Minerals and Waste

Introduction

The Council recognises the importance of sustainable waste management both locally and in co-operation with its neighbours to ensure that all the waste management needs of the area are met. The key challenges for future growth in waste will be balancing economic prosperity and associated growth with the financial strains of providing necessary infrastructure.

Waste Management

The predominant residual municipal solid waste (MSW) treatment method within Coventry is incineration within an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility. Around 92% of residual MSW is sent to the existing EfW plant, with the remainder going direct to landfill. The EfW plant operates by burning residual municipal waste, under controlled conditions, and utilising the heat from the combustion to raise steam. This steam is then used to generate electricity using two turbines and to provide heat to Coventry's district energy network (Heatline). The heat is transported using a network of underground pipes to heat eight major buildings in the city centre including the Council House, the Cathedral, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, and the Sports Centre. Buildings within the new business district at Friargate will also be served by Heatline for their heating and cooling needs.

The EfW plant is operated by Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company, an 'arm's length' company jointly owned by Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Councils. The development proposed by the Plan will inevitably lead to a rise in all waste production. Residual municipal waste will continue to be delivered to the EfW plant at the same proportion (i.e. 92% of total tonnage). However, it is also recognised that recycling levels will also need to be maintained and increased throughout the Plan period in line with the Council's Waste Management Strategy.

The challenge to Coventry will be building upon existing recycling and composting arrangements and raising the city's ambitions to become amongst the highest recycling cities in the UK. By doing this we will ensure that we meet the recycling targets set out in the national waste strategy and deliver the associated climate change and other environmental benefits of conserving raw materials and energy for the people of Coventry. Coventry's Municipal Waste Strategy 2008-2020 has outlined the city's ambition to achieve a 50% recycling rate by 2019/20.

The NPPF requires each community to take responsibility for their own waste and to adopt the principles of the waste hierarchy – prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle / compost, recover and then finally disposal. Coventry will require a sufficient number of waste treatment centres to cater for its needs. Where this involves newer methods of waste treatment, this can often take place in completely enclosed, controlled environments and does not constitute bad neighbour uses. Facilities at the EfW plant will also be expanded to support the management of the city's waste and generate heat and power for local homes and business.

Existing waste treatment facilities, however, have often been located in older industrial areas. As these areas continue to regenerate, the existing uses may not be considered compatible with new, or expansions to existing waste management facilities. In this context, and in order to ensure Coventry's waste treatment needs are met, existing waste treatment facilities will either need to be improved where necessary and safeguarded.

Policy EM8: Waste Management

1. The Council's Waste Management Strategy will be supported through:
    a) encouraging less consumption of raw materials through the reduction and re-use of waste products;
    b) a requirement for development proposals to incorporate adequate storage for waste and recycling services along with safe access for collection vehicles;
    c) encouragement of new methods of processing and recycling at waste management sites;
    d) supporting recycling proposals for aggregate materials subject to the criteria in part 2 of this policy;
    e) Existing waste management facilities or land allocated for waste management uses being protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses that are more sensitive to odour, noise, dust and pest impacts; and
    f) Proposals for waste management facilities only being permitted where they would not have an unacceptable impact on the quantity or quality of surface or groundwater resources.

2. Proposed new or expanded waste management facilities will be assessed against the following criteria:
    a) The effect of the proposed waste facility upon the environment and neighbouring land uses;
    b) The impact of traffic generated by the proposal and the availability of alternative transit modes, such as rail and waterways;
    c) The need for pollution control measures appropriate to the type of waste to be processed or handled;
    d) The impact of proposals on residential amenity. New waste facilities will not normally be approved adjacent to existing housing and proposals for anaerobic digestion will not be approved in close proximity to existing housing;
    e) The effect of proposals on aircraft safety; and
    f) The design of the proposal. Careful consideration should be given to the need to minimise environmental and visual impact. Wherever feasible, waste operations should be enclosed within buildings or sealed structures in order to minimise impacts on adjacent uses from noise, ordure, vermin and wildlife. Proposals advocating open air unenclosed storage of organic odour producing material will not be supported.

3. Proposals will be supported where it is demonstrated that these criteria are satisfied.

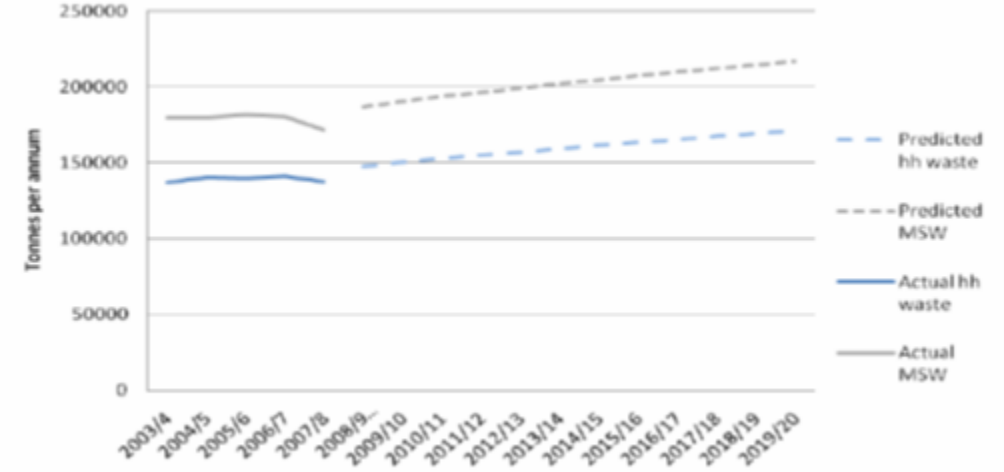
4. Development proposals should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

Residual waste treatment capacity operational or in construction in the West Midlands is currently at 1.3 million tonnes per annum. Allocations for waste management sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities will be assessed against the criteria in this Policy.

