

Waste Planning In Wales

Fact Sheet 3

Planning for Waste is vital to ensure that appropriate sites are identified and that facilities are designed and operated to appropriate standards.

This fact sheet focuses on Waste Planning in Wales – specifically planning policy, regional working and decision making.

The main consideration in current waste planning is **planning for new facilities**

The planning framework requires the consideration of the following documents before a decision can be made. They can be split into different strategic levels:

European Level

The Waste Framework Directive, and specifically articles 5 and 7 are of particular interest to waste planning in Wales.

Article 5 requires member states to establish an integrated and an adequate network of waste management facilities. Member states must produce waste management plans to illustrate their capabilities in effectively disposing of their own waste.

The main objective is to ensure the best disposal or treatment facility is located as close to the origin of the waste as possible.

Article 7 requires local authorities to specify disposal sites or installations in their waste management plans.

Here authorities must identify sites and the site selection criteria applied in selecting these sites, that are deemed appropriate for the development of waste management facilities.

The Landfill Directive includes requirements such to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill, the classification of landfill sites into three categories (Inert, Hazardous and Non-Hazardous), the banning of certain wastes from landfill, the treatment of wastes before landfill and landfill siting and location requirements.

The directive also refers to the responsibility Local Authorities have to assist in developing local industries that can utilise recovered materials to produce recyclable materials or recycled content products to assist in meeting the biodegradable waste targets for Wales.

National Level

The National Waste Strategy for Wales, 'Wise about Waste', identifies policies for waste management and targets and actions to meet them. Primary targets identified for waste and its management in Wales include:

- Reducing the amount of waste produced by public bodies.
- Minimum recycling and composting targets for each local authority.
- Improving the segregation of hazardous household waste.

Secondary targets for waste in Wales include:

- Stabilisation and reduction of household waste.
- Encouraging businesses to join the public sector in creating waste minimisation targets.
- Diverting waste and particularly biodegradable waste from landfill.
- Reducing the amount of hazardous waste produced.
- Reuse and recycle construction and demolition waste wherever possible.

Strategic Waste Management Assessments (SWMA), produced by the Environment Agency Wales, provide much of the waste data to inform decision-making at the regional level. SWMAs include datasets on

- Municipal Waste.
- Hazardous Waste.
- Commercial and Industrial Waste
- The use of existing Licensed Waste Management Facilities.

Planning Policy Wales 2002 (PPW) refers to the obligation for local planning authorities, as set out in the European Waste Framework Directive, to make provision for establishing an integrated and adequate network of waste disposal installations.

PPW also refers to local planning authorities being obliged to ensure that waste is recovered or disposed of without harming the environment in conjunction with the Environment Agency, who act as the regulator for all industrial facilities in Wales.

Picture:
*Planning Policy
Wales (March 2002)*



PPW affirms the Environment Agency's statutory role in relation to the management and regulation of waste and the collection of waste production and management data. The agency, it states, has a statutory role in 'development planning for waste management through consultation on individual plans and as a consultee on certain planning applications'.

Technical Advice Note 21 (TAN21), which accompanies PPW, describes the required approach to waste planning in Wales in much greater detail.

TAN21 acknowledges that the planning system is not designed to deliver the necessary infrastructure for effective total waste management. Total waste management is achieved through the role of the private sector and local authorities through their waste management strategies and municipal waste contracts. However the planning system has a vital role to play in terms of determining appropriate sites, scales and operating conditions of this infrastructure when they provide their local planning documents and in responding to specific planning applications.

Regional Level

Regional Waste Assessment (RWA) is the first stage in the development of a RWP. It still needs to be considered separately when making a planning decision. The three main aims of an RWA are:

- To set the Regional context of the Plan.
- To assist the formulation and implementation of waste management options.
- To monitor the performance in meeting the specified targets identified in the National Waste Strategy.

Regional Waste Plans (RWP) are a voluntary joint arrangement between local authorities. A RWP ensures local authorities are able to take a strategic overview of their waste management

commitments at a regional level. Key elements of the RWP include:

- Agreement of the apportionment of facilities to local authorities. LAs will determine locations and make provisions in their UDPs, and RWPs will specify type, capacity and approximate locations.
- The identification of areas or types of locations for future facilities.

The RWPs provide a statement of how they will help contribute to general waste management objectives within the **Landfill Directive** and the **National Waste Strategy**.



Map: *Wales Regional Waste Plan Areas*

RWPs are currently under revision in Wales, and due to undergo consultation during 2007.

Local Level

Unitary Development Plans (UDP) ensure that adequate provision is made by each local authority to develop the new waste infrastructure required to deliver the targets set out in the **National Waste Strategy**. These plans are now being replaced by Local Development Plans that will have the same role as UDPs in waste planning under the new planning regime that is being introduced in Wales.

Municipal Waste Management Plans (MWMP) produced by each local authority, sets out the authorities plan to manage the waste they collect and meet the municipal waste targets identified in the **National Waste Strategy**.

Consistency in Decision Making

The following diagram indicates the relationship between the detailed planning (and strategy) documents and the overall planning framework. Transparency is maintained throughout, from the European to the Local levels ensuring a consistent approach to the waste planning decision-making process.

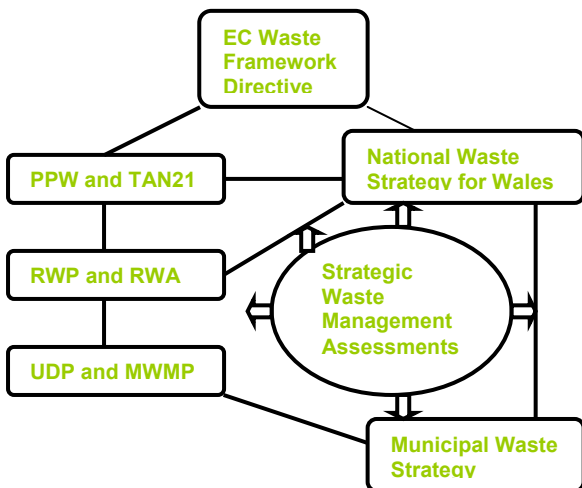


Diagram: *Planning Framework for Decision Making*

Requirements for Decision Making

The assessment of any waste planning application requires the following:

- The inclusion of an Environmental Impact Assessment if the project is included in the defined list of specific developments known as 'Schedule 1' of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.
- The consideration of the Best Practice Environmental Opinion when granting planning permission for specific waste management facilities.
- To take into account the potential impacts on health in planning decisions for any specific development.
- Meeting various emission limits, environmental quality standards and other controls designed to protect the environment and human health.
- The use of the Best Available Technique (BAT) by waste management facilities to ensure that the best technique is chosen to achieve a high level of protection of the environment as a whole.
- Ensure flexibility has been integrated into the management of wastes or specific sites to cope with future changes in waste management legislation, targets and arisings.
- A public consultation exercise must be carried out to consider local feeling to the specific site and facility.

Summary

The National Assembly for Wales subscribes to a plan led approach to the delivery of its waste management and has taken measures to ensure that Unitary Development Plans identify future needs and how they will be addressed, through site allocation and identification of site selection criteria.

Planning for new waste facilities and the management of wastes is clearly an integrated decision making process using guidance set at the European, National, Regional and Local levels.

Planning is also a system where local communities and stakeholders can have a say in appropriate land uses and through the system can affect the size, operation and location of these facilities.



For additional information visit:
www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk

