

Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy
Site Options Consultation
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

October 2009

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Introduction

This document is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of Gloucestershire County Council's Waste Core Strategy (WCS) Site Options Consultation – October 2009. It should be read in conjunction with the consultation documents which are available to view at the following locations:

- Online at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/wcs
- Gloucestershire County Council Offices, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester
- All Gloucestershire District Council Offices
- All Gloucestershire Libraries

The consultation runs for 8-weeks from 5th October 2009 until 30th November 2009. Comments on this EqIA are welcome.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents (LDDs) such as the Gloucestershire Waste Core Strategy (WCS) to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. One of the fundamental aims of sustainable development is social progress that recognises the needs of everyone. Inclusion and sustainable development are therefore inextricably linked.

EqIA is a way of examining whether a new or existing function, policy or procedure differentially affects any person or group of persons. It enables the potential and actual effects of a policy to be examined, and improvements or changes introduced, to ensure fairness and encourage diversity.

Conducting EqIAs during the plan preparation process will help to ensure that policies do not discriminate unlawfully. EqIAs assist in clarifying any particular needs and help to identify and remove any barriers. They also help identify what is working well.

EqIAs consist of two main parts; initial screening and subsequently, if an adverse/negative impact is identified, a full impact assessment.

Stage 1 – Initial Screening must be completed at the earliest opportunity to determine whether or not it is necessary to carry out a full EqIA. Key questions to ask at Stage 1 are; what are you looking to achieve, who will benefit, does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community, does the activity make a positive contribution?

If there is potential for negative impact/discrimination a full EqIA is needed.

Stage 2 – Full Impact Assessment provides an opportunity to assess the evidence for a possible negative impact. It ensures that research and consultation with the equality target groups has been carried out and leads to an improvement or action plan aiming to minimise the negative impact and, where possible, maximise any positive impacts. The action plan should include actions that will remove or alleviate the potential for the activity to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities.

This document is a Stage 1 Initial Screening assessment only. The results show that a Stage 2 assessment is not needed.

Stage 1 – Initial Screening

This section of the EqIA considers the following:

- Aims and objectives of the WCS Site Options Consultation
- Who will benefit from the WCS Site Options Consultation
- What outcomes are expected from the WCS Site Options Consultation
- Proposed consultation programme
- Whether the WCS Site Options Consultation could affect a particular group in either a negative or positive way
- Whether any potential negative impacts have been identified

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the WCS Site Options Consultation can be summarised as follows:

- To inform the preparation of the Waste Core Strategy (WCS) by consulting with stakeholders on potential sites that may be suitable for the treatment of residual municipal (mainly household) waste. This is the waste leftover after recycling and composting often referred to as ‘real rubbish’
- To allow all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the overall preferred strategy which is based on focusing the search for sites in the centre of Gloucestershire within the area defined as ‘Zone C’
- To allow all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the 13 specific sites that have been identified as having potential for waste treatment use

- To allow all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on whether possible urban extensions to Gloucester and Cheltenham proposed through the Draft RSS (2008) if they go ahead, should incorporate waste treatment facilities into their future development; and
- To allow all stakeholders the opportunity to put forward any alternative sites that may be suitable and available for waste treatment use.

Who will benefit?

The WCS is about finding the most sustainable way of managing Gloucestershire's waste. It will deal with all of the different waste streams.

We all generate waste and we all pay for it to be dealt with. At present most waste in Gloucestershire is disposed of through landfill. This cannot continue for environmental and financial reasons. Landfill is bad for the environment and if the Council continues to dispose of waste in this way it is likely to be fined. These fines may be passed onto the taxpayer.

Finding an alternative, more sustainable way of dealing with our waste will benefit everybody. Identifying specific sites to deal with the treatment of waste is therefore a key issue.

What outcomes are expected?

The overall outcome of the WCS will be a sustainable planning framework for waste management in Gloucestershire in the period 2011-2026.

This can probably be best summarised through the draft 'spatial vision' for Gloucestershire proposed in the WCS 'preferred options' consultation paper in 2008:

'By 2026 Gloucestershire will be a clean, green, healthy and a safe place in which to live, work and visit. It will be a County whose inhabitants proactively minimise waste production to achieve zero growth by 2020 and where opportunities for re-using and recycling waste are maximised. This will be delivered through a sustainable waste management system that: raises public awareness about waste minimisation; views waste as a resource; provides everyone with localised access to recycling facilities; supports markets for recyclable materials; and delivers a network of sites that enable maximum diversion of waste from landfill.'

Sufficient waste management facilities will be provided to enable all households in Gloucestershire to recycle and compost at least 70% of their rubbish by April 2010, with an 80% participation rate by 2020. Gloucestershire's communities, key landscape / environmental assets and land liable to flooding will be safeguarded from the adverse impacts from waste management activities. Major waste facilities will be located in the

central area of Gloucestershire proximate to the main urban areas along the M5 corridor. Smaller supporting facilities will be dispersed around the County’.

