

Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document

Preferred Options 2 : Consultation on New Sites

Results of Consultation Report

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1 Purpose of the Report

This report provides an overview of the Consultation on New Sites (Preferred Options 2) which took place from May 9th to June 27th 2011. It highlights key issues raised against each of the sites which were included in this consultation and the actions arising for the District Councils and the Waste DPD Team in taking the Waste DPD to the next stage.

Should Consultees wish to see the individual consultation responses received during the consultation process, please visit <http://merseysideeas-consult.limehouse.co.uk>. On this portal all responses and comments are logged and available for viewing. Consultees responses will be available on this site until the final version of the Waste DPD is published.

2 Communication and Promotion of the Preferred Options 2 Report

The following means were used to communicate the consultation to potential consultees:

- Statutory advertising (notices) during the week of commencement of consultation
- Press Releases to local newspapers
- Posters in District Council Libraries, One-Stop shops and Council receptions as required in District Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs)
- Information on District Council websites with links to consultation portal (see below)
- Consultation events held in each relevant District (Halton, Liverpool, Sefton and St.Helens)
- Emails and letters sent to consultees on Merseyside EAS and Council SCI databases (3668 individuals and organisations)
- Letters to all local authority Councillors in Merseyside & Halton following local elections in May 2011
- Paper questionnaire with reply-paid envelope included with Report for hard copy responses
- Dedicated consultation portal for direct electronic response at <http://merseyside-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>
- Waste Planning Website: www.wasteplanningmerseyside.gov.uk
- In addition, Community Organisations and Individuals in Rainford, St.Helens publicised the consultation through newsletters and providing facilities for copying, distributing and collecting paper questionnaires in their area.

3 Overall Levels of Participation in the Preferred Options 2 Consultation

The consultation portal allows data to be gathered on use of the site during the consultation period. The cumulative visitor statistics for the site are shown in Table 1 below.

Web Traffic over 7 weeks	
Site visits	2631
Visits / week	375
Unique visitors	1566
Page views	28811
Pages / visit	11
Time / visit (min)	9.55

Table 1: Participation via the Consultation Portal

The statistics reveal a considerable level of interest with over 1500 unique visitors viewing the site over the consultation period. Clearly however (see following section), only a very small proportion of visitors left consultation responses and/or comments on the website. There is no way of measuring whether some of the website visitors responded to the consultation by other means, having initially browsed the consultation material on the website. During the same period there were 29 visits to the Interactive Mapping site to which readers were directed from the main on-line document to view site plans and constraint maps.

The attendance at consultation events also provides some useful information on the level of interest generated. A total of approximately 850 consultees attended the four events organised across the four Districts. Further details are reported in Section 9 of this report.

4 Responses received to the consultation.

Responses to the consultation were received by four principal methods:

- Direct web-site responses
- Responses on the paper questionnaire circulated with the Preferred Options 2 Report, obtainable on demand from MEAS, and also distributed by Community Organisations in Rainford
- Letters
- Emails

Additional responses were also received in the form of petitions, pro-forma letters and from comments received at consultation events.

Web-site and questionnaire responses are easiest to analyse numerically since there are unambiguous answers to questions such as “Do you support allocation of these sites?” Where responses are received via letters and emails, these questions, although addressed, are not necessarily directly answered and in order to feed into numerical analysis, Merseyside EAS interpreted the responses received as answers to specific consultation questions that were posed. Where such interpretation has been applied, all results are posted on the consultation portal and consultees are able to check how their responses have been interpreted and analysed. Where an email address has been registered by a consultee, an email is automatically sent to the consultee informing of posting of comments on the portal. Other Consultees who registered comments will be notified about the publication of this report by letter.

Table 2 shows responses received via the different methods of communication. Petitions and pro-forma letters are covered in a Section 7.

Type	Number	Percent
E-Mail	74	2.5 %
Letter	36	1.2 %
Paper Questionnaire	2688	91.7 %
Web Questionnaire	132	4.5 %
Total	2930	100 %

Table 2: Responses received to Consultation

The vast bulk of the responses received were unambiguous (96% from web-forms and the paper questionnaire) with only 4% requiring some interpretation. Since most of the 4% emails and letters which did require some interpretation were generally not problematic, we have a high degree of confidence that the results presented in the statistical summary of the individual questions provide an accurate picture of the views of the consultees who responded.

