

## **Appendix A: Sustainable Development and Overarching Strategic Policy**

1. In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied.

2. The NPPF confirms that it is the purpose of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It considers that there are three dimensions to sustainable development, namely economic, social and environmental which are inextricably linked and mutually dependant. The NPPF makes it clear that local plans are the key to delivering sustainable development and thereby building and supporting vibrant and healthy communities, contributing to a strong, responsive and competitive economy and contributing to protecting the natural, built and historic environment.

3. Local Planning Authorities are advised, when plan making, to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and to meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.

4. The NPPF is based upon a presumption of sustainable development, and the Local Plan is also underpinned by this presumption. This is set out in Policy MWSP1. The NPPF also indicates that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved without delay whilst proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MWSP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**

**When considering development proposals the MPA/WPA will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The MPA/WPA will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Plan area.**

**Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Plan and subsequent Local Development Documents will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.**

**Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Local Planning Authority will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise taking into account:**

- a. Any adverse impacts of granting permission which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when**

- assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or**
- b. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that the development should be restricted**

## **Climate Change**

5. Climate change is a matter of great concern at an international and European level and tackling climate change is a Government priority. Measures to tackle climate change nationally have already been introduced through the Climate Change Act (2008), with a legally binding target to cut UK emissions by 34% by 2020, and at least 80% by 2050.

6. Climate change is considered to have both strategic as well as local implications and needs to be taken into account at all stages of the planning process. Crucial to achieving sustainable development is full consideration of the implications of development proposals in respect to climate change. This is set out in Strategic Policy MWSP2.

### **Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MWSP2: Climate Change**

**Waste management, mineral extraction and all related development, including restoration proposals, will take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development through measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to future climate changes. The proposed measures and the means of monitoring shall be identified.**

7. All waste management development, whether built or landfill, as well as minerals development whether quarries or processing plants, have the scope to contribute to climate change, as well as to contributing to mitigation of climate change. There are a range of measures available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce the carbon footprint, create carbon sinks, and to adapt to future climate change.

8. Applications should set out how the proposed development will be resilient to climate change and may, therefore, include:

- Incorporation of sustainable drainage schemes to minimise flood impacts on site, or downstream;
- Measures to enhance water efficiency;
- Measures to adapt to the potential impacts of excess heat and drought;
- Sustainable transport measures including the use of travel plans, the use of low emission vehicles, and vehicles with greater fuel efficiency for use on site, or for long distance transportation;
- The use of operational plant selected to ensure maximum efficiency and well maintained;
- Contributing to biodiversity by creating habitats which act as wildlife corridors and act as carbon sinks (primarily quarries and landfill sites);

- Specialist planting – such as drought resistant plant species (primarily at quarries and landfill sites);
- Emission measures;
- Green and brown roofs

9. The toolkit for developing measures to mitigate and manage climate change impacts will be developed over time. The list of matters sets out those that are currently in the public arena, but the list is not exclusive, as further ways of mitigating and managing climate change are likely to be developed over the period of the Plan.

10. Applications should demonstrate how the design, location, and transportation related to the development will positively contribute towards the mitigation of climate change. The climate change impacts of buildings located on quarries should be considered, and incorporated in the development, unless they are for short term or temporary use.

11. The extent to which it may reasonably be expected that such measures will be incorporated, will depend on the scale and nature of the development, and the opportunities available for incorporating measures to reduce the effects of climate change. Additionally, where a development is proposed for the longer term, resilience should be built in, and there should be flexibility built into the design to enable the facility to adapt, should circumstances change.

12. Where on-site options have been considered, and are not viable, off set measures or allowable solutions may be put in place. Biodiversity off- setting is one such example. Quarries and landfill sites may provide opportunities for accommodating off-setting for other development proposals.

13. Transport related emissions are likely to be one of the biggest contributors to climate change as far as waste and mineral developments are concerned. Proposals for such developments will need to consider how they can reduce or limit the emissions they generate, paying particular regard to transport related emissions. As climate change is expected to happen to a certain extent regardless of whether or not reductions in carbon dioxide emissions are achieved, all new waste management facilities will need to be resilient to climate change impact risks that arise over the life of the waste facility.

### **Climate Change measures – waste management development**

14. Waste recycling and recovery operations contribute to addressing climate change by diverting waste from landfill. When preparing planning applications all waste recycling, recovery and disposal operations should be designed so as to include mitigation and adaptation measures to address the possible effects of climate change.

15. All waste management developments, whether built development or landfill, have the scope to contribute to mitigating climate change. There are a

range of measures available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce carbon footprint, and to adapt to future climate change.

16. Applications should set out how any proposal for built waste management development will make use of renewable energy, including opportunities for the generation of energy from waste for the use within the development, or beyond the site itself, and the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy, based on the principles in the energy hierarchy.

### **Climate change measures – mineral extraction sites and related development**

17. Planning applications for new mineral extraction sites should ensure that sites are designed so that their operation and restoration incorporates mitigation and adaptation measures, to take account of the effects of climate change over the period of the operations, and in the longer term following the restoration of the land.

### **Applications for Waste Management Development and Minerals Extraction and related development**

18. It is expected that there will be applications for a range of waste management facilities, as well as mineral extraction and related development, over the Plan period, primarily in response to the continuing demand for minerals to support growth, and to address the rising targets for recovery of waste. This Local Plan is intended to assist developers seeking to bring forward new development proposals, and to guide them to appropriate locations.

19. In determining individual planning applications the starting point for the Councils as Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities will be Strategic Policy MWSP3. This states that applications will be determined in accordance with the relevant Strategic Policies in this Local Plan. The Councils will also take into account whether the development is proposed to take place on a Strategic site. Finally the Councils will consider the details of the application against the General and Environmental Policies which were Saved by Direction of the Secretary of State, from the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan adopted in 2005, or such other policies which may replace them. A list of the Saved policies is set out in Chapter 7. When reviewing the Saved policies the environmental criteria set out in paragraph 143 (bullet 6) of the National Planning Policy Framework will be addressed.

### **Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MWSP3: The Determination of Planning Applications**

**All applications for waste management development or mineral extraction and related development will be determined with regard to:**

- **The Strategic Policies in this LDD which are appropriate to the application**

- **The Strategic Sites identified in this LDD which are appropriate to the type of development proposed**
- **The Saved and Environmental Policies in the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan (or such other Policies as may replace them)**

20. When preparing an application developers will be expected to take into account all relevant issues, including highway and access issues, landscape, biodiversity, flooding, potential impact on the water environment, contamination and pollution, effects on rights of way, archaeology, heritage assets, local and national designations and strategies, and relevant strategies, policies, and programmes that may be relevant to the operation, reclamation, and after use of the site, and to minimise potential impacts. This may require the preparation of an Environmental Statement, or individual studies to be undertaken. Matters of particular relevance to individual sites are set out in the accompanying notes for each site, within the Policies Map.

21. It should be noted that Government guidance no longer precludes the development of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land ( ALC grades 1, 2 and 3a) but does require that it should be taken into account, along with other sustainability considerations (such as biodiversity, the quality and character of the landscape, its amenity value and heritage interest; accessibility to infrastructure; workforce and markets; maintaining viable communities; and the protection of natural resources including soil quality) when determining planning applications. Where BMVA land is to be worked, then soil handling techniques should be employed which ensure that soils are carefully handled so as to avoid compaction, and which can maintain the quality of the soil resource so that the quality of the land can be restored following reclamation.