

<b>17. WASTE MANAGEMENT</b>
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## PART ONE POLICY

<b>POLICY WMT1 - LANDFILL PROVISION</b>
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<p><b>THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY RECOGNISES THAT LANDFILL CAPACITY WILL BE REQUIRED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE AND HAS IDENTIFIED SUFFICIENT LANDFILL CAPACITY TO ACCOMMODATE LANDFILL NEEDS WITHIN THE BOROUGH DURING THE PLAN PERIOD, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL'S WASTE DISPOSAL STRATEGY.</b></p>
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## POLICY WMT1 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION

- 17.1 Total volumes of waste requiring disposal or treatment within the Borough are in the region of 500,000 tonnes per year. Of this, just under half is building waste, the remainder being household, factory and commercial waste. If all this waste were to be disposed of by landfill, then about 500,000 cubic metres of air space are required each year. These amounts are expected to remain constant throughout the UDP period.
- 17.2 The current Waste Disposal Plan for Merseyside was published by the MWDA in 1989. It sets out the MWDA's policies for the control and disposal of waste in Merseyside up to 1997. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the MWDA acts as a Waste Disposal Authority but the duties of the former Waste Regulation Authority (MWRA) have now been transferred to the national Environment Agency (EA). The MWDA has responsibility for the provision of disposal services through contracts let after competitive tender. The EA is responsible for waste disposal planning, for site licensing and has the duty to prepare a revised Waste Disposal Plan. The former operational waste disposal functions of the MWDA are transferred to a private company, Mersey Waste Ltd.
- 17.3 Strategic Planning Guidance for Merseyside states that UDP's should have regard to the policies of the Waste Disposal Plan. It is also incumbent on the Local Planning Authority to include within its UDP the provisions of the Waste Local Plan, which is to be separately produced by Shire Counties.
- 17.4 The MWDA's preferred method of disposal, as expressed in the Waste Disposal Plan, is local landfill, where this is environmentally acceptable. The Plan recognises that local landfill is cost-effective, reliable and flexible, and will always be needed for some types of waste, or for residues remaining after waste treatment or resource recovery. However, the Plan recognises that if local landfill is not available, then other methods will be considered, including distant landfill via bulk transport, recycling and treatment methods associated with resource recovery.

- 17.5 In December 1992, the Council endorsed a strategy for waste management within the Borough. It covers the landfill sites outlined under Proposal WM1, expansion where possible of recycling initiatives, evaluation of other methods of waste disposal or treatment, evaluation of possible markets for recycled materials, promotion of schemes for the re-use of waste building materials, and evaluation in the longer term, beyond the UDP period, of the opportunities for distant landfill of bio-degradable waste. The strategy is, therefore, consistent with the policies adopted by the MWDA in the Waste Disposal Plan, with the Government's policies in relation to recycling and resource recovery, and with the national planning advice contained in PPG23.
- 17.6 The Council's Strategy encompasses landfill at the sites outlined under Proposal WM1. Together, these sites provide sufficient landfill capacity to cater for the Borough's requirements during the UDP period.

#### **Proposal WM1 - Landfill Waste Disposal Sites.**

The following sites are identified on the Proposals Map for waste disposal by landfill:

1. **Bidston Moss, Birkenhead**
2. **North Bromborough Dock and North Reclamation Area, Bromborough**
3. **Former Clay Extraction Site, Lingham Lane, Moreton**
4. **South Bromborough Dock, Bromborough**

#### **PROPOSAL WM1 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.7 The sites identified in Proposal WM1 are all existing commitments, with planning permission, licensed and operational. Their boundaries are shown on the Proposals Map for information only.
- 17.8 The Council is committed to reducing the requirement for landfill, by encouraging waste minimisation, recycling and re-use, and the re-use of inert building materials wherever practicable.
1. **BIDSTON MOSS, BIRKENHEAD**
- 17.9 This is a long-standing landfill site, commenced in 1936, which was operated by the MWDA under permitted development rights by virtue of Class B of Part 12, Schedule 2, of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988. The site is able to receive household, industrial and commercial wastes, gully emptyings and selected special wastes. By agreement with the Government, the MWDA operated the landfill site until September, 1996, when tipping operations ceased. It is now being restored to open space use. The sites of the adjoining Waste Reception Centre and the disused incinerator are not, however, affected by the landfill closure.

