Policy Title:
LP33 - Waste

Existing Policies Which adopted Core Strategy or Policies Sites and Places (PSP) policy would eventually be replaced	**N/A - New Policy**
Non-Strategic / Strategic	**Non-Strategic**

Purpose

Modern waste management infrastructure is an important aspect of sustainability, and is fundamental to achieving the prudent and efficient use of natural resources, minimising waste arisings and moving to a low-carbon, low-environmental impact economy whilst generating local employment opportunities.

Since the adoption of the Joint Waste Core Strategy between the West of England authorities in 2011, there has been significant policy and legislative change to the context of planning for waste arisings. In addition, there are changes to the way in which waste is handled, with facilities now becoming more typical of operations on business and industrial sites. At a local level, the 'Resource and Waste Strategy 2020 and beyond' was agreed at Cabinet in March 2020 and sets out an ambitious vision for Waste services to drive waste up the Waste Hierarchy, including: reducing consumption particularly of single-use items; increasing recycling to 70% by 2030, from a current rate of 59.9%; and reducing waste going to landfill to zero by 2030.

These changes and ambitious targets will likely result in additional waste management facilities, particularly for recycling. However, the exact location, number and scale of facilities remains unknown and is continuing to be collaboratively determined between partners across the West of England. Alongside policies to specifically to reduce waste generation within major development sites, the purpose of this policy is therefore to provide an up-to-date, supportive policy context for proposals for recycling and re-use.

Policy wording

Support for reducing waste and maximising re-use and recycling

1. **In accordance with waste hierarchy, development proposals should come forward that involve the management of waste through prevention, preparing for re-use and recycling.**
2. **Only in limited circumstances will other recovery facilities be considered, where proposals can clearly demonstrate that facilities contribute to achieving net zero carbon emissions targets such as but not limited to: providing a local waste solution, heat offtake, carbon capture and or power generation benefits, and other opportunities for recycling have been explored.**
3. **Proposals for additional landfill facilities is the last resort for waste management and will not generally be permitted, unless it is clearly demonstrated that the demand is local, it is not bringing waste from elsewhere, particularly by road/ fossil fuel rail and it takes account the environmental impact of moving waste.**

Facilities for the management of waste

4. **Reflecting the Waste Hierarchy, proposals for new or enhanced waste management facilities for non-hazardous waste, including recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, storage and waste transfer facilities will be acceptable provided proposals demonstrate that:**
    a. **As much material as possible would be reused or recycled within a 'Meeting our Waste Targets' report, before residual waste is passed on for other thermal treatment; and**
    b. **Are appropriately located in relation to the primary highway network and origins of waste generation; and**
    c. **Do not adversely affect the local health or living conditions of residents (including noise levels, odours, air quality, dust, litter, light pollution and vibration); and**
    d. **Do no result in unacceptable environmental impacts; and**
    e. **Prioritise previously developed land, including sites within employment areas, existing distribution uses or redundant agricultural buildings; and**
    f. **Allow flexibility for innovation; and**
    g. **Propose appropriate mitigation so as to avoid or minimise adverse impacts; and**
    h. **Only where waste to be treated cannot practically and reasonably be reused, recycled or processed to recover materials, will proposals for thermal treatment of waste facilities be accepted. Proposals must set out how all opportunities to maximise energy and heat generation have been explored, and how net zero carbon targets have been achieved.**

Proposals for disposal

5. **Proposals for additional landfill facilities will not generally be permitted, unless it is clearly demonstrated that this is the last resort for waste management.**
6. **Proposals will only be permitted as a last resort where it can also be demonstrated that:**
    a. **The waste to be disposed of is residual waste and cannot be reused, recycled or processed;**
    b. **These involve the minimum quantity of waste necessary to enable either restoration of current or former mineral workings sites, or a demonstrable improvement in the quality of the land, or the establishment of an appropriate after-use or improvement of land that has been damaged or disturbed as a result of previous or existing uses; and**
    c. **These incorporate finished levels that are compatible with the surrounding area and any likely settlement and ensure satisfactory restoration of the land for an agreed after use. This includes proposals for aftercare and long term management of the restored site and makes provision, wherever practical and economical, for landfill gas to be recovered for use as an energy source and for appropriate habitat creation for biodiversity benefit; and**
    d. **They are not within water source protection zones.**

