

**MINERALS – SUPPLY: MINERALS OTHER THAN AGGREGATES****Key Issue – General:**

**Whether there is clarity in matters relating to the adequacy of and supply of minerals to be extracted and the appropriateness of the source locations; also whether the proposals are justified. (National Policy: PPS 12, Para 4.1; MPS 1, Para 15; Planning and Minerals Practice Guide, Para 21)**

**Specific Issues and Matters for Discussion:**

**Whether the section on the spatial characteristics of the area adequately informs the strategic policies on minerals other than aggregates**

1. *With regard to the quantities of mineral sales, are separate figures available for sales of brick clay and building stone (Table 1)?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 9) (LCC M1)

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on how much extraction of brick clay is intended to take place and how best to maintain an adequate and steady supply**

2. *In Para 4.35 and Policy CS3 (Brick clays), are years of production being confused with years of landbank capacity? Is maintenance of a 25 year landbank an appropriate way forward? How appropriate is the reference to landbanks in Policy CS3? Should Policy CS3 specifically refer to a landbank of 25 years? [Ibstock]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraphs 12-15) (LCC M1)

3. *Should there be active support for the extension of workings where there are reserves of less than 25 years / exclusion of support in circumstances where there are extensive reserves? [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraphs 16-20) (LCC M1)

4. *Is the need for brick clay quantified? Is a greater supply (or lesser supply) justified?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 10) (LCC M1)

5. *In Policy CS3, does any special provision need to be made in respect of premium brick clays (Para 4.42)?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 11) (LCC M1)

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on the locations where brick clay extraction may take place**

6. *Does Policy CS3 logically follow on from the text?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 21) (LCC M1)

7. *Policy CS3 would only allow extensions to existing sites where they are required to support levels of capital expenditure. What about cases where a straightforward continuation of production is required in circumstances where there would be no environmental problems?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 20) (LCC M1)

8. *In respect on new brick clay extraction sites (Policy CS3), how is a minerals operator to know about production capacity at other sites? Is this set down somewhere? Why is there a tie to landbanks / production capacity? Is there an assumption that needs could be met at existing sites?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraphs 22-24) (LCC M1)

9. *With regard to Para 4.83, should the whole of the brick clay resource be protected; also shown on the Key Diagram? [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraphs 25-27) (LCC M1)

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on how much extraction of fireclay is intended to take place and how best to maintain an adequate and steady supply**

10. *In Para 4.37, is 1.7m tonnes the size of the stockpile or the reserves? Is the planning permission (that expires in 2012) for extraction? How rapidly is the stockpile being depleted?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 37) (LCC M1)

11. *What and where is the evidence base setting out information on clay operators (Para 4.39)?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraphs 35-36) (LCC M1)

12. *Should there be a study on fireclay reserves (Para 4.41)?*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 39) (LCC M1)

13. *In respect of Para 4.41 and Policy CS4 (Fireclay), what sort of evidence would be required to demonstrate a proven need? [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 38) (LCC M1)

14. *Should Policy CS4 contain a target for fireclay production? [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 34) (LCC M1)

15. *Should the extraction of fireclay be referred to in Policy CS7 as a factor in favour of new opencast coal proposals? [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 40) (LCC M1)

16. *Should reference be made to the prior extraction of brick clay (Para 4.84) [GOEM]*

See Topic Note – Provision for Brick Clay and Fireclay (paragraph 28) (LCC M1)

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on how much extraction of gypsum is intended to take place and how best to maintain an adequate and steady supply**

17. *Para 4.48 states that sufficient reserves of gypsum exist. How much / what rates of consumption / how long will the reserves last / what are the lead-in times for exploiting additional resources / how important are the reserves of gypsum nationally or regionally?*

Currently around 19Mt of permitted reserves remain to be worked at the Barrow site. Production capacity at the Barrow works is 900,000 tonnes per annum. In the region of 90% of the gypsum consumed at the Barrow works is sourced from the Barrow Mine (i.e. 810,000 tonnes per annum), with around 10%, up to 90,000tpa, being imported for blending purposes. The remaining permitted reserves will consequently last around 25 years, at the current rate of production.

The lead-in times for exploiting additional resources are between 5 and 10 years following the successful discovery of economically workable reserves, depending on whether the development relates solely to mining or whether a new manufacturing facility is required.

The reserves of gypsum within Leicestershire are of national importance. The Minerals Planning Fact Sheet on Gypsum (BGS – January 2006) (MCD 22) indicates that gypsum is widely distributed in England in rocks of Permian and Triassic age, but that its occurrence may be unpredictable. The fact sheet states that total permitted reserves of gypsum/anhydrite in England are in excess of 50Mt, the largest reserves being in Leicestershire and East Sussex, where reserves are between 15-20Mt. The reserves at Barrow therefore comprise about 40% of the national total.