2. NORTH BROMBOROUGH DOCK AND NORTH RECLAMATION AREA, BROMBOROUGH

17.10 This site was granted planning permission on appeal in 1990. Landfill operations have recently commenced. Privately owned and operated, the site is licensed to receive household, commercial, dry non-hazardous wastes and gully emptyings. The capacity is up to 3,250,000 cubic metres and landfill operations are permitted over a ten year period.

3. FORMER CLAY EXTRACTION SITE, LINGHAM LANE, MORETON

17.11 Privately owned and operated, the site is licensed to receive inert building waste. Remaining capacity is in the region of 500,000 cubic metres.

4. SOUTH BROMBOROUGH DOCK, BROMBOROUGH

17.12 Granted planning permission following the same appeal as Proposal WM1/2 above, the site is licensed to receive inert building waste. The site is now operational and has a capacity of 950,000 cubic metres. It is privately owned and operated.

17.13 In addition, there is the licensed site at Carr Lane Brickworks, Moreton. However, this site is subject to a Stop Notice, and an Enforcement Notice which has been upheld on appeal and in litigation in the High Court. Any further deposit of inert waste at the site is dependent on compliance with the Enforcement Notice, and the rate of clay extraction for the remainder of the site, which is not operational at present. In view of these uncertainties, the site has not been included under Proposal WM1, but may provide a minor landfill resource in the longer term.

### **Policy WM2 - Criteria for Landfill Waste Disposal Sites**

**In considering proposals for waste disposal facilities by landfill, the Local Planning Authority will assess such proposals against the following criteria:**

- (i) **Criteria which will identify the most sensitive and valuable land:**
  - the presence of mineral reserves/ resources;
  - the best and most versatile agricultural land (MAFF Grades 1, 2 and 3A);
  - nature conservation sites of national importance;
  - nature conservation sites of local importance; and
  - Country Parks or other land with recreational potential;
- (ii) **Criteria which will identify sites where landfill development would have a significant adverse effect in the short or long term:**
  - adverse effect on the landscape quality of the site and its

- surroundings;
  - adverse effect on amenity in and around the site;
  - conflict with any intended alternative use of the site;
  - adverse effect on the achievement of economic and urban regeneration; and
  - adverse effect on land-use at the site or its surroundings;
- (iii) Criteria which will identify extra pollution, hazard or nuisance control measures needed, which would be imposed by way of planning conditions or legal obligations:
- proximity (within 250 metres) to residential or other sensitive development or services;
  - proximity to groundwater resources or surface water features;
  - proximity to a minor (within 8 km) or major (within 13 km) airport; and
  - accessibility to the site and road capacity.

Sites which favourably satisfy the criteria will not receive automatic approval, but will merit further consideration for detailed geotechnical and environmental assessment.

#### POLICY WM2 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION

- 17.14 The UDP, in its function of incorporating the provisions of the Waste Local Plan, together with the Waste Disposal Plan and the Council's Waste Management Strategy, will provide the framework for waste treatment and disposal within the Borough. It is essential that the environmental, economic and social consequences of proposals are fully considered within the land-use framework.
- 17.15 The Local Planning Authority, in conjunction with the other Merseyside local authorities and the MWRA, have agreed the criteria outlined in Policy WM2 as a comprehensive methodology for the preliminary assessment of proposals. The criteria are designed to safeguard land with high agricultural, landscape, ecological and nature conservation value from use for waste disposal, and aim to minimise pollution risks and adverse impact on residential and other sensitive areas. The methodology is reproduced in the Waste Disposal Plan. It is very unlikely that any site will favourably satisfy all the criteria, but this is only the preliminary stage of assessment. Sites which on balance are favourable in relation to the criteria will go forward for further detailed assessment.
- 17.16 In relation to sub-point three of the second criterion of Policy WM2, conflict with any intended alternative use of the site can be interpreted in relation to short-term and long-term uses. In the former, the primary consideration will be the provisions of the UDP, as adopted. No landfill sites other than those already operational are identified in the UDP. Any landfill proposal which may come forward would, therefore, constitute a "departure" from the UDP, and the Council would then have to consider the relative merits of the proposal against the designation or allocation of the land in the UDP. In the longer

