

# **Managing Organic Waste**

## **ESA Conference**

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# Introduction

- Planning for waste infrastructure raises technical, organisational, financial and environmental challenges
- Above all it's a people issue which must be resolved - or it will be a threat to any infrastructure proposal
- So although I will be talking about planning I will continually return to people as they are central to it

# People and Waste

- People generally dislike change - especially if it appears imposed
- Above all waste developments are generally disliked – virtually all proposals generate objection and protest
- So we are on the ‘back foot’ before we start!
- So how are we to address this?

# Communications

- Part of the answer lies in ‘communications’ that:
  - explain issues
  - engage communities in solutions
  - explain strategies and plans that are well founded and
  - demonstrate that proposals (planning applications) have addressed community concerns
- However, there has to be some substance behind these messages

# Role of Planning

- This is where planning comes in.
- Planning is about managing change in the physical environment and comprises:
  - Defining a vision – in effect painting a future picture or setting the agenda – from which all other decisions will follow
  - Defining strategies to achieve the vision
    - what services or developments are needed?
    - resolution of the big issues
  - Creating plans that show **what facilities should be built and how many and where?**
  - Developing the above in collaboration with the community

# The Vision

- The vision for an area is established in ‘Community Strategies’ which reflect community aspirations
- Industry – as part of the community - can participate creating community visions – but it has to be positive and relate to broad ideas
- Often however the message is seen about potential failure on:
  - European Directives
  - ‘Best Value’ targets and
  - Dire warnings

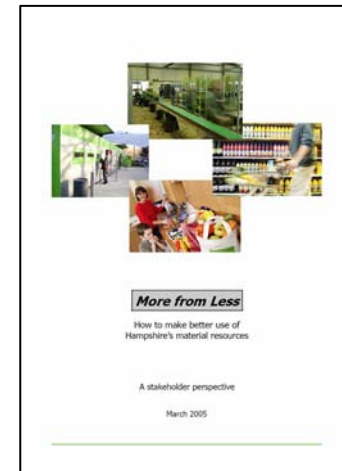
- Instead the focus should be positive and look at the big issues
- Addressing climate changes – the carbon debate
- Building the future – eco-communities
- Husbanding resources – resource management
- **Waste infrastructure has a central role in all these matters**

# The Vision

- Realised in Hampshire as a Material Resource Strategy (MRS)
- Created from an in depth community engagement processes
- Provided context for subsequent strategies and plans.



MRS stakeholder event



More from Less

# Strategies

- Waste Core Strategies Development Plan Documents (DPDs) are the principle vehicle
- Must be well founded on:
  - good information
  - proper evaluation of options
  - and subject to engagement process
- Should answer the tough questions
  - How much / many
  - Where
- Otherwise there will not be confidence in the strategy

# Plans

- Waste site DPDs should identify development sites to ensure the strategies are deliverable
- Inevitably contentious and subject to numerous objections
- Some issues will only be resolved by a Planning Inspector who will test for 'soundness'
  - Is the DPD consistent with Strategy?
  - Has it been properly appraised?
  - Has there been proper public engagement?

# Collaboration

- DPDs are collaborative enterprises
- The engagement elements are not just about NIMBY issues - business and industry need to participate
- House builders, mineral operators and retailers very active in this field.
- Is the waste industry prepared to participate likewise?

# Planning applications

- Essential that all issues are thoroughly addressed by planning applications;
- Thought needs to be given to public engagement
  - before submission
  - applicant accessibility important
- Some critical issues

# Design

- If waste infrastructure is to become integrated with wider agendas it has to be seen to do so
- Design quality is seen as critical
- No excuse for not designing facilities that are appropriate to the site and its context



Marchwood EfW

# Health and Pollution

- Legitimate concern;
- But an issue of perception more than anything else;
- Expect all process facilities to comply to appropriate environmental standards which address these matters;
- Planning application will have to explain this and more.

# Traffic



- Most constant concern;
- Only develop sites which have an appropriate access
- Will need to look at alternative modes.

# Feed the monster

- A strategic issues but a constant refrain;
- Argument that large facilities will undermine recycling programmes etc
- Objection based on – there is a better site or solution – should be addressed in a similar manner
- Not an issue if an application complies with well founded strategies and plans;

# So put it somewhere else!

- Some one will always say this!
- If you do the foregoing right you will have the answer

# Anaerobic Digestion

- Little experience of technology
- Could have a role to play in the bio-waste sector but
  - how many?
  - where does it fit in a balance strategy?
  - issue over residuals?



Holsworthy

# Anaerobic Digestion

- Appears that 'modular' design, modest foot print gives locational flexibility
- Still a waste facility and issues mentioned are still relevant.



Porthmadog



# Hard work

- Planning is not something that can be hurried – you are dealing with sensitivities and changes
- Don't expect quick results
- It is not cheap – commitment of time, money and staff for all
- So expect some hard work over a long period of time

**In the end, its all about people**