A particular feature of responses received in this consultation was the frequency with which multiple responses were received from the same individual or organisation. Typically, a paper questionnaire was backed up by a letter or email received separately. Generally such multiple responses were amalgamated into a single response from the organisation or individual and where additional points were made or issues were raised in the separate communication, these were added to the original issues noted.

Each “response” in Table 2 above represents a single answer to one of the two specific consultation questions asked in the Preferred Options Report. These responses were made by **2747 individual consultees, of whom 232 represented 91 organisations**. This includes a number of organisational responses that were made by a number of individuals from the same organisation (For example one organisation - Rushton Hinchy Solicitors Ltd - submitted responses from 49 individuals).

There were 2751 responses to Question 1 (sites) and just 179 responses to Question 2 (general views on Waste DPD). The latter number represents something of an over-estimate of interest in Question 2, since many respondents used Question 2 to simply amplify their views on site issues. The consultation responses were therefore strongly biased towards Question 1 (site) issues.

5 Source of Responses

5.1 Geographic Analysis

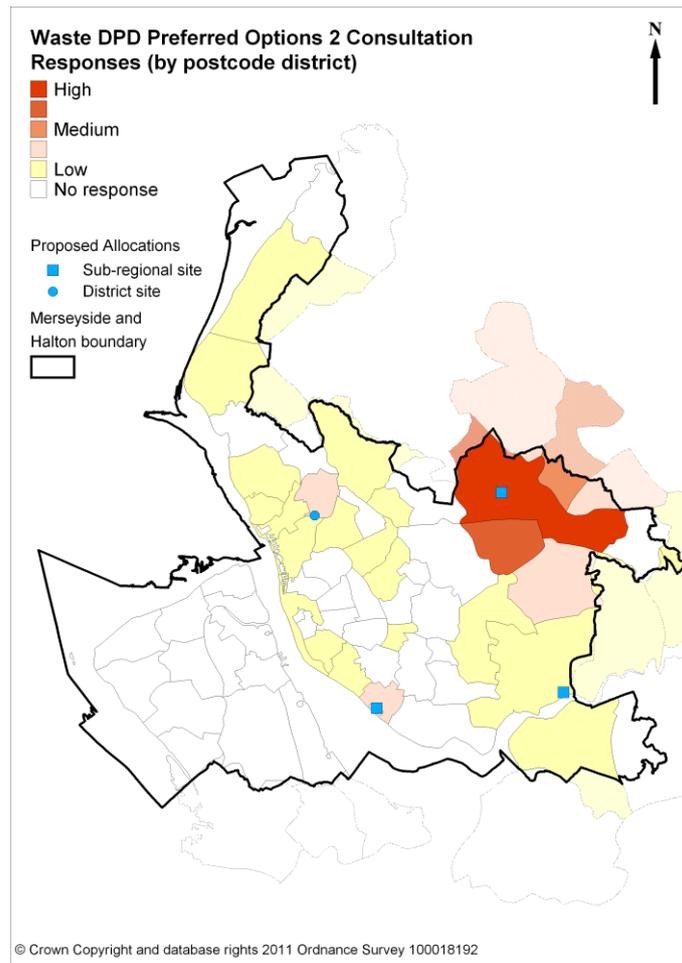
From the level of general inquiries and subsequent responses and correspondence received, it was clear that much of the interest in this consultation was in relation to one specific site : S1596 in St.Helens. This overall impression is backed up by an analysis of the Postcode Areas provided by consultees (Postcode information is required on the paper questionnaire and is a mandatory field when registering on the website – no consultees are registered manually unless they supply this piece of information). The Table below shows the 5 most frequently occurring postcode areas in responses to the individual site questions.

