

## OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS & WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

### Summary of Responses to Minerals & Waste Issues and Options Consultation Paper (June 2006) and County Council's Initial Thinking on Preferred Options

For Minerals and Waste Forum Meeting 12 September 2006

#### **Question 1a:**

#### **Are these the right aims and objectives for the Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Development Framework?**

##### Summary of Responses

Most respondents supported the objectives in the Consultation Paper, with objectives M1, M3, M4, M5, M6 and W2, W3, W4, W5, W6 specifically welcomed. More emphasis was felt to be needed on restoration projects and their ability to enhance local communities and environment; site proximity to market area; transport infrastructure; protection of the historic environment; and the mitigation of the effects on local communities. The Minerals and Waste Aims are felt not to place enough emphasis on sustainable development. Additional objectives concerning new waste technologies; site re-use; investment in alternative transport; geological conservation and hazardous waste were proposed by respondents.

#### **Question 2:**

#### **What period should the Core Strategy and Minerals & Waste Sites Proposals and Policies documents cover?**

##### Summary of Responses

Most respondents would prefer the documents to cover the period up to 2018, with the next preferred period being to 2026. The Core Strategy should cover at least 10 years from the date adoption in order to confirm with PPS10, although a shorter timescale may be beneficial due to the uncertainty in the South East Plan. Longer periods are believed to be advantageous in developing approaches to restoration projects and meeting demands for the supply of construction aggregates. This will help to cover the costs involved with the installation of sophisticated facilities associated with waste treatment and mineral extraction. With regards to the Site Proposals document, this should try to coincide with the period of the Core Strategy or the Regional Spatial Strategy; the Waste Sites document should be able to demonstrate how enough capacity for waste can be provided over the next 10 years.

County Council's Initial Thinking

Core Strategy: to 2026 for minerals and waste, in line with South East Plan.

Minerals and Waste Sites Proposals Documents: provision to 2019, to give at least 10 year's provision on adoption.

**Question 3a**

**What sort of areas should the MWDF identify to provide for the future mineral working need?**

Summary of Responses

Identifying specific site allocations is preferred, although a large number also felt that using a combination of broad areas of search with specific site allocations would be beneficial. In both scenarios, there is call for the protection of Green Belt areas and AONB's. In order to reduce the impact of new workings on road networks, locating them near to Growth Points would minimise travel times and distances from source to market. The consensus was that sites should be chosen that offer greatest benefits for restoration and that do not adversely affect the environment.

County Council's Initial Thinking

Core Strategy should indicate very generally where future mineral working areas will be located:

Sharp sand and gravel: further working in West Oxfordshire and new area(s) in south of county;

Soft sand: southwest of Oxford;

Limestone: Witney / Burford area and central Oxfordshire / Bicester area;

Ironstone: new areas probably not needed.

Core Strategy should also include broad locational criteria policy for mineral workings, based on Structure Plan Policies M1 and M2.

Specific sites to be identified in Minerals Sites Document, if necessary supported by more detailed locational criteria policies.

**3b**

**What type of new workings should be preferred for the sites to be identified in the MWDF?**

Summary of Responses

The majority would prefer new workings located as extensions to existing quarries, but realising that future working will inevitably come from a combination of these with new workings in order to meet all objectives. Extensions to existing quarries should be allowed only where the existing infrastructure is adequate and the impact on the environment has been

fully determined, but without taking away the flexibility of assessment on a site by site basis. It was felt that new hard rock quarries in the County should be of appropriate scale to serve local (as well as regional) requirements for locally distinctive stone.

#### County Council's Initial Thinking

Extensions to existing quarries are likely to be the most suitable option in the short term because this would enable remaining resources to be recovered within established working areas sites, where there is existing infrastructure. In the longer term new quarries are likely to be needed to maintain supply within existing production areas and to meet the need for aggregate supply in other parts of the county – to spread production more evenly in relation to new areas of demand. Work for the Minerals Sites Document will include a full assessment of existing quarries to identify which are suitable for extensions and also a full assessment of any potential new mineral working areas to identify which are most suitable.

### **3c**

#### **For how much of the period of the MWDF should sites and/or areas be identified?**

##### Summary of Responses

Identification to 2016 or 2018 with policies covering the remainder of the period was preferred by respondents, with a suggestion of a new sites document to be published after this time to tie in with the South East Plan. But a significant number favoured identification of sites for the whole plan period.