term, including beyond the UDP period, the Council would have to consider whether the viability of a particular land-use would be compromised by a landfill development. The most obvious example is if landfilling of putrescible materials were to negate the possible future use of the land for "hard" development. This criterion is, therefore, designed to identify such possible conflicts in the preliminary stage of assessment. Further explanatory guidance to the criteria set out in Policy WM2 is contained within Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 44.

### **Policy WM3 - Restoration and Aftercare of Landfill Waste Disposal Sites**

**The Local Planning Authority will apply comprehensive restoration and aftercare conditions for landfill sites, in accordance with an agreed afteruse. Restoration and aftercare will be closely monitored to ensure compliance with such conditions.**

**Such conditions should take account of the following:**

- (i) the type of material that has been landfilled in order to ensure public safety;**
- (ii) a beneficial and viable afteruse; and**
- (iii) the amenity and environment of the surrounding area.**

#### **POLICY WM3 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

17.17 Waste disposal by landfill is essentially a temporary use of land. It usually involves a long-term commitment to a final landform, which together with technical implications associated with disposal, may restrict the range of afteruses possible. Normally, only "soft" afteruses are possible on sites where putrescible material has been landfilled, because such sites will continue to produce landfill gas and leachate for many years after tipping has ceased. Monitoring of these emissions will normally be an essential part of restoration and aftercare conditions. "Hard" afteruses are possible only where carefully controlled disposal of inert materials has taken place. Not all sites will be suitable for public use.

NB In all the above considerations, references to landfill in all cases also include land-raising

17.18 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 introduced new waste management licensing powers for the Waste Regulation Authority. In particular, licences will only be surrendered when the MWRA is satisfied that no further pollution is likely. In line with national planning advice in PPG23, it is, therefore, important that planning conditions do not duplicate licence conditions or modifications as the former will not be in operation following the cessation of landfilling. This is particularly important in relation to landfill gas and leachate control.

## PART ONE POLICY

**POLICY WMT2 - RECYCLING AND RE-USE OF WASTE MATERIALS**

**THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY IS FAVOURABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS PROPOSALS FOR WASTE TREATMENT FACILITIES WHICH COMPRISE RECYCLING AND RE-USE OF WASTE MATERIALS, SUBJECT TO ADEQUATE ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS AND TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS.**

## POLICY WMT2 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION

- 17.19 The first priority of the Council's Waste Management Strategy is waste minimisation. The UDP's role in this aspect is, however, minimal as it is solely concerned with the use and development of land.
- 17.20 The second priority of the Strategy is to encourage the recycling and re-use of waste materials. The Council has a target of achieving recycling or re-use of 25% of household waste by the year 2000, in line with Government guidance. The Council is pledged to do this, and if possible to achieve a higher percentage, as outlined in its statutory Recycling Plan.
- 17.21 The primary reason for Policy WMT2 is to reduce the reliance on other disposal methods, and, therefore, to reduce the amount of polluting emissions inherent in any method of waste disposal of putrescible material. The opportunities to develop further landfill facilities are diminishing, and particularly so within Wirral, where there are no longer any natural containment sites available and the vast majority of the Borough is underlain by a major aquifer. The result is that these factors require a much higher degree of pre-engineering of landfill sites, which means that the cost of landfill is increasing vis-à-vis other forms of disposal. The Council is, therefore, committed in the longer term to reducing the reliance on landfill as the primary method of waste disposal.
- 17.22 The other primary method of disposal is incineration. Whilst the control of emissions from incineration processes is not a planning matter, the Council is particularly concerned about the possible effects of such emissions on surrounding land-uses, which is properly within the purview of the Local Planning Authority under the national planning advice expressed in PPG23. This, together with the identified sufficiency of operational landfill capacity during the UDP period, leads the Council to believe that facilities for the incineration of municipal waste are not required in the Plan period.
- 17.23 Recycling and re-use of waste materials, therefore, represents an important option in the waste management cycle. Moreover, it represents a more sustainable use of resources than some other methods of disposal. However, it is recognised that there are limitations. Obviously, not all waste materials