Post Code Sector	Count of Q1 Responses
WA11	2430
WA10	141
WN5	26
WN8	16
L19	13

Table 3 Most frequently recurring consultee postcode areas

Consultees from the top four postcode areas (see mapping below) represent 2613 responses of the 2751 responses received on individual sites (95% of responses). Given this high level of response from a specific area surrounding one site (and the relatively low level response from areas surrounding other sites), analysis of responses should be undertaken at least partly on the basis of consultee origin. With such skewed data, if local origin is ignored, there is a danger of local views on a site where there were few local representations made being outnumbered by responses originating from the area with the largest number of representations.

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5.2 Sector Analysis

Consultees responding to the Preferred Options consultation were categorised as:

- Private Individuals
- Private Organisations
- Public Organisations

Analysing all consultees according to this grouping, the following breakdown can be defined:

Group	Number of consultees	Percentage of consultees
Private Individuals	2747	97 %
Private Organisations	68	2 %
Public Organisations	23	1 %

Table 4. Types of Consultee Responding

Nearly all of the responses, therefore, were submitted on behalf of private individuals with the remainder, which were submitted on behalf of organisations, split roughly 70% from private sector organisations (mainly businesses) and 30% from public sector organisations.

6 Analysis of responses to specific questions.

6.1 Question 1. Proposed Allocations for Sites

Consultees were asked to show their support or opposition to the allocation of sites.

1A. No Postcode Analysis - All Responses						
Site	Oppose	Oppose Strongly	No view expressed	Support	Support Strongly	Total
F0885	13	37	2545	62	76	2733
H2309	12	38	2501	52	130	2733
L2337	9	42	2533	71	78	2733
S1596	26	2604	91	7	5	2733
						10932

In the following table, all “Do not wish to Express a View” responses have been removed from the analysis.

1B. No Postcode Analysis – after removal of “Do not wish to express a View” responses					
Site	Oppose	Oppose Strongly	Support	Support Strongly	Total
F0885	13	37	62	76	188
H2309	12	38	52	130	232
L2337	9	42	71	78	200
S1596	26	2604	7	5	2642
					3262

As noted above, this analysis suggests that there is considerable support for some of the sites (eg 130 “strongly support” responses for site H2309). It is instructive, however, to see how many of these supporting responses are local to that site and how many come from “cross-voting” from other areas. The following table repeats the analysis taking into account **only the responses** from the postcode areas surrounding the site with the high level of response – S1596:

2. Postcode areas: WA10, WA11 and WN* only					
Site	Oppose	Oppose Strongly	Support	Support Strongly	Total
F0885	12	27	53	72	164
H2309	11	36	44	123	214
L2337	8	29	66	73	176
S1596	25	2544	1	3	2573
					3127

And finally the following table analyses the responses from the remaining postcode areas:

3. Other postcode areas					
Site	Oppose	Oppose Strongly	Support	Support Strongly	Total
F0885	1	10	9	4	24
H2309	1	2	8	7	18
L2337	1	13	5	5	24
S1596	1	60	6	2	69
					135

Site ID	Location
F0885	District Site, Site North of Farriers Way, Netherton Industrial Estate.
H2309	Sub-Regional Site: Widnes Waterfront, Halton
L2337	Sub-Regional Site :Land Off Stalybridge Road, Garston, Liverpool
S1596	Sub-Regional Site : Sandwash Close, Rainford Industrial Estate, St.Helens

Key to sites

6.2 F0885 - Key Issues raised and actions arising

Issue	Action
Road Capacity & Road Safety. Routes for access to the site (Farriers Way <i>versus</i> new site access road)	Ensure that Waste DPD policies address waste transport issues adequately. Make clear that for grant of Planning Permission a satisfactory transport assessment will be required which will allow safe access to the site with minimal environmental impact.
Noise, Smell & Dust	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require best practice in operation of waste management facilities. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Proximity to Residential Development	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of residential developments or mitigation through design and good practice. Note that proximity to housing taken into account in site selection. Site has been designated for allocation on the basis of good separation from nearest housing. Alternative sites considered were nearer to significant housing developments.
Type of waste facility allowed and Possibility of hazardous materials on site	Ensure that potential waste management uses of site are clear in site profile and clarify that only indoor treatment of waste will take place.

