

Waste Management Plan for England: Environmental Report Non- Technical Summary

Final Report for Defra

June 2013

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1.0 Introduction

This non-technical summary (NTS) outlines the main findings of the Environmental Report (ER), which has been produced as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Waste Management Plan for England ‘the Plan’.

In the context of this document and the main ER, ‘the Plan’ refers to the Waste Management Plan for England *excluding* Planning Policy Statement 10 (PPS10) on sustainable waste management, which is currently undergoing a separate review process.

Given that the Plan under assessment here does not include the spatial distribution of facilities and other issues which are the realm of PPS10, there can be no assessment of the location specific impacts of the Plan since it does not establish any land-use planning framework for development of waste management facilities.

1.1 What is SEA?

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 introduced a requirement for an SEA to be produced for a number of statutory plans and programmes, including Municipal Waste Management Strategies.

The SEA process aims to identify the main environmental implications of a plan or strategy, and key alternatives, before it is adopted, and its provisions are implemented. This allows the environmental impacts of proposals to be identified and addressed whilst at the plan or strategy development stage, enabling consideration of possible alternatives in advance of implementation. SEA thus facilitates the development of plans or strategies that take account of the environmental impacts (benefits and dis-benefits), allowing full consideration of them, and identifying options for mitigation of impacts where they have the potential to arise.

The main findings of the assessment are presented in this document.

1.2 The Waste Management Plan for England

The Plan is a document which is required under Article 28 of the Revised Waste Framework Directive (WFD, or Directive 2008/98/EC).

One of the main intentions of the Plan is to comply with the requirements of the revised WFD, and to bring current policies under the umbrella of a national plan.

The Waste Review 2011 details the main policies which will fall under the Plan umbrella. This is supplemented by other information and policies contained within documents such as the Anaerobic Digestion Strategy 2011 and the UK Plan for Shipments of Wastes, among others.

1.3 The Environmental Report

The ER is the key output of the SEA process which contains:

- An outline of the SEA process;
- Identification of relevant key policies which directly affect the Plan;
- An elaboration of reasonable alternatives to the proposed plan;
- Baseline information about the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the area covered by the Plan, including key sustainability issues of the areas likely to be affected;

- Details of the environmental, social and economic criteria against which the Plan has been assessed;
- An assessment of the likely significant effects of the Plan, and the alternatives being assessed, on the environment;
- Measures to mitigate any significant negative impacts that arise from the assessment; and
- Measures to monitor the progress of the Plan against the sustainability objectives.

2.0 Environmental Objectives

Having identified the baseline information, together with the key relevant environmental issues facing England, these were developed into objectives against which the Plan would be assessed. Figure 1 shows the objectives and key questions used as a basis for the appraisal of the Plan.

Figure 1: Environmental Objectives against which the Plan will be Assessed

Ref	Objectives	Sub-Objectives	Key Questions	Main SEA Topics Covered
1	Protect natural material assets		What is the likely effect of the plan on the total demand for materials (including energy carriers)?	Material Assets
2	Reduce Air Emissions contributing to global problems	To reduce emissions of greenhouse gases To reduce emissions of ozone depleting substances	What are the impacts on climate change and the ozone layer from the waste policies presented?	Climatic Factors Air
3	Reduce Air Emissions of local relevance	To reduce air pollution emissions including acidifying emissions	How does the plan affect emissions to air with a localised impact? What is the potential impact on health of these emissions? Will there be any impact on property (including historic buildings) arising from the emissions?	Air Human Health Population Cultural Heritage/ Historic Environment

Ref	Objectives	Sub-Objectives	Key Questions	Main SEA Topics Covered
4	Protect & enhance biodiversity	To minimise the negative impact on global resources, wildlife, flora and fauna	What is the effect on Total Material Requirement as a result of the policies presented? (Total Material Requirement can be used as a proxy for the impact on global wildlife flora and fauna).	Materials Balance Biodiversity Flora & Fauna
5	Conserve water resources & water quality	To minimise water use To reduce harmful emissions to water bodies	What is the likely impact of the plan on water use? What is the likely impact of the plan on water quality? What is the likely impact of the plan on protected water bodies?	Water
6	Conserve and improve soil quality	To minimise negative impacts on, or improve, soil quality To preserve the “best & most versatile” agricultural land	What is the likely impact on soil quality as a result of the Plan?	Soil
7	Protect and enhance landscape & historic environment		What is the likely impact on landscape and historic environment as a result of the Plan?	Landscape Cultural Heritage/ Historic Environment

3.0 Alternatives to be Assessed

Article 5.1 of the SEA Directive states:

“..an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated”.

