

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

REPORT TITLE:
HENDON RELOCATION – UPDATE

REPORT OF:
HEAD OF WASTE STRATEGY AND CONTRACTS

FOR SUBMISSION TO: AUTHORITY MEETING.	DATE: 11th February 2004
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SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report outlines the Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon Development Framework published by London Borough of Barnet on 19th January 2004, as it effects the Authority's Hendon rail transfer station.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members comment on the contents of the report to provide guidance to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts in his continuing negotiations with the London Borough of Barnet and the developers involved in the formulation of proposals for the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross Area.

Signed by: Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts

Date:.....

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In July 2001, it was reported to the Authority that Railtrack and Pillar Holdings, acting through a joint venture company called Cricklewood Redevelopments Ltd (CRL), were seeking to re-locate the Authority's rail transfer station at Hendon to a new site on the other side of the railway line.
- 1.2 The Authority responded to a planning consultation from L.B. Barnet on the development in September 2001. The inadequacies of the initial proposal to the Authority were the smaller size of the new site, poor traffic access off the Edgware Road / Cricklewood Broadway, a reliance on just three waste compactors, insufficient railway sidings and dependence upon a separate freight handling terminal.
- 1.3 The Head of Waste Strategy and Contracts developed a site specification in December 2001 with representatives of LondonWaste Ltd (the Authority's contractor) and Shanks Waste Services Ltd (the current Hendon facility operator and owner of much of the equipment). The specification sought adequate capacity for growth in wastes arising, recycling bulking facilities, a materials recycling facility and a site large enough to accommodate other aspirations.
- 1.4 In May 2002, Officers attended a North West London Freight Distribution Workshop organised jointly by the L.B. Barnet, Cricklewood Redevelopments Ltd (CRL), the Strategic Rail Authority and the Rail Freight Group. A revised proposal was presented, the shortcomings of which were that the facility required a short transfer of compacted waste containers via road to a separate transfer area for loading onto rail that would be shared with other operators. In addition, the proposal was unclear as to whether sufficient siding space would be available for storage of waste containers prior to rail transfer.
- 1.5 In October 2002, the Authority responded to a L. B. Barnet consultation on a revised chapter of their Revised Deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan specifically concerning the regeneration of the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross area. The Authority's response requested that the wording should be strengthened to require the inclusion of a means of diverting significant amounts of waste from landfill for recovery, recycling or composting and reiterated the self-evident interest for the L.B. Barnet in providing such facilities and thereby keeping its collection and transportation costs to a minimum.
- 1.6 At the February 2003 meeting, the Authority was informed that the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross developments were being combined and that CRL had revised the Masterplan to address one of the Authority's concerns, that of removing the requirement to double handle waste to enable rail transfer. Concerns remained about the access, size, nearby housing and cost of the facility. The Authority also responded to the L.B. Barnet's consultation on the development requesting explicit reference to its requirements under the Landfill Directive to be made.

- 1.7 At the October 2003 meeting of the Authority, Members were advised in detail of developments with CRL and how Authority officers had been responding. It was agreed that the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts should negotiate an approach focussed around obtaining security of land tenure; a fully operational, enhanced rail and road transfer station; sufficient recycling and composting sorting and transfer capacity to serve the catchment through to 2014; and permitting consideration of a civic amenity capability if sufficient land is available
- 1.8 At the December 2003 meeting of the Authority a recent submission from CRL was noted, and Members agreed that the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts should continue negotiations with LB Barnet and the developers involved in the formulation of the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross Area Masterplan specifically for a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and bulking bays appropriate to the needs of the Authority and relevant constituent boroughs that achieves the higher recycling and composting targets in the North London Joint Waste Strategy and for the need (in design and lease terms) of a full road-based capability at the Authority's discretion and for the Authority's preference for a treatment facility if at all possible. A letter was sent to CRL to this effect.

2. RECENT PROGRESS – THE NEW DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 On 20th January 2004 Officers formally received from LB Barnet the "Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross Regeneration Area Development Framework" issued as draft supplementary planning guidance for public consultation, with a covering letter asking for comments by Monday 1 March.
- 2.2 The Foreword to the document states:
- 2.2.1 "The Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon Regeneration Area is ready for change.
- 2.2.2 "Several years ago it became clear to the Council, the Greater London Authority, landowners and developers that this was a major opportunity for investment in sustainable development that will meet the needs of generations of Londoners.
- 2.2.3 "To bring about this change, the Council and the GLA adopted a unique partnership approach with the key stakeholders to devise this Development Framework. Engaging with the local community has been an essential part of the process ... This is just the beginning of a dialogue that will lead to the regeneration of this area. The Framework will help manage the implementation of significant development that it describes, but will also ensure that, over time, the area will function and the local community will experience maximum benefit from the development process.