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Proximity to Schools	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of schools or mitigation through design and good practice. Proximity to schools taken into account in site selection.
Vermin	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require best practice in operation of waste management facilities. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Proximity to Recreation Facilities	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of recreational facilities or mitigation through design and good practice. Proximity to green space, parkland etc taken into account in site selection.

6.3 H2309 - Key Issues raised and actions arising

Issue	Action
Proximity to Residential Development	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of residential developments or mitigation through design and good practice. Note that proximity to housing taken into account in site selection. Site has been designated for allocation on the basis of good separation from nearest housing. Alternative sites considered were nearer to housing.
Concerns with regard to health effects of facilities	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate a high level of protection from environmental health risks. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Alternative sites proposed	Consultee suggests a nearby alternative site should be designated since it currently operates below capacity as a Waste Transfer Station. At this late stage in the development of the plan, no specific action is proposed on this issue since the allocation of H2309 is based on a wide range of possible waste management uses on a sub-regional scale.

6.4 L2337 - Key Issues raised and actions arising:

Issue	Action
Proximity to Residential Development	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of residential developments or mitigation through design and good practice. Note that proximity to housing taken into account in site selection. Site has been designated for allocation on the basis of reasonable separation from nearest housing.
Road Capacity & Road	Ensure that Waste DPD policies address waste transport

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Issue	Action
Safety	issues adequately. Make clear that for grant of Planning Permission a satisfactory transport assessment will be required.
Regeneration Issues	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require waste management facilities to be designed and built to high standards to enhance rather than detract from regeneration opportunities.
Noise, Smell & Dust	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require best practice in operation of waste management facilities. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Concerns over Consultation Process	Consultation processes will be reviewed prior to the forthcoming consultation on the Waste DPD Publication Document and any lessons learnt will be incorporated. Note that Consultation Processes at all stages of Waste DPD production have been fully compliant with all relevant District Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs).
Protection of Wildlife / Ecological Assets	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate a high level of protection from ecological damage. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Alternative Sites Proposed	Comments suggest that there are “better sites in South Liverpool” and that a site should be found “outside of the city” but no specific suggestion. No specific action to be taken at this late stage in development of the plan.
Concerns over Site Selection Process	Ensure that when the Waste DPD Publication Document is made available, supporting materials are provided which provide a complete and transparent guide to how sites were selected – both with respect to objective criteria (scoring) and wider planning deliverability issues.
Pollution and Health Concerns	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate a high level of protection from environmental health risks. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Proximity to Schools	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of schools or mitigation through design and good practice. Proximity to schools taken into account in site selection.

6.5 S1596 - Key Issues raised and actions arising

Issue	Action
Road Capacity & Road Safety	Commission some further work on assessment of local highway network to quantify capacity with respect to potential waste management developments. Ensure that Waste DPD policies address waste transport issues adequately. Make clear that for grant of Planning Permission a satisfactory transport assessment will be

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Issue	Action
	required. Review the acceptable categories of waste management facilities on this site.
Noise, Smell, Dust & Vermin	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require best practice in operation of waste management facilities. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits. Review the acceptable categories of waste management facilities on this site.
Proximity to Residential Development	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of residential developments or mitigation through design and good practice. Review the acceptable categories of waste management facilities on this site. Note that proximity to housing taken into account in site selection. Site has been designated for allocation on the basis of good separation from nearest housing. Most alternative sites considered were nearer to significant housing developments.
Local History of Waste Facilities / Fear of Landfill development	Ensure that it is clear that allocation is for an enclosed, built waste management facility, different in nature from the landfills that have historically affected this area.
Pollution and Health Concerns	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate a high level of protection from environmental health risks. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Greenbelt & Green Space Issues	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require waste management facilities to be designed and built to high standards to allow compatibility with surrounding land uses. Make clear that proximity to Green Belt and other Green Space is taken into account in site selection process.
Protection of Wildlife / Ecological Assets	Commission some additional ecological survey to enhance existing information in site profile. Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate a high level of protection from ecological damage. Make clear operational factors will additionally be controlled by Environment Agency permits.
Footpath and Right-of-Way Issues	Ensure that additional transport assessment (see above) includes impact on Rights of Way and measures to mitigate problems.
Alternative Sites Proposed / Preference for Brownfield sites	Comments suggest that there are “better sites in St Helens” and that a site should be found “on brownfield land” but few specific suggestions were made. No specific action to be taken at this late stage in development of the plan, since where specific sites have been suggested, these have generally already been assessed and discounted. There is no case for assessing completely new sites where these have been suggested, since the Plan now has a set of sites which meet Planning and Deliverability criteria.
General Amenity / Rural Character and Visual Impact Issues	Ensure that Waste DPD policies require waste management facilities to be designed and built to high standards to allow compatibility with surrounding land uses. Make clear that proximity to Green Belt and other Green Space is taken into account in site selection process.
Possibility of Hazardous	Ensure that potential waste management uses of site are

