

Resource Conservation

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

a. Substitute Materials

Policy 33 Substitute Materials

The County Council will encourage the use of substitutes for naturally occurring minerals and, in particular, seek to use waste materials for its own reclamation schemes, road construction and other works as far as this is technically and economically possible, and environmentally acceptable.

The County Council will support initiatives which increase the use of substitutes for naturally occurring minerals, provided that the proposals are environmentally acceptable.

- 8.1 MPG1 encourages the use of mineral waste or other materials wherever practicable to reduce the demand on greenfield sites for mineral extraction. Aggregates are the principal materials for which waste and other materials (such as pulverised fuel ash) can be used as a supplement or substitute. DoE Circular 20/87 advises that highway authorities should identify at the earliest opportunity whether suitable waste material is likely to be available within a radius of about 10 miles of the prospective routes of a new road. MPG6 states that it is Government policy to encourage the use of secondary and recycled materials in construction and it is committed to increasing significantly the level of use. For the East Midlands Region 70mt of aggregates supply are to be provided from secondary and recycled material over the period 1992-2006.
- 8.2 Arup Economics and Planning completed a study in 1991 on the occurrence and utilisation of mineral and construction wastes as part of the DoE minerals planning research programme. The study indicates that, for most secondary materials, the principal disadvantage to their further use are transport costs. It suggests that potentially the most effective and direct measures to maximise use of secondary materials are those that alter relative prices in their favour such as a tax or industry-administered levy on primary materials. The study also suggests that further encouragement could be given to the establishment of construction waste recycling plants in urban areas. The County Council will support initiatives for the use of secondary aggregates and the recycling of materials to reduce demand for primary aggregates.
- 8.3 The use of secondary aggregates and recycled materials is an appropriate method of conserving natural resources and accords with the concept of sustainability. In November 1992, the County Council jointly prepared and publicised with Leicester City Council and Leicester Environment City Trust Ltd. 'Building for the Environment', an environmental good practice checklist for the construction and development industries. It offers helpful and constructive advice on good environmental practice, helping to move towards sustainable

urban development. It advocates, amongst other things, action to reduce material use maximise the use of recycled materials and use secondary materials as much as possible. Approximately 0.5 million tonnes per annum of construction and demolition waste is deposited in licensed landfill sites within Leicestershire.

b. Safeguarding Mineral Resources

Policy 34 Safeguarding Mineral Resources

a. Mineral Consultation Areas

The County Council will update and refine the mineral consultation areas notified to District Councils based on the latest available information. The County Council will request that applications for development within such areas and which could have the effect of sterilising proven mineral resources of economic importance be referred to it by District Councils for consultation.

b. Provision of Reserve Information

Where mineral reserves are believed to exist but are not proven, the County Council may request the District Council to obtain from the proposed developer information in respect of the existence or otherwise of the mineral deposit before any application for development is determined.

c. Extraction in Advance of Surface Development

Proposals for the extraction of minerals in the advance of approved surface development which would otherwise permanently sterilise proven mineral reserves will normally be permitted provided that they are consistent with the general principles set out in policies 2 and 3 and that:

- (i) the proposed surface development would permanently sterilise a significant quantity and quality of mineral;
- (ii) mineral extraction can be completed and the site restored in an acceptable timescale to allow the subsequent development to proceed in accordance with an agreed programme;
- (iii) the site can be restored in a suitable manner and to an appropriate standard to allow the development to take place without materially affecting its viability;
- (iv) there would be no serious environmental impact.

- 8.3 MPG1 points out that, as mineral resources are finite, care must be taken to safeguard those deposits which are of economic importance against other types of development which would sterilize the deposits or be a serious hindrance to their extraction. Minerals and Waste Disposal Policy 4 of the Structure Plan states:

“Land will not be allocated and planning permission will not normally be granted for surface development which could sterilise important, economically workable deposits of minerals. Exceptionally where development of land is considered essential, and proven reserves would be permanently sterilised, planning permission will normally be granted for the prior extraction of the mineral”.

- 8.4 The major threat to the protection of workable mineral resources comes from pressure for development around existing settlements. General Structure Plan Policies would often be adequate over much of the County as development in the countryside is strictly controlled. In considering certification of a local plan, the County Council will have regard to the effect of development proposals on mineral resources.
- 8.5 Provision is made under the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 for the County Council to notify the District Planning Authorities of areas in which development is likely to affect, or be affected by, the winning and working of minerals other than coal (normally referred to as Mineral Consultation Areas). The County Council formally notified the District Councils of the areas affected and supplied them with copies of the plans relating to these areas in November 1983. Since these areas were drawn up, additional reserve information has become available, particularly in the form of the Soar/Wreake Valley Sand and Gravel Resource Assessments. The County Council therefore intends to refine and update the Mineral Consultation Areas based on the latest available information. It is recognised that knowledge of mineral resources within the County is incomplete. The County Council will consequently encourage initiatives which contribute to improved knowledge of mineral resources within the County.