

Waste Management Facilities

Informal Design Guidance

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1 Context

This guidance note has been prepared to provide informal planning advice on the potential design issues associated with the development of waste management facilities within North Yorkshire. The guidance has been prepared for developers to help inform the preparation of site specific design solutions. It will also be used by the Waste Planning Authority to support pre-application discussions with prospective developers. The guidance is particularly relevant to the provision of relatively large scale facilities, but many of the principles it contains may apply to all facilities.

“Government initiatives such as Achieving Excellence, Rethinking Construction and Better Public Buildings are all intended to deliver a procurement process that provides better design quality in an holistic sense, buildings with the following attributes – fitness for purpose, build quality, sustainability, adaptability, safety, efficiency, appreciation of context and an aesthetic impact that contributes to civic life.”

CABE (2002) Improving Standards of Design in the Procurement of Public Buildings

2 Design Policy

It is widely acknowledged that good design is an essential component in the delivery of effective waste management facilities. This importance is heightened when considering major facilities such as energy from waste plants due to their potential scale and mass. The emphasis on good design is increasing and the need for it is supported in national, regional and local policy and guidance. At a national level, several of the Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) set out broad principles for achieving good and sustainable design in new development. PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development¹ establishes the need for good and sustainable design and outlines how these principles should be translated at a local level. In addition, PPS 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management² makes clear reference to the need for planning authorities to consider design when determining planning applications and these principles and the benefits that they can bring are reinforced in the Companion Guide to PPS 10³.

At a regional level the Regional Spatial Strategy⁴ promotes the need for good design in new development. Policy S4, Urban and Rural Design within this document specifically relates to the design of new development and the way that such principles can be embedded in local planning policy.

The need for good design is incorporated within local policy in North Yorkshire. The adopted Waste Local Plan⁵ identifies through Policies 4/3 and 4/19 that new waste development should be compatible with the local landscape and design and wherever possible such facilities should enhance local landscape character; it also sets out the need to carefully consider the local environment and residential amenity. The strategic aims of the emerging Waste Core Strategy⁶ build on the principles set out in the Waste Local Plan and many of the strategic aims include clear reference to good design e.g. SA2, SA4, SA5 and SA9. The draft Waste Core Strategy reinforces the need for good design

“Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.

Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted.”

PPS 1, Paragraphs 33 and 34

“Good design and layout in new development can help to secure opportunities for sustainable waste management, including for kerbside collection and community recycling as well as for larger waste facilities. Planning authorities should ensure that new development makes sufficient provision for waste management and promote designs and layouts that secure the integration of waste management facilities without adverse impact on the street scene or, in less developed areas, the local landscape.

Waste management facilities in themselves should be well-designed, so that they contribute positively to the character and quality of the area in which they are located. Poor design is in itself undesirable, undermines community acceptance of waste facilities and should be rejected.”

PPS 10, paragraphs 35 and 36

POLICY DC W16 DESIGN AND RESTORATION

“The county council will support proposals for waste management facilities which contribute towards more sustainable development through a high standard of design, mitigation, operation and/or restoration appropriate to its local context”

North Yorkshire County Council (2007) Minerals and Waste Development Framework; draft Waste Core Strategy

¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005) *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development*

² Department for Communities and Local Government (2005) *Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management*

³ Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) *Planning for Sustainable Waste Management: Companion Guide to Planning Policy Statement 10*

⁴ Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (2004) *Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber to 2016, based on Selective Review of RPG12*

⁵ North Yorkshire County Council (2006) *North Yorkshire Waste Local Plan*

⁶ North Yorkshire County Council (Submission Draft, January 2008) *Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Waste Core Strategy*

throughout, specifically policies DC W13 and DC W16. It should also be noted that requirements for good design are also set out in relevant district or borough planning policy.

“An assessment of the roles and relationships of the area or site to its strategic context, together with an appreciation of the individual characteristics of form and the way a place is used, will lay the foundations for a unique design response.”

Llewelyn-Davies (2007) Urban Design Compendium 1

3 Generic Sustainable Design Principles

Any new waste management proposals need to encompass all operational aspects of the proposed development. The position and orientation of the building should recognise the relative position and proximity of sensitive receptors to minimise any potential adverse impacts e.g. position the plant with regard to surrounding residential properties in order to minimise potential visual impacts and noise impacts.

The layout should make the most of the site, with the plant designed and positioned in such a way to take full advantage of the wider site and its surroundings. It is anticipated that a landscape strategy would be prepared for any undeveloped parts of the site and this would be designed in such a way to create an attractive and distinctive setting.

As far as possible (and within reasonable cost) the proposed development should embrace the principles of sustainable development, including:

- ◆ Ensuring the development respects the character of the site and surrounding landscape;
- ◆ Materials should be used efficiently and where possible in construction make the most of locally sourced, recycled or sustainably managed resources;
- ◆ Existing habitats should be retained and enhanced where possible and consideration should be given to replacement habitats or habitat creation within the site;
- ◆ The potential to generate energy through heat and/or power should be maximised and energy use within the development facility should be minimised;
- ◆ Water should be conserved and recycled both internally and externally;
- ◆ Potential environmental impacts should be mitigated e.g. air quality, noise, pollution, flooding and micro-climatic effects;
- ◆ The development should aim to attain a very good or excellent BREEAM Industrial rating;
- ◆ A statement should be prepared identifying how sustainable principles will be met in terms of construction, operation and decommissioning of the development (including the management of construction wastes); and
- ◆ Community engagement and the delivery process should promote the active involvement of local people and increase their understanding of the proposed development.

