

Reviewing the Plan for **Solihull's Future**

Solihull Local Plan Review

Waste Management

October 2020



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1. Introduction

1. This topic paper is one in a series of papers supporting the Council's Draft Submission Plan which has been published for consultation. The topic papers look at the relevant national and local guidance that impact on the emerging plan, together with how the Draft Submission Plan has been developed and the representations made previously. They also provide a summary of the evidence base and how it has been used to shape the local plan. The topic papers do not contain any policies, proposals or site allocations and should be seen as explanatory supporting documents.
2. The main issues covered by this topic paper are:
 - The waste arising in the Borough including forecasts for the Plan period;
 - The management of waste that takes place in the Borough and likely developments;
 - The need for additional waste management provision within the Borough.

2. Background

3. Waste Management policy in Solihull is set out in the National Planning Policy for Waste and the Solihull Local Plan 2013 (SLP). National policy makes clear the need to use evidence to identify the need for waste management facilities. It indicates that local plans should identify sites or areas for new or enhanced waste management facilities.
4. The SLP was informed by a number of studies undertaken as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy review. These indicated that there was a significant gap between waste arising in the Borough and the capacity of facilities to manage waste. A gap of 350,000 tonnes was predicted for 2011, and this was predicted to increase to over 500,000 tonnes by 2028.
5. The SLP recognises the challenge of providing sufficient waste management facilities to meet an equivalent tonnage to the waste arising in the Borough and address the predicted shortfall. A key element of the spatial strategy sought to manage an equivalent tonnage to that arising in the Borough.
6. Policy P12 seeks to address the waste capacity gap by identifying strategically important waste management sites, by locating waste management facilities on appropriate industrial sites, and by considering the potential of sites within an Area of Search for waste management facilities. The policy also sets out the criteria for considering the suitability of sites for waste management facilities.

3. Local Plan Review

7. The Local Plan Review Scope, Issues & Options was published for consultation during December 2015 and January 2016. The document indicated that the Council considered that Challenge I relating to waste management and minerals remained relevant, and that Policy P12 should be carried forward with minor amendments only. There were no relevant representations relating to the waste management elements of the document.
8. The Draft Local Plan was published for consultation from December 2016 to February 2017. Challenge I and Policy P12 were maintained with minor updating. The sustainability appraisal was mainly positive, with moderate benefits for resource efficiency and greenhouse gases. A small number of representations were received relating to waste management. These highlighted;
 - the lack of detail about when and where waste management facilities would be provided;
 - that the Area of Search for waste management facilities was considered to be contrary to Green Belt policy;
 - the need for management of food waste; and
 - that policy to address capacity was welcome to minimise unauthorised disposal.
9. A Supplementary Consultation was published in January 2019, but this related specifically to proposed housing allocations and did not reference waste management.
10. The Draft Submission Plan is being published for consultation from 30 October 2020 to 14 December 2020. Challenge I maintains the objectives of managing waste further up the waste hierarchy and providing sufficient waste management facilities to meet an equivalent tonnage to that arising in the Borough. The reference to a significant capacity gap between waste arising and the capacity of facilities in the Borough has been omitted, as evidence indicates that this is no longer the case.
11. Policy P12 includes minor updating to make the sequential approach towards identifying new waste management facilities more explicit, and identifies a site for a relocated Waste and Recycling Centre for the Borough, if required. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies two moderate benefits from the policy and no adverse effects.

4. Summary of Evidence

Waste Needs Assessment

Introduction

12. In December 2018, A Waste Needs Assessment for Solihull prepared by Naisbitt Resource Management/Hendeca was published. This sets out the waste management facilities existing within the Borough, waste arisings for the various waste streams, forecasts for future waste arisings and the capacity needs of the Borough to meet the forecasted waste arisings in the future.
13. There are only a small number of permitted facilities in the Borough, predominantly receiving construction and demolition wastes. Whilst there is composting capacity, there is no residual waste treatment or disposal capacity. This means that there is reliance on such facilities outside the Borough, including for a significant proportion of strategic capacity used to manage Local Authority collected waste.
14. There is limited transfer capacity, all related to Local Authority activities, so no transfer capacity for commercial & industrial waste.
15. There has been a significant increase in the quantity of construction & demolition waste managed in the Borough associated with the inert landfill site and waste wood processing facilities at Meriden Quarry, resulting in Solihull becoming a net importer of waste.
16. Only 13% of waste deposited in Solihull originated in the Borough in 2017, with over 90% of waste originating in the West Midlands.

Waste Management Facilities in Solihull

17. In 2017, there were 13 permitted facilities operating in Solihull, handling just over 1 million tonnes of waste, although the theoretical capacity was greater than 2 million tonnes. The largest tonnage of waste is from the construction & demolition sector, followed by municipal waste, which together comprise 86% of waste received.
18. Almost all waste exported from Solihull is sent to the West Midlands. 45% goes to Coventry, where the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company provides energy from waste. 28% is sent to Warwickshire, mainly for composting and landfill, and 18% to Birmingham.
19. There are a significant number of exemption activities spread across the Borough, with the majority on-farm exemptions covering everyday on-farm activities.