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Issue	Action
Materials on site	clear in site profile. Make clear that the Environment Agency site is extremely unlikely to allow this site to be used for hazardous waste because of Flood Risk Zone.
Concerns regarding impact on local businesses	Ensure that Waste DPD policies incorporate high quality design elements and environmental protection standards which will make any proposed facility developed a welcome addition to the industrial estate rather than a potential “bad neighbour”. Make clear that allocation is for an enclosed, built waste management facility, different in nature from the landfills that have historically affected this area. Review the acceptable categories of waste management facilities on this site.
Concerns over Consultation Process	Consultation processes will be reviewed prior to the forthcoming consultation on the Waste DPD Publication Document and any lessons learnt will be incorporated. Make clear that Consultation Processes at all stages of Waste DPD production have been fully compliant with all relevant District Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs).
Proximity to Recreation Facilities	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of recreational facilities or mitigation through design and good practice. Proximity to green space, parkland etc taken into account in site selection.
Current agricultural use of the site	Make clear in site profile that although the site is currently in agricultural use, it is allocated for Employment use in the UDP.
Concerns over Site Selection Process	Ensure that when the Waste DPD Publication Document is made available, supporting materials are provided which provide a complete and transparent guide to how sites were selected – both with respect to objective criteria (scoring) and wider planning deliverability issues.
Proximity to Schools	Ensure waste DPD policies incorporate protection of schools or mitigation through design and good practice. Proximity to schools taken into account in site selection.

6.6 Conclusion on responses to Question 1

While various issues have been raised, and in the case of site S1596, by a large number of consultees, none of these issues constitute new valid Planning reasons for withdrawing any site from the process. It is proposed that in preparing the Publication Document for the next stage of the Waste DPD, actions should be undertaken to address the issues raised as indicated in the tables above.

6.7 Question 2. General Comments on the Waste DPD

Brief explanation: This question asked Consultees to provide any further general comments on the Preferred Options 2 Report.

Qualitative Analysis

174 responses were originally registered as answering Question 2. On analysis however a large number of these responses (111), although written in the Question 2 box were in fact clearly continuations of responses to Question 1. These are not included in the following analysis which lists issues raised in the remaining 63 responses to question 2 in order of the frequency with which the issue was raised

Key Issues Raised and Actions arising :

Issues	Action
Concerns over Consultation Process	Consultation processes will be reviewed prior to the forthcoming consultation on the Waste DPD Publication Document and any lessons learnt will be incorporated. Make clear that Consultation Processes at all stages of Waste DPD production have been fully compliant with all relevant District Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs).
Suggests Alternative Site(s) – generally non-specific suggestions.	No specific action to be taken at this late stage in development of the plan, since where specific sites have been suggested, these have generally already been assessed and discounted. There is no case for assessing completely new sites where these have been suggested, since the Plan now has a set of sites which meet Planning and Deliverability criteria.
Concerns over the Site Selection process	Ensure that when the Waste DPD Publication Document is made available, supporting materials are provided which provide a complete and transparent guide to how sites were selected – both with respect to objective criteria (scoring) and wider planning deliverability issues.
Responses providing general guidance from National or Regional bodies	Waste DPD policies to be checked to ensure compliance as appropriate
Concerns over Spatial Strategy and Self-Sufficiency issues	Ensure that Publication Document and background documents published alongside provide a full picture of the Spatial approach to be taken in the Waste DPD and of the approach to net self-sufficiency.
Technical points regarding technologies to be adopted etc	Ensure that the Publication Document reflects an accurate and up-to-date approach to waste management technologies in the Merseyside and Halton context, bearing in mind the general requirement that the DPD should be “technology neutral”.
General positive comments	No action required
Concerns over Insufficient Detail provided on potential developments	Ensure that the Publication Document and background documents issued alongside make clear the distinction between site allocation at the plan-making stage and potential specific development at the Planning Permission stage, when more detailed information will be available.

