

**The New Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire 2015 -2030
Invitation to the Borough Council to comment upon a consultation draft**

The Borough Council has been consulted by Staffordshire County Council on a draft new Minerals Local Plan and its Sustainability Appraisal.

For any comments that the Borough Council may have on the draft plan to be taken into account they have to be received by the County Council by no later than 4th July 2014

Recommendation

That officers in consultation with the Chairman submit a response to the County Council to the effect that the Borough Council has no particular observations to make upon the Consultation document

Reason for report

To give the Committee the opportunity to consider whether the Borough Council should submit any particular representations on the Draft Plan

Background

The Borough Council has been consulted by Staffordshire County Council on a draft new Minerals Local Plan and its sustainability appraisal. The new Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire will provide policies to determine planning applications to develop the county's mineral resources during the period 2015 to 2030 and identify suitable land for mineral working. When it is eventually adopted, it will replace the 'saved policies' in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Minerals Local Plan 1994 to 2006.

The draft new Plan is supported by other documents including a Sustainability Appraisal that assesses the sustainability impacts of the draft Plan and the alternatives that the County Council considered in its preparation. These documents can be viewed via the County Council's website: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/planning and using the link to their "Consultation Portal".

The Borough Council is being invited to respond to a series of questions relating to the draft Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal using the questionnaire available on the consultation portal. The comments received will be taken into account as they review and finalise the Plan.

Three audio - visual presentations are also available on the [consultation portal](#) which explain the background to the Plan and summarise its contents. The intention is to use the most relevant presentation at the Committee will explain in more detail the content and purpose of the document.

Your officers have not got the capacity to consider the consultation document in any depth, but appreciate that the Committee may nevertheless wish to make representations, hence the placing of this item on the agenda

The document includes the following

A list of Strategic Objectives as follows

Strategic Objective 1 – the sustainable economic development of minerals

Strategic Objective 2 – acceptable locations for minerals sites

Strategic Objective 3 – operating to high environmental standards
Strategic Objective 4 – restoration that enhances local amenity and the environment

It then goes onto a series of policies as follows

Policy 1 – Provision for sand and gravel

Policy 2 – Provision for industrial mineral used in the manufacture of cement

Policy 3 – Safeguarding Minerals of Local and National Importance and Important Infrastructure

Policy 4 – Minimising the impact of Mineral development

Policy 5 – Planning for hydrocarbon extraction

Policy 6 – Restoration of mineral sites

The Newcastle perspective

The Minerals Plan is not concerned with energy minerals such as coal although Great Oaks is identified as a site where opencast mining might occur because of the current planning application

There are no new mineral site proposals that relate to Newcastle. The main implications relate to sand and gravel. Additional reserves need to be permitted within the next 10 years. In Newcastle it is proposed to permit the extension of existing aggregate sites rather than to promote any new sites such as the Follywood site near Bloor Heath, between Loggerheads and Market Drayton, as had previously been promoted by the owner of that site. It is also proposed to safeguard sand and gravel reserves across large parts of the rural area .

With respect to the other 'Newcastle' issues given the extent of the reserves already with planning permission for extraction at Knutton and Madeley Heath quarries (granted in 2013 and 2012 respectively) there are no additional proposals within the Draft Plan in respect of brick clay.

With respect to the consideration of applications for exploratory drilling and production, most particularly for hydrocarbons, proposed policy 5 is of potential relevance to Newcastle bearing in mind the likely location of such minerals and it sets out by reference to Policy 4 an appropriate list of criteria or potential environmental impacts against which any such future proposals may be judged

Background documents

The new Minerals Local Plan

The new Minerals Local Plan – Appendices

Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment – Interim Report – Testing Alternatives