



**RTPI**

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20 October 2011

Hazardous Waste NPS consultation response  
Defra  
Area 6D  
Ergon House  
c/o 17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

Email response sent to: [HIWU@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:HIWU@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION PAPER: Draft National Policy Statement for Hazardous Waste**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the largest professional institute for planners in Europe, representing some 23,000 spatial planners. The Institute seeks to advance the science and art of spatial planning for the benefit of the public. As well as promoting spatial planning, the RTPI develops and shapes policy affecting the built environment, works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, training and development.

This response has been formed drawing on the expertise of the Institute's Environmental Planning and Protection Network's minerals and waste interest group.

If you require further assistance, have any queries relating to our response or require clarification of any points made, please contact Catherine Middleton on 020 7515 1913 or email [epp@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:epp@rtpi.org.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Richard Blyth  
**Head of Policy and Practice**

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### **General comments**

In common with other NPSs that have been produced so far (by other government departments), the RTPI considers that clarity of the Hazardous Waste NPS could be improved by better distinguishing between evidence, advice on processes, good practice guidance for applicants, and the actual policy on which proposals will be assessed. The planning policy statements (PPSs) most recently produced by DCLG offer some good examples that move towards policy statements that are less cluttered with background information and in which policies are clearly identifiable.

As the RTPI has said in its response to previous NPSs, there is generally a lack of clear spatial guidance in the draft National Policy Statements (NPSs), particularly in translating the national need for infrastructure into the need to provide a particular type of infrastructure in a particular locality. This makes a robust assessment balancing need with local impacts very difficult.

The RTPI also recommends that there should be a reference to public involvement in the process, with a specific instruction on front-loading. While this is covered in the general IPC principles, it would be helpful if this was reinforced as part of the NPS itself.

### **Comments relating to the draft NPS for Hazardous Waste**

1. The background section places emphasis on the role of the IPC and Nationally Significant Infrastructure. However, in many cases the development for hazardous waste management will not be of the scale to be determined by the IPC, therefore the RTPI suggests that clear advice for LPAs should also be included.
2. There is an absence of any reference to radio-active waste, which for some unexplained reason is outside the scope of the statement (paragraph 2.2). The RTPI recommends that this section should explain where policy for this type of waste will be set out.
3. In paragraph 2.3 the waste hierarchy is reproduced. The RTPI recommends that it should be illustrated in exactly the same way as in the National Waste Strategy, for consistency between related documents.
4. In 4.1 General Points, the statement refers to infrastructure that is identified in this policy statement. However, there will always be occasions when infrastructure that has not been identified will be promoted, particularly as a result of advances in the technology of waste management. The RTPI recommends that policy to cover this eventuality should be included.
5. Section 4.7 refers to the desirability of submitting an Environmental Permit alongside a planning application. There are huge cost implications to this approach, especially when the outcome of the planning application is uncertain. The RTPI suggests that it would be better to advise the preparation of a draft application for a permit alongside the preparation of the planning application.
6. In 4.9 reference is made to the potential for adverse impacts on human health. This is an important section, but the particular impacts resulting from hazardous waste are not identified; rather matters general to any waste management have been listed, e.g. traffic, air pollution, dust, odour etc. Also, noise is identified as an issue relevant to health, but it should also be considered in relation to residential amenity.
7. It is very useful to have all of the issues relating to hazardous waste together in one place, but it would be much more helpful in Section 5 if the specific 'extras' that apply specifically to planning for hazardous waste were to be clearly identified. Much of what is contained in Section 5 applies to all waste planning and much of it to planning in general.