7 Petitions and pro-forma letters.

The following petitions and signed pro-forma letters were received objecting to the proposed allocation of the specific sites mentioned:

Site	Materials Received	Number of Signatures
S1596, Sandwash Close, Rainford, St.Helens	Petition from local residents	4259

8 Sites Brought Forward During the Consultation

During previous consultations (Issues & Options; Spatial Strategy & Sites and Preferred Options) a “Call for Sites” was issued inviting consultees to submit ideas for sites which in their view should have been evaluated as possible allocations in the Waste DPD.

There was no corresponding Call for Sites with this consultation since it is the last planned consultation before proceeding to the Plan Publication Stage. Nonetheless, several consultees (see tables above) raised the possibility of alternative sites – either in a non-specific sense or by referring to specific sites which they consider to have merits over those which have been proposed for allocation. As well as individual consultees bringing forward ideas on alternative sites, a number of sites were brought forward by landowners and land agents during the consultation.

It is not proposed to undertake further site assessments at this late stage in development of the plan. Where specific sites have been suggested, these have in most cases already been assessed and discounted. There is no case for assessing completely new sites in the small number of cases where these have been suggested, since the Plan now has a set of sites which fully meet Planning and Deliverability criteria.

9 Consultation Events.

As part of the consultation process, four public meetings were held around the sub-region, one per district. These meetings were held to give the public an opportunity to find out more about the Waste DPD and Preferred Options Report and also to provide the chance to discuss various issues with both the Waste Team and district officers. The meetings also had the added use of flagging up key issues that need to be resolved or investigated prior to the next stage of the Waste DPD.

Date and Venue	Number of attendees
Monday 23 rd May 2011 at Stobart Stadium, Halton.	12
Thursday 26 th May 2011 at Millenium House, Liverpool	11
Tuesday 7 th June 2011 at Rainford Parish Hall, St Helens	Approx 800*
Thursday 9 th June 2011 at Netherton Neighbourhood Centre, Sefton.	16

* Due to large numbers at this consultation event, it was not possible to ensure all attendees signed in when entering the hall therefore an approximation has been given here.

There was no need to register for the event; people could just turn up on the day and were organised as informal “drop in” sessions with officers from MEAS and District Councils available for informal discussions following the Questions and Answer session. At most sessions there was also a representative from the relevant authority’s Waste Collection Department in attendance to answer any queries regarding household waste and collection arrangements.

These meetings provided the public with opportunity to talk to the waste team and District officers, and also provided a means of flagging up issues regarding the Waste DPD, site allocations and consultation process itself.

10 Next Steps

Publication. The next stage in the development of the Waste DPD will be the Publication of a Final Draft of the Plan (the Publication Document) which is scheduled to take place in November 2011. A six week period will be available for interested parties to submit representations as to the soundness of the Plan.

Submission. The Publication Document is then submitted to the Secretary of State (Department of Communities and Local Government) along with the representations that have been made with respect to the soundness of the Plan. This should take place in January 2012. This marks the start of the Examination in Public of the Plan.

Examination Hearing. The Secretary of State will appoint a Planning Inspector to conduct

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a formal hearing in public at which parties who have made representations will be heard. The Inspector will write a report in which he or she will reach a conclusion as to the soundness of the Plan. The hearing should take place in May 2012 and the report should follow in September 2012.

Adoption. If the Plan is found to be sound, all six District Councils involved will vote on its adoption as part of their individual Local Development Frameworks. At that point (likely to be in December 2012) the draft policies and land allocations will become formal policies adopted by the Councils.