Following consultation with the statutory consultees, given the nature of the Plan, the alternatives have been specified in terms of increases in, or a reduction in, the quantity of waste managed at each level of the waste hierarchy (as defined in the rWFD). In other words, relative to the proposed plan, alternatives are assessed which imply changes in the amount of waste being:

- A. Prevented;
- B. Sent for preparation for re-use;
- C. Recycled;
- D. Sent for other forms of recovery; or
- E. Sent for disposal.

The alternatives are considered independently of each other and against the existing Plan (or baseline). They are considered in respect of the environmental outcomes which might be expected to result from them.

The alternatives considered are shown in Table 1. These show a matrix of alternatives for the principal waste stream classifications – household, commercial and industrial (C&I) and construction and demolition (C&D) waste. For example, Alternative 3C represents higher recycling of C&I waste than in the baseline.

Table 1: Proposed Alternatives for Consideration in SEA

Stream	Waste Prevention (A)	Preparation for Re-use (B)	Recycling (C)	Other Recovery (D)	Disposal (E)
All Streams					
The Plan	Existing and planned policies	Existing and planned policies	Existing and planned policies	Existing and planned policies	Existing and planned policies
Household					
Alternative 1	Above Baseline levels (less waste)	Above Baseline (more sent for prep for reuse)	Above Baseline (more recycled)	Above Baseline (more recovered)	Above Baseline (more disposed)
Alternative 2	Below Baseline levels (more waste)	Below Baseline (less sent for prep for reuse)	Below Baseline (less recycled)	Below Baseline (less recovered)	Below Baseline (less disposed)
C & I					
Alternative 3	Above Baseline levels (less waste)	Above Baseline (more sent for prep for reuse)	Above Baseline (more recycled)	Above Baseline (more recovered)	Above Baseline (more disposed)
Alternative 4	Below Baseline levels (more waste)	Below Baseline (less sent for prep for reuse)	Below Baseline (less recycled)	Below Baseline (less recovered)	Below Baseline (less disposed)
C&D					
Alternative 5	Above Baseline levels (less waste)	Above Baseline (more sent for prep for reuse)	Above Baseline (more recycled)	Above Baseline (more recovered)	Above Baseline (more disposed)
Alternative 6	Below Baseline levels (more waste)	Below Baseline (less sent for prep for reuse)	Below Baseline (less recycled)	Below Baseline (less recovered)	Below Baseline (less disposed)

4.0 Appraisal Methodology

The key impacts of the Plan and alternatives have been assessed in relation to whether they are positive, negative, neutral or uncertain, and also whether they are:

- Secondary;
- Cumulative (i.e. where several individual effects of the plan have a combined effect);
- Synergistic (i.e. interaction of effects to produce a total effect greater than the sum of individual effects);
- Long, medium or short term (including temporary/ permanent).

Given that the plan is, a) defined at a national level, and b) is not location specific, much of the assessment is naturally set at a high level and is largely qualitative in nature, although quantitative information has been included where relevant.

The results of the appraisal are presented across two sections. The first presents an analysis of how waste management impacts upon each of the SEA topics. This is effectively a literature review setting out the evidence base for the impacts of waste management as a whole, rather than the specific impacts of the plan and alternatives. As such these results are not included in this NTS.

The second part of the appraisal focusses on the Plan and the alternatives, with each alternative being assessed against each of the SEA objectives (see Figure 2). For each objective, five matrices are presented, one for each level of the hierarchy as defined by the alternatives (see Table 1). The assessment criteria presented in the matrices are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Key to Matrices

Effect	
Major Positive Impact	
Minor Positive Impact	
Negligible/ No Impact	
Minor Negative Impact	
Major Negative Impact	
Uncertain Impact	?
Timeframe	
Short (2013-2015)	S
Medium (2013-2020)	M
Long (To beyond 2020)	L

With regards to the timeframe where the interpretation of this differs between the appraisal of objectives, this has been clearly stated in the relevant section of the report.

5.0 Results of the Assessment: Impacts of the Plan & Alternatives

The Plan is designed to bring together current plans and policies already in place. Thus the introduction of the Plan itself is not considered to have any **significant** impact on the environment as defined by the seven objectives. Therefore the Plan is assessed as having ‘no or negligible’ impact across the criteria used.

