Matter 3: Sustainable waste management

Policy 8 – Improvement or Extension of Existing Facilities

61) Paragraph 5.2.8.4 includes reference to taking account of the original reasons for time limited permissions, in the consideration of proposals for the improvement or extension of facilities with temporary permission. For clarity, to be effective and justified, should this be included within the wording of Policy 8?

The Borough Council is concerned that because of the difficulty of finding alternative waste sites there is a strong possibility that those sites in temporary uses, particularly those in the Green Belt (see also response on SBC response on Policy 3 and Policy 9) will, once established, become permanent rather than being restored to an appropriate form use.

The supporting text included in para 5.2.8.4 is welcome as it provides some comfort in recognising the need to minimise the harm to the environment and local amenity which may arise from the improvement or extensions of facilities through temporary permissions. However for this approach to be effective and to carry appropriate weight, it needs to be included within the wording of Policy 8. The policy should explicitly state that the original reasons for the imposition of time limits need to be taken into account when considering further extensions of time. In addition, any time limiting conditions should also be recognised so that the burden of proof remains with the applicant to demonstrate that need and the benefits of extending the permission rather than restoring the site as originally required. Without being in the Policy, it is difficult to see what weight this wording would have in seeking to achieve its desired effect.

As referred to in the Council’s response under Q49, temporary permissions resulting in extensions to facilities is something that is a significant problem within Spelthorne’s Green Belt. Without the assurance of an effective policy taking into account the original reasons for permission being time limited the pressure to continue granting permission on temporary sites because they are “already established” becomes all the more compelling and will remain a recurrent problem for residential amenity within the Borough.

In order to be effective, the wording within para 5.2.8.4 should to be included in Policy 8 as follows:

iii) On sites subject to temporary permissions, the reasons for the original imposition of a time limit are fully taken into account and are not undermined by the grant of a new extended permission to the detriment of the environment or local amenity.