British Gypsum Ltd is the sole producer of natural gypsum in England. Gypsum is extracted in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire,

Cumbria and East Sussex from 5 mines and 1 opencast site. Total gypsum output in England is about 1.7 million tonnes per year. The Barrow site therefore contributes almost 50% of this output. The associated manufacturing plant at Barrow currently supplies between 85% and 95% of the entire UK market for bagged plaster.

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on how much extraction of building and roofing stone is intended to take place and how best to maintain an adequate and steady supply**

18. *Should there be a survey of building stone resources (Para 4.52)?*

Annex 3 (Natural Building and Roofing Stone) of MPS1 (MCD 2) (paragraph 3.2) indicates that English Heritage and the industry should make MPAs aware of important sources of building stone that they consider should be safeguarded from other forms of development through LDD policies. Although the necessary knowledge does not currently exist to do this, English Heritage has indicated in their representation that this issue is being addressed. The Strategic Stone Study is a major 5-year study of England's building and roofing stone resources, which will assist MPAs in identifying the location of these minerals and inform their safeguarding. The Council understands that Leicestershire and Rutland is currently on the EH Strategic Stone Study timetable for the commencement of work next year (2009)

19. *Should Policy CS6 (Building and roofing stone) refer to circumstances where new quarrying could be appropriate (Para 4.53)?*

Policy CS6 indicates the circumstances where proposals for the extraction of building and roofing stone would be acceptable. The County Council does not have sufficient detailed knowledge of the nature and extent of suitable building stone resources to identify potentially workable materials. This is acknowledged by English Heritage in their representation.

**Whether there is clear evidence and guidance on the locations where coal extraction may take place**

20. *Should sufficient environmentally acceptable sources of future coal working be identified under the provisions of Policy CS7? [UK Coal]*

The Council does not consider that it is in a position to identify sufficient environmentally acceptable sources of future coal working under the provisions of Policy CS7.

The Government has not set targets for the share of total energy or electricity supply to be met from different fuels: it believes this is a matter for the markets, reinforced by long term policy measures. There are therefore no national or regional indications of what level of future coal working within the County would be considered to be 'sufficient'.

MPG3 (MCD 34) states that the extent to which it will be possible to identify particular areas where extraction may be acceptable will depend upon local circumstances and the level of knowledge about the resource. As stated in Para 4.67, the County Council does not have the technical or commercial information relating to the quality and extent of reserves to enable the identification of specific areas for future coal working.

As a result of faulting and folding of coal bearing strata, coal seams occur at varying depths from the surface and vary in thickness in Great Britain from a few centimetres up to rarely 3.5m. The physical and chemical properties of coal determine whether a coal can be used commercially, either on its own or after processing/blending to improve coal quality. Opencast mining is viable where one or more seams are relatively near the surface, but the ratio of coal to overburden and the nature of the overburden are also very important. The economics of opencast coal extraction has changed with time, allowing coal with higher overburden ratios to be extracted.

The broad extent of the opencast coal area within Leicestershire, coincident with 'Shallow Coal' defined on the Coal Resources map of Britain, is shown on the Key Diagram (Figure 3). The intention is that this area be shown on the Proposals Map.

During the preparation of the Minerals Development Framework, the County Council has been advised by UK Coal about two sites within Leicestershire which have been sufficiently assessed as to suggest that a proposal for extraction could be made. The sites put forward were Longmoor, which has now been permitted on appeal, and Minorca, which was refused planning permission in July 1996. UK Coal has not provided any information to suggest that the original reasons for refusal at Minorca can be overcome. No other coal operators have put forward any sites.

Whilst Policy CS7 does not specifically identify environmentally acceptable sources of future coal working, this policy should not be interpreted in isolation, as indicated in Para 1.11. Other policies within the DPD provide guidance as to various matters that need to be addressed before deciding whether proposals for coal extraction are environmentally acceptable. Thus, for example, Policy CS11 sets out the strategy for environmental protection, Policy DC3 deals with sites of national historic importance, Policy DC4 deals with sites of regional and local importance, Policy DC5 deals with countryside, Policy DC10 deals with agricultural land, and Policy DC12 deals with health and amenity. The County Council expects that 'areas of protection', such as nationally protected landscape and local nature conservation areas, will also be shown on the Proposals Map once they have been identified through the preparation of District Council LDFs.