It is important to recognise that the alternatives are considered relative to the effects of the Plan. The implementation of the elements that make up the Plan (although not introduced by it) will have positive impacts going forward. The alternatives are set against this trajectory already implied – i.e. they are based on the improvements over and above (or below depending on the alternative in question) what is already happening. This is not intended to reflect any specific quantified limit for performance ‘above’ or ‘below’ the baseline, but merely to indicate the likely tendency in the environmental effect if the pattern of waste prevention and management was to go further than, or less far than, what is implied in the Plan.

There will also be interactions between the levels of the waste hierarchy. For example, as the amount of recycling increases, the potential environmental benefits that may be obtained through increased waste prevention and reuse will fall. These interactions will occur for a number of the objectives considered within the analysis including global and local emissions as well as water use.

A summary of the impacts associated with the plan alternatives is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Summary of Impacts

		Environmental Objectives						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Protect natural material assets	Reduce air emissions contributing to global problems	Reduce air emissions of local relevance	Protect & enhance biodiversity	Protect water resources & water quality	Preserve and improve soil quality	Protect and enhance landscape
Alternative 1 (HH Waste Above the Baseline)	Waste Prevention							
		L	L	L	L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use							
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Recycling			?				?
		L	L		L	L	L	L
	Other Recovery	?	?		?	?	?	?
		L	L	L	L	L	L	L
	Disposal							
		L	L	L	L	L	L	L

		Environmental Objectives						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Protect natural material assets	Reduce air emissions contributing to global problems	Reduce air emissions of local relevance	Protect & enhance biodiversity	Protect water resources & water quality	Preserve and improve soil quality	Protect and enhance landscape
Alternative 2 (HH Waste Below the Baseline)	Waste Prevention			?				
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use			?				
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Recycling							?
		L	L		L	L	L	L
Other Recovery								
	L	L		L	L	L	L	
Disposal								
	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Alternative 3 (C&I Waste Above the Baseline)	Waste Prevention							
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use							
		L			L	L	L	
	Recycling			?				?
		L	L		L	L	L	L
Other Recovery								
	L	L		L	L	L	L	
Disposal								
	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Alternative 4 (C&I Waste Below the Baseline)	Waste Prevention			?				
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use			?				
		L			L	L	L	
Recycling							?	
	L	L		L	L	L	L	

		Environmental Objectives						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		Protect natural material assets	Reduce air emissions contributing to global problems	Reduce air emissions of local relevance	Protect & enhance biodiversity	Protect water resources & water quality	Preserve and improve soil quality	Protect and enhance landscape
	Other Recovery	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
		L	L		L	L	L	L
	Disposal							
		L	L	L	L	L	L	L
Alternative 5 (C&D Waste Above the Baseline)	Waste Prevention			?				
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use							
		L			L	L	L	
	Recycling			?				?
		L	L		L	L	L	L
	Other Recovery	?	?		?	?	?	?
L				L	L	L	L	
Disposal								
	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	
Alternative 6 (C&D Waste Below the Baseline)	Waste Prevention			?				
		L	L		L	L	L	
	Preparation for Re-use							
		L			L	L	L	
	Recycling							?
		L	L	L	L	L	L	L
	Other Recovery	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
L				L	L	L	L	
Disposal								
	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	

As can be seen from Figure 3, where the alternatives lead to an increase in waste prevention, preparation for re-use, recycling or recovery, or a reduction in the amount of disposal the overwhelming impact is positive. Conversely the opposite is true where alternatives lead to

increased disposal, or reduced waste prevention, preparation for re-use, recycling or recovery. In all cases where impacts are projected the impacts are estimated to be long term (which generally includes short and medium term).

6.0 Mitigation

Mitigating measures have been proposed where the assessment has shown the potential for negative impact according to each environmental objective. These are described in the main report.

7.0 Monitoring

The SEA Regulations make clear the requirement to monitor the implementation of the plan with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action.

Monitoring should be an important factor in the implementation of any plan, and should occur over the course of implementation and beyond. In particular monitoring helps to answer the following questions:

- Is the Plan contributing to environmental sustainability in the way envisaged?
- Have there been any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative) that have arisen from the Plan? Do these impacts require remediation?

It will also be essential for Defra to maintain the monitoring framework and baseline information as appropriate.

Monitoring proposals have been provided which are intended to provide ideas as to what could be implemented, taking into account that technical and scientific advances may mean that alternative measures for monitoring become more appropriate, or more appropriate for the purpose, or more cost effective in future.

8.0 Consultation

Comments on the Environment Report should be sent to:

Alternatively responses can be emailed to [XXXXXXX](#)

The closing date for responses is [xxxxx].