

**Halton Council, Liverpool City Council, Knowsley Council,
Sefton Council, St.Helens Council and Wirral Council**

Joint Merseyside & Halton Waste Local Plan

Post-Adoption Environmental Statement

A Statement relating to the Sustainability Appraisal /

Strategic Environmental Assessment of the

Joint Merseyside & Halton Waste Local Plan, as required by

the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes

**Regulations 2004: Regulation 16(4) and Town and Country Planning
(Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012: Regulation 26(a)**

July 2013

Prepared by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service on behalf of Halton,
Knowsley, Liverpool City, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral Councils

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1. Introduction & Context

The Waste Local Plan

- 1.1 The Joint Merseyside & Halton Waste Local Plan ('the WLP') has been produced by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (Merseyside EAS) on behalf of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral Councils. It sets out a waste planning strategy to 2028 for managing the principal streams of hazardous, non-hazardous and other wastes created in the 6 authorities, and makes provision for managing wastes originating outside the WLP area where logistical and economic reasons, or the presence of existing waste management capacity means this is feasible.
- 1.2 The WLP comprises a vision and overarching strategic objectives; a spatial strategy for distributing new waste management capacity which reflects the pattern of arisings and the location of existing capacity; and a set of 17 planning policies some or all of which may apply to new development and to any variation of the function or scale of existing facilities. The WLP also contains 18 allocations of sites in appropriate locations for new or expanded waste development which would support built facilities. Finally there are 2 allocations for inert landfill sites in the plan.
- 1.3 Work on the WLP began in early 2006 as a joint planning collaboration between the five Merseyside Unitary Authorities. Halton Council (also a Unitary Authority) joined the plan preparation process later in that year. Plan development occurred in the following principal stages shown below:
- **Issues & Options Report** (April-May 2007): Alternative approaches to key policy areas;
 - **Spatial Strategy & Sites Report** (November 2008-January 2009): Presentation of draft Vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy, and initial site allocations for built facilities;
 - **Preferred Options Report** (May-July 2010): Amended vision, etc., preferred policy positions including development management policies, revised built facility site allocations and landfill allocations;
 - **Preferred Options 2 Report** (May-July 2011): Changes to 6 proposed site allocations: 4 new sites introduced and 2 withdrawn;
 - **Publication of Plan** (November 2011-January 2012): Draft WLP policies and site allocations.
- 1.4 The WLP was submitted to the Secretary of State on 14 February 2012 and Elizabeth Ord LLB(Hons) LLM MA DipTUS was appointed as the Planning Inspector charged with undertaking an independent examination of the Plan. The Examination Hearings on the WLP took place at St Helens Town Hall in the second half of June 2012. As a result of issues raised by the Inspector and in representations on the plan, a number of Main Modifications were proposed which necessitated a further period of consultation between November 2012 and January 2013. A report on responses and issues raised during this consultation was submitted to the Planning Inspector on 17 January 2013.

- 1.5 The Examination closed on 4 March 2013 when the Merseyside & Halton authorities received the [Inspector's Report](#). The report concluded that the WLP complies with the requirements stated in Section 20 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and that it is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Inspector concluded that the WLP, as revised to include the Main Modifications, is sound.
- 1.6 The WLP has been formally adopted by each of the six collaborating authorities and came into force across Merseyside and Halton with effect from July 18th 2013. It now forms part of the statutory Local Plans in each authority and will be used in conjunction with each authority's Local Plan and its associated district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications for waste management facilities and for ensuring that other developments conform to the sustainable waste management policies which the WLP promotes.

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.7 European Directive 2001/42/EC "*on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment*" (otherwise known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive) introduced a statutory obligation on Member State governments and their lower-tier planning authorities to conduct an assessment of the environmental impacts of certain strategies and plans. The Directive applies to those plans and programmes prepared by public bodies in the UK which meet the following criteria:
- they are '*prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and is required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions*' (Article 2(b) refers); and
 - they concern '*town and country planning or land use ... which sets the framework for future development consent of projects*' (Article 5.2(a) refers).
- The WLP meets these criteria.
- 1.8 Under Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, where a Local Planning Authority is preparing a new Local Plan, it is also mandatory for the plan to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) throughout the course of its production appraising the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan from the outset. This process ensures that decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development.
- 1.9 While SA and SEA are distinct processes many of their requirements overlap and they can be undertaken in conjunction provided the assessment of environmental impacts covered by the latter is extended to include social and economic dimensions necessary for SA.
- 1.10 The WLP has been subject to this combined assessment process (hereafter referred to as SA/SEA) at each stage during its production, and has largely been prepared by independent consultants. Merseyside EAS also updated the Scoping Report twice during the plan preparation period, and has prepared this Adoption Statement. A list of the SA/SEA reports produced at the various stages of Plan preparation is provided at Appendix A.

