

Statement of Common Ground Between Surrey County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council Concerning Strategic Policies for Waste Management

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1.0 Introduction and parties involved

- 1.1 National policy¹ states that: *“Local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.”* and *“Strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans.”*
- 1.2 National policy² expects that Local Plans will include ‘non-strategic’ and ‘strategic’ policies, and explains that strategic policies should.....*“set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:.....infrastructure”* and this includes *“for.....waste management”* and *“wastewater”*.
- 1.3 National Policy states: *“In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these.”*

¹ Paragraph 24 and 25 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework July 2018

² Paragraph 20 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework July 2018

- 1.4 This document represents a **Statement of Common Ground between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)** and concerns the strategic matter of waste management and helps ensure that sufficient waste management capacity is planned for in each area.
- 1.5 SCC and BCC are neighbouring waste planning authorities located in the south east England (See Figure 1) with responsibility for planning for the future management of waste in their areas by including relevant strategic policies in their Local Plans. SCC adopted the Surrey Waste Plan in 2008 and BCC adopted its Minerals and Waste Local Plan in 2006. SCC is currently updating its planning policies on waste management by preparing the Surrey Waste Local Plan (plan period to 2033) and BCC's new Minerals and Waste Local Plan (plan period to 2036) is currently at the independent examination stage.

2.0 Signatories

- 2.1 This statement is agreed by the SCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and BCC's **insert position of lead member**.

Councillor Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Surrey County Council

Councillor **insert name**, **insert position**, Buckinghamshire County Council

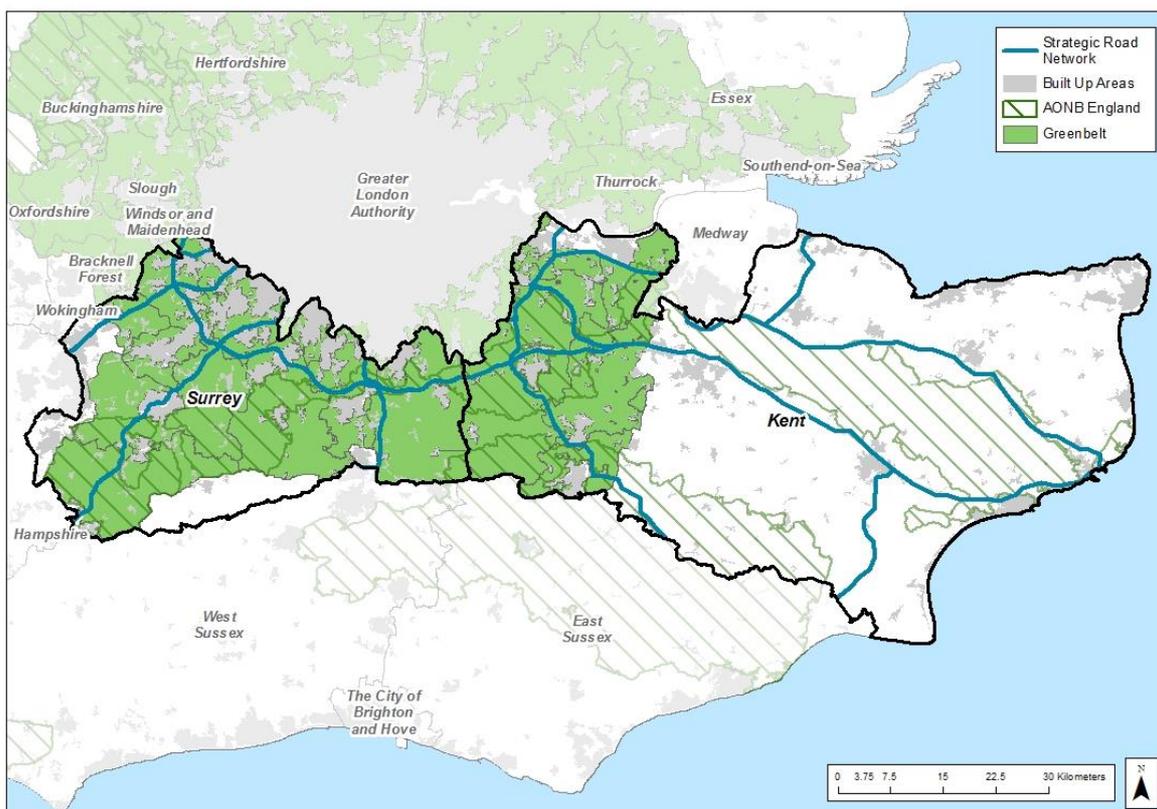
3.0 Strategic Geography

3.1 Surrey and Buckinghamshire are neighbouring counties in the south east of England (see Figure 1). There are good road connections, in particular the M25. Waste management data shows that a proportion of waste produced in Surrey is managed in Buckinghamshire – the movements for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017 are set out in Appendix 1. This cross boundary movement is typical of the way in which waste is managed, as it is subject to market forces, having no regard to administrative boundaries. This is recognised in National Planning Policy for Waste that expects waste planning authorities to: *“plan for the disposal of waste and the recovery of mixed municipal waste in line with the proximity principle, recognising that new facilities will need to serve catchment areas large enough to secure the economic viability of the plant;”*

