

## **WOKING CORE STRATEGY – WASTE**

### **Statement of Common Ground by Woking BC and SCC (Waste)**

This statement of common ground has been prepared by Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council in response to the Inspector's e-mail of 24 January 2012. It clarifies the Inspector's concern about how the Core Strategy addresses the matter of waste management. The two parties have met on 2 February 2012 and have agreed the following statement:

#### **Woking Core Strategy**

The main reference to waste development in Woking's Core Strategy is paragraph 1.33 as follows:

#### **“Surrey Waste Plan (2008)**

Surrey County Council is responsible for the preparation of the Surrey Waste Plan. The Plan was adopted in May 2008 and sets out the planning framework for the development of waste management facilities in Surrey. Its provisions are material considerations (*sic*) in planning decisions. In particular, the Proposals Map identifies sites that are safeguarded for waste purposes.”

Paragraph 8.2 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 (Local Spatial Planning) requires District Planning Authorities to include on their adopted Proposals Map minerals and waste matters, including safeguarding areas and any minerals and waste allocations which are adopted in the development plan by the County Council.

Paragraph 1.37 of the Core Strategy Publication Document deals with the Proposals Map. In line with the requirements of PPS 12, the Core Strategy commits to include safeguarded sites identified in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework on the Proposals Map. Subject to Woking Borough Council's proposed changes to the Proposals Map being incorporated on an adopted Proposals Map, Surrey County Council is satisfied that this requirement has been satisfied by the provisions of the Core Strategy and the Proposals Map. It should be emphasised that the information about the safeguarded areas were published after the Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State and was agreed to be introduced as proposed changes to the Proposals Map.

#### **Inspector's Concerns**

'The Inspector has specific concern about how the Council proposes to address matters relating to waste management. This is particularly pertinent given that the Core Strategy is clearly intended to be a spatial plan and appears to defer to the Surrey Waste Plan on this issue, the later appears to be a plan that does not cover the timeframe of the Core Strategy and would presumably be based upon an old evidence base? How does the Core Strategy, a spatial plan, intend to address matters of waste management, including issues relating to waste hierarchy? The Inspector would therefore be grateful for your early consideration and response as to how the submitted CS addresses, as far as relevant, issues of waste in line with national planning policy. There may be scope for the submission of a succinct topic statement clarifying the factual position on this subject, this could include a Statement of Common Ground with the waste planning authority'.

### **Response / Statement of Common Ground**

The Surrey Waste Plan comprises three development plan documents: Core Strategy, Waste Development and Waste Development Control Policies, along with a Proposals Map. The Plan was adopted in May 2008 and “the documents are expected to have a lifetime of ten years from their date of adoption”.

The Surrey Minerals and Waste Development Scheme was reviewed last year and a revised scheme came into effect from 12 October 2011. The programme for any review of the Waste Plan would be included in the Scheme. The minerals and waste planning annual monitoring report assesses each year how the policies in the Waste Plan are being implemented, indicating whether the policies need to be amended or replaced. The latest report confirms satisfactory progress with its implementation, so no review is included within this revision of the Scheme.

The Surrey Waste Plan 2008 (SWP) is likely to be reviewed in due course but the timing is uncertain. The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that “This Framework does not contain specific waste policies, since national waste planning policy will be published alongside the National Waste Management Plan for England”. The draft National Waste Management Plan is expected in May 2012, and finalised a year or so later. The SWP will be assessed against the new national waste policy and the annual monitoring reports to determine the nature and scale of review required and the prospective timescales. The issue of the certificate of conformity proposed in the draft NPPF may also be a factor considered in the decision on if and when to review the SWP.

The County Council has noted that the Core Strategy Publication Document builds in sufficient flexibility for monitoring and review to bring the Core Strategy up-to-date. It is expected that the outcome of any future review of the Waste Plan will help inform the future review of the Core Strategy.

### **Sites Allocated for Waste Development in Woking**

There are two sites in Woking allocated for waste development in the SWP: Heather Farm, Horsell and Martyrs Lane.

There was a public inquiry in 2009 into proposed industrial and storage development at Heather Farm. The County Council objected to the proposal based on safeguarding the site for waste development in accordance with the Surrey Waste Plan. The Inspector allowed the appeal and his report includes the following at para 29:

“I fully understand the particular difficulties experienced in Surrey in identifying a sufficient range of suitable waste sites, particularly in this part of the County which is affected by a number of policy designations and constraints. However in assessing the extent to which the Heather Farm site is necessary to implementing the Surrey Waste Plan, I have to have regard to the likelihood of its being delivered for waste purposes in the plan period. For the reasons I have set out above, I consider this to be very unlikely. In consequence I consider that the granting of permission for an alternative use would not materially impact on the successful implementation of the Surrey Waste Plan.”

Therefore, despite the allocation of Heather Farm in the Surrey Waste Plan 2008, the Inspector saw very little prospect of waste development there. That has effectively

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diminished to no prospect at all for the foreseeable future with the change of ownership. When the Surrey Waste Plan is reviewed, the Heather Farm allocation would almost certainly be deleted because of its unavailability for waste development. Adjacent land is proposed as a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) designation, to which the County Council has no objection as so there will be no waste development for the adjacent SANGS to conflict with.

Martyrs Lane remains an allocated waste site, in which there has been occasional interest but no proposals have yet come forward. It is also considered to have potential for the recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste in the submitted Aggregates Recycling DPD, for which the public examination hearings are programmed to start on 20 March 2012.

The SWP also includes six industrial estates in Woking that may be suitable for accommodating some waste development. These are Wintersells, Byfleet; Avro Way, Brooklands; Byfleet, Oyster Lane; Monument Bridge East; Goldsworth Park; and Sheerwater.

Several applications for waste development in the Surrey Green Belt have been submitted since adoption of the SWP, with alternative site assessments as part of their supporting documentation. None of these assessments, nor the site search work undertaken for the Aggregates Recycling DPD, have identified sites within which would justify their allocation for waste development in a review of the SWP.

### **County Council Position**

Officers are satisfied that waste management is adequately covered by the Surrey Waste Plan 2008 and the submitted Woking Core Strategy. Although there is a gap of nine years in the end of Plan timescales, a review of the SWP is expected to be undertaken within the next three years or so and is likely to look towards a 2026-2031 timeframe, compatible with Woking's 2027.

Woking's Core Strategy acknowledges the County Council's waste planning responsibilities and the role of the SWP. It also covers appropriate waste matters for a district core strategy, such as provision in development for the storage of waste and recyclable materials, design facilitating the waste reduction and the recycling and composting of waste produced, sustainable construction to minimise waste and opportunities for harnessing biomass waste to generate energy.

The Surrey Waste Plan is part of the Development Plan for the Woking area. In line with good practice and Government guidance, it is not expected that the Core Strategy will repeat policies of the Waste Plan as these policies are themselves material consideration for planning decisions. In this regard, Surrey County Council is satisfied that the Core Strategy adequately covers the requirements of the Surrey Waste Plan by committing to take them into account.

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