

Rutland Local Plan Review - Developing a Spatial Strategy for Minerals

Introduction

1. The purpose of this note is to give additional background information on how the spatial strategy for minerals in the Rutland Local Plan 2016-2036 has developed and how the local context was taken into consideration.

National guidance

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Mineral Planning Authorities (MPAs) should plan for a steady and adequate supply of minerals of economic importance by identifying in their Local Plans, sites and/or areas for minerals extraction in appropriate locations. A landbank provision of at least 10 years for crushed rock and 15 years for cement primary (limestone) and secondary (clay) materials to maintain an existing plant are required. The Government also encourages MPAs to take account of the contribution that secondary and recycled materials can make to the supply of materials in preference to the extraction of primary materials.

Available strategic approaches and the local planning context

3. In order to guide development and investment within Rutland it is necessary to set out where new minerals development should be located, including both mineral extraction and facilities for the processing of recycled aggregates.

4. There are a number of ways that a local plan can identify sites and/or areas for minerals development. The adopted Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (referred to as the Mineral Core Strategy, or MCS) was adopted in October 2010. The adopted MCS contains a spatial vision for mineral extraction with a spatial strategy that can be broadly summarised thus:

- Mineral extraction focused on the eastern part of the County where viable limestone and clay resources are located and have historically been worked.
- Two broad 'Areas for Future Mineral Extraction' identified; one related to limestone for aggregates covering the north east of the County and the other limestone and clay for cement purposes covering the area in the vicinity of Ketton Cement Works in the south east of the County.
- An Area of Search (AoS) is identified for Ketton Cement Works within which it is considered that there would be sufficient reserves to secure at least 15 years additional working.
- Potential locations for locally sourced building and roofing stone are not specified given the variable nature and quality of the resource.
- No specific sites are identified for mineral extraction or secondary or recycled aggregate production.

The adopted MCS does not include site-specific allocations, however it does sets out development criteria to allow for unallocated sites to come forward where in line with the spatial strategy and other relevant policies.

5. The Issues & Options (I&O) consultation paper (November 2015) stated that there have been no changes in local circumstances or national policy that would warrant a review of the spatial strategy or the Ketton Cement Works AoS. Options considered through I&O paper included continuing with the adopted spatial strategy and locational elements and continuing with the approach of not including site-specific allocations or amending these elements in some manner. A spatial strategy for mineral extraction could comprise a single, or a

combination of the above options. Since the adoption of the MCS, updated BGS mapping had been released, allowing for refinement of resource polygons and improved differentiation between mineral resources. As such it was recognised that there was a need to refine elements of the adopted MCS to reflect BGS mapping and other factors (e.g. extant planning permissions) to bring these elements up-to-date. It should be noted that there are no sand and gravel quarries in Rutland and no evidence that this material has been worked in the past, as such no provision, spatial strategy or sites and/or areas for sand and gravel are identified in the adopted and emerging plans.

6. Since the adoption of the MCS, production has come forward in line with the spatial strategy as expected. The preferred option as identified the emerging Local Plan is therefore to continue with the two broad areas for mineral extraction, however these would be refined and updated as appropriate. It is considered that continuing to maintain the distinction between extractive activities will assist in avoiding and/or exacerbating cumulative impacts.

7. Through the identification of areas for mineral extraction the emerging Local Plan seeks to encourage the continued supply of minerals to support growth within the County (and wider) whilst reflecting local circumstance such as a features of significance, in particular Ketton Cement Works. Rutland is a small, predominately rural county and as such the amount of planned construction is relatively small compared to other areas, with few major construction projects planned. The emerging Local Plan allocates a number of sites for new housing to meet requirements to 2036. These sites are mostly located in the market towns of Uppingham and Oakham and include the new settlement at St George's Barracks, North Luffenham where the majority of new development is focused. The redevelopment of St George's may result in an increase in future demand for limestone aggregate and cement to support the requisite construction activity associated with developing a new village community. In addition, Land at Quarry Farm, Little Casterton is allocated for development which forms part of a wider urban extension that crosses the border into Stamford however it will contribute towards meeting South Kesteven's housing need and not Rutland's. There are no national infrastructure projects planned for Rutland however it is likely that some projects identified outside the county (for example the A14 Cambridge and Huntingdon improvement) may be supported by mineral products from the county. Ketton Cement Works produces cement that is distributed nationally.