##### County Council's Initial Thinking

Core Strategy should cover period to 2026.

Minerals Sites Document should make provision for mineral supply through site allocations and criteria policies to 2019, to give at least 10 year's provision on adoption; it could also include broad areas of search for the period beyond 2019.

### **4**

#### **How should the 1.82mtpa sand and gravel supply requirement (apportionment) for Oxfordshire be subdivided between soft sand and sharp sand and gravel?**

##### Summary of Responses

The most suitable apportionment was given as 18% soft sand to 82% sharp sand and gravel. Flexibility within the apportionment figures is important in order to allow for variations in market demand and the availability of the resource. Where demand forecasts are absent, previous trends in supply and demand can be used.

County Council's Initial Thinking

Subject to further examination of data on supply and demand, there should be a move towards a split of 18% soft sand to 82% sharp sand and gravel for the period to 2019.

**5**

**What strategy for the location of new sand and gravel workings should be adopted in the MWDF?**

Summary of Responses

The continued concentration of new workings in the main existing working areas in West Oxfordshire was felt to be most appropriate and may offer opportunities for the extension of existing quarries. Combined with identification of new strategic working areas in the South of the County could allow usage closer to areas of production, reducing the impact on local communities and traffic. But some think continued working in West Oxfordshire is inappropriate due to environmental constraints in the Lower Windrush and Cassington areas. There are also concerns about dispersal to new areas in South Oxfordshire, particularly over environmental impact, Green Belt and AONB. The identification of new sites should consider the impact on location and transport, local residents, ecology, and potential for environmental enhancement.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred strategy for locating new sand and gravel workings is to identify extensions to existing quarries in the West Oxfordshire area in the short term and identify new area(s) for workings in the south of the county and further areas for working in West Oxfordshire to meet longer term requirements. The preferred options document should set out where these broad area options are likely to be – as in the Draft Structure plan Review, which will be tested in preparing the Minerals Sites Document. Further work will need to be done on when new working areas will be needed and the potential contribution that each area should make to the overall supply strategy. Evidence will be required to justify why continued working in West Oxfordshire and new area(s) in the south of the county are preferable to other areas or a more dispersed pattern of working. A full assessment of all potential options will be carried out in preparing the Minerals Sites Document to identify which are the most suitable.

**6**

**What strategy for the location of new limestone and/or ironstone workings should be adopted in the MWDF?**

Summary of Responses

All location strategy options were mentioned, although the identification of new workings was favoured. Introducing a more dispersed pattern of smaller workings will alleviate the impact of extraction from concentrations of large workings. But extensions to existing quarries should be considered as a means of reducing the impact of road haulage. No further ironstone workings are needed since there are sufficient reserves at current locations. It was also suggested that working be continued in existing areas with demand being monitored and reviewed towards the end of the MWDF period.

County Council's Initial Thinking

Limestone supply should continue to be mainly from the Witney / Burford and central Oxfordshire / Bicester areas. Existing permitted reserves should provide for most of the period to 2019, but new working areas may be needed towards the end of this period. The balance of supply from these areas should be signalled in the Core Strategy and worked up in more detail in the Minerals Sites Document, which should identify new locations for working if required. The Core Strategy should set a policy basis for additional limestone workings, both extensions and new sites, to meet local and regional needs in line with regional policy.

Ironstone working is limited to the north of the county in areas which are both remote and distant from the main areas of development in the county, and access to the primary road network is difficult; and there are already substantial permitted reserves of ironstone. There does not seem to be a strategic case for making provision for further supply of ironstone.

**7a**

**How should the MWDF make provision for additional aggregate recycling facilities?**

Summary of Responses

Identifying sites for permanent facilities is felt to be the most suitable provision, although setting locational criteria for the consideration of planning applications is also important. Locational criteria should apply based on need and demand, whilst protecting Green Belt and AONB. This may also allow the MWDF to adapt to new technological changes over time and allow a more flexible approach. Temporary sites can be appropriate, but are not favoured due to impact on road networks and local residents.

County Council's Initial Thinking

Preferred option should be to identify some permanent facilities whilst recognising there will inevitably be some applications for temporary facilities that will need to be considered on merits using locational criteria. The preferred option should be to identify permanent facilities where possible and appropriate whilst recognising there will also continue to be applications for temporary facilities that will need to be considered on their merits against locational criteria. The Core Strategy should include policies for both permanent and temporary facilities, with specific sites being identified in the Minerals Sites Document where there are known opportunities that are realistic and appropriate.