can be recycled or re-used; markets for materials so treated have to be available; and the process cannot be considered sustainable if the energy used in the recycling/ re-use process is greater than would be required to provide the same materials by other processes. All of these matters are addressed in the Council's Plan for Recycling, which was first published in 1992, and has recently been updated.

- 17.24 In order to foster recycling and re-use of waste materials, the Local Planning Authority will encourage development of waste treatment facilities which comprise these concepts. However, there will be due regard to whether the local transport network is capable of accommodating the traffic likely to be generated, and to all other environmental considerations, including residential amenity. In all cases, the Council will have due regard to any environmental consequences associated with recycling, and treatment methods associated with resource recovery, including any associated with the facilities or processes themselves.

#### **Policy WM4 - Provision of Recycling Collection Areas.**

**In the design of free-standing supermarkets and superstores with dedicated car parks, the Local Planning Authority will require the provision of a suitable area to accommodate facilities for the collection of, at least, waste glass, cans and paper for recycling.**

#### **POLICY WM4 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.25 The Council's strategy and its target, as stated in its statutory Recycling Plan, to achieve 25% recycling of household waste by the year 2000 will involve increasing the opportunities for separation of recyclable materials at central points within the Borough, and instituting separation of materials by individual householders at the point of collection. Achievement of the target, however, will only be possible with the full involvement of the Local Authority, industry and individuals, and will require substantially increased resources.
- 17.26 Car parks in Key Town Centres and other shopping centres, and at free-standing supermarkets and superstores present the most convenient opportunities for providing collection points for recyclable materials. Policy WM4 is, therefore, designed to increase the number of central collection facilities, thereby adding to the achievement of the Council's strategy, and will also increase the opportunities for non-car-borne residents to make use of these facilities. It is also in line with national planning advice in the revised PPG6, issued in July 1993.

### **Policy WM5 - Criteria for Waste Reception Centres**

**In assessing proposals for further waste reception centres within the Borough, in addition to assessment of the transport and environmental implications of such proposals, the Local Planning Authority will pay particular attention to evaluation of the need for such facilities.**

#### **POLICY WM5 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.27 The MWDA policy in the Waste Disposal Plan is that, throughout Merseyside, one of these facilities should be located within three miles of any resident. Three such facilities are in operation within Wirral, at West Kirby, Bidston and Clatterbridge. The only areas of the Borough not within three miles of one of these facilities is a small area of north Heswall/ Pensby and a very small area of south Eastham. There is also a difficulty, particularly in those areas, of identifying suitable sites within the rigorous environmental and transport criteria necessary to ensure a successful development.
- 17.28 The Council will, however, continue to encourage the enhancement of existing waste reception centres, in particular by improving facilities for the separation of waste materials suitable for subsequent recycling or re-use, in consultation with the private contractors who will, in the future, be operating these facilities.

### **Policy WM6 - Criteria for Waste Transfer Stations**

**In assessing planning applications for the development of waste transfer stations, the Local Planning Authority will pay particular regard to environmental and transport considerations. In addition, the following considerations will be required:**

- (i) **the site should not be located in close proximity to residential premises; and**
- (ii) **where the Local Planning Authority considers that nuisance may be caused to surrounding land users by reason of noise, fumes, dirt, odours, grit and wind-blown material, all operations in respect of waste transfer activities should be carried out within a building and not on an open site. Where this is not the case, an open site may be acceptable, but in any case, must be securely fenced to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority for reasons of security, public safety and the prevention of environmental contamination by wind-blown material.**

#### **POLICY WM6 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.29 Waste transfer stations may present particular environmental problems unless their siting and operations are carefully controlled. Such problems can manifest themselves in terms of visual intrusion, noise, dust, dirt, odours,



wind-blown material, transport of waste by heavy goods vehicles and general nuisance. Policy WM6 is, therefore, designed to provide criteria to minimise such adverse environmental effects.

