

[REDACTED]

October 2nd., 2023.

Emma Brook,
Principal Planning Officer.

Response to the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan.

Dear Emma Brook,

I am a member of Lowdham Parish Council. Our clerk forwarded the plan to our members.

You are asking us to say if the plan is legally compliant and if it is "sound". I don't have the expertise to answer the question on legality.

Under "sound" you use the expression "sustainable development". I find that expression ambiguous. (If you launch a business producing tobacco and it flourishes, then that enterprise is sustained. So is that sustainable development? However, that isn't what we're looking for. We want an outcome that benefits, or at least doesn't harm, people, future populations or the biosphere.)

I prefer the words "sustainable" or "sustainability" which are defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Nowhere in the Waste Local Plan could I find any discussion of the waste that gets recycled or the waste that doesn't get recycled. And I think that these materials should be considered.

For example:

Paper and Cardboard

The recycling of these materials is going fine, as far as I can tell.

Steel Cans

Likewise.

Plastic

This recycling isn't going well, either in Nottinghamshire or across the country or across the world. The City and County Council, the district councils and other local authorities and, indeed citizens, should be pressurising national government to take action and to get together with other governments to regulate, internationally, the production, reuse and recycling of all plastic products.

A great deal of plastic waste ends up in rivers, seas and oceans. It is swallowed by sea animals, fish and sea birds - and they die. It breaks up into microplastics too small to be seen, which have been found in human blood and mothers' milk. This is a problem that ranks with the climate and biosphere emergencies and it needs to be dealt with.

Single use pieces of plastic (some of which I enclose) are used by the food industry, but also by other industries. A huge percentage ends up in the environment and they should be banned as soon as possible. They are a large part of the problem. Plastic drinks bottles are a menace because many of them are not recycled.

(The woman pictured on the front of your report, emptying six or more plastic milk bottles into a skip at a recycling centre is a paragon of recycling. But will her bottles be landfilled or incinerated or actually recycled?)

Aluminium

This is another problem material. Newark and Sherwood District Council would have us deposit foil (aluminium) food trays in their green coloured waste bins, presumably for landfill or

* How are these different kinds of waste recycled?

incineration. (I don't know what happens with other district councils.) This is wrong. Clean aluminium is eminently recyclable.

Single-use Vapes

In the last two years single-use vapes have become a problem so far as recycling is concerned. Vape batteries contain lithium, aluminium, steel, copper and plastics which can all be recycled. The casing is made either of glass or of solid plastic. The lithium is needed for electric car batteries.

Single-use vapes are marketed as disposable so at least a million a week are being binned and sent to landfill or incineration. The lithium batteries can and do catch fire if they are crushed. I believe that producers, importers and retailers should collect used vapes and arrange for them to be recycled. I enclose the "Guardian" report on single-use vapes.

Tetrapaks

This is an example of a wealthy company benefiting at the expense of the environment. Tetrapaks are ideal containers for liquid foods; not better than glass containers, but lighter. They are cardboard, plastic and aluminium welded together - impossible to separate at home for recycling. Many are thrown away; a small proportion can be left by consumers at dedicated collection points which are too far away for many communities; which are then transported to Halifax to be recycled. This scheme is paid for by the company.

This isn't good enough. All tetrapaks should be collected kerbside and recycled at the company's expense. But it is for the government to make this happen.

Overall, I believe that our recycling service is not nearly as good as it should be. We should be aiming to reuse or recycle 100% of waste. Materials that can't be reused or recycled should not be produced. This is a government responsibility, but we all have to pressurise the government. Single-use plastics should be banned. The plastics situation should be brought under control, locally, nationally and internationally. Similarly, we should get a grip on single-use vapes.

Please note that landfill emits methane, a greenhouse gas. If it's collected, presumably it will be burned, resulting in carbon dioxide, another greenhouse gas. Incinerators emit carbon dioxide. Both methods of disposal should be avoided.

This response is my own. However, it may or may not be endorsed by Lowdham Parish Council.

Stephen Platt.

NB I also enclose advice for Lowdham on how to recycle.