1.11 The combined assessment has played an important role in providing a sound evidence base for the Plan, informing the evaluation of alternatives, and contributing to the definition of the overall Vision, Strategic Objectives, Spatial Strategy and Waste Management Principles. The SA/SEA has played an important role in site allocations because many of the Sustainability Objectives defined in the initial stage of the process were used as evaluation criteria in the site assessment methodology.

1.12 Paragraph 13 of the examining Planning Inspector's report states that:

"The SA has been carried out by external consultants and repeated/updated as required at each consultation stage, including the main modification consultation stage. The SA reports are all available in the documentation library and have not been challenged at any stage. The approach to and implementation of the SA is adequate."

1.13 The rest of this Statement provides the detail required by the SEA Regulations on adoption of a programme or plan to demonstrate how the following requirements have been met:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan;
- How the environmental report has been taken into account;
- How opinions expressed in response to consultation have been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered; and
- The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan.

2. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan

Preparation of the WLP has been informed by SA / SEA to ensure appropriate consideration of social and economic, as well as environmental, issues. These matters have been addressed in defining the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Spatial Strategy, Waste Management and Development Management Policies, and site allocations.

2.1 The SA / SEA commenced at the same time that initial work on the WLP got under way in Spring 2006. Stage A of the process involved compiling an evidence base that defined the local baseline conditions with regard to social, environmental and economic factors; using this detail to identify areas of sustainability problems, and from this to define the set of Sustainability Objectives (hereafter 'the SA Objectives') which have been used to assess policies and site allocations subsequently. This work occurred between June and December 2006 and included workshop sessions for which invitations were issued to a range of stakeholders including local, regional and national governmental and regulatory bodies covering waste and non-waste activities, local Agenda 21 and Sustainability Panel coordinators, representatives from waste planning functions in neighbouring authorities, the waste management industry, third sector representatives, and the relevant healthcare trusts.

- 2.2 The range of criteria covered in both parts of this work included the environmental factors identified in Annex A of the SEA Directive (biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, waste, air, climate, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape, and their collective interaction). Undertaking SA required additional consideration of matters such as public exclusion, reduction of crime, job creation and stimulation of business growth.
- 2.3 Work on the WLP began when the local unitary authorities were preparing their Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). This situation had two implications for the SA/SEA. First, it was agreed that the SA Objectives should have a similar range to those being used to assess Core Strategies and other LDF documents that were then under development. In practice this meant that the SA Objectives also contained a number of criteria which extended the scope of the SA beyond that which would be typical for a Waste Plan appraisal. This matter was particularly evident when assessing the site allocations. The second implication was that the other LDF documents (now Local Plans) were also being framed to contain a range of generic development management policies addressing noise, air, transport and other impacts that could also be applicable to new waste management development.
- 2.4 The SA / SEA baseline, supporting evidence base, other relevant programs and plans, and the SA Objectives were documented in a Scoping Report which was completed in early 2007 prior to the first public consultation on the WLP. A revision, containing updated information about key sustainability criteria, was completed in July 2009 prior to consultation on the WLP Preferred Options report. In July 2011, prior to publication of the draft Submission version of the WLP, a further revision incorporated an updated environmental baseline and a review of the implications of additional and new policies, plans and programmes relevant to the Plan.
- 2.5 Stage B in the SA / SEA process involved assessing the initial objectives and policy alternatives against the SA Objectives to evaluate their relative impacts, identify mitigation measures to address adverse impacts as well as ways of improving and where possible maximising sustainability benefits. This work was undertaken in early 2007 and a Sustainability Commentary was produced in April 2007 which was published in parallel with public consultation on the WLP Issues & Options report which took place in late Spring/early Summer 2007.
- 2.6 Stage C involved a more detailed evaluation of the preferred policy directions, sector-specific policies and site allocations which occurred in two stages. The SA / SEA assessments were a key input to the next stage of plan development which involved defining the initial Vision, Strategic Objectives and Spatial Strategy, as well as policy on Energy from Waste, industrial, commercial and mixed use developments, waste minimisation and sustainable waste transport. The proposed Vision and Strategic Objectives, and three alternative Spatial Strategies were published in the Spatial Strategy & Sites report which underwent public consultation in November 2008 to January 2009. These elements of the WLP, together with an initial set of site allocations were subject to assessment against the SA Objectives by independent consultants.
- 2.7 The SA Objectives were fundamental to the assessment of candidate sites for new waste development. A preliminary review of sites, undertaken in 2005, identified approximately