### **Policy WM7 - Criteria for Clinical and Chemical Waste Incinerators**

**In assessing planning applications for clinical and chemical waste incinerators, the Local Planning Authority will be guided in the first instance by assessment of all environmental and highway considerations. In addition, because of the specialised nature of the waste involved, the Local Planning Authority will have particular regard to the following requirements:**

- (i) the Local Planning Authority will need to be convinced that emissions from the disposal operation will not have unacceptable environmental effects on surrounding land-uses; and**
- (ii) the applicant will be required to demonstrate the need for the facility in a sub-regional or regional context, and that the particular site of the proposal is the optimum environmental location within that context.**

### **POLICY WM7 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.30 Clinical and chemical wastes are hazardous and in some cases toxic and possibly with trace amounts of low level radioactivity. For the foreseeable future, the recommended method of disposal is by incineration. Other methods of disposal are being investigated, but none is tried and tested. Incineration is recommended by Central Government in Waste Management Paper 25 (Clinical Waste) and in PPG23 on Planning and Pollution Controls; by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution in its Report No. 17 (Incineration of Waste); and by the EC in its Fifth Action Programme, published in February 1993.
- 17.31 In view of the nature of the waste and the processes involved in incinerating it, environmental concerns are paramount. Whilst it is not the function of the planning system to duplicate or superimpose emission standards which are more properly the province of other statutory authorities, most notably the Environment Agency, the UDP has a legitimate role in ensuring that such emissions do not affect land-use to the detriment of the local population or visitors. Of particular concern is to ensure that wind-borne emissions do not adversely affect agricultural and horticultural products or the soil, thereby causing contamination in the food chain.
- 17.32 To the present, there has been a multitude of small incinerators dealing 'in-house' with such wastes, particularly clinical waste incinerators at various hospitals throughout Merseyside. With the introduction of much stricter emission standards through EU legislation, small incinerators have already been closed. Existing medium and large incinerators will need

greatly enhanced emission standards or will be closed. The Royal Commission Report mentioned earlier, strongly advocates that the way forward is to build a limited number of larger incinerators serving a wider area and that the "proximity principle" should only be a broad aim rather than an overriding consideration in respect of such facilities.

- 17.33 The arisings of such wastes are relatively small in relation to the total waste stream. The question of need, therefore, becomes more pressing where a smaller number of facilities serve a larger catchment area. Need should be looked at on a Merseyside or even a North West Regional level. Although the question of need for a development is not normally a land-use planning matter, PPG23 concedes that need could be a material consideration in relation to proposed developments which are required to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations, 1988. Such incinerators fall within this category under Schedule 1 of those Regulations.

#### **Policy WM8 - Criteria for Sewage Treatment Facilities.**

**In assessing proposals for sewage treatment facilities, the Local Planning Authority will have regard to all environmental factors, whilst recognising the limitations imposed on site location.**

#### **POLICY WM8 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.34 The responsibility for sewage treatment within the Borough lies with North West Water Limited and Dwr Cwmru (Welsh Water Limited). Under the EU Urban Wastewater Directive, it will be necessary for sewage to at least undergo primary treatment before being deposited in "sensitive" sea areas. Site locations are already established at existing sewage works and outfalls, which limits site choice. The Local Planning Authority will, therefore, pay particular attention to environmental, design and landscaping considerations in assessing proposed developments.
- 17.35 The Local Planning Authority will also have regard to the Water Companies' proposed capital programmes. At present, proposals to provide secondary treatment facilities are as follows:
- Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead - outline planning permission has been granted and construction is proposed to begin before the year 2000
  - Beaconsfield, New Ferry - proposed to begin within ten to fifteen years
  - Long Sea Outfall, Meols - a primary treatment works is proposed to begin within the UDP period
  - Target Road, Heswall - already has primary treatment but construction is proposed to begin before the year 2000 (Welsh Water Limited)

- 17.36 The Local Planning Authority will continue to work closely with the Water Companies to facilitate these developments resulting in significant improvements to the aquatic environment around Wirral.