8. In order to make provision for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates MPAs, in line with government guidance, are required to produce an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA). The LAA requires MPAs to calculate their own aggregate provision rates on the basis of average sales over a 10-year rolling period and other relevant information. In relation to limestone aggregate, it was calculated that a total of 3.42 million tonnes (Mt), equivalent to 0.19 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) is required to be produced in Rutland over the plan period. This provision rate was calculated on the basis of average aggregate sales over a 10-year rolling period (2004 – 2013) and consideration of local circumstances. It was considered unnecessary to factor in any additional growth to the provision rate as the level of construction is not likely to be any greater in the future than experienced previously (including during periods of economic growth). As acknowledged above, the development of St George's Barracks may result in an increase in future demand, however, the masterplan for this development identifies a large area for mineral extraction in order to support planned growth and avoid sterilisation of mineral resources. Further detail is set out in the 2014, and subsequent LAAs. The LAAs form part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, informing the plan-making process.

9. The potential sustainability effects of these options were tested against the sustainability objectives through the Sustainability Appraisal process in order to assess potential contribution towards achieving sustainability outcomes and addressing key issues. ^[1]_{SEP}

10. The MCS identified both an Area for Future Mineral Extraction and an AoS for cement purposes. For clarity, these areas have been taken forward as the Cement Primary and Secondary Materials AoS (referred to as the Cement AoS) in the Local Plan Review Draft July 2017 and refined & updated as appropriate based on BGS Mineral Resource mapping and extant planning permission for mineral extraction. The Ketton Cement Works is both a locally and nationally important cement manufacturing plant and relies mainly on locally quarried limestone from the adjacent Grange Top Quarry in conjunction with on-site clays to manufacture around 1.4Mt of cement each year. Permitted limestone and clay reserves used in the manufacture of the cement at Ketton are sufficient to last until around the middle of the plan period and the need for additional reserves is accounted for with the identification of the Cement AoS, as it is understood to contain appropriate reserves to maintain a landbank of at least 15 years over the plan period.

11. During plan preparation the potential for new Garden Village settlement(s) at St Georges Barracks and/or Woolfox was also put forward. Through the plan-making process St George's Barracks was determined to be the most appropriate and was subsequently put forward as a proposed allocation (refer Rutland Local Plan Policy H2 - St George's Garden Community development and delivery principles). The additional consultation (refer Specific Consultation considering the implications of potential development of St George's within the Local Plan July 2018) that formed part of Rutland's Local Plan Review considered the implications of potential development of St George's and recognised that the site sits within the identified Mineral Safeguarding Areas for limestone and clay and proposes safeguarding of part of the site (east). The Cement AoS was expanded to reflect the St Georges Garden Community Masterplan. Preference would be given to proposals for extraction from that part of the AoS identified in the St George's masterplan in order to progress the development.

12. The Area for Future Mineral Extraction for Limestone Primarily for Aggregate Purposes identified in the MCS was reviewed and updated to reflect BGS Mineral Resources mapping and capture the relevant limestone resources, being the upper and lower Lincolnshire limestone used for aggregate and building stone. This area is referred to as the Limestone for Aggregates and Building Stone (LABS) AoS and is identified in the Local Plan Review Draft July 2017. It is not possible to specify potential locations for locally sourced building and roofing stone given the variable nature and quality of the resource. However, the identification of areas of focus for limestone is considered to provide sufficient guidance regarding building and roofing stone and is therefore included in the AoS in the proposed spatial strategy. The building stone quarry at Hooby Lane, Stretton is included in the updated AoS, in addition to the other permitted limestone quarries in the area that also produce some building stone. This alternative spatial strategy would continue to facilitate delivery of the identified provision rate for crushed rock and offer better guidance for industry investment, particularly for building stone extraction.

13. The I&O consultation paper also considered whether site-specific allocations should be identified, as the adopted MCS does not include site-specific allocations (addressed below – refer to Industry Interests). The MCS identifies development criteria that enables unallocated sites to come forward where appropriate, this approach allows for flexibility. It was considered that this approach was appropriate to take forward and, should site-specific allocations be identified, would complement the identifications of such allocations and allow for the plan to respond quickly to any changes in local circumstances.

14. The MCS includes a general policy that encourages and supports the production of recycled and secondary aggregates as alternatives to using primary materials. It does not identify any specific sites for production but supports aggregate recycling at existing quarries. Since the adoption of the MCS, recycled aggregates have been produced at two quarries and a recycling centre in Rutland. As expected, due to the small size of the County and few brownfield/industrial sites capable of accommodating any significant recycling

operations, production of recycled aggregates has been limited. No secondary aggregates have been produced.

15. The proposed spatial strategy continues to encourage the production of recycled and secondary aggregates. It recognises that facilities for aggregate recycling are not linked to geological conditions and, like the MCS, doesn't identify specific sites. It continues to direct such development to existing mineral extraction sites to ensure deliverability and adds additional guidance as to suitable locations including within industrial areas, existing waste sites and where associated with the re-use of previously development land, in line with the spatial strategy for waste management.