Safeguarding Existing Recycling or Re-use Waste Management Facilities and Agent of Change

7. **Existing waste management sites are safeguarded for waste use. Expansion or intensification of operations for recycling or re-use will be supported, subject to criteria within 4 a - g.**
8. **Development proposals which would prevent or prejudice the use of existing recycling or re-use waste sites for waste purposes will be resisted under the 'agent of change' principle unless design standards or other suitable mitigation measures are adopted to ensure that the amenity of any new residents would not be significantly adversely impacted by the continuation of waste use at that location or suitable compensatory provision has been made for the waste use elsewhere within the Plan area.**

Supporting text

Planning sustainably to meet our waste needs

1. National policy requires waste planning authorities to plan for the sustainable management of waste including: municipal / household, commercial / industrial, construction / demolition, low level radioactive, agricultural, hazardous, and waste water (Paragraph: 013). As such, driving waste up the 'Waste Hierarchy', recognising a need for a mix of type and scale of facilities, and ensuring that policy supports continually innovating technologies will be essential to the future of waste management within the district.

The 'Waste Hierarchy'

2. National planning policy requires that Waste Planning Authorities identify opportunities to meet the identified needs for their area to enable the management of waste streams. Planning for waste in South Gloucestershire is therefore guided by the 'Waste Hierarchy', with the greatest weight in decision-making applied to proposals which support prevention of waste (through using 'won' on-site materials), then 'preparing for re-use' (which might include cleaning or repairing materials to enable re-use) followed by 'other' recovery. Reflecting the waste hierarchy, including; prioritising the renovation and retrofit of existing structures, minimising the quantity of materials and ensuring development designs in waste reduction (LP25 - Embodied Carbon Policy) encouraging re-use of materials in construction (LPS10 - Climate Change, Sustainable Design and Construction and LP23 - Climate Change Adaption and Resilience policies). Whereas the focus of this policy is specifically on waste facilities where needed.

Recycling and Re-use of Waste

3. In transposing the Waste Framework Directive, the Government have stipulated a target requirement for a 65% recycling rate for municipal solid waste by 2035. In addition, the Environment Act 2021 places new responsibilities on Waste Planning Authorities to ensure that all household waste is collected individually and separately.
4. To date, the Council have made significant progress towards minimising waste generation and maximising recycling and are on track to meet these targets and already provide individual collection of waste, however since the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019 there are aims to go further. The Council has set out ambitions plans within the Corporate Plan (2024) and 'Resources and Waste Strategy: 2020 and Beyond' (2020), to exceed to recycling rates of 65 percent by 2025, to 68 percent by 2027 and 70 percent by 2030.
5. There is a known need for additional recycling contracts within South Gloucestershire if these ambitious targets are to be met, which may result in additional recycling facilities. In addition, there is likely to be demand for more non-hazardous waste management facilities for recycling and re-use to reflect housing growth proposed in the Local Plan and the age of existing facilities. In addition, the requirements within the Environment Act for deposit return schemes and electronic waste tagging may require upgrades to existing facilities. As such, the exact location, number and scale of facilities remains unknown. Proposals for recycling and re-use facilities will therefore be supported subject to the general development management criteria.

6. The policy therefore supports waste management facilities which prioritise recycling and re-use, and facilities which support this, including:
    a. Local household waste recycling centres.
    b. Transfer stations, which are facilities where waste is bulked up and temporarily stored before being transported for treatment elsewhere.
    c. Multi Re-use Facilities (MRFs), which include specialised plant that receives, separates and prepares recyclable materials for marketing to end-user manufacturers.
    d. Composting, such as in-vessel composting of garden waste to produce compost, in conditions whereby the oxygen level, moisture and temperature are carefully monitored and controlled to ensure the material is fully sanitised.