3.2 Movements of waste also take place between Surrey and Buckinghamshire and other counties and areas.

Figure 1: Location of Surrey and Buckinghamshire

Replace map below with similar one showing relative locations of Surrey and Bucks



4.0 Strategic Matters

Net self sufficiency

4.1 Net self-sufficiency is a principle generally applied to waste planning that means an authority will plan for waste management facilities with sufficient capacity to manage an amount of waste that is equivalent to the amount predicted to arise within its area (irrespective of imports and exports). This helps ensure that sufficient waste management capacity is provided consistent with National Planning Policy for Waste.

4.2 The approach of net self-sufficiency in the south east was originally set out in the South East Plan and is now included in a Memorandum of Understanding³ between SCC, BCC and other waste planning authorities in the South East which includes the following:

“The Parties recognise that there will be a degree of cross-boundary movement of waste. In light of this, the Parties will plan on the basis of net self-sufficiency which assumes that within each waste local plan area the planning authority or authorities will plan for the management of an amount of waste which is equivalent to the amount arising in that plan area. All parties accept that when using this principle to test policy, it may not be possible to meet this requirement in full, particularly for hazardous and other specialist waste streams.”

4.3 This approach is taken by BCC in its emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan and by SCC in the adopted Surrey Waste Plan (2008) and the emerging Surrey Waste Local Plan. Both plans provide for the development of facilities that will manage waste produced within, and beyond, each area based on net self-sufficiency and in accordance with the waste hierarchy. Application of the waste hierarchy in determining waste capacity requirements ensures that waste is managed in the following order of preference:

Most sustainable

1. Prepared for reuse;
2. Recycled and/or composted;
3. Recovered in ways other than recycling/composting;
4. Disposed.

Least sustainable

4.4 SCC and BCC recognise that the application of net self-sufficiency does not mean that an exact equivalent amount of waste, of the same type, will be transported in both directions between Surrey and Buckinghamshire. It is possible that particular commercial conditions exist which mean more waste is transported to one authority than the other. However net self-sufficiency means that such a situation would, in principle, be broadly balanced by movements between other authorities.

³ Memorandum of Understanding between the Waste Planning Authorities of the South East of England, April 2017

4.5 Appendix 1 details reported movements of waste between Surrey and Buckinghamshire and both authorities agree that there are no planning reasons why these movements cannot continue in future subject to completion of certain landfills considered in the section below.

4.6 Currently more non-hazardous waste is exported from Surrey than is imported and a capacity gap therefore exists for recovery of residual waste. Policies, including the allocation of land for the management of waste, are included in the Surrey Waste Local Plan to address this matter. Buckinghamshire County Council is planning to achieve net self-sufficiency. In light of this neither SCC or BCC are specifically planning to meet the waste management needs of the other area but neither are they placing restrictions on development which constrain the origin of waste which may be managed by such development.

Non-Inert Waste Landfill

4.7 In Surrey there is only one non-inert landfill remaining at Patteson Court and this site has planning permission requiring restoration by 2030. In Buckinghamshire there are two non-inert waste landfills which are sufficient to meet requirements over the plan period to 2036.

4.8 The demand for non-inert waste landfill has declined markedly in recent years and this decline is likely to continue. No proposals for new sites (including proposals for allocations in waste local plans) have come forward in either Buckinghamshire or Surrey and there are no allocated sites for landfill in either the Surrey Waste Local Plan or the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, however proposals (including extensions or alterations of existing landfill sites) may come forward. The assessment of need for any new non-inert landfill would take account of whether there is already sufficient suitable capacity to deal with the residual waste. This assessment will take account of the fact that waste is transported increasingly long distances to landfill and so existing sites some distance away may be able to serve requirements in Surrey and Buckinghamshire and other neighbouring areas. This assessment will also need to consider impacts associated with vehicle movements.

4.9 SCC and BCC are collaborating on a Joint Position Statement concerning Non-hazardous Waste Landfill in the South East that is being facilitated by the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group.

