

## 8.9 Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

8.9.1 The following policies implement Strategic Objective 6: To encourage innovation and best practice which provide opportunities to minimise the impact of waste development on communities and the environment.

8.9.2 The policies are designed to ensure that there would be no unacceptable harm to the environment and amenity or to other material planning considerations from waste development proposals.

### Sustainable Design

8.9.3 The SWLP seeks to ensure that all new development is of a high standard. It encourages well-designed schemes which will make a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment.

8.9.4 Waste development should seek to contribute to achieving sustainable development<sup>1</sup> by:

- Minimising waste and pollution to support health and wellbeing of our residents;
- Contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment; and
- Supporting Surrey's competitive and nationally important economy.

8.9.5 Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change and rising sea levels. Facilities should promote energy efficiency and seek to reduce energy consumption related to the use of buildings.

8.9.6 Development should make sure that there is enough land available for any landscaping or biodiversity gains necessary on site. In addition, development of, and improvements in, Green Infrastructure should be achieved through good design of sites and facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Paragraphs 6 and 7

### Policy 13 – Sustainable Design

Planning permission for waste development will be granted where it can be demonstrated that development follows best practice for built design. All waste development should demonstrate that the development:

- i) Is of a scale, form and character appropriate to its location
- ii) Includes necessary landscaping and biodiversity gains
- iii) Includes measures to maximise efficiency of water use during construction and operation;
- iv) Includes measures to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, including through energy efficiency and maximising the use of lower-carbon energy generation such as heat recovery and the recovery of energy from gas produced from the waste activity; and
- v) Includes measures to ensure resilience and enable adaptation to a changing climate.

Table 1 Monitoring for Policy 13 – Sustainable Design

Measure/Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of planning applications which are permitted for new or enhanced waste management facilities is contrary to design guidance</li> </ul>
Data Source(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Applications and Decisions</li> <li>• Appeal Decisions</li> </ul>
Key Organisation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste Planning Authority</li> <li>• Waste Industry</li> </ul>
Target(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No planning applications permitted where design of new or enhanced waste management facilities is contrary to design guidance</li> </ul>
Trigger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant number of planning applications permitted where facilities are considered to be poorly designed.</li> </ul>

### Development Management

- 8.9.7 This development management section is concerned with addressing impacts that might arise during the operation of a waste management facility. The policies in the section are therefore concerned with ensuring that any significant adverse impacts do not occur.
- 8.9.8 It should be noted that some matters related to impacts on the environment and amenity are dealt with by environmental controls outside the planning system. Effects on air quality and soil quality are primarily a matter for other regulatory controls, but can be material planning considerations. The effect of development on the water environment as well as flood risk are also key considerations which can also be subject to other controls.

### General Amenity

- 8.9.9 Amenity generally refers to residents' expectations for enjoyment of their surroundings. It can cover a range of issues from noise, dust, odour, and disturbance due to illumination and vibration, to perceptions of the possible health effects of development.
- 8.9.10 The scale, appearance, and level of activity of waste development can result in impacts to amenity. It is important that such impacts are kept to an acceptable level. The impact of noise should consider construction noise, operating noise and noise from vehicles. Hours of operation may also be a consideration.
- 8.9.11 The release of fumes or emissions, including bioaerosols, from some waste management activities have potential to impact human health. Odours released from some waste activities may also affect the wellbeing of communities. Impacts related to emissions including dust and fumes should consider sensitive receptors as well as the extent to which impacts can be mitigated.
- 8.9.12 Proposals should consider potential for impacts from illumination and aim to minimise the impact of light pollution, glare and sky glow from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
- 8.9.13 For proposals that would be likely to impact on air quality through dust, fumes or significant traffic generation, the developer should provide an assessment of the impact of pollutants in relation to surrounding sensitive receptors using suitable methodology and significance descriptors. The assessment should state the controls and mitigation that will be applied to avoid adverse impacts.

### Flood Risk

- 8.9.14 The responsibilities for Flood Risk are divided between the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The Environment Agency is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. The Lead Local Flood Authority is responsible for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.
- 8.9.15 Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk by applying the sequential test and if necessary the exception test<sup>2</sup>.
- 8.9.16 Waste treatment (except landfill and hazardous waste facilities) are characterised as less vulnerable development and are generally appropriate in Flood Zone 1 and 2. Landfill and hazardous waste facilities are highly vulnerable and are generally appropriate in Flood Zone 1.
- 8.9.17 Development of any schemes within areas identified as at risk from flooding from surface water or groundwater should be assisted by early discussions with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

### Groundwater resources

- 8.9.18 Proposals should consider the proximity of groundwater resources and the potential risk for contamination. For example landfill is a potential hazard to groundwater quality and non-inert landfill must not be located in Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 1. In other locations, it will also be unacceptable, for example, on or in a major or principal aquifer or areas where there is a risk of groundwater pollution.
- 8.9.19 The developer should provide an assessment which shows how the water table and any underground aquifers would be affected by the development and any subsequent effects on matters such as salinity, the water level and the flow of water in nearby water bodies.