Waste Arisings

20. Just under 100,000 tonnes of Local Authority collected waste arises in the Borough, with around 93,000 tonnes comprising household waste. The household waste per household has remained static at round 1.05 tonnes per household per year since 2011-12. Of this, about 10% goes to landfill, whilst the remainder is split equally between recycling/composting and incineration with energy from waste.
21. Estimated commercial & industrial waste arisings for 2017 are within a range from 39,600 to 48,400 tonnes. For construction & demolition waste, estimates indicate between 447,000 and 475,000 tonnes, or 482,000 to 513,000 tonnes, depending on which Gross Value Added figures are used. The report does recognise that the construction & demolition figures could overestimate waste in Solihull.

22. The report also considers wastes from agriculture and hazardous waste arisings. It estimates that between 300 and 500 tonnes of non-natural agricultural waste is produced annually, with around 9,400 tonnes of hazardous waste arisings in 2017.

Waste Forecasts

23. The report indicates that Local Authority collected waste could increase from between 98,000 to 102,000 tonnes to between 110,000 to 123,000 tonnes per annum by 2036. This is based on the increase being driven by the increasing number of households only.
24. For commercial & industrial waste growth scenarios suggest that around 68,000 to 69,000 tonnes are likely to arise by 2036, based on the higher forecasts. The forecasts for construction & demolition waste suggest between 664,000 and 817,000 tonnes by 2036, although this could be an overestimation, given that expectations would suggest a maximum of around 200,000 tonnes per annum.
25. The report assumes that agricultural waste will remain at current levels of between 300 and 500 tonnes per annum, and that hazardous waste arisings will be in the range of 7,000 to 11,000 tonnes per annum.

Capacity Needs

26. The report draws a number of conclusions relating to Local Authority collected waste. The Bickenhill household waste and recycling centre is close to capacity, so additional capacity will be required to support an increase in population and households. Recycling/composting materials are currently exported to facilities in Birmingham and Warwickshire which could increase to between 21,000 and 24,000 tonnes by 2035. Food waste is not collected separately, and there is no capacity for its treatment, although a facility is proposed at Meriden Quarry. The Coventry and Solihull Energy from Waste facility should provide sufficient capacity for residual waste.
27. For commercial and industrial waste, the level of residual waste is unlikely to be large enough to justify a separate facility. The report recommends some additional physical treatment capacity for the recycling of non-wood based construction and demolition waste, but notes that a current proposal would provide this capacity. For developments that would generate significant excavation waste, evidence should be provided that capacity exists.
28. The very low tonnages of agricultural waste indicate that this stream should continue to be appropriately managed by the private sector, and does not require specific provision. The Local Plan could consider promoting on-farm anaerobic digestion systems to manage natural agricultural waste. Because of the very low quantities of hazardous waste there does not appear to be a need for any provision for recovery or disposal.
29. In summary, there is a need for increased household waste and recycling capacity requiring a site of 1 to 2 hectares, and provision for composting for around 30,000 tonnes and recycling for around 62,000 tonnes for Local Authority and commercial and industrial waste streams requiring 2 to 5 hectares.

Waste Data Interrogator

30. The Waste Needs Assessment uses data from the Waste Data Interrogator (WDI) 2017. Data for 2018 was published by the Environment Agency in October 2019. This is included in the table below.

Operator	Site Name	Facility Type	2018 Input (tonnes)
Solihull Community Housing	Chapelhouse Road Depot	Waste Transfer	1,555
Solihull MBC	Moat Lane Transfer Station	Waste Transfer	5,498
Enterprise Managed Services	Bickenhill HWRC	Civic Amenity Site	22,001
A & A Recycling Services	Meriden Quarry	Physical Treatment	133,868
Berkswell Recycling Ltd	Berkswell Estate Wood Waste Facility	Physical Treatment	20,127
Michael Merrell	M Merrell Vehicle Dismantlers	Car Breaker	242
Berkswell Recycling Ltd	Berkswell Quarry	Composting	30,150
NRS Waste Care Ltd	Meriden Quarry	Deposit of waste to land (recovery)	1,896
Cemex UK Materials Ltd	Berkswell Quarry	Deposit of waste to land (recovery)	107,424
Arden Wood Shavings Ltd	Arden Wood Shavings	Timber Manufacturing	33,783
Armac Demolition Ltd	Arden Brickworks	Use of waste in construction	35,783
NRS Waste Management Services Ltd	Meriden Quarry Landfill site	Inert Landfill	223,608
Total			615,926

31. There were 12 licensed facilities in Solihull that recorded inputs in 2018, a reduction of one from 2017. The total waste input at facilities in Solihull has fallen by about 40% but remains higher than in 2015. One facility, Coleman & Co at Meriden Quarry closed in 2018 and no input was recorded for the NEC Waste Pre-treatment Centre. The reduction was largely due to a fall in the input at the Meriden Quarry landfill site, although there was an increase at Berkswell Quarry.
32. Overall, the Waste Data Interrogator data for 2018 is consistent with the conclusions in the Waste Needs Assessment.

