Firstly an appraisal was undertaken of initial policies set out in an Issues and Options paper (placed on consultation from November 2005 – January 2006). A more detailed appraisal was undertaken of the 2006 Preferred Options. Then a further detailed appraisal was carried out on the 2007 Revised Preferred Options. The SA recognised 4 categories of predicted effects, each represented by a different colour, as illustrated in the key below.

Categories of Sustainability Effects

Green (G)	Option actively encouraged in its current form as it would resolve an existing issue / maximise opportunities. (Where these are considered to be significant it is reported in the text).
Blue (B) ?	Option would have a neutral or an uncertain (?) effect.
Orange (O)	Option would need some changes in order to have a positive effect on issues identified.
Red (R)	The option would exacerbate existing problems and cannot be suitably mitigated. Consider exclusion of option. (Considered to be significant).

- 15 Where it was considered that there were opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the emerging policies, recommendations were made and these were primarily with respect to environmental protection (and particularly biodiversity), minimising impacts on sensitive land uses, controlling hazardous wastes, enhancing opportunities for education about waste minimisation and recovery, and minimising the transportation impacts of waste developments.

Appraisal of the Waste Development Control DPD Options

- 16 In November 2005, a Development Control DPD Issues and Options report, jointly prepared by the Councils was placed on consultation. The Options outlined in this report were appraised by Enfusion, and the results used to further develop the emerging policies in the Waste Development Control DPD.
- 17 Issues outlined in the paper were presented with a range of alternative Options and a comparison of the sustainability effects of implementing each

Option was made, with recommendations made as to the Preferred Option in each instance.

**Appraisal of the Waste Development Control DPD Preferred Options-
Stage 1 (2006)**

- 18 The development of Options, and the subsequent SA undertaken, informed the development of Preferred Options, which were then subject to a detailed SA, with suggestions made for the mitigation of negative effects, where appropriate. Where available, evidence from the SA Scoping Stage and from other researched sources was used to justify the prediction of effects. The assessment found that the Preferred Options would make a significant contribution to sustainability, and included recommendations for further iterations of Development Control policies. The Preferred Options report and accompanying SA Report were placed on consultation in June 2006.

**Appraisal of the Waste Development Control DPD Revised Preferred
Options- Stage 2 (2007)**

- 19 The feedback from the SA and Consultation on the Preferred Options has been incorporated into the revision of the Preferred Options. A number of key changes were made to the policies. In particular WDC1 amalgamated policies on managing impacts relating to amenity, visual aspects, noise and light emissions, vibration, air emissions and climate change, contaminated land and agricultural land (previously contained in WDC 1,3,4,5,6,7 & 12. In addition new policies addressing issues of Sustainable Transportation of Waste and Renewable Energy have been introduced. Leading on from these revisions further Sustainability Appraisal work has been undertaken. The following presents the key findings of this most recent appraisal on the Revised Preferred Options:

20 *The Policies*

- Will ensure the identification and management of potentially negative impacts arising from waste management facilities by requiring the assessment of likely impacts relating to key issues of environmental quality, health and well being for the local population (e.g. including amenity, noise and light and air pollution).
- Will safeguard key built assets (airfields, water ways, archaeological) and natural assets (international habitats and species designations, landscape) by only permitting development for waste management where it can be demonstrated that negative impacts can be avoided or mitigated.
- Will encourage routes to more sustainable living, e.g. through supporting the potential exploitation of waste for energy, and in promoting progress towards more sustainable transportation of waste.

Mitigation

- 21 No significant negative effects were identified in the assessment of the Revised Preferred Development Control Policies. Some uncertainties may carry forward from the issues raised during the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options appraisal. For example, the predicted increase in the requirement for waste management facilities over the plan period may put additional pressure on sensitive areas (e.g. designated habitats or populations adjacent to existing facilities likely to experience expansion). The Revised Preferred Development Control Policies have incorporated robust measures to address these issues, such as the requirement for new developments to be accompanied by assessments, and the need to clearly demonstrate no significant negative impacts. The monitoring strategy should seek to focus on measure that best reflect key sensitivities in Wiltshire and Swindon.

Conclusions

- 22 The Development Control DPD is likely to have an overall positive impact on Wiltshire and Swindon's environment through providing for the control of waste development in a sustainable manner. The policies encourage sustainable transportation, support the movement of waste up the waste hierarchy, promote an increase in renewable energy sources, and afford protection to the natural environmental, local amenity, historical & cultural environments and existing infrastructures. This is particularly important given the predicted increase in waste produced in the County and Borough, both from existing and new development.

Monitoring the Implementation of the MWDF

- 23 The MWDF is designed to be an on-going, iterative process, in which all sections are kept up to date through a rolling process of public involvement, monitoring and, where necessary, adjustment. The monitoring of the significant effects of any plan of this type is seen as essential by the European SEA Directive, and the Councils believe that all stakeholders should have an early opportunity to be part of the process.
- 24 The Councils intend to develop one set of indicators to meet the monitoring requirements for both the MWDF and SA processes. The key sustainability issues identified in the SA Scoping Report, including consultation, and the SA of the Core Strategy and Development Control DPD (2006 Preferred Options and 2007 Revised Preferred Options) have assisted in developing indicators and targets for monitoring, which will contribute to the overall Monitoring Strategy for the MWDF.

Next Steps

- 25 In carrying out the SA of the Development Control DPD, Enfusion has identified a number of recommendations. They will be used to inform the preparation of policies in the Development Control Submission Document. Enfusion will then carry out a further SA, to determine whether the last stage of policy refinement has progressed the SA Objectives further and a Revised SA Report will be published alongside the Development Control Submission Document.

Further information and How to Comment on the SA Report and the Waste Development Control DPD

- 26 If you have any comments on the SA and SEA of the Development Control DPD Revised Preferred Options Document we would be grateful to receive them. The SA report, Non-technical Summary and technical appendices will be available along with the Waste Development Control DPD Revised Preferred Options Report on the Wiltshire County Council website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/. Comments can be made online.
- 27 The County Council, at County Hall, Trowbridge, Swindon Borough Unitary Authority, Libraries and District Councils will hold copies of the main report and non-technical summary along with the Waste Development Controls DPD Revised Preferred Options Report . Hard copies of any of the documents are available on request from the address below.

If you wish to make comments in writing, please direct them to:

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Comments must be received by noon on **Friday 14th September 2007.**