Industry interests

16. To inform options and assess such interest in identifying specific sites for minerals extraction, the I&O consultation paper asked the question whether any additional sites for mineral extraction were needed to be allocated (and which sites). There was also a call for sites where the industry, landowners and agents were requested to put forward sites for potential minerals extraction to be included as allocations in the Local Plan. Two sites were put forward, one during the I&O stage and one for consideration at Draft Plan stage. No other sites were identified at subsequent stages. These sites were assessed as being appropriate and subsequently proposed as site-specific allocations.

17. It is proposed to allocate Greetham Quarry North West extension, located within the LABS AoS, for the extraction of 3.5Mt of crushed rock (limestone) (approximately 1.1Mt to 2036 and 2.4Mt thereafter). The allocation is planned to be worked around 2025 following completion of extraction operations at the adjacent permitted quarry. By this time it is likely the other existing commitments, with the exception of Thistleton Quarry, will have limited or no reserves remaining. Allocating this site will help ensure a steady and adequate supply of minerals, provide certainty to industry and communities regarding when and where development may take place and, along with current commitments, help meet the 0.19Mtpa provision figure.

18. It is also proposed to allocate Hooby Lane Quarry extension, located within the LABS AoS, for building stone extraction. Limestone for building stone purposes is currently produced from three quarries however overall output of limestone for this end use is limited. Allocating this site will support a continued supply of building stone, important for conservation purposes and /or maintaining the local distinctiveness of the built environment within Rutland.

19. The site identification and assessment process is set out in the Rutland Local Plan Review Site Appraisals (July 2017) document.

The proposed Spatial Strategy

20. The emerging Local Plans spatial strategy can be broadly summarised thus:

- Mineral extraction focused on the eastern part of the County where viable limestone and clay resources are located and have historically been worked.
- Two broad Areas for Search identified – one for Limestone for Aggregate and Building Stone covering the north east of the County, and one for Cement Primary and Secondary Materials covering the area in the vicinity of Ketton Cement Works in the south east of the County within which it is considered that there would be sufficient reserves to secure at least 15 years additional working.

- Site-specific allocations - M4a Greetham Quarry North West extension for limestone aggregate (an application, 2020/0297/MIN, was received by Council in March 2020), and M5a Hooby Lane Quarry extension for building stone.
- Preference for recycled aggregate facilities within industrial areas, existing waste sites and where associated with the re-use of previously developed land (including existing mineral extraction sites or disused railheads and wharves).
- Identification of development criteria to allow for unallocated sites to come forward where in line with the spatial strategy and other relevant policies.

21. The proposed spatial strategy, development criteria and site allocations for minerals development are set out in Rutland Local Plan Policies MIN1 – Spatial strategy for minerals development, MIN2 – Mineral Provision, MIN4 – Development criteria for mineral extraction, MIN5 – Site-specific allocations for the extraction of crushed rock, MIN6 – Site-specific allocations for the extraction of building stone and MIN9 – Development criteria for other forms of minerals development. These elements were subject to public consultation as the Local Plan was developed. The Summary of Consultation Responses/Representations (for each consultation stage), sets out how these representations have been considered, which has influenced the Plans development.

Conclusion

22. Returning to the reference to national policy (paragraph 2), it is considered that through the identification of a spatial strategy for minerals, development criteria and site specific allocations that the Local Plan meets the requirements of national policy and guidance. It does this in the following manner:

- MPAs should identify, in their Local Plans, sites and/or areas for mineral extraction in appropriate locations – The approach applied to the emerging Local Plan includes identification of a spatial strategy for minerals development that identifies preferred locations, complemented by site-specific allocations and development criteria which allows for unallocated sites to come forward where appropriate.
- MPAs should seek to maintain a landbank of at least 10 years for crushed rock - Greetham Quarry North West extension has been allocated for crushed rock extraction and development criteria has been identified which enables unallocated sites to come forward where appropriate; helping maintain a landbank of at least 10 years.
- MPAs should seek to maintain a landbank of at least 15 years for cement primary (limestone) and secondary (clay) materials to maintain an existing plant - A Cement Primary and Secondary Materials AoS associated with the nationally significant Ketton Cement Works and that is considered to contain appropriate reserves to maintain this landbank for over the plan period, has been identified.
- MPAs should take account of the contribution that secondary and recycled materials can make to the supply of materials in preference to the extraction of primary materials - The emerging Local Plan encourages and supports the production of recycled and secondary aggregates in Rutland, providing guidance as to suitable locations.