**7b**

**How much provision should the MWDF make for aggregate recycling?**

Summary of Responses

Provision for aggregate recycling should be higher than is required to meet national targets providing there is supply. Construction and demolition provides the greatest recycling potential, and recycling aggregates conserves mineral resources. Suitable sites that are proposed should meet (and possibly exceed) regional targets enabling a more sustainable approach. The market place, price differential and waste management legislation are felt to drive aggregate recycling more than targets or objective.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option should be to look to make provision for more than is required through identification of permanent sites so far as is possible and with the expectation that additional sites will be brought forward for consideration on merits against locational criteria policy. The regional targets should be used as a guide to the level of provision that is required as a minimum.

**8a**

**What sort of sites should the MWDF identify to provide for new aggregate recycling facilities?**

Summary of Responses

Existing sites are favoured, with the possibility of identifying sites on industrial or employment land together with locational criteria taking into account protection of environmental designations. However, industrial/employment sites can be too costly to make aggregate recycling viable and are scarce. There are also conflict issues with existing industrial or employment land users. Aggregate recycling will occur in association with demolition and re-development of brownfield

sites. Some considered locating on brownfield sites to be un-sustainable. The costs of haulage and disposal are important in determining where wastes are taken to whilst considering impact on the road network.

County Council's Initial Thinking

This is largely an issue for the Minerals Sites Document, but the Core Strategy should indicate which types of site are preferred through broad criteria policy. In recognition of the difficulty of finding sites for these facilities, a sequential policy approach could be adopted, in which the order of preference is likely to be: existing minerals / waste sites; industrial / employment land; brownfield land in the countryside; greenfield sites.

**8b**

**At what type of location in relation to the Green Belt around Oxford should the MWDF make provision for new aggregates recycling facilities?**

Summary of Responses

More respondents prefer location of aggregate recycling facilities in urban areas or countryside areas outside of the Green Belt. Sites within the Green Belt should be used only at suitable locations, such as brownfield sites that might have good access by rail. Redundant industrial sites, army depots, old airfields etc may be an alternative to Green Belt sites. Assessment of the impact on road networks should be a factor, together with the identification of sites with rail access.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option should be for locations on non-green belt land close to urban areas, but there needs to a recognition that green belt sites may have to be used if sufficient facilities are to be provided with good access close to sources of waste. Policy on locating facilities in the green belt should be in line with the new minerals and waste policies in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RPG9). Locations in the countryside beyond the green belt may be appropriate where accessibility is good.

**9i**

**Should the Core Strategy promote an increase in the supply of aggregates from outside the County?**

Summary of Responses

This is supported, and identifying a source close to Oxfordshire and using rail should be considered. Increase in the supply should occur if the exporting quarries have enough capacity to supply depots in Oxfordshire and if this will meet local demand. But this may be contrary to government policy.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The aggregates supply strategy for Oxfordshire should accord with current government and regional policy, and the aim should be to meet the local land-won aggregates apportionment for the county. But it is likely there will be a long-term need for increased supply from outside the county (and the region) as local supply within the South East declines further. The Core Strategy should therefore include a policy on new rail aggregate depots and if possible sites should be identified in the Minerals Sites Document.

**9ii**

**Should the Minerals Sites Proposals and Policies document identify new sites for rail aggregate depots?**

Summary of Responses

A large majority support this. Rail and water transport should take priority over road when considering longer distances, whilst taking into account the shortage of rail network capacity.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The Core Strategy should include a policy on new rail aggregate depots and if possible sites should be identified in the Minerals Sites Document.

**10i**

**What factors or criteria should be used to identify and assess site/area options?**

Summary of Responses

The prioritisation of sites already identified and/or developed is favoured, whilst avoiding environmental designations and areas of archaeological interest where possible. Identifying existing patterns of supply and distribution and the proximity of use of the product together with the impact on the road networks should be used in assessment. The restoration of sites is an important factor, including emphasis on restoration to some form other than water. Government, Structure Plan and district plan policies should be taken into account. The approach in the existing Minerals and Waste Plan could be used, with the inclusion of issues relating to biodiversity impact; hydrological impact; protection of rights of way networks; landscape features. Locations that can deliver benefits in line with key strategies should be encouraged.