More specific ‘strategic objectives’ flowing from the vision include the following:

A. To influence Gloucestershire’s residents to reduce the amount of waste they produce through raising awareness of waste issues. And then subsequently to encourage them to view any waste they do generate as a resource for which they must take communal responsibility.

B. To make the best use of Gloucestershire’s waste by encouraging competitive markets for goods made from recycled materials and obtaining a benefit (value) from left over (residual) waste materials.

C. To preserve and enhance the quality of Gloucestershire’s environment and to avoid undesirable environmental effects, including risks to human health and unacceptable impacts on designated landscapes / nature conservation sites.

D. To reduce the environmental impacts of transporting waste by managing the majority of Gloucestershire’s waste within a reasonable distance from its source of arising, and to encourage the use of sustainable means of transporting waste.

E. To co-locate similar or related facilities on existing waste sites or previously developed sites in preference to undesignated Greenfield locations (where appropriate) and to safeguard such land from development that may prevent this use.

It should be noted that the vision and objectives outlined above are likely to be refined in the formal publication version of the WCS to be published in Autumn 2010.

The specific outcome of the site options consultation will be a decision on which site or sites to take forward and allocate in the formal ‘publication’ draft of the WCS which is due to be prepared in Autumn 2010.

Proposed consultation programme

The WCS has already been subjected to extensive consultation in line with the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This included an ‘issues and options’ consultation in 2006 and a ‘preferred options’ consultation in 2008.

It has now been decided in light of national policy and in response to comments received at the preferred options stage that the WCS will include specific strategic site allocations and this has necessitated a further round of 'site options' consultation taking place between October 5th and 30th November 2009.

Consultation will be extensive and will include the following:

- Documents made available online at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/wcs
- Documents made available at all Council Offices and Libraries in Gloucestershire
- Extensive mail-out to various consultees held on in-house database
- Businesses and residents neighbouring potential waste sites written to
- Various articles and media releases
- Nine exhibitions
- Discussions with District Councils and landowners

Impacts on Particular Groups

The 'generic' nature of the WCS site options consultation is such that it will have no discernible impact on any particular group. This is demonstrated in Table 1 overleaf which considers potential impacts on each of the different equality strands.

Table 1 – Waste Core Strategy Consideration of Potential Negative and Positive Impacts

	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Evidence
Age			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people regardless of age. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on any particular age group.
Disability			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people regardless of disability. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that

				waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on people with or without a disability.
Gender including Transgender			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people regardless of gender. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on any particular gender.
Race including Gypsy and Traveller			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people

				regardless of race. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on any particular race.
Religion or Belief			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people regardless of religion or belief. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on any particular religion or belief.

Sexual orientation			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people regardless of sexual orientation. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no discernible impact on any particular sexual orientation.
Other groups			✓	The allocation of specific sites for waste through the WCS will have the same impact on all people. Everybody generates waste and the WCS is about managing that waste in the most sustainable manner. The allocation of sites through the WCS will have no

				discernible impact on any particular group.
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Contribution to Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. People all want to fulfil their potential and feel that they belong and contribute to their local area.

It is a term that has been given to describe how people who live and work in the same place get along. It is about looking at the common values that keep us all together.

The WCS has a role to play in contributing towards community cohesion. We all generate waste and we must all take responsibility for reducing the amount of waste that we produce. This will help to reduce the amount of waste that has to be disposed of or treated.

The extensive consultation that the WCS is being subjected to is intended to allow everybody to have their say on where and how waste should be managed in Gloucestershire and should therefore positively contribute towards community cohesion.

There may also be specific community benefits arising from the overall process such as the establishment of community composting schemes or similar.

Potential Negative Impacts

The information detailed in Table 1 shows that no specific negative impacts have been identified through this EqIA. For this reason it is considered that there is no need to undertake a full Stage 2 Impact Assessment.

Summary

EqIAs are an important part of the planning and policy making process, the principle being to establish whether policies or proposals are likely to inadvertently discriminate against a particular group.

This assessment has demonstrated that the generic nature of the WCS and its subject matter and the fact that we all generate waste regardless of age, race, gender, disability etc. means that no particular group will be disadvantaged or discriminated against through its policies.

A further Equality Impact Assessment of the formal publication draft of the Gloucestershire WCS will be prepared at a later date.

**For further information on this consultation
please contact:**

Minerals & Waste Planning Policy

Email: m-wplans@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Find more online at:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/wcs>

**For further information on the Council's residual
waste PFI project (which does not form part of
this consultation) please contact:**

The Waste Management Unit

Email: realrubbish@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Find more online at:

http://www.recycleforgloucestershire.com/real_rubbish/



For telephone enquiries relating to the Waste Core Strategy
please call 01452 425667