

**17 SUSTAINABILITY ..... 2**

- 17.1 Introduction..... 2
- 17.2 Definition of Sustainable Development..... 2
- 17.3 Policy Context..... 3
- 17.4 Summary of Sustainability Performance of the Ince RRP Proposals ..... 3
  - 17.4.1 High and Stable Levels of Economic Growth and Employment..... 3
  - 17.4.2 Protection and Enhancement of the Environment ..... 4
  - 17.4.3 Prudent Use of Natural Resources ..... 4
  - 17.4.4 Social Progress that Meets the Needs of Everyone ..... 5
- 17.5 Conclusions..... 5

Appendix:

Appendix 17.1: Sustainability Matrix.....Appendix Volume

## 17 SUSTAINABILITY

### 17.1 Introduction

This section of the ES provides an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposed development at Ince. As with other sections, it assesses the RRP (without the RDF Plant), the RDF Plant and the combined development scheme (i.e. the RRP). The Sustainability Appraisal uses the Regional Sustainability Appraisal Toolkit produced by the North West Development Agency to assess the main principles of sustainability and how the proposed development performs against these principles. The appraisal framework is presented as a Sustainability Matrix in Appendix 17.1.

This section of the ES includes;

- Definition of sustainable development;
- Policy context; and
- Summary of Sustainability performance of the proposed development and its two constituent parts.

### 17.2 Definition of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is commonly defined as:

*'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Report, 1987)*

Sustainable Development is about creating solutions that meet environmental, social and economic objectives in a balanced and holistic way. The Government's strategy 'A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK', published in May 1999, identifies four key objectives:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of natural resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

The proposals for development need to ensure that social, economic and environmental issues are dealt with in an integrated way.

Sustainability Development forms the basis of the Government's overarching planning policy for the UK, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) which aims to create sustainable communities through the planning system.

The United Nations' definition focuses on improving our quality of life as an integrated part of, rather than an alternative to, the environment: sustainable development is considered to be:

*'...development which improves people's quality of life within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems'.*

## 17.3 Policy Context

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process of assessing the environmental, social and economic merits of plans, projects and programmes, and the plan-making system is now required to produce SA for all emerging Development Plan Documents. SA for individual projects is not a mandatory requirement, however it is considered appropriate to test the Ince proposal against the Action for Sustainability (AfS) toolkit, which was set up by the North West Regional Assembly to assess plans/projects/programmes in the region against established and agreed sustainability indicators. The Integrated Appraisal Toolkit (IAT) is a methodology that has been successfully applied in the sustainability appraisal of development initiatives at all levels.

The aims of the IAT, set out in the Matrix at Appendix 17.1, have sought to inform the region's changing priorities and improve the integration of the economic, social and environmental objectives for the region.

## 17.4 Summary of Sustainability Performance of the Ince RRP Proposals

Analysis of the proposals for Ince have been undertaken, looking at the sustainability of the economic, social and environmental implications of the development (Appendix 17.1). It can be seen that the development proposals and its constituent parts, perform very well against the sustainability criteria.

The matrix can be categorised into four key areas, themes and aims. A summary of the analysis under these four themes, for the RRP excluding the RDF Plant, the RDF Plant and the combined scheme (the RRP), is set out below.

### 17.4.1 *High and Stable Levels of Economic Growth and Employment*

Analysis of the development proposal in the context of the current economic and market conditions has illustrated that the combined scheme and its constituent parts, meet the sustainable development aims of providing good employment opportunities, conditions for business success, economic growth and investment.

The combined scheme scores highly on the sustainability matrix by supporting the diversification of the local economy and attracting inward investment, the RRP excluding the RDF Plant does similarly, whilst the RDF Plant does but not to the same extent. The economic section of the report shows that in the region of 1,740 to 1,855 full time employment opportunities could be created by the combined scheme, 1,324 to 1,432 by the RRP excluding the RDF Plant, and 416 to 423 by the RDF Plant, addressing local and wider sub-regional unemployment.

The combined scheme and constituent parts also score highly on the sustainability matrix by supporting the diversification of the local economic base by providing high specification waste reprocessing and recycling facilities and/or energy generation.