**10ii**

**Should different factors or criteria be weighted differently? If so, how?**

Summary of Responses

Factors/criteria may differ substantially between sites and impacts should be identified in the environmental assessment process. Weighting is considered to be subjective and may change over the period of the plan, and should take into account the hierarchy of designated sites. Factors such as the community and environment were recognised as important together with noise and pollution levels, ability to support increased traffic and restoration strategy. AONB and Green Belt should have greater protection than other land.

**10iii**

**What weight should be given to environmental designations compared with impact on people?**

Summary of Responses

Environmental designations should have high weighting, but developments affecting the environment also have an impact on the people living there. Irreplaceable assets should be protected unless legislation allows this to be overridden.

**10iv**

**What weight should be given to access and proximity to market?**

Summary of Responses

A high weighting should be given to these factors, as they can reduce the effect of the transportation of minerals. The “proximity principle” should apply.

**10v**

**What weight should be given to protection of high grade agricultural land?**

Summary of Responses

Giving agricultural land high weighting is favoured, although there is recognition that this land can be used to restore lost habitats and preserve distinctive species. The promotion of local food production is a reason to protect high grade land.

**10vi**

**Should restoration potential and after-use opportunities be taken into account in site/area selection and assessment?**

Summary of Responses

This is strongly supported. Sites should be chosen on their long term environmental and social benefits, including opportunities to increase public access to the countryside. If restoration cannot be guaranteed, the site should be rejected.

**11i**

**What should the priorities for restoration be: agriculture; habitat creation; recreation; other (please specify)**

Summary of Responses

Restoration to agriculture was the most preferred method, but others advocate habitat creation or recreation. Involving the local community in restoration projects is important. Some consider the starting presumption should be for restoration to the state before working. Others suggest a balance of afteruses should be sought and that restoration should be decided on a case by case basis, with certain factors deciding the priorities – location and setting of site; geology; agricultural land grade before working; views of local community and the landowner. Using sites for geological and other scientific, conservation and educational purposes is also suggested.

**11ii**

**Should there be a preference for restoration back to land; creation of lakes; or for partial infilling?**

Summary of Responses

Restoration back to land is strongly favoured. Restoration back to lakes provides little diversity and is out of keeping with landscapes. But reed bed creation is a priority of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Restoration is dependant on the geology / hydrogeology and the availability of restoration materials. Some feel setting priorities can become prescriptive, so sites should be considered individually to increase diversity.

**11iii**

**Should infilling and restoration of mineral workings be a priority use for inert waste materials?**

Summary of Responses

This is supported, but the type of waste should be taken into account (e.g. inert waste that cannot be recycled) and traffic.

**11iv**

**How should environmental enhancement be promoted and secured?**

Summary of Responses

Environmental enhancement should be promoted as part of the wider land management strategy. Consultation with local communities and Parish councils can achieve well-designed after-use schemes and plans for biodiversity enhancement, the funds for which could come from stakeholder restoration strategies. Conditioning of consents together with a fund for failed projects could secure enhancement objectives. Inert waste sites could be used for habitat restoration.

**12i**

**How should the MWDF ensure developments for mineral working and supply will be environmentally acceptable?**

Summary of Responses

Respondents favour planning policies that promote sustainable development, backed up by site monitoring. Policies should protect AONBs and local communities from the effects of increased traffic, noise and pollution. Development proposals should be assessed for their impacts in relation to policies.

**12ii**

**Should standard buffer zone distances for mineral workings be specified in the MWDF, to give certainty, or should these distances be set at the planning application stage on a case by case basis, related to the particular circumstances of the proposed development?**

Summary of Responses

A majority of respondents favour specifying buffer zones at the planning application stage, on a case by case basis, rather than in the MWDF. If standard distances are set out in the MWDF they should be able to be varied on a case by case basis. Others consider that strong policies should be set and consistently applied.

**12iii**

**How can the MWDF reduce the environmental impact of mineral transport?**

Summary of Responses

Implementation of transport management measures such as using routing agreements for heavy vehicles is suggested. Concerns are raised about weight limits on roads; a reduction in mineral traffic is preferred. The application of the “proximity principle” should reduce impact of traffic. Alternative transport methods such as water and rail are advocated.