Recovery of Waste

7. Facilities for the recovery of waste typically include those which:
    a. Treat waste unsuitable for recycling, or which remains after recycling has occurred, by methods such as thermal treatment (such as incineration or pyrolysis) and anaerobic digestion (AD) in the case of food waste.
    b. Result in incineration and pyrolysis processes have the potential for energy recovery (use of heat and syngas produced), while AD can similarly produce usable biogas. Incineration and pyrolysis may also produce by-products such as bottom ash and char which can be used for various purposes; for instance, bottom ash can be used for producing recycled aggregate.
    c. Recover Construction, Demolition and Excavation (CDE) waste which can be processed to produce recycled aggregate. Existing minerals sites such as quarries can be suitable locations for doing this, particularly as they may already be well screened and have buffers to reduce noise. However, for reasons of practicability, and to minimise potential impacts, the proposals should only be for a temporary period commensurate with the operational life of the mineral site.

Disposal

8. Disposal, such as by landfill or land raising, represent the lowest points of the hierarchy and should be considered as the ‘last resort’. The Council continue to make significant progress against targets set by Government of sending less than 10% of municipal waste to landfill by 2035, with amounts of waste sent to landfill consistently below this threshold since 2020/21. However, the Council are seeking to within the Resource and Waste Strategy: 2020 and Beyond (2020) this set out ambitious targets to achieve zero waste to landfill by 2030.
9. Disposal is the lowest tier in the waste hierarchy referred to in national guidance, and should only be resorted to where the waste to be disposed of is residual waste and cannot practicably and reasonably be reused, recycled or processed. To drive waste management up the waste hierarchy, it is therefore not expected that there will be ongoing demand for landfilling facilities, if other targets are to be achieved.
10. Any proposals for additional landfill facilities must therefore demonstrate that other stages higher up the Waste Hierarchy have been considered first in advance of landfill

or land raising.

11. In granting planning permission for landfilling or land raising developments, or engineering or other operations, conditions will be imposed limiting both the types and quantities of waste to be deposited in order to conserve capacity for waste that cannot be reused, recycled or processed.

General Development Management Principles for Waste Management Facilities

12. To drive waste management up the waste hierarchy, it is recognising that there is a need for a mix of types and scale of facilities, and that adequate provision must be made for waste disposal. Alongside legal requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments and Waste Framework Directive reporting, all proposals will be expected to prepare a 'Meeting Our Waste Targets' report which demonstrates how as much material as possible would be reused or recycled.

13. It is recognised that waste management facilities can be controversial and require sensitive siting and design to avoid issues such as noise, odour, and pollution, visual and landscape impact and disturbance to sensitive uses such as dwellings. As such all proposals must have regard to other policies within the plan, particularly transport, flood risk, pollution and noise.

14. Planning applications should include full information to enable proposals to be appropriately assessed. Where it is assessed that application proposals could lead to significant adverse effects but these are capable of adequate resolution, appropriate mitigation should be identified so as to avoid or minimise any adverse impact.

Safeguarding existing waste management sites

15. National guidance requires Waste Planning Authorities to consider the impact of non-waste related development on existing waste management sites.

16. In recent years, the 'Agent of Change' principle has been applied to waste-generating uses, alongside more traditional applications for noise. This principle places the responsibility of mitigating the impact of noise, dust, vibration and other nuisance-generating activities (from existing noise-generating businesses) on the proposed new development. Developers proposing non-waste development in close proximity to existing waste sites should be aware of the potential impacts on existing waste operations and plan this into their development so as not to prevent or prejudice the continued waste use in that location, otherwise such developments will not be permitted. Accordingly proposed non-waste developments should be designed to protect both the amenity of potential new residential developments and the existing waste operation within that area.

Ongoing joint working across the West of England

17. National policy requires that waste management is a strategic issue, and indeed, it is recognised that there are some waste types which are produced for which it would be uneconomic to have a facility within the District.

18. There is a long-history of joint working and cross-boundary cooperation on waste arisings in the West of England. Since the Joint Waste Core Strategy was adopted in 2011, which covered the authorities of South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and Bristol, joint working and monitoring against adopted policies continues to take place between the waste planning authorities. The West of England Partnership on Waste has continued to procure facilities as needed across the four districts.
19. Detailed guidance for developers on how waste management should be addressed will be set out within a Waste SPD which South Gloucestershire will work with neighbouring authorities to prepare.

Additions	
Key evidence	
Other relevant policies to cross-reference?	LPS10 Climate Change, Sustainable Design and Construction