2200 potential development locations. This list was reviewed with planning officers in each district from late 2008 to mid 2009 to identify which sites were still suitable; which were no longer available; which should be removed as duplicates or erroneous sites; and whether any new sites had been identified. The resulting 'long list' of verified possible locations totalled about 950 sites.

- 2.8 A comprehensive criteria based site assessment methodology was developed as a means of sorting the long list within each individual district into one ordered list weighted by site score. The method is described in full in the built facilities site selection methodology (PO1-005). The assessment criteria were chosen to directly reflect the range of relevant SA Objectives. Particular emphasis was given to environmental criteria. The assessment process used the proximity of a site to sensitive receptors, protected assets in the built and natural environments, greenspace, etc. to comply with the SEA requirement to assess these impacts. The range of criteria was expanded to include a number of other factors relevant to the wider scope of SA, such as proximity to areas of deprivation and distance to convenient public transport routes and hubs.
- 2.9 The plan development process integrated the SA Objectives fully into the site assessment in order that the proposed allocations would be drawn from those in the most sustainable locations. Inevitably, there is competition for land resource between different uses and the local authorities were not able to nominate all of the most sustainable sites for waste management use. This is because they were not in appropriate locations with regard to the evolving spatial land use strategy for the district and the same factors which made these sites suitable and sustainable for waste management uses also rendered them suitable for a wide variety of other uses. The initial recommendations for site allocations were also presented in the Spatial Strategy & Sites report with 45 proposed site allocations identified. As stated above, all sites in the 'long list' had already been subject to SA-based evaluation by the team preparing the WLP. During the SA/SEA process the availability of sites continued to change and a flexible approach was followed in response to these changes. These 45 locations, plus a further 10 which were considered but later withdrawn, also underwent a separate SA / SEA evaluation by independent consultants, and the recommendations taken into account in decisions on which sites should be taken forward as preferred allocations.

The second part of Stage C involved preparing the Preferred Options report which had three main components listed in the table below.

Component	Status	How SA / SEA dealt with it
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision, Strategic Objectives & Spatial Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised to reflect consultation responses and external consultants' recommendations of SA / SEA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-assessed to take account of changes made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined, together with alternatives where realistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment of policies and alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site allocations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer allocations to reflect revised assessment of need. Several of the original allocations were replaced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment of all new allocations

- 2.11 Two site allocations were withdrawn following Preferred Options consultation and their replacements were subject to further consultation in the “Preferred Options (2)” process in Summer 2011. One site (S1) was a new allocation and underwent independent SA / SEA. The other (H1) had been previously assessed and consulted upon at earlier stages of plan development so was not re-assessed.
- 2.12 Stages C and D of the SA process also involved preparing the SA Report and consulting on the draft WLP and its associated SA / SEA.

3. How the Environmental Report has been taken into account

- 3.1 The findings of the SA/SEA have informed development of the WLP at each stage, contributing to subsequent amendment or expansion of policies and site allocations alongside consultation responses. The sections below provide detail of how the SA/SEA influenced strategy, broad policy and development management matters as the WLP evolved. As explained in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.10, the SA/SEA was also incorporated into the site selection process, and each allocated site was evaluated independently by consultants undertaking the assessment.

