

Southam Roadshow: 7th March 2006

Attendees: 6 individuals and 1 officer of Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Chris Saint (Chair)
Suzanne Osborn (Warwickshire County Council)
Jim Davies (Warwickshire County Council)
Mikka Styles (Arup)

1. There was an opportunity to have some refreshments and browse the documents and flyers relating to primarily the Minerals consultation, but also the Waste consultation.
2. The meeting was opened by Councillor Chris Saint (Cabinet member with responsibility for planning issues) at 6:15pm
3. Suzanne Osborn gave a brief presentation on the Minerals Development Framework consultation process
4. Jim Davies gave a presentation on the Minerals Development Framework itself.
5. Then there was an opportunity for questions and answers. Some of the answers were provided on the night whereas other questions were deferred and our considered answers are included in the table below:

Questions	Answers
<p>1. What is being done to increase the level of recycling in the minerals industry?</p>	<p>There are European standards for the quality of recycled aggregates to be reused, which each region has to make a contribution towards.</p> <p>Nationally there is the Aggregates Levy which is a charge on developers – this money then funds research into further recycling.</p> <p>WRAP research is specifically looking at end-use of the recycled aggregates into produce.</p> <p>Recycled aggregates amounts to about 300,000 tonnes a year. There has been a definite increase over the past 5-10 years, but even recycling of aggregates is proving a very unpopular activity.</p> <p>Currently there is a consultation on Waste Management Plans to encourage large construction and demolition sites to manage their own waste on site.</p>
<p>2. Planning conditions to restore quarries are very impressive, but are there any plans to write retrospective conditions into the Minerals Development</p>	<p>This is not relevant to the Minerals Development Framework as it is too loose to usefully include as a policy. However, it could be considered as part of a planning application.</p>

Framework?	
3. In Stockton there was a large housing development – they didn't know there was a potential quarry about 200 metres away from the newly-built houses. Can the Minerals Development Framework address this problem of communication?	A valid planning permission is a legal charge over the property and as such should be revealed as part of land searches carried out by solicitors. The onus is on the solicitors to ask the relevant questions.
4. What is the current landbank for aggregates?	It was 8.91 years in 2003. When the updated figures come out the landbank may be more around the 7 year mark.
5. What does national guidance say about the most appropriate landbank threshold?	When the final guidance is drawn up it will probably confirm the 7 year threshold.
6. Is it true to say that Warwickshire County Council (WCC) will probably be looking a little more favourably on applications for mineral extraction as need is now more of an issue?	Perhaps a little more favourably.
7. Will there be more emphasis on alternative means of transport other than by road?	On planning applications we can definitely require a feasibility study, but the arguments for using alternative means of transport won't always stack up.
8. Do you intend to carry on baseline air quality management monitoring before and after an application?	This is not current practice. Air quality would be considered through the planning application process. This monitoring could be included as part of the conditions of granting planning permission, but each application would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
9. Following on from the previous question, concern was raised that these precautions did not prevent bigger particles from landing on roofs of houses etc.	Noted.
10. Are we being nationally exploited for our minerals here in Warwickshire?	For cement we produce 10% of the national requirement, but generally speaking no. Sand & gravel is too low in commercial value to justify transporting it too far.
11. Parish Councils expressed	Advice given was that the EIA was

<p>concerns that they lacked the expertise to know on what planning grounds they could legitimately object.</p>	<p>generally a good place to start. Also encouraged to get in touch with West Midlands Planning Aid Service (WMPAS) for advice on specific applications. WMPAS is a voluntary organisation that offers planning advice and support to community groups who may not be that familiar with the planning system. Leaflets on WMPAS were distributed at the meeting.</p>
<p>12. There was also concern about the (in some cases) very significant life expectancy of a quarry. What if, at the end of its life the operators fail to implement plans for its restoration?</p>	<p>This is something to consider, but generally speaking operators are very keen on restoration.</p>
<p>13. Following on from the previous question, the Environment Agency has a proven model to credit check companies to ensure they have the money for restoration even if they go bust. WCC should explore this in policy.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>14. There was a discussion around the existing coal seam that runs through Southam.</p>	<p>Officers are aware that coal reserves possibly exist at depth under a large area of the county and will seek more information on this matter from the relevant bodies.</p>
<p>15. Geo-thermal issues – do we have a policy gap here?</p>	<p>There is the opportunity to broaden out policy on energy to include new coal technologies and geo-thermal energy.</p>

6. Cllr Saint formally closed the meeting at 8 pm.