#### **Policy WM9 - Criteria for Sewage Sludge Disposal Facilities**

**In evaluating proposals for sewage sludge disposal facilities, the Local Planning Authority will have particular regard to the environmental consequences of the process and to a high quality of design. In the case of proposals for sewage sludge incinerators, the Local Planning Authority will additionally have regard to the following requirements:**

- (i) the Local Planning Authority will need to be convinced that emissions from the disposal operation will not have unacceptable environmental effects on surrounding land-uses; and**
- (ii) the applicant will be required to demonstrate the need for the facility in a sub-regional or regional context, and that the particular site of the proposal is the optimum environmental location within that context.**

#### **POLICY WM9 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

- 17.37 At present, sewage sludge from the whole of the Mersey Basin area is piped to Sandon Dock in Liverpool and then dumped in designated areas in the Irish Sea. The Government has agreed that all sludge dumping at sea will cease by the end of 1998.
- 17.38 The Water Companies are presently assessing the feasibility of alternative methods of sludge disposal, including landfill, agricultural application, composting and incineration. When complete, the Companies will be in a position to plan investment in new plant to dispose of the sludge. The exact requirement for Wirral is not yet known, or indeed if there will be any need for new facilities. Sludge from the Target Road primary treatment plant is already disposed of by application to agricultural land, but it is doubtful if this method would be practicable for Wirral's three other treatment works, primarily due to heavy contamination of the sludge with heavy metals from such a highly industrialised area.
- 17.39 Sludge disposal by any method can give rise to environmental nuisance or pollution. The Local Planning Authority will, therefore, carefully evaluate proposals to ensure such effects are mitigated. Particular attention will be paid to siting and design of plant, and measures to minimise pollution. The additional requirements regarding incineration of sewage sludge have the same justification as for clinical and chemical waste incinerators, and are outlined in the reasoned justification to Policy WM7, above.

### **Policy WM10 - Requirements for the Environmental Assessment of Waste Disposal Facilities**

**Under the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988, the Local Planning Authority will require any proposal for a waste disposal/treatment facility falling within Schedule 1 of the Regulations to submit a statutory Environmental Impact Statement to accompany the planning application. Similarly, any such proposal falling within Schedule 2 of the Regulations, where the proposal is large scale and would have significant environmental implications, may also require a statutory Environmental Impact Statement to be submitted.**

**In other cases, the Local Planning Authority will request applicants to submit a statement of the environmental consequences of the proposal.**

#### **POLICY WM10 - REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

17.40 Any form of waste treatment or disposal will give rise to some form of pollution and, therefore, have environmental effects. The Council views the protection of the environment as of the highest priority. The Local Planning Authority will endeavour to minimise pollution and all other adverse environmental effects arising from waste treatment and disposal both during and after operations have ceased.

17.41 Under the Regulations there is a statutory duty for applicants to support their proposals with an Environmental Impact Statement for the following developments in respect of waste management:

##### Schedule 1

- an installation designed solely for the permanent storage or disposal of radioactive wastes
- an installation for the incineration or chemical treatment of special waste
- landfill for the deposit of special waste

##### Schedule 2

- any other waste treatment or disposal installation where annual throughput of waste exceeds 75,000 tonnes, or where the proposal is sited in a particularly sensitive location in relation to other land uses

17.42 Such is the Council's concern for the environment, however, it considers that all other planning applications for waste treatment or disposal should be accompanied by a statement of the environmental effects of each proposal and the Local Planning Authority will request such a statement in these cases.

17.43 In both statutory and non-statutory Environmental Statements, the topics to

be covered showing environmental effects are:

- human beings
- flora
- fauna
- soil
- water
- air
- climate
- the landscape
- the interaction between any of the foregoing
- material assets
- cultural heritage

17.44 Further explanatory guidance can be found in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 45.

