

5th March 2008
Our ref: SP 8010
Ask for: Nicholas Dean

Dear Sir or Madam

WORCESTERSHIRE WASTE CORE STRATEGY: NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF PREFERRED OPTIONS, REGULATION 28 SUBMISSION DOCUMENT AND PROPOSALS MAP DPDs AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Thank you for your contribution last year to the development of the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire. At the time the Strategy was prepared the Council believed it was interpreting government policy correctly. Following advice from the Planning Inspectorate and in anticipation of emerging government guidance however it was clear that it would not be found "sound". On June 28th 2007 the Council wrote to the Secretary of State asking her to issue a direction to withdraw the Waste Core Strategy (this is the process specified in the statutory regulations). She has now done so.

You may be interested to know that this is not solely a local problem. Many other County Councils have experienced the same kind of difficulties. Only two, Hampshire and Surrey, have produced Waste Core Strategies which the Planning Inspectorate has found sound. The Inspectorate has, however, specifically advised that neither of these should be used as a model by other councils. Officers from 31 County Councils and other interested parties met with the Waste Policy Specialists of the Department of Communities and Local Government last August to request clearer advice on how we should proceed with our respective Waste Core Strategies. We have been told that the Government's Planning White paper will lead to changes in the statutory Regulations and a simpler process.

In the meantime, however, we have to follow the current Regulations. What this means in practice is that the Council must set aside its Preferred Options and Regulation 28 Submissions Documents, the Sustainability Appraisal of them and all the public comments, including yours, which it received on those documents. None of these can be used in their present form and none will be material to any future work on the Waste Core Strategy. I am sure you will agree that this is a

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very disappointing development. In practice, however, the Council has learned a great deal from this exercise and will try to take account of all the views it received on these documents in its future work.

The Council has discussed how it should proceed with the Government Office for the West Midlands and will be issuing a new timetable soon. We will advertise these in the county's newspapers, the Council's website and reconsult everyone who took part in the earlier stages of the Strategy on revised proposals once these have been considered by the Government Office. You will therefore be receiving further proposals about the Waste Core Strategy over the next few months. I am sorry that we won't be able to use your comments in the form you submitted them. I hope, however, that you will find that we have been able to take account of their substance and that you will continue to help us to complete the Strategy.

A copy of the statutory notice is attached for your information as prescribed under regulation 37 above.

Please contact me if you would like any further information about this matter.

Yours faithfully

Nicholas Dean