Issues and Options

- 3.2 This initial stage identified nine areas of broad policy, proposing between two and four alternatives for each. The issues covered included waste minimisation, self-sufficiency, spatial distribution of allocated sites across the WLP area, etc. Certain SA/SEA findings directly affected the definition of the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Spatial Strategy though these were implemented at the next stage (see below), and supported by consultation responses on the WLP itself. Options recommended by the SA/SEA with regard to development management policies were held over until preparation of the Preferred Options report, but were assessed prior to publication.

Spatial Strategy & Sites

- 3.3 At this stage the initial Vision, Strategic Objectives, and overarching Waste Management and Spatial Strategies were first put forward. The consultation report identified the proposed conclusions from the Sustainability Commentary concerning the Vision and Sustainability Objectives and proposed revisions incorporating the recommended changes. The consultation report also identified the SA/SEA assessment of three spatial strategy options, including the preferred solution, which was taken forward subsequently.

Preferred Options

- 3.4 The changes resulting from SA/SEA at the previous stage were implemented in the Preferred Options and drew no further recommendations for altering the text of these core components of the WLP. The SA/SEA therefore focused instead on the key generic and development management policies which had emerged at this stage. Key recommendations from the SA/SEA were again incorporated into the consultation report resulting in additional changes to the Vision, reiterating the changes that had already been made to some of the Strategic Objectives. New recommendations concerned: the need to assess cumulative impacts if the preferred spatial strategy was taken forward as it would cluster waste sites; the appropriate approach to delivering carbon reduction through the sustainable transport of waste; and the

deliverability of Energy from Waste (EfW) capacity within the context of the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) PFI procurement and non-municipal facilities of this type. Recommendations and alternatives for development management policies which were consulted on at this stage were subsequently incorporated into a revised draft WLP.

Preferred Options 2

- 3.5 This stage involved consultation on two replacement site allocations (S1 and H1), one additional sub-regional site for Liverpool (L1) and one additional district site for Sefton (F3). These additional sites had not been approved by the relevant district at Preferred Options stage. Of the replacement sites, one (H1) had already been assessed prior to consultation at the Spatial Strategy & Sites stage. The re-assessment undertaken by the consultants did not recommend any changes to the WLP.

Publication of the draft Plan

- 3.6 The only action undertaken at this stage involved incorporating the four new site allocations and associated appraisal details into the Environmental Report. Consequently there were no changes which might need to be reflected in the WLP.

Main Modifications

- 3.7 Eight main modifications and an allocation for a replacement sub-regional site were re-assessed at this time. The consultants undertaking the assessment concluded that all of the changes made small improvements to the overall sustainability of the WLP, but they did not identify any further changes that were necessary.

4. How opinions expressed and results of public consultation on the draft Plan and Environmental Report have been taken into account

- 4.1 The WLP has been prepared in accordance with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2008 and replaced in 2012). The WLP and public consultations at each development stage have been produced in conformity with the Statements of Community Involvement of each of the six collaborating authorities.

- 4.2 Article 5.4 of the SEA Directive requires the involvement of nominated statutory consultees which have environmental responsibilities both during preparation of the assessment framework and on the emerging plan. These consultees are the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England. Each of these bodies were involved in defining the SA Objectives and commented on the Scoping Report.

- 4.3 A number of other organisations and bodies were involved in defining the initial scope of the SA/SEA and these have been referred to in paragraph 2.2 above. These bodies were consulted on the content of the initial Scoping Report and of the proposed SA Objectives between November 2006 and January 2007. A total of 79 comments were received from nine organisations, 30 of which resulted in immediate changes to the Scoping Report. A further 16 were deferred for re-evaluation until the next amendment of the Report.

- 4.4 At each subsequent stage of consultation, all of these bodies received individual notification – in addition to being consulted on the WLP - that an SA/SEA report had been prepared or revised and comments were invited. This notification process was extended to include representatives of RSPB, Friends of the Earth and the Wirral Society (representing CPRE).
- 4.5 A revised Scoping Report was published in support of the Issues & Options consultation process in Spring 2007. The initial Report has since been revised twice: in early 2010, prior to consultation on Preferred Options (summer 2010); and in Summer 2011, prior to consultation on the Published draft of WLP. The most recent version can be viewed at http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive, document PS-004. Earlier versions can be provided in electronic format on request.
- 4.6 The statements below summarise how consultation on the SA/SEA was conducted. At each stage an initial draft of the evolving SA/SEA Environmental Report was sent to the three statutory consultees referred to in paragraph 4.2 prior to public consultation on the WLP. Where possible their comments resulted in immediate revision of the Environmental Report prior to public consultation. Otherwise changes were made as the Report was revised subsequently after public consultation.
- 4.7 The collective consultation processes drew virtually no responses on the specific content and recommendations of the Environmental Report as it was revised at each stage. However, at each stage, a number of responses commenting on the WLP expressed support for the broad content and conclusions of the SA/SEA work to date.