### Contaminated Soils and Groundwater

- 8.9.20 Contaminated soils or groundwater include those areas where previous uses of the site or adjacent land could have caused contamination e.g. industrial processes, petrol filling stations, fuel storage, chemical storage, vehicle parking/servicing etc. These may not be identified on any contaminated land register.

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<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 100

- 8.9.21 The developer is therefore responsible for determining whether land is suitable for development, or can be made so by remedial action. In order to demonstrate this, the developer should provide an assessment of potential pollutants and how any contamination would be addressed including a desktop and site walkover study.
- 8.9.22 The developer will need to satisfy the WPA that unacceptable risk from contamination will be successfully addressed through remediation. A remediation scheme should include future monitoring and maintenance schemes.

### Landscape

- 8.9.23 Government policy expects the planning system to “contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment” (NPPF, Paragraph 109). The NPPF states that “great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty” (NPPF, Paragraph 115).
- 8.9.24 Where possible, new development should take place outside such protected landscapes. It is recognised that there may be a requirement for new or extensions to existing development in order to meet local needs. Factors which may support a proposal being considered acceptable include:
- The proposal is for a small-scale facility to meet local needs and can be accommodated without undermining the objectives of the designation; or
  - The need for new facilities which cannot be met in another way or cannot be met from outside the designated area; and
  - Significant adverse impacts on the landscape and visual amenity can be adequately mitigated.
- 8.9.25 Regard should also be given to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Some proposals, such as the restoration of old mineral workings, which contribute to the improvement of the landscape, may be supported provided that the long term benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh the impact in the short-term, e.g. impacts to visual amenity.
- 8.9.26 Development of any schemes affecting landscape should be assisted by early discussions with officers. The Surrey Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a comprehensive assessment of the landscape character of the county. It takes account of the framework of the National Character Areas recently reviewed by Natural England and describes variations in the landscape character at a county level. The up to date LCA should be used to support plan making, policy development and to help inform planning applications.

## Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 8.9.27 Areas or sites of international biodiversity importance should be protected unless there are no appropriate alternative solutions and there are overriding reasons which outweigh the need to safeguard the value of sites or features, and provided that favourable conservation status is maintained.
- 8.9.28 Areas or sites of international and European biodiversity importance in Surrey include:
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
  - Ramsar sites; and
  - Sites supporting 'European Protected Species'.
- 8.9.29 Areas or sites or priority habitats and species of national biodiversity or geological conservation importance in Surrey include:
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
  - National Nature Reserves (NNRs);
  - Ancient Woodland; and
  - Habitats and species of Principal importance in England.
- 8.9.30 Areas, sites or features of regional or local biodiversity or geological conservation importance in Surrey include:
- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI);
  - Local Nature Reserves; and
  - Species of Conservation Concern identified for Surrey
- 8.9.31 Assessment should be undertaken to establish the nature conservation importance of the site (including its biodiversity and geodiversity) and proposals should be designed to minimise any significant adverse impacts on the site and on the surrounding area. Where development would result in the loss of or adversely affect an important area, site or feature, the harm is mitigated, or compensated for, including, where practicable, the provision of a new resource elsewhere which is of an equivalent value.
- 8.9.32 Applications for Energy from Waste or similar technologies should demonstrate the facility will not have an adverse air quality effect on internationally designated sites within a 10km radius. This should be accomplished through a project-level Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening and will need full appropriate assessment in the event that significant impacts are identified.

- 8.9.33 Green Infrastructure should provide a network of interconnected habitats to enable dispersal of species across the wider environment. Open spaces within developments should be linked to biodiversity in the wider countryside, including on designated sites, Priority habitats and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs). Planning of Green Infrastructure should also provide 'ecosystem services' such as flood protection, microclimate control, pollination and filtration of air pollutants, and is therefore also integral to any Climate Change Adaptation strategy for an area.
- 8.9.34 Development of any schemes affecting biodiversity or geodiversity should be assisted by early discussions with officers. New developments should be designed to maintain and where possible enhance existing Green Infrastructure. In delivering biodiversity enhancements, measures should be taken to contribute to the Green Infrastructure network to maintain existing habitats and to enhance habitat connectivity. Production of a Green Infrastructure master-plan should be considered for large scale developments.
- 8.9.35 The positive role that high quality new development can play in providing new habitats and increasing biodiversity is recognised and development should include measures for the enhancement of biodiversity where justified by the nature of the proposal. Any creation, enhancement, and management of habitats, ecological networks, and ecosystem services should be consistent with wider environmental objectives.