**13**

**How should the MWDF safeguard mineral resources, and which minerals should be safeguarded?**

Summary of Responses

There are mixed views, but identification and safeguarding of all mineral deposits is favoured. The view is expressed that mineral deposits should be safeguarded because they will be needed beyond the duration of the MWDF. Minerals identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy should be prioritised for safeguarding, and those that are greatest in demand. Fullers Earth is of strategic importance and should be safeguarded.

**14a**

**What sort of locations should the MWDF identify to provide for the waste management facilities needed?**

Summary of Responses

Identification of specific sites for waste management facilities is preferred by most respondents, with some favouring a combination of specific sites and broad locations; but a large number prefer locational criteria for planning applications to be considered against. It is suggested there should be a range in size and location from localised smaller facilities up to large strategic sites near urban areas and the primary road network, to provide flexibility.

County Council’s Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to identify specific sites in the Waste Sites Document; but also to indicate broad areas where facilities will be needed to serve local communities or where specific sites are not identifiable. This will be supported with locational criteria policies.

**14b****How should the MWDF relate locations identified for waste management facilities to types of facility?**Summary of Responses

A majority of respondents prefer identification of sites that can support a wide range of facilities; this would accord with PPS10, allow for the emergence of new waste technologies and provide flexibility for the type of waste facilities to be provided. But a significant number prefer sites to be restricted to specified types of facilities. Some respondents wish to see particular types of facility ruled out, such as in-vessel composting and incinerators.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to identify locations that are generally suitable for a range of facilities, to provide flexibility and allow for evolving waste management technology; but where there are sound planning reasons for doing so, sites will be restricted to specified types of facility.

**14c****What types of sites for waste treatment facilities should the MWDF identify?**Summary of Responses

Opinion is split between the 3 options. Some prefer a mix of sites for both large scale and small scale facilities, as there is demand for local waste centres but waste can be sent elsewhere for treatment, and this would improve recycling and recovery levels and reduce traffic impact. Some respondents felt the size of a facility should be related to its location and types of waste it will be handling and that, although larger facilities are more commercially viable, a hierarchy of sites is needed to handle different types of waste.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to provide for a mix of sites for both large and small scale facilities. For large-scale facilities, specific sites should be identified in the Waste Sites Document, but this is likely to be more difficult for smaller-scale facilities and there will have to be a greater reliance on locational criteria polices for these types of sites.

**15a****What strategy for locating waste treatment facilities should form the basis for identifying sites in the MWDF?**Summary of Responses

A large majority of respondents prefer facilities to be located within or close to the main urban areas; but there is recognition that some sites may need to be located in rural areas due to the potential effects of treatment of certain types of waste, although these should still be close to urban areas. There is concern about locating facilities in Green Belt or AONB. Some respondents consider a mix of locations appropriate.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to locate waste treatment facilities within or close to the main urban areas, subject to availability of suitable land. In recognition of the difficulty of finding sites for waste facilities, a sequential policy approach for site locations is likely to be needed.

**15b****What sort of sites should the MWDF identify to provide for waste treatment facilities?**Summary of Responses

Use of existing waste management sites is strongly preferred, although significant numbers of respondents favour brownfield sites or industrial / employment land. Very few respondents favour greenfield locations. Use of other sites such as redundant farm and horticultural sites and old airfields is also suggested.

County Council's Initial Thinking

This is largely an issue for the Minerals Sites Document, but the Core Strategy should indicate which types of site are preferred through broad criteria policy. In recognition of the difficulty of finding sites for these facilities, a sequential policy approach could be adopted, in which the order of preference is likely to be: existing waste sites; industrial / employment land; brownfield land in the countryside; greenfield sites.

**15c**

**At what type of location in relation to the Green Belt around Oxford should the MWDF make provision for waste treatment facilities?**

Summary of Responses

A small majority of respondents prefer locating facilities either in urban areas or countryside outside of the Green Belt; but there is also significant support for suitable sites within the Green Belt, provided selection criteria are met. Concerns are raised that adequate transport infrastructure should be in place.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option should be for locations on non-green belt land close to urban areas, but there needs to be a recognition that green belt sites may have to be used if sufficient facilities are to be provided with good access close to sources of waste. Policy on locating facilities in the green belt should be in line with the new waste policies in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RPG9). Locations in the countryside beyond the green belt may be appropriate where accessibility is good.