Environmental technology is identified as a key sectoral priority for the North West region. The proposal will assist in developing this emerging market and will assist in putting the North West at the forefront of environmental technology, waste reprocessing and in the case of the RDF Plant, renewable energy.

The combined scheme and constituent parts substantially support both the strategic and sustainable aims of economic policy in the locality, the wider Cheshire sub-region and the North West region as a whole. Furthermore, the combined scheme is of national importance in creating a future model for other similar developments, to assist wider sustainable development objectives in the UK and Europe.

#### **17.4.2 Protection and Enhancement of the Environment**

The combined scheme and constituent parts offer significant opportunities to facilitate economic development whilst also providing significant environmental benefits.

The RRP excluding the RDF Plant utilises innovative and sustainable methods of processing waste. This not only reduces the reliance on the landfilling of waste in Cheshire and the region but also contributes to government targets for alternative methods of waste management and a decreased reliance on landfilling. The RDF Plant makes use of waste for the production of a renewable and sustainable forms of energy, which makes a contribution to the Government's target of 10% of gross national energy consumption to come from renewable energy sources by 2010. The combined scheme delivers both.

The combined scheme and constituent parts utilise multi modal transportation methods, through the site being accessible by rail, water and road for the movement of freight. This will both significantly reduce the volume of traffic on the region's road network and provide associated environmental benefits.

An Environmental Management Plan, which includes a Wildlife Conservation Plan and a Habitat Management Plan, will be implemented to retain and enhance the existing ecological value of the site. This is the case for the combined scheme and constituent parts.

The principal effects of developing the Ince site will be the loss of an area of greenfield land (for the combined scheme, and to a lesser extent for its constituent parts in isolation which have lesser land coverage). Both the CCC Application and DBERR Application (and the two in combination) will have some significant visual impacts, particularly from a close distance. The effects on water quality and air quality will not be significant, for the combined scheme or its constituent elements.

In the longer term, the both elements of the development and the combined development will create a significant amount of compensatory habitats and enhance the existing ecological value of the site. The RDF Plant will also play a key role in achieving the government's renewable energy and waste management targets. Overall, each of the proposals and the overall scheme score well on the sustainability matrix in terms of protection and enhancement of the environment.

#### **17.4.3 Prudent Use of Natural Resources**

As a modern, high specification development, both the proposals and the combined scheme are intended to utilise the latest building technology and design practices in order to create a sustainable and environmentally friendly development. It is the intention to design all facilities to achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating for industrial buildings.

Design principles for the RRP excluding the RDF Plant utilise environmental technologies to be responsive to climatic conditions. The micro-climate of each development plot will be carefully considered whereby heating or cooling can be

monitored to reduce adverse effects on the internal or external envelope of each building.

In terms of water use, the site (for all elements of the development) will utilise a SUDS scheme to manage flood risk and will aim to collect and use 'harvested' rainwater and grey water from sinks etc for non-potable purposes.

The Environmental Management Plan proposed for all elements of the development will ensure the sustainable management and protection of natural resources. This is further enhanced for the RDF Plant and the overall RRP, where renewable energy will be produced.

#### ***17.4.4 Social Progress that Meets the Needs of Everyone***

The combined scheme will substantially contribute to the delivery of sub-regional regeneration by creating a large number of new employment opportunities. By offering a contemporary and unique waste management facility, the scheme offers the opportunity to diversify the local economic base and generate new employment opportunities, which will have multiplier effects throughout the local economy in one of the North West region's sectoral priorities. This is the case, but to a lesser extent for the constituent elements.

### **17.5 Conclusions**

Sustainable development is a key theme of the development proposals in respect of the combined scheme and its constituent elements. The assessment of economic, social and environmental implications of the proposals shows that the development of this site for a Resource Recovery Park, together with the environmental mitigation measures proposed, will have significant benefits at the local, regional and national levels for environmental, economic and social interests. Those benefits are conveyed substantially by the combined scheme and to lesser but still substantial extent by the constituent elements.