Issues & Options Consultation

- 4.8 The initial Issues & Options (I&O) were subject to SA/SEA and a Sustainability Statement was produced summarising the assessment of the key strategic and policy options. This Statement, together with the SA, were published in support of consultation on the I&O stage of the WLP in April 2007. A total of 101 comments were received at this time, though none related to the SA/SEA.

Spatial Strategy & Sites Consultation

- 4.9 A draft Environmental Report was prepared which summarised the assessment of the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Spatial Strategy and proposed the allocation of 45 sites for waste management use. This report was presented for public consultation in late 2008. A total of 184 responses were received of which 67 were from organisations and the rest from members of the public. Again, none related directly to the SA/SEA but some responses on the WLP consultation expressed agreement with the interim recommendations of the SA/SEA. Analysis of the responses can be viewed at http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive, document PO1-006.

Preferred Options Consultation

- 4.10 Prior to this consultation process substantial changes were made to the list of site allocations for built facilities which resulted in withdrawal of some of the original proposed allocations, and subsequent withdrawal of their replacements. Irrespective of whether a site was retained, all sites proposed as allocations underwent SA/SEA.

- 4.11 A further revision of the Environmental Report was made at the Preferred Options stage, including new assessment of sites for built facilities and inert landfill. The assessment also covered revisions to the Vision, Strategic Objectives, etc. as a result of the previous consultation stage, and various development management policy options. The Environmental Report was published alongside the emerging WLP in summer 2010 and was also supported by an updated Scoping Report.
- 4.12 The Environment Agency expressed concern that it was unclear how the assessment process integrated SA/SEA with a parallel Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which had been prepared by independent consultants, drawing on similar assessments undertaken by each of the local authorities. Merseyside EAS prepared a 'Frontispiece' which explained the inter-relationships to demonstrate that the combined assessments met the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 25 on flood risk¹. The content of this document was agreed with the Environment Agency and can be viewed at http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive, document PS-023.
- 4.13 The consultation process drew 139 responses of which 64 were from organisations and the rest from members of the public. An analysis of the responses can be viewed at http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive, document PO2-007. One response from a developer noted that the SA/SEA report proposed restricting the range of waste management activities at one of the sub-regional site allocations. Following subsequent discussion, and in the light of the extent of local opposition expressed through consultation responses, this site was subsequently withdrawn and replaced with another allocation (see Preferred Options 2 below). No responses to the revised Environmental Report were received at this stage. A single response proposing amendments to the Scoping Report was received from Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority, now known as Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA). Minor factual corrections were implemented in all cases. The response identified a number of additional planning, policy or strategic documents which should be taken into account. Most of these were included in the amended Report where they were not already subsumed by overarching national or EU policy which was already represented in the report.
- 4.14 No responses were made questioning the content or recommendations of the interim SA/SEA report.

Preferred Options 2 Consultation

- 4.15 This supplementary consultation was necessary due to the replacement of two site allocations proposed at the previous stage (in St.Helens and Halton) and the introduction of two new proposed allocations in Sefton and Liverpool. The Environmental Report and Scoping Report were not updated at this time but the results of SA/SEA assessment of the new allocations were documented in an Addendum report to the Environmental Report. In response to this consultation, a total of 2747 responses were received from members of the public and organisations, none of which questioned the content or recommendations of the

¹ Planning Policy Statement 25 was the principal policy guidance document at this time. It has now been incorporated as a Technical Appendix to the National Planning Policy Framework without modification to its contents.

SA/SEA directly. Most responses concerned were from residents living close to one of the two new site allocations. A report on consultation responses on the WLP at this stage can be viewed at:

http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive, document PS-008.