The Council adopted its Municipal Waste Strategy 2008-2020 in 2009 in response to the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Waste (England and Wales) Regulation 2011 and associated national policy. The strategy outlines the Councils commitment to reducing both the quantity of waste, and to increase waste minimisation and reuse of unwanted goods, recycle and compost more waste, with the least amount of waste being sent to landfill as possible. This will be achieved through the development and support of proactive education, engagement, enforcement, higher levels of waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting consistent with national standards of good practice for an urban environment.

Coventry is one of the highest performing authorities for diversion of municipal waste away from landfill. During the year 2014/15 the Council sent 8.3% of municipal waste to landfill, the proportion of this waste purely from household sources was 3%. Of the remaining household waste, 34.1% was recycled and 60.84% was used to generate electricity at the Energy from Waste Plant.

Figure 11.1: Actual and projected growth of households and municipal waste (MSW) in Coventry

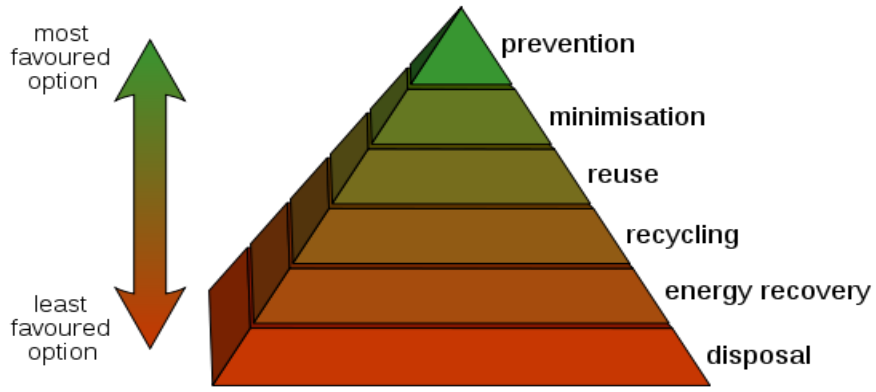


Source: Coventry Waste Strategy, 2008-2020

The estimates from the data show a fall in arisings as shown by figure 11.1. As demonstrated through this Plan, there is a significant planned increase in housing provision and the associated increase in population up to 2031. Future growth in prosperity and dwellings within the city will see a growth in overall waste produced in Coventry.

Therefore, it is important to recognise the significance of effective waste prevention to provide a safe, clean and green environment where people will want to live and invest. Supporting residents to minimise the amount of waste produced, maximising reuse, recycling and recovery of energy from the remaining waste, to reduce the impact on the environment and encourage more sustainable use of resources for the benefit of all.

Figure 11.2: The Waste Hierarchy



Existing Waste Management Facilities

The urban nature of Coventry and the absence of active quarrying activity means there is no opportunity for existing or future development landfill capacity in the city. Therefore, the city will continue to rely upon landfill capacity in surrounding authorities for the life of the plan period to manage wastes that cannot be reduced, re-used, recycled, composted or recovered. Whilst the total volume of waste landfilled is likely to fall over the life of this plan it should be considered that an increasing percentage of waste that is landfilled will be classed as hazardous waste, e.g. asbestos.

However, Coventry hosts a number of other waste management facilities for the treatment of both commercial and municipal wastes, including:

- 1 x Energy from Waste facility, Bar Road
- 1 x Civic Amenity Site at Bar Road;
- 1 x municipal waste transfer station at Whitley Depot London Road;
- a number of metal treatment / recycling facilities; and
- Numerous privately-operated Waste Transfer, Bulking, and Material Sorting facilities – (used by Coventry, neighbouring authorities, and private businesses).

New Waste Management Facilities

The Council will support the distribution of new waste facilities across the city providing the sites and facilities meet the specified criteria in Policy EM8. Where proposals for waste facilities can demonstrate they are sustainably located and meet waste management requirements and fulfil a need they will be supported. Modern well-run waste management facilities may present no more noise or loss of amenity than a typical industrial use and are essential to managing waste in sustainable and efficient ways.

Industrial areas with existing and complementary waste and industrial uses are well placed to specialise in new waste and sustainable energy technologies. There is an opportunity for the development of such technologies at the Bar Road facility which has potential to cluster complementary waste and sustainable energy uses. The Council will actively encourage and promote appropriate recycling and CHP energy generation schemes.

The Jobs and Economy section of this Local Plan makes provisions for a minimum reservoir of 58ha of employment land to be available at all times. This can include proposals for the management and treatment of waste and should ensure that there is a constant supply of suitable sites for waste-related uses. Coventry recognises that the future sustainable management of waste is an area of growth and has significant potential for job creation. To support the implementation of both the city's Climate Change and Waste Management Strategies, Coventry would support the development of facilities that recycle and recover value from waste. In particular, facilities that are developed along with supporting infrastructure that make use of the materials recovered through the waste management process in specific localities that reduce transport journeys will be encouraged. For example, a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) that is co-located with a paper mill or plastic manufacturer along with an Anaerobic Digestion facility that powers and heats the other buildings to develop an eco-park.