

Warwickshire Minerals Development Framework “Core Strategy” Workshop.

Manor Hall, Saturday 2nd September 2006 10:00am - 12:30pm

Attendees

Mick Jeffs	CPRE
Anton Irving	English Nature
Terry Harrison	Bidford-on-Avon Resident
Tony Rhymer	Bidford-on-Avon Resident
Cllr. Mike Gerrard	Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council
Becky Bailey	Cardiff University – Planning Student
Cllr. Mrs Keeley	Chairman of Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council
Cllr. Mrs Deacon	Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council
Richard Baker	Atherstone Town Council
Mr R Hammersley	Planning Aid

Apologies.

Mrs Carol Callaghan

Introduction: Jim Davies

The format of the meeting was explained in that the Issues and Options would be discussed by Key Issue in any order suggested by the attendees due to the limited time available.

Initially various issues were raised concerning the Cemex operation at Marsh Farm and the recent Broom Court Farm application near Bidford-on-Avon and answered accordingly although the issues raised were not related to the “Issues and Options” paper.

Main Discussion

Key Issue 5 The discussion began on how new developments could be made to use certain percentages of recycled material in their construction. It was pointed out that construction projects would in the main be dealt with by the Local Districts and Boroughs but this issue could be addressed in there LDF's.

It was also highlighted that recycled aggregates have to meet specific industry standards when used in the construction of new buildings etc. Sometimes there is a reluctance by developers to use recycled material even though it is the same standard as primary aggregate.

The question was asked as to whether the County Council should have a separate policy on the treatment of Colliery Waste. Warwickshire still has a number of spoil tips in existence which may have the potential to be re-worked as an aggregate. It was suggested by a member of the Group that Colliery Spoil has certain chemical and physical properties which may make it

unsuitable as a secondary aggregate. The issue of waste was finished off with the point that when referring to Construction Waste, Secondary and Recycled Aggregates etc reference to the Waste Hierarchy should be included.

Key Issue 13 – Railheads

In a general discussion of the issue of rail the following points were made, The overall Strategic Planning for the railways is a national and not County function, however the safeguarding of existing railheads and existing railway lines (disused) is predominately a Local Planning Authority and the county council has the power assist in this.

Virtual quarries could be created at railheads in which aggregates would be bought into the urban areas by rail, stockpiled and then redistributed to a local market by HGV.

The use of rail will not always be feasible but it should be at least studied at the application stage. The role of canals would essentially be unfeasible in Warwickshire as the locks are too numerous and narrow.

Key Issue 12

It was generally agreed among the group that Option B could be the preferable option.

“How should the Minerals Development Framework address the issue of sustainable transport for future mineral extraction and processing sites?”

Option B – Encourage future developments to use alternative transport solutions to road use including canals, waterways and rail, providing it is both practical and economically feasible.”

It was accepted that the majority of mineral would still be transported by road but any new development should at least do an assessment on all travel options as part of the application stage.

Soil Resources

The protection of soil resources, especially top-soil which has been stripped and stored in bunds etc before commencement of extraction should be contained in the plan. There is specific guidance on this issue from DEFRA and a draft Directive from the EU and these principles should be upheld in the MDF and valuable top-soil should not be allowed to be ‘tipped’, exported off site or allowed to degrade.

Key Issue 15 – Buffer Zones

The findings of the SA were queried as the options had similar scoring. It was explained that in doing the SA some areas are difficult to assess in relation to the SA options and over the Short, Medium and Longer terms. The SA process is also quite subjective and there can be a great deal of difference between people’s weighting of the important issues and effects.

Trust

At this point the subject of trust was brought up and how Marsh Farm and the Cemex application at Bidford had undermined the residents faith in the Industry. These comments were noted but WCC assured the group that it contained staff who could adequately assess and monitor applications and subsequent minerals and waste developments. The value of communities raising issues at the application stage was stressed as an important part of the process.

Health and Safety

Whilst Marsh Farm was raised again during the meeting the issue of Health and Safety at the site was raised as an on going cause for concern for some local residents. It was pointed out that the HSE had been contacted as part of the Minerals Core Strategy Consultation process but has declined to comment on policies, preferring to comment on individual applications.

Key Issue 9 – Deep Mining of Coal

The point was raised that the Issues and Options paper appeared to only suggest that the one operation at Daw Mill would be extended and the MDF should recognise new development from extending existing sites.

The group was in general agreement that the future deep mining operations for coal would be a possibility in Warwickshire and therefore provision must be made in the MDF to handle any application or proposal.

The meeting then closed.