Consultation on the Published Draft Plan

- 4.16 The Environmental Report was amended to include the replacement site assessments, and the Scoping Report was updated again, primarily bringing information about waste management and arisings up to date and with modification of certain demographic and environmental criteria where new data had been released in the period since the previous update.
- 4.17 The revised Environmental Report again underwent a preliminary review by the three statutory consultees. Natural England largely approved the content but repeated earlier requests for more emphasis on the conservation of soil resources. This request was not taken forward because it was considered that the SA Objectives already addressed the matter by favouring development on brownfield land which avoided development in the Green Belt and/or which took account of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and because District Local Plans would contain policies to this effect which the WLP did not need to duplicate.
- 4.18 English Heritage expressed concern that recommendations in the Environmental Report concerning two sites in the North Liverpool docklands and one in Sefton docklands did not make sufficient requirement for future protection of heritage assets in the vicinity. Appropriate statements were agreed with English Heritage but could not be included in the draft plan and relevant site profiles at this stage for procedural reasons. Changes were made to the Environmental Report and the proposals were presented to the Planning Inspector undertaking the Examination of the WLP as a number of additional modifications, all of which were subsequently approved.

Main Modifications Consultation

- 4.19 Following the Examination Hearings on the WLP, eight main modifications to policy wording were implemented and a replacement sub-regional site allocation was introduced following the withdrawal of landowner support for the previous allocation.
- 4.20 These changes underwent SA/SEA re-assessment, and the consultants undertaking this work also reviewed the larger number of additional modifications and confirmed that none of the latter would affect their original assessments. A further, final revision of the Environmental Report was prepared in Autumn 2012, circulated to the statutory consultees for initial review, and then presented alongside the amended draft WLP for public consultation between November 2012 and January 2013. A total of 23 responses were received on the WLP in response to this process.
- 4.21 Natural England reiterated their comment about soil quality, referring also to other environmental criteria, with respect to specific policies in the WLP and, by inference to the SA/SEA. The Planning Inspector subsequently agreed that these matters were already

addressed directly by policy text and statements in the WLP, or by development management policies in other local planning documents which the authorities were already preparing.

- 4.22 Natural England also requested that the appraisal of the replacement allocation should make specific reference to protection of nearby local nature designations, and this change was made prior to the issue of the revised SA/SEA report for public consultation.
- 4.23 The statements above (paragraphs 4.1-4.2.2) refer to consultation responses on the evolving Environmental Report. Merseyside EAS has produced reports summarising the number and nature of responses received at each stage of consultation from Issues & Options (2007) to Main Modifications (2013). These reports provide additional information on opinions received on environmental and other issues. These reports have been identified previously in this section and URLs have been provided by which they may be accessed.

5. How the results of any transboundary consultations have been taken into account

- 5.1 This requirement is only relevant for where a plan may have significant effect on the environment of another Member State. Wales has transposed the SEA Directive through separate legislation to that enacted in England, and the nature conservancy role is undertaken by a separate body. Therefore it is treated as a separate Member State in the context of this Statement.
- 5.2 The Environment Agency acts as the statutory consultee on environmental matters in both England and Wales and was consulted at each stage in developing the plan and on the evolving SA / SEA process. Section 4 of this Environmental Statement explains how responses from this source were taken into account.
- 5.3 The Countryside Council for Wales was also consulted on the draft plan and the SA / SEA report supporting it at each stage. A single response was received at the final, Main Modifications stage, but this concerned matters relating to the Habitat Regulations Assessment only.
- 5.4 Wirral Council shares a boundary with Flintshire along the length of the Dee Estuary and consequently that county council was consulted on the SA / SEA Scoping Report and on the SA / SEA report at each stage, as well as on the draft plan. No responses were received.

6. The reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives considered

- 6.1 The wording of the SEA Directive, including the required content of the Adoption Statement, suggests that it would primarily apply to high-level programmes and plans that would undergo a single stage of consultation. In such circumstances it is entirely reasonable that the final reporting processes should make clear which alternatives have been considered and why some of them have been rejected. The SEA Directive does not anticipate the

approach taken in the UK in which assessment occurs in conjunction with Sustainability Appraisal, both of which are applied at several stages as a plan evolves through the development process. Consequently information on the alternatives considered has been presented and taken into account much earlier in the plan development process. This statement provides only a brief summary of the consideration of alternatives and signposts the reader to the original documents within which these considerations were made explicit.