- 2.2.4 “When implemented, the Framework will create a new and exciting environment in this part of Barnet ...
 - 2.2.5 “A model of sustainable development, the Development Framework will set high standards to create this exemplary place.
 - 2.2.6 “The Development Framework will be Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). It will be supported by a delivery strategy which will also form SPG when it is complete. The principles described in this Development Framework will be discussed at the forthcoming Unitary Development Plan Inquiry as part of the debate about the chapter that the Council has included in the Unitary Development Plan expressly to bring forward the regeneration of Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon.”
- 2.3 The Development Framework is further described as a working document to guide developers and prospective purchasers and investors in the creation of detailed development proposals, which will need to be in accordance with it if they are to be supported by the Council.
- 2.4 There is a vision of a new town centre and a new commercial district combining to form a sustainable community. Specific references are made to the continuation of the Authority’s waste handling capability within the Framework, but it is evident that the Authority’s comments from the December 2003 meeting crossed (in terms of timing) with the finalisation of this Framework.
- 2.5 Consequently there remain various issues of some concern to Authority Officers, which it is opportune to raise now, so as to inform the final draft of the Development Framework which will be presented to Barnet Council’s Cabinet and the Mayor of London in April 2004.

3.0 COMMENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Authority officers have several matters to raise following a review of the Development Framework. These are set out below in the sequence in which they arise within the Framework.
- 3.1.1 There is a continuing absence of confirmation of the actual size of the area of land ‘earmarked’ for waste handling, although it is noted that this is true for other areas too in the Framework.
 - 3.1.2 The fourteenth Strategic Design Principle is for “provision of strategic waste handling and recycling facilities for local residents”. The phraseology seems to potentially contradict itself by indicating a strategic facility, but saying it is for local residents. Authority officers are concerned that this might possibly lead to planning difficulties in the future.

- 3.1.3 It appears that LB Barnet is proposing that the site adjoining the southern side of the waste facility should be residential and that these should be 4-8 storeys high and of the highest density within the development area. This leaves Authority officers concerned about such close proximity of neighbouring and overlooking residential properties to a waste facility, and the potential for conflict in the future, particularly in relation to noise from a rail transfer operation and any potentially outdoor recycling bulking activities. The recent experience of the Western Riverside Waste Authority at their site in Wandsworth reinforces these concerns. The rail operations in particular have the potential to conflict with local residents' preferences, particularly if increased traffic on the Midland Mainline requires the loading or movement of waste trains at less trafficked (i.e. anti-social) times, particularly night-time. This point applies to the proposed rail freight facility further to the south too.
- 3.1.4 Whilst not strictly a matter for the Authority, LB Barnet's Development Framework appears to advocate residential properties with doors that open onto the street. This is not entirely clear from the Framework (p30, Perimeter Blocks, para2), but Authority officers are confident that LB Barnet will consider the operational needs of refuse, recycling and composting collection services from all residential properties, as the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy due for a stakeholder dialogue from February 2004 aims to reach a 45% recycling and composting rate by 2015 (in accordance with the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit's report *Waste Not, Want Not* and the London Mayor's assessment of the best practicable environmental option for London in *Rethinking Rubbish*, his municipal waste management strategy).
- 3.1.5 The section on the waste "handling" facility (p61), whilst consistent with previous proposals from Cricklewood Redevelopment Ltd continues to implicitly exclude the possibility of any form of waste treatment facility being provided as a replacement to the NLWA's current facility. In this regard Authority officers have concern that this may conflict with the London Mayor's policy to increasingly deal with London's waste in London, and with neighbouring regions' emerging policies to refuse planning permission to new waste facilities that will import large quantities of waste from other regions such as London. It may be premature therefore to exclude the possibility of a waste treatment facility being provided, whether this might be a mechanical and biological treatment facility similar to those currently being built for the East London Waste Authority or some other thermal treatment facility providing both local heat and power. The Authority may wish to urge LB Barnet to reconsider this point, as the current proposal does not appear to fit fully with the UDP Chapter which states that the new waste facility "must enable the Authority to meet both its Statutory Best Value performance standards for household waste, recycling and composting and the requirements of the EU Landfill Directive" (para 1.20).

- 3.1.6 The same section on the waste handling facility also speaks only of it being rail linked, whereas it is a requirement of the Authority that any facility has a full road-borne capability too in order to obtain best value for the Authority as it procures waste services against a backdrop of relatively few landfill sites to which we can deliver by rail and no recycling or composting facilities actively receiving wastes by rail.
- 3.1.7 The same section under Land Use Mix states that the new waste facility will be required to accommodate local waste collection from Brent (in the West London Waste Authority) as well as Barnet and Camden (both North London Waste Authority). Whilst Authority officers fully appreciate the strategic sense of this, it must be indicated to LB Barnet that the Authority has not incorporated this into any of its tonnage projections and initial facility requirements that it has put forwards hitherto. This will undoubtedly place further pressure on a site that already appeared too small.
- 3.1.8 To compound this further still, the same section under Land Use Mix states that the new waste facility will be required also to accommodate a Re-use and Recycling Centre for local residents. Barnet has good, recent experience (through the Summers Lane site development) of the quite significant land requirement for such a facility if it is to divert 50% - 60% of inputs from landfill, and must therefore appreciate that accommodating it on the currently designated waste facility site is most unlikely to be possible. Having said this, however, if the currently proposed site were enlarged to compensate, the Authority need not object in principle to some form of co-location, subject to appropriate site security, safety and operational needs.
- 3.2 These comments, observations and objections are based on Authority officers' initial examination of the Development Framework that, due to timing difficulties, have unfortunately not been first discussed with LB Barnet planning and regeneration officers. Further clarification may therefore be reported verbally at the Authority meeting.

4. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The strategic implications remain as reported to the December 2003 meeting of the Authority, and are repeated below for Members convenience:
- 4.2 The retention of railheads and transfer by rail is a stated priority within the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy, and yet the Mayor is also pressing local authorities to deal with our waste locally (the proximity principle). Given the nature of future waste management challenges, it appears that rail transportation is unlikely to be able to deliver the flexibility needed for multi-

faceted recycling and composting demands. The Authority must remember however that it will continue always to have some requirement to use landfill, and will therefore need some type of facility at which to receive and bulk-up such waste. Although it is possible that a rail transfer station may not be efficient by 2020, it is important for the Authority to consider rail transport where treatment cannot be provided locally. Given the difficulty expected in identifying new waste treatment sites in North London, it is possible that there will be a continuing role for a rail transfer station to transport waste to sites elsewhere. However, the increasing recycling targets and unavailability of rail-linked reprocessing infrastructure mean that a complete road transfer capability must also be provided at any replacement facility, and that no premium cost should arise as a result of the replacement facility's access to rail.

- 4.3 The Government has recently consulted on the implementation of the EU Landfill Directive, in relation to the introduction of allocations of tradable allowances that will limit the amount of biodegradable waste the Authority can send to landfill in the future (this was the subject of a separate report in October 2003).
- 4.4 The Authority already has significant energy recovery capability in the form of the Edmonton Energy from Waste Facility. However, preliminary strategic modelling suggests that considerable additional diversion through energy recovery or other landfill diversion facilities will be necessary, even at the higher recycling rates now promoted by the Government and the London Mayor. It is anticipated that the Authority may require approximately 250,000 tonnes of such additional landfill diversion capacity by 2015.
- 4.5 As all of the waste from the Hendon facility currently goes to landfill, significant quantities of biodegradable waste from this source may need to be diverted from landfill within this timescale, if the Authority is not to risk having to purchase significant numbers of landfill allowances from elsewhere, assuming that these will be available.
- 4.6 The final completion of the Authority's relocation from the Ashburton Grove waste transfer facility and the potential for development of facilities for diverting waste from landfill at the Edmonton Facility as part of the proposed EcoPark, will have an influence on the Authority's specification for any replacement facility at Hendon. However, given the significant increase in recycling and composting capacity required to achieve the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy targets, it can reasonably be expected that new significant facilities at least for recycling and composting, and preferably for treatment, will be required for the Hendon catchment area before the end of the Authority's current contract with LondonWaste Ltd.

4.7 The Authority has nearly finalised negotiations with LondonWaste Ltd and Shanks Waste Services Ltd regarding the extension of the current arrangements at Hendon until the Authority's lease on the site expires in March 2009 (or earlier if a new facility is provided to the Authority). When considering any replacement facility, the Authority will have to consider its contract for the disposal of waste with LondonWaste Ltd.

4.8 The Authority has worked, and continues to work in consultation with the other Partners in the draft North London Joint Waste Strategy, to identify the facilities that will be required to ensure that statutory requirements for diversion from landfill are met. This strategic framework is now in a stakeholder dialogue process and hopefully nearing completion, at which point a North London Waste Local Plan or Development Framework will be needed to identify the actual locations of the facilities identified within the strategy. Experience elsewhere suggests that the development of a Waste Local Plan, will take a minimum of two years further to complete and adopt.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The recently received Development Framework sets out an ambitious vision for the redevelopment of the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross area. Some aspects of the Framework's provision for municipal wastes management still leave Authority officers with some concerns, as set out in section 3 of this report.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is recommended that Members comment on the contents of the report to provide guidance to the Head of Waste Strategy & Contracts in his continuing negotiations with the London Borough of Barnet and the developers involved in the formulation of proposals for the Cricklewood, West Hendon and Brent Cross Area.

7.0 COMMENTS OF THE FINANCE OFFICER

7.1 The Finance Officer has no comments to add.

8.0 COMMENTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

8.1 The comments of the Legal Adviser are incorporated in the report.

Local Government Act 1972 - Access to Information

Reports to the Authority:-

Hendon Relocation Update: - 17/12/03

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