### Historic Environment

- 8.9.36 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. A heritage asset is defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest and may include a contribution from its setting.
- 8.9.37 A heritage asset will either be a Designated Heritage Asset (Listed buildings, Registered Historic Park or Garden, Conservation Area, Scheduled Ancient Monument) or a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (Locally Listed Park, Garden Building or Feature, Areas of High Archaeological Potential, County Sites of Archaeological Importance, Known site on the Historic Environment Record).
- 8.9.38 The Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER) holds information on known heritage assets; these databases may also help in the prediction of the likelihood of encountering currently unknown heritage assets of historic and archaeological interest. Developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets affected during the development management process, and make any Information gained about the significance of the historic environment publicly accessible through submission of reports to the HER, publication and archiving.
- 8.9.39 Development of any schemes affecting heritage assets should be assisted by early discussions with heritage officers. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties (NPPF, Paragraph 188). The objective of early discussion is to discuss detailed schemes for preservation, enhancement or mitigation. To do this, sufficient information must be presented so that officers are in a position to discuss plans and form opinions.

### Public open space and Rights of Way

- 8.9.40 Developers should provide an assessment of any open space or Public Rights of Way (PROW) lost, directly or indirectly affected by a proposed development. Where affected, operators will be required to make sure that the PROW remains accessible. This could be through measures to replace or compensate for such impacts and identification of any opportunities to improve facilities for walkers, cyclists, horse riders alternative routes which should be in place at the correct time.

### Land and soil resources

- 8.9.41 Land of grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification is a national resource. Waste development should seek to use unproductive land preferentially. Operators should provide information on the quality of existing agricultural land. Any land to be restored to agriculture should be returned to a suitable agricultural classification even if that is not its original agricultural classification.
- 8.9.42 The developer should outline how the agricultural land classification would be protected or on completion of proposed operation, would be returned to the same agricultural land grade classification and the quality of any agricultural land lost and justification for its loss.
- 8.9.43 Developers should provide information on the measures that would be taken to safeguard the soil qualities during storage and/or restoration. If the importation of soils or waste is part of the proposal, operators should also provide information of the quality of imported soils/ other waste materials and how they would improve the land for agricultural purposes.

### Aerodrome Safeguarding

- 8.9.44 Any proposed development would need to comply with Aerodrome Safeguarding requirements to ensure that the operational integrity and safety of the airport are not compromised. This includes a range of factors for example the heights of buildings & structures, lighting, renewable energy, gas flaring etc.
- 8.9.45 All applications within the consultation area of civil and military aerodromes and airstrips and where:
- The proposal involves landfilling;
  - The development involves features attractive to hazardous birds such as: amenity landscaping and water features, this includes the enhancement of existing wet areas or water courses and buildings with ledges, gantries and flat roofs;
  - Where the proposal includes lighting which may impact on airport safety (i.e. dazzling);
  - Where a proposal involves the venting and flaring of gas.
- 8.9.46 Development of any schemes affecting any official or non-official aerodrome safeguarding areas should be assisted by early discussions with planning officers. Where development could affect these areas the developer should demonstrate how the development would not constitute a hazard to air traffic, with or without mitigation.

### Cumulative Effects

- 8.9.47 Account should be taken of the local area including any assessments that have been undertaken. Where short-term significant adverse impacts are identified e.g. during construction of a new facility it is important that any significant adverse impacts in the short-term, e.g. the impacts of HGVs on residential or visual amenity, are outweighed by the long-term benefits.

#### Policy 14 – Development Management

Planning permission for waste development will be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will not be an unacceptable impact on communities and the environment including:

- i) General amenity including air quality, noise, dust, fumes, odour, vibration, illumination, including that related to traffic, generated by the development; and
- ii) Flood risk, including opportunities to enhance flood storage, surface water quality, and surface water drainage; and
- iii) Those on ground water resources including ground water quality, the protection of Source Protection Zones and Areas of Groundwater Vulnerability; and
- iv) Those related to contamination of land or groundwater; and
- v) The appearance, quality and character of development in the landscape and any features that contribute to its distinctiveness; and
- vi) Those on the natural environment, biodiversity and geological conservation interests including green infrastructure; and
- vii) Those on the historic landscape, sites or structures of architectural and historic interest and their settings, and sites of existing or potential archaeological interest or their settings; and
- viii) Those on public open space, the rights of way network, and outdoor recreation facilities; and
- ix) Those affecting the use, quality and integrity of land and soil resources and land stability; and
- x) Those affecting aerodrome safeguarding and the risk of birds striking aircraft; and
- xi) Cumulative impacts arising from the interactions between waste developments and between waste development and other forms of development; and
- xii) Any other matter relevant to the planning application.

Table 2 Monitoring for Policy 14 – Development Management

Measure/Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of planning applications where there would be a significant adverse impact on community or environment.</li> </ul>
Data Source(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Applications and Decisions</li> <li>• Planning Appeals</li> </ul>
Key Organisation(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrey County Council</li> <li>• Waste Industry</li> </ul>
Target(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No planning applications permitted where there would be a significant adverse impact on community or environment are permitted.</li> </ul>
Trigger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant number of planning applications permitted where there would be a significant adverse impact on community or environment are permitted.</li> </ul>