Safeguarding

4.10 Each authority seeks to safeguard waste management capacity in its own area through robust policies in their respective development plans on waste management. This means the plans of both parties include a presumption against granting permission for other forms of development which could result in reductions in physical or operational capacity (either by reductions in numbers and size of sites or by reduction in site throughput or restrictions on operation). Where development is proposed that would result in a reduction in capacity the need for that capacity in meeting the needs of other areas will be taken into account.

Green Belt

- 4.11 It is recognised that the prevalence of Green Belt within Surrey (73% of Surrey is included within the Green Belt (see Figure 1)) presents a significant constraint and fewer opportunities may exist for the management of waste which are clearly consistent with national policy. Indeed, historic patterns of development suggest it is unlikely that the anticipated waste management needs of Surrey will be met without developing waste management facilities on Green Belt land⁴. Allocations of land are therefore proposed in the Surrey Waste Local Plan within the Green Belt.
- 4.12 Approximately a third of Buckinghamshire is also within the Green Belt.
- 4.13 As waste management is considered inappropriate development within Green Belt, any proposals will only be considered acceptable if 'very special circumstances' are shown to exist, which clearly outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm, such as the preservation of openness of Green Belt designated land⁵. One such very special circumstance would be an inability of the waste to be practically managed in other locations outside of the Green Belt, including those outside of Surrey.
- 4.14 Proposals in Buckinghamshire for the management of waste that might otherwise need to be managed within the Green Belt in Surrey will be considered taking into account the national policy constraints on development within Green Belt. For example, where it is demonstrated that the waste to be managed is to be transported to the facility in Buckinghamshire specifically to avoid development within the Green Belt then this may be a material consideration.

5.0 Additional Strategic Matters

- 5.1 Common ground on other matters between SCC and BCC is set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Waste Planning Authorities of the South East of England, April 2017. This includes the following:
- Principle of planning for waste from London;
 - implementation of the waste hierarchy;
 - provision of capacity within waste local plans; and,
 - recognition of waste industry influence on delivery of actual capacity.
- 5.2 SCC and BCC are also party to the following Joint Position Statements:
- Non-hazardous landfill in the South East of England (currently being prepared)
 - Permanent Deposit of Inert Waste to Land in the South East of England (currently being prepared)

⁴ See Surrey County Council Site Identification and Evaluation Report [January 2019]

⁵ This is consistent with paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF

6.0 Cooperation Activities

6.1 Activities undertaken when in the process of addressing the strategic cross-boundary matter of waste management, whilst cooperating, are summarised as follows:

- Input to draft proposals for planning policy concerning waste management in each other's area;
- membership of the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group and signatories to related joint MoU and joint position statements; and,
- ad-hoc exchange of information (via correspondence and meetings) related to the monitoring of waste movements and management capacity

7.0 Governance and Future Arrangements

7.1 The parties to this Statement have worked together in an ongoing and constructive manner. SCC and BCC will continue to cooperate and work together in a meaningful way and on an ongoing basis to ensure the effective strategic planning of waste management. Appropriate officers of each Party to this Statement will liaise formally through correspondence and meetings as and when required (including via SEWPAG).

7.2 The parties will review this SoCG at least every 12 months and establish whether this SoCG requires updating. Specific matters likely to prompt updates of this SoCG include the following:

- Adoption of the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (anticipated Summer 2019)
- Modifications to the Surrey Waste Local Plan resulting from its independent examination (anticipated in June/July 2019)
- Evidence which shows significant changes in the level of waste movements between the two authorities.

Appendix 1 - Reported movements of waste between Surrey and Buckinghamshire**To be verified by BCC****Household, Commercial & Industrial Waste (Source: Environment Agency Waste Data Interrogator)**

Facility WPA	Facility Name	Operator	Exports from Surrey to Buckinghamshire			Exports from Buckinghamshire to Surrey		
			2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
Buckinghamshire	Gerrards Cross Landfill	Veolia ES Landfill Limited	21,000	48,000	28,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
Buckinghamshire	Springfield Farm Landfill	Veolia ES Landfill Ltd	N/A	N/A	6,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
Buckinghamshire	Gerrards Cross Landfill	Veolia ES Landfill Limited	21,000	48,000	28,000	N/A	N/A	N/A

Inert Waste (Source: Environment Agency Waste Data Interrogator)

Facility WPA	Facility Name	Operator	Exports from Surrey to Buckinghamshire			Exports from Buckinghamshire to Surrey		
			2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Hazardous Waste (Source: Environment Agency Waste Data Interrogator)

Facility WPA	Facility Name	Operator	Exports from Surrey to Buckinghamshire			Exports from Buckinghamshire to Surrey		
			2015	2016	2017	2015	2016	2017
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A