6.2 Each consultation process has been supported by a library of documents that has enabled consultees to identify the results of SA/SEA, HRA and other assessments made at the preceding stage. Supporting text in the consultation reports has clarified the reasons for selecting a preferred option and has quoted relevant recommendations from the SA/SEA evaluation at the preceding stage to demonstrate how the choice of preferred option and the way it has been worded, has responded to the assessment process. Appendix A lists chronologically the SA/SEA reports produced during WLP preparation.

6.3 A chain of conformity demonstrating how assessments and responses to consultations at one stage have been taken forward to inform the next stage of plan development has been maintained throughout the process. The final version of the Environmental Report contains a series of tables that retraces the assessment process for strategic and policy alternatives, and which provides an audit trail, showing how the specific recommendations from the SA/SEA process have contributed to the choice of policy direction at each stage. This information can be viewed at:
http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpc_docarchive, in document MOD-003 (see Appendix A).

6.4 The final Environmental Report also identifies the set of site allocations first proposed at the Spatial Strategy & Sites consultation in late 2008. As PPS10 requires the WLP to be technologically neutral, the site selection process could only identify which waste management uses were not feasible or appropriate at a particular location. Consequently most of the allocations were regarded as suitable for one or more of the likely waste management uses. Subsequent review of the management need led to a reduction in the number of allocations proposed, but all of the allocated sites which were retained provide locations suitable for two or more alternative waste functions.

7. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan.

7.1 Implementation of the WLP will be monitored at regular intervals to check that its effects deliver its vision and strategic objectives, and that any adverse significant environmental impacts can be detected, and mitigation applied, promptly. Detail on the monitoring proposals is provided in Section 8 of the Environmental Report.

7.2 In line with previous statements, amalgamation of SA and SEA means that the monitoring proposals must also cover potentially significant social and economic factors, as well as indicating the scale of waste management activity. Monitoring of social factors includes any potential adverse impacts on human health which, together with environmental monitoring, meets the local authorities' obligations under Article 1 of the EU Waste Framework Directive.

- 7.3 Monitoring of the WLP will be carried out continuously and reported annually in conjunction with the six local authorities' Monitoring Report for their Local Plans in order that any remedial action affecting the plans can be coordinated with those being deployed to address other matters.
- 7.4 Responsibility for collecting monitoring information for the WLP will be largely devolved by the six local authorities to Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, which has prepared the Plan on their behalf. The Service is normally consulted on planning proposals for a wide range of developments and this will provide opportunities to collect data from the submitted applications, Environmental Impact Assessments, Design & Access and Planning Supporting Statements.
- 7.5 Section 8 in the final Environmental Report (see paragraph 6.3 for details of where it can be viewed) summarises the monitoring framework which is now proposed as a mechanism for tracking the significant environmental (and economic and social) effects of the WLP.

Appendix A.

List of SA/SEA reports produced during the course of the preparation of the Waste Local Plan.

All documents are available from the Document Archive held on the WLP Consultation Portal which can be accessed at:

http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/public_docs/wdpd_docarchive

Document	Filename/URL
Issues and Options Sustainability Commentary February 2007	IO-002-Sustainability Commentary v2-6_1 from MP 090207.pdf
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Spatial Strategy and Sites Report September 2008	SSS-002-Sust_App Main report.pdf
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD - Preferred Options December 2009	PO1-001-Draft SA report - Updated Jan 2010.pdf
PREFERRED OPTIONS 2: NEW SITES CONSULTATION Supplementary Report – Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment January 2011	PO2-008-Suppl Report on PO2 sites assessed under SEA_SA and HRA.doc
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD Proposed Submission Document August 2011	PS-003-Publications stage Waste DPD SA Report_v2.pdf
Summary of consultation on SA/SEA and how the results of assessment have been reflected in the waste DPD Addenda and Errata for above report November 2011	SUB-006-Reg. 30 summary report on SA.pdf (1) SUB-004-Combined Addenda and Errata for SA and HRA.pdf

<p>Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Re-issued report including assessment of main modifications following the Examination Hearings August 2012</p>	<p>MOD-003-Modifications SA Report.pdf</p>
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