Developers should, where appropriate, take into consideration guidance on design quality, available from Constructing Excellence (www.constructingexcellence.org.uk), OGC (How to achieve Design Quality in PFI Projects), CABE (Improving Standards of Design in the Procurement of Public Buildings, October 2002) and 4Ps (Achieving Quality in Local Authority PFI Building Projects).

CABE (the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) provides a design review service to prospective developers whereby proposals can be reviewed by their panel of experts. This review considers architectural issues as well as the

sustainable design credentials of the proposals prior to planning submission. Where appropriate, modifications can be made to proposals which may improve the final design solution and also reduce planning approval risks. Where appropriate, developers should make use of this service.

The Council would expect developers to demonstrate that proposals are designed to the highest standards (not entailing excessive cost) having regard to relevant national guidance such as that contained in PPS 10 and elsewhere. A list of other relevant reference documents is contained in Section 7 of this document.

4 Design Issues in North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire is a predominately rural County; therefore the prospect of delivering a large scale waste management facility presents clear challenges. It is also a County of diverse landscape character; therefore a design solution for one site would not necessarily complement another. The setting of potential sites is also likely to be sensitive as the County incorporates a range of national and landscape designations including two National Parks and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are also numerous registered Historic Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings, while registered Historic Parks and Gardens are not statutory designations, Listed Buildings are, the setting of such buildings and sites would need to be considered in relation to any potential development.

Many of the districts/boroughs within the County have undertaken landscape character assessments. Such documents would provide key pointers in the development of a design solution for a given site, potentially providing guidance on the setting of sites and how new developments can be best integrated. They could also provide suggestions on how landscape character could be enhanced or repaired.

It is clear through the policy drivers at a national, regional and local level that the design of such a facility would be a key consideration and it is anticipated that carefully considered design solutions would be required for any future waste management facility. The design solutions should also respond to and integrate with the surroundings.

5 Design Considerations

The design of a new waste management facility embraces a range of attributes from cost to sustainability, function to responding to context, but is fundamentally much more than what a development looks like. It is clear from the previous sections of this document that the need to deliver good design in the delivery of new waste management infrastructure is important. There is no definitive waste sector reference material on what constitutes good design for waste facilities. However, there are various guides relating to the delivery of good design at a more general level, prepared by CABE, DCLG and the Construction Industries Council. Defra has recognised the importance of good design in the delivery of waste facilities and has responded by commissioning research in this area, a waste specific design guide is expected to emerge later in 2008.

The ability to evaluate the design of new waste facilities is fundamental and needs to recognise the way in which waste management services and/or facilities are provided. This evaluation process should be integral through the delivery of new facilities, from setting out the initial brief to the completed building.

The design process should be iterative and evolutionary, involving consultation and stakeholder engagement at different stages in the process and the evaluation of new proposals should recognise this. There are several aspects of a development that can be evaluated throughout the process, which can be outlined as follows:

Function

- ◆ Will the proposed facilities achieve the intended requirements?
- ◆ Do the proposals deliver a working facility within the site area?
- ◆ Have opportunities for maximising any heat/power output been identified?

Building quality

- ◆ Will the materials proposed last the lifetime of the development?
- ◆ Have the long term costs of building maintenance been considered?
- ◆ Do the development proposals incorporate a landscape strategy that provides a setting for the development and provides opportunities for enhancing biodiversity?

Efficiency

- ◆ Can the facility be delivered on time and within budget?

Sustainability and impact

- ◆ Does the building respect the local setting and character?
- ◆ Has the management of surface water been considered?
- ◆ Has the residential amenity of surrounding residential properties been considered?
- ◆ Are recycled/materials from renewable or low impact sources incorporated?

- ◆ Have measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding area or receptors been incorporated?

Aesthetics

- ◆ Can the design of the new facility be justified i.e. is a landmark building appropriate, does it respond to context?

The above headings and points may be used by the Council in assessing the provision of new facilities and through the planning determination process. They should not be taken as a definitive set of criteria, but as an indication of how proposals will be evaluated. It is anticipated that the criteria will expand and/or change as more is known about a proposed development or solution. It is also the case that design solutions will be site specific and this guidance should be read in conjunction with any site specific information as well as relevant policies contained within local development plan documents.

6 Conclusions

The consideration of design issues is central to achieving good design outcomes for new waste facilities. It is important that developers and other stakeholders take a systematic approach to how designs for new facilities are achieved. This is supported by planning policy drivers at local, regional and national levels of government.

This document provides an outline of some of the issues and reference documents that should be considered by prospective developers. A design solution for a particular site will be unique to that site, its setting and the characteristics of the facility that is proposed. It is for the developer and the design team to develop a quality design solution taking into account relevant sustainable design criteria. The developer will need to ensure that the solution that is proposed represents 'good design'. This will need to be demonstrated by the applicant and will be tested through the planning application determination process.

7 Further Reading/References/Signposting

- ◆ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005) Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- ◆ Department for Communities and Local Government (2005) Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management
- ◆ Department for Communities and Local Government (2006) Planning for Sustainable Waste Management: Companion Guide to Planning Policy Statement 10
- ◆ Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber (2004) Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber to 2016, based on Selective Review of RPG12
- ◆ North Yorkshire County Council (2006) North Yorkshire Waste Local Plan
- ◆ North Yorkshire County Council (Submission Draft, January 2008) Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Waste Core Strategy
- ◆ www.breeam.org
- ◆ www.dqi.org.uk
- ◆ www.cabe.org.uk

It should also be noted that Defra will be publishing a design guide for new waste facilities in 2008. Reference to this document may assist in the preparation of a design solution for proposed waste management facilities in North Yorkshire.