More recent developments

33. A physical treatment facility at Berkswell Quarry for Cemex UK Materials was granted planning permission in December 2018. This would provide capacity for up to 49,000 tonnes per annum, and be required for the lifetime of the Quarry, although it has yet to be implemented.
34. Planning permission has also been granted for an in vessel composting/biomass/waste water plant at Meriden Quarry for Beechwood Recycling which has been largely built, although the Company has gone into liquidation and the facility has never operated. This would provide capacity for up to 30,000 tonnes of composting, as well as food waste.
35. A former composting facility is operating as a wood recycling business at Hawkhurst Moor Farm in Berkswell, although this has not been formally authorised. The business has been invited to submit an application for a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development.

5. How the Evidence has been used

Waste Capacity Gap

36. Evidence in the Waste Needs Assessment demonstrates that the significant capacity gap between the waste arising and the capacity of waste management facilities to manage waste in the Borough, highlighted in the SLP no longer exists. The closing of this capacity gap may be a result of the policy in the SLP, which has encouraged and permitted a number of waste management facilities in the Borough, not all of which have yet to come on stream.
37. However, a big part has been played by mineral operators managing construction waste at the two quarries in the Borough. NRS Waste Care has been managing significant quantities of construction waste as part of its operations to work and restore the Sandcap area of Meriden Quarry between Birmingham Road and Hampton Lane. Whilst the Waste Data Interrogator for 2018 shows a significant reduction in the tonnage managed from 2017, recovery and restoration operations to Berkswell Quarry have partially offset this reduction.
38. Whilst restoration works are by definition temporary, the size of the void at Meriden Quarry indicates that this activity is likely to continue for many years. The situation at Berkswell Quarry is likely to be similar, and with further mineral working in the pipeline, restoration works are likely to be on-going.
39. It is considered, therefore, that the challenge and spatial strategy imperative to address the capacity shortfall is no longer required. However, there are a couple of significant requirements that will need to be addressed through the Local Plan Review.

Household Waste & Recycling Centre

40. The Waste Needs Assessment identifies a need for additional household waste and recycling capacity. The current facility at Bickenhill is at or over capacity, and the additional population/households means that additional capacity is required either at the existing facility, or a new larger site. The evidence suggests that a site of 1 to 2 hectares may be required in total.
41. The Council has been investigating options for additional capacity or alternative sites for a number of years. A report was prepared in 2016 looking at alternative locations for both the HWRC, and the Council Depot, currently based at Moat Lane, Solihull. This site has been identified as a proposed housing allocation in the Draft Local Plan. In June 2019, a further report was undertaken looking at the 8 sites previously considered, together with 4 new potential sites. The report recommended that 4 sites were worthy of further consideration, 2 adjacent to its existing location, if agreement could be reached with the landowner, one at either Berkswell or Meriden Quarry if land were available, and one off Damson Parkway utilising part of the proposed allocation for employment land in the Draft Local Plan, Site 20.
42. Further investigations will be required before a conclusion on a preferred location can be reached. In the meantime opportunity has been taken to include the potential for a relocated HWRC to be accommodated on site UK2 (Damson Parkway) within Policy P12 and Policy UK2.

Recycling of LA household and commercial & industrial wastes

43. Evidence in the Waste Needs Assessment indicates that there is a potential need for recycling/composting capacity to provide for Local Authority collected waste and commercial & industrial waste. Capacity for around 62,000 tonnes per annum for recycling and for 30,000 tonnes per annum for composting is recommended, which could require a single site

of up to 5 hectares, or a site for 2 to 4 hectares for a recycling facility and a site for 1 to 2 hectares for composting.

44. The composting requirement would be met by the Beechwood Recycling facility at Meriden Quarry if it comes on stream. The composting permission remains at Hawkhurst Moor although the current use is for wood recycling. There would not, therefore, appear to be a need to make additional provision for composting in the Local Plan Review.
45. The Review could make provision for additional recycling capacity. This could be by allocating a specific site, if a suitable site is available. However, no relevant/suitable site submissions have been made through the various Calls for Sites that the Council has undertaken. Alternatively, the Local Plan Review could highlight the need for a recycling facility using the sequential approach for finding suitable sites set out in Policy P12 of the Draft Local Plan.

6. Conclusion

46. This Paper sets out how the Local Plan Review will address the need for waste management in the Borough for the Plan period. It provides a summary of the review process, as it relates to waste management. It also summarises the Waste Needs Assessment for Solihull undertaken in 2018, together with additional evidence that has been used to develop the waste management element of the Draft Submission Plan.
47. The evidence indicates that the significant capacity gap between waste arising in the Borough and the capacity of waste management facilities in Solihull has been addressed. It does highlight the need for a relocated and expanded Waste and Recycling Centre in the Borough, and for additional recycling capacity, which can be managed through the sequential approach in Policy P12.

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