

**Warwickshire County Council Minerals Forum – Revised Spatial Options**  
**19 March 2009, Wedgnoek House, Warwick**

**Minutes of Meeting and Group Breakout sessions**

**Attendees**

Tony Lyons (Principal Planning Officer, WCC), Adam James (Planning Officer, WCC), Derek Greedy (Principal Waste Advisor, WCC), Eva Neale (Trainee Planning Officer, WCC), Jonathan Parkhouse (Archaeologist, WCC), Anna Stocks (Planning Archaeologist, WCC), John Radley (Geologist, WCC), Andy Ambrose (ALP Ambrose), Dr. Lillian Harrison (Brett Consultants), Charles Cadogan (Cadogan and Co.), Michael Metcalfe (Carter Jonas), Jim Davies (Environment Agency), Peter Toon (Hanson UK), Allison Crofts (Natural England), Martyn Bradley (Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group), Brian Shaw (Tarmac), Cllr. Antoinette Gordon, Shaun Denny (Cemex UK), Chris Lambart (National Trust), Patricia Wyatt (WALC)

**Introduction**

Tony Lyons opened the meeting with a presentation on progress since the last Minerals Forum. It was outlined that the changes to PPS12 and the experiences of other mineral planning authorities meant that it was necessary to reassess the approach taken, and therefore return to the Issues and Options so that key issues could be re-addressed and some spatial options could be put forward for consultation. It was explained that the purpose of the document was to re-assess some key issues, to put forward 3 Spatial Options for siting mineral developments within the County and for comment on 'strategic sites' that have been submitted by industry for possible allocation in the Minerals Core Strategy.

Jim Davies (Principal Officer for the Environment Agency) then delivered a presentation on the links between Mineral Planning and the water environment, with specific regard to the Water Framework Directive.

Jonathan Parkhouse (County Archaeologist for Warwickshire County Council) then delivered a presentation on archaeological issues and their importance in the Minerals Development Framework. It was also explained that all of the submitted strategic sites would be subject to archaeological assessment following the consultation.

**Group breakout sessions**

The groups was split up into two break out groups to discuss some of the key issues and the three spatial options:

**Spatial Options**

***Option 1***

- It is a good idea to focus on sites that already have existing minerals.
- It is worth making the most of existing sites and maximising on this.
- There could be issues regarding 'satellite site' and definitions of "extensions".

### **Option 2**

- The sites could be in the wrong place with not enough minerals.
- There could be issues around landowners not supporting the site.

### **Option 3**

- There is logic in this option.
- It was suggested that looking into neighbouring boundaries might be useful.
- Maybe there should be a mix of option 1 and 3.
- Consideration should be given to the landscape.
- May overstate importance of transport

### **Strategic Sites**

- Consideration should be given to the size of the site.
- Greenfield sites should be considered from an aggregate perspective.
- Consideration should be given to collective locations and the operators.
- Product type in terms of building sand.
- It was suggested that a criteria matrix could be used.
- A question was raised as to the robustness of the process and whether sites can be brought into the plan at a later date. The land owners' support should be in place.
- A question was also raised as to whether the sites will be verified by a geologist.
- Should there be allocation of secondary aggregate producing sites in the Waste Development Framework also?

### **Minerals Safeguarding**

- Questions over the quality of BGS mineral safeguarding maps.
- Important to make a distinction that safeguarding is to prevent sterilisation of the mineral from development.
- The size of deposit should be considered.
- Buffers could be put in place to prevent housing from being in close proximity to the quarries.
- The 'one size fits all' buffer zone approach is a concern – sterilisation of deposit?

### **Restoration**

- The end uses can always change and are not meaningful.
- Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Targets – at present, industry are solely responsible for being required to achieve the targets which they think is slightly unfair.
- Industry restore agriculture land back to agriculture and this seems reasonable enough. Questions raised about the effectiveness of restoration back to agriculture.
- Scale of some sites could provide important habitats and landscape enhancement opportunities.
- The BAP Targets can be contradictory.
- There should be a realistic approach to the BAP Targets.

## **Minerals Forum**

- It was agreed that they are generally beneficial.
- Operators within the industry can cover huge geographical areas and the frequency of the events should be taken into consideration.

## **Agricultural Land**

- Observed that there is only 0.1% of grade 1 quality land within the County and 12% grade 2.
- Lower grade agriculture land strategy may be relevant but is not a robust method.
- Geology – this is the reason for high quality land.
- Best and most versatile land contradicts the Bap Targets.
- Low level agricultural restoration can provide problems.

## **Inert Waste**

- Questions exist over whether there should be a criteria for inert waste (i.e. a 'waste acceptance' criteria)?
- The point made on inert waste was perturbing.
- There is not a shortage of material left to be recycled. Most of the waste that can be recycled is being recycled.
- This is dependant on location.
- This is not the job of the Planning Process.
- There should be sufficient opportunities for recycling sites and provision made.

## **Flood Risk/Hydrology**

- There should be flood risk storage areas across throughout the county.
- There are opportunities for "cleaning water" i.e. with reed beds. Also opportunities for aquifer recharge.
- Can the regional work be translated into a more local level? Jim Davies has agreed to look into this.
- The balance against other factors such as landscape sensitivity (primary historic) should be considered but there are other landscape factors to be taken into consideration also.

## **Renewable Energy/Carbon Reduction**

- Industry are uncomfortable with the Merton approach – affects deliverability
- Industry will follow national policy – is there a need for a local interpretation?
- Biomass – taking land out of food production. This approach has it's own problems. Looking at the layout of the site is a sensible approach.
- More likely to achieve what is wanted through proximity principle.
- Scope for use in transportation

**Note: It was pointed out that the landbank calculations look about 3 years light of getting their target/approx 4 million tonnes light.**