**16i**

**What can the plan do to help move waste management up the hierarchy?**

Summary of Responses

Raising commercial and public awareness through education and advertising is thought to be important. This should coincide with the introduction of policies for waste audits and county targets. Locally based small-scale recycling facilities could be installed at new large-scale developments to maximise provision for recycling and recovery in suitable locations. Applications for new developments should be monitored to ensure environmental, social and economic factors are integrated.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to ensure there is no restriction to the movement of waste management up the waste hierarchy and that there is adequate provision of a range of waste management facilities, including local communities having access to suitable facilities. This includes positive policies to encourage the provision of new facilities higher up the hierarchy.

**16ii**

**Should disposal (landfill) provision be restricted to encourage waste management methods higher up the hierarchy?**

Summary of Responses

A large majority of respondents support restricting landfill provision to encourage methods further up the waste hierarchy. But there is recognition that some landfill will always be needed and there should be flexibility of provision.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to limit landfill provision in line with national and regional policy and landfill targets while also recognising there will be a continued need for some landfill.

**16iii**

**Should the plan over-provide for recycling and recovery facilities?**

Summary of Responses

A large majority support over-provision; but this should be monitored in terms of facility development and cost. The view is expressed that over-provision may result in facilities that are not economically practical, and allocated sites not being developed.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to make provision for at least the minimum capacity required to meet national and regional policy targets for recycling and recovery; and to provide a positive policy framework to enable advantage to be taken of any appropriate opportunities that may arise to increase capacity.

**16iv**

**Should the plan aim to meet (or exceed) national / regional targets for recycling and diversion from landfill; or should it set local targets?**

Summary of Responses

A majority of respondents support meeting or exceeding these targets; but some think the MWDF should set higher local targets. There is some concern about the increasing cost of meeting targets.



County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to plan to at least meet the national/regional targets for recycling and diversion from landfill through positive policies and identification of sites, but will need to be kept under review. The regional targets should be used as a guide to the level of provision that is required as a minimum.

**17i**

**Should the MWDF provide only for Oxfordshire's waste?**

Summary of Responses

A small majority of respondents think the MWDF should not provide for just Oxfordshire's waste, in accordance with the RSS; but an almost equal number believe it should provide only for Oxfordshire's waste. Concerns are raised about implications for the Green Belt.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to provide for net self sufficiency plus Oxfordshire's share of waste from London as set in regional policy.

**17ii**

**Should the MWDF provide for net self-sufficiency, to allow local cross County boundary movements?**

Summary of Responses

There is strong support for net self-sufficiency. Respondents note that Oxfordshire exports waste as well as importing it, and that cross-boundary movements are inevitable. Cross-boundary movements are preferred if this is more efficient in terms of transport impacts.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to provide for net self sufficiency plus Oxfordshire's share of waste from London as set in regional policy.

**17iii**

**Should the MWDF make additional provision for waste from elsewhere (in the region and/or beyond the region), particularly from London? If so, should this just be for landfill or should it be for treatment facilities as well?**

Summary of Responses

A majority of respondents consider that additional provision should not be made for waste from elsewhere. Concerns are raised about the effects on Green Belt and the environment. The view is expressed that waste should be accepted only if it would be useful as a fuel resource or if the County would benefit financially.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to provide for net self sufficiency plus Oxfordshire's share of waste from London as set in regional policy. Imported waste should normally be limited to residues from treatment processes that require disposal by landfill, but import of waste for treatment at facilities in Oxfordshire could be appropriate where this would be a sustainable option or there would be overall benefits.

**17iv**

**How much provision should the MWDF make for landfill, recycling, composting and other waste treatment facilities? (please specify)**

Summary of Responses

Landfill should be secondary to recycling, composting and other waste treatment facilities. It is suggested landfill should be around 30% of the provision, with 70% for other methods. Other views are that there should be flexibility and provision should be responsive to locally gathered data, but that this should accord with the Regional Spatial Strategy. There is also a view that using planning policy to drive waste management up the waste hierarchy by restricting landfill will increase transport distances and prices rather than encourage waste treatment.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to ensure there is enough capacity to meet the targets in regional policy for recycling, composting, other treatment and landfill; but only the minimum provision required for landfill should be made.

