

Examination Into The Hampshire Minerals And Waste Plan Local Plan – Summary of Inspector’s Findings.

Background

- The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan was submitted for examination on 29 February 2012. Examination hearings were held between 6 to 8 June 2012, 11 to 15 June 2012 and 13 to 14 March 2013.
- The Inspector’s Report is now available (See: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/mineralsandwaste/planning-policy-home.htm> or telephone 0845 603 5634), and the key issues relevant to Dorset are summarised below.

Outcome

- Following the Hearings, the Inspector recommended a series of amendments and concluded that provided these were made the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan would satisfy legal requirements and could be adopted.

Summary of extracts from Inspector’s Report

Issue 8: Land won aggregate – supply

- 1.1. In overall conclusion on matters related to land-won aggregate supply, the Inspector was satisfied that supplying sand and gravel at a rate of 1.56mtpa (including 0.28mtpa for soft sand) would be an appropriate contribution to a steady and adequate supply of aggregates for the plan area.

Issue 9: Meeting aggregate supply

- 1.2. The Inspector stated that he was satisfied that the Plan in its entirety includes a strategy that will deliver a steady and adequate supply of sharp sand and gravel and soft sand. He also concluded that the modifications to Policy 20 (the allocation of future sites policy, which included comments made by Dorset County Council) improved the policy in relation to unallocated sites.

Issue 11: Site allocations

- 1.3. The Inspector concluded that sufficient sites had been allocated within the Plan and that they are acceptable in environmental terms and in other respects. He also concluded that there are no known deliverability or other issues of significance with the allocations. The main conclusions of his report in relation to site allocations are highlighted below.

Purple Haze

- 1.4. The Inspector noted that the objections to the Purple Haze allocation had been wide and varied and included concerns regarding the nature of the reserve, the Appropriate Assessment findings, impact on residential and recreational amenity, restoration and transportation impacts.
- 1.5. On the issue of the reserve, the Inspector concluded that he has no reason to question the estimates or understandings of the Hampshire Authorities.
- 1.6. The Inspector acknowledged that the working of the site would encroach into the Moors Valley Country Park. However, he highlighted the importance of the mineral resource and concluded that he considers the disbenefits on amenity to be acceptable with this regard. He also noted that the allocation would provide an important contribution to the requirement for soft sand.
- 1.7. In the Inspector’s discussion on the adequacy of the Appropriate Assessment, he acknowledged that a lack of hydro-geological evidence had created some uncertainty for some stakeholders. However, he noted that Natural England had advised that these matters have been addressed through the wording of the development considerations included in the Plan.
- 1.8. On the issue of restoration, the Inspector acknowledged the concerns raised of the success of heathland restoration but highlighted that this is not the only element of the restoration identified for the site. As a

result, he concluded that any uncertainties on restoration do not override the appropriateness of the allocation.

- I.9. In relation to traffic impacts, the Inspector concluded that the additional traffic generated is unlikely to have a significant impact on the B3081 or the wider transport network.
- I.10. In conclusion, the Inspector stated that, even if alternative soft sand sites were available, he would still find the Purple Haze site to be a suitable site for mineral extraction. He indicated that, in his view, any outstanding matters could be resolved at the planning application stage and, if this cannot occur, that permission would need to be refused.

Roeshot

- I.11. The Inspector identified the impact on residential amenities, traffic impacts and restoration as the three main considerations in relation to this allocation.
- I.12. The Inspector concluded that protection of amenity is covered by development considerations identified for the site and that he would expect appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented through planning conditions. On the issue of traffic impact, the Inspector concluded that the increase in traffic is unlikely to have a material impact on the operation of the A35 or the wider highway network. In terms of the restoration, the Inspector noted the concerns raised by some stakeholders over the level of inert fill which will be required to restore the site but concluded that he would not expect this to be an overriding issue. The Inspector therefore found the allocation to be soundly based in all circumstances.

Bleak Hill extension

- I.13. The Inspector concluded that the key issues at the Bleak Hill Quarry extension site were covered in the identified development considerations and these can be dealt with at the application stage.

Non-hazardous (household waste) landfill

Purple Haze

- I.14. The Inspector noted the similar concerns and issues raised for the landfill allocation to those raised for the allocation for mineral extraction in this location. He came to the same conclusions; namely that concerns can be addressed by the development considerations identified in the Plan. The Inspector also noted that some stakeholders questioned the need for the site but highlighted the projected shortfall in landfill capacity identified in the Plan.
- I.15. The Inspector concluded that, as submitted, the overarching policy for non-hazardous landfill (Policy 31 (Non Hazardous waste landfill)) was not effective. However, the proposed modification (see modification MM15 in Appendix A) introduces a priority order for decision making which rectifies this issue. As a result of the modification, and with this being in place, the Inspector concluded that soundness would be ensured.

Next Steps

- The Plan is currently being considered by all the five Authorities whose areas are covered (or partially covered) by the Plan – Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council, Portsmouth City Council, New Forest National Park Authority and South Downs National Park Authority. Each Authority will decide through their own democratic processes whether or not to adopt the Plan.
- This process will be finished by the middle of October 2013 and at that stage it is expected that each Authority will have adopted the Plan. It will then be used to guide future minerals and waste development within the relevant areas of each of the Authorities.