**17v**

**Should the waste management capacity requirements for Oxfordshire in the Regional Spatial Strategy be used, or should local capacity requirements be established?**

Summary of Responses

A majority consider that requirements in the Regional Spatial Strategy should be used but they should be monitored and performance checked. A significant number favour establishing local capacity requirements.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to plan for the capacity requirements in regional policy, unless local information and circumstances indicate otherwise. This should be monitored and kept under review as new information become available.

**18i**

**What factors or criteria should be used to identify and assess site options?**

Summary of Responses

These should be broadly similar to those used for the assessment of mineral working sites. Transportation and avoiding residential areas are factors of particular concern to many respondents. Sites close to the waste source will reduce the effects of the transportation. There are concerns about locating sites in the countryside, especially in Green Belt or AONB. Criteria should take into account impact on the environment and local community. There is some support for the criteria in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

**18ii**

**Should different factors or criteria be weighted differently? If so, how?**

Summary of Responses

A majority of respondents favour different weightings. It is suggested that proximity to waste source, protection of water resources, nature conservation areas, AONB's and emissions should be given high weightings. The hierarchy of environmental designations should also be taken into account.

**18iii**

**What weight should be given to environmental designations compared with impact on people?**

Summary of Responses

Opinion is divided. Many respondents see no conflict between these factors and wish to see equal weighting given. Giving weight to environmental designations can also minimise the effect on local populations as well as protect important areas. Some think that weighting depends on local circumstances.

**18iv**

**What weight should be given to access and proximity to waste source?**

Summary of Responses

High priority should be given to these factors, provided this is reasonable taking into account other factors. There are transport concerns and therefore sites should be near urban areas, close to the waste source, avoiding the countryside and environmental designations.

**19i**

**How much provision should be made for further landfill of waste?**

Summary of Responses

Most respondents do not wish to see any increase in provision for landfill; instead continued encouragement of recycling should reduce the requirement for landfill. But population growth, housing provision and the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy should be taken into account.

County Council's Initial Thinking

The preferred option is to make provision for landfill in line with national and regional policy targets while also recognising the continued need for some landfill capacity.

<b>19ii</b> <b>Should landfill provision be restricted only to residues from waste treatment processes?</b>
<u>Summary of Responses</u> A majority of respondents consider that landfill provision should be restricted to residues.
<u>County Council's Initial Thinking</u> The preferred option is to make provision for landfill in line with national and regional policy targets; over time this will increasingly limit landfill to waste that has been subject to treatment.

<b>19iii</b> <b>Should landfill provision for inert waste be restricted only to restoration of mineral workings?</b>
<u>Summary of Responses</u> A majority of respondents think landfill of inert waste should be restricted in this way, but only residues from waste treatment should be landfilled. There is concern that waste management licence restrictions are inhibiting the use of inert waste in restoration and resulting in it being taken to unlicensed sites.
<u>County Council's Initial Thinking</u> The preferred option is to give priority to use of inert waste for restoration of mineral workings. No provision should be made for other types of inert waste landfill site and policy for new landfill should include a stiff test of need for use of inert waste other than for restoring mineral workings.

<b>19iv</b> <b>Should existing landfill void that is not currently needed be safeguarded for future landfill use, or should such sites be restored more quickly in some other way?</b>
<u>Summary of Responses</u> A majority of respondents think safeguarding of landfill void for future use is important since landfill is decreasing nationally as a resource. A combination of safeguarding for future use and quick restoration is proposed by some.
<u>County Council's Initial Thinking</u> The preferred option is generally to safeguard existing landfill void for future use.

**20i**

**How should the MWDF ensure waste management developments will be environmentally acceptable?**

Summary of Responses

There is a wide range of opinion. Appropriate scientific investigation, environmental assessment and restoration plans should be used to set standards, involving local communities. Impact of developments should be minimised by concentrating on those that ensure the waste hierarchy is observed. Smaller local sites can reduce the impact of waste management. Developments incorporating recycling schemes may help. Green Belt and protected landscapes like AONB should be given more importance in the MWDF.

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**How can the MWDF reduce the environmental impact of waste transport?**

Summary of Responses

Larger integrated facilities combining sorting, recycling and recovery can reduce the impact of transport. Some respondents suggest planning conditions be imposed to ensure alternative transport methods or include routeing agreements for road traffic. The “proximity principle” should be applied.