

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 13 SEPTEMBER 2007

**MINERALS PLAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT
PREFERRED OPTIONS**

Report by: Sarah Applegate, Senior Planning Officer

Summary:

This report summarises the provisional preferred minerals extraction locations set out in the draft Hampshire Minerals Plan - Preferred Options document, and recommends its approval for public consultation.

The consultation document sets out the joint authorities' intended policies and site allocations, and the justification for these in preference to the alternatives. The consultation will offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on the preferred options, and the reasoning behind the choices, in advance of the sites being finalised, subject to later examination by an independent Inspector.

No new mineral extraction or landfill sites are identified within the New Forest National Park, although some are proposed in New Forest District in the vicinity of the National Park boundary.

Recommendations

To approve the attached Hampshire Minerals Plan - Preferred Options document for public consultation

Resources and Corporate Plan

A4 – Develop spatial planning policies to support the delivery of the National Park's purposes and duties.

Routine resources

Papers:

- NFNPA 206/07:** Cover paper
NFNPA 206/07: Annex 1 - Hampshire Minerals Plan - Preferred Options
NFNPA 206/07: Annex 2 - Site Evaluation Criteria
NFNPA 206/07: Annex 3 - Possible Mineral Site Allocation Map

Background Papers:

Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and New Forest National Park
Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Hampshire Minerals Plan and Waste Management Plan Issues and Options –
Sites Discussion Paper (September 2006)

Hampshire Minerals Plan and Waste Management Plan Issues and Options –
Sites Discussion Paper Addendum (May 2007)

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The National Park Authority, as an 'all purpose' planning authority, has to produce minerals and waste plans for its area. The Authority has decided to undertake production of these documents jointly with the other minerals planning authorities in Hampshire (NFNPA 30/05). This facilitates coordination and the pooling of resources, and enables the Authority to draw on the considerable minerals and waste expertise of Hampshire County Council.
- 1.2 The Authority has no powers beyond its own boundary, and cannot allocate sites except within the National Park. However, by producing a joint minerals plan, the Authority can coordinate its planning with neighbouring minerals planning authorities and be directly involved in the evaluation and allocation of sites beyond its boundary. Under the current arrangements the joint plan has to be approved by each of the joint authorities.
- 1.3 The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy¹ was prepared jointly by the National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils. It was adopted by the Authority on 28 June 2007 (NFNPA 192/07); and subsequently by each of the other joint authorities. It applies to the whole of the New Forest National Park and the rest of Hampshire.
- 1.4 The Minerals Plan Development Plan Document, once adopted, will deliver a number of the key elements in the Core Strategy by identifying locations for mineral extraction, landfill and aggregate recycling.

¹ Full formal title 'Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and New Forest National Park Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document'.

- 1.5 Consultation on the Minerals Plan Issues and Options was undertaken over the past year with a range of public, business and environmental interests.
- 1.6 A briefing and discussion session on potential mineral allocation sites was held for Authority Members on 14 June 2007, which was also attended by minerals and waste officers from Hampshire County Council.
- 1.7 The site selection process has used a range of environmental and sustainability factors to evaluate the long list of potential sites, in order to identify the preferred sites. The site evaluation criteria were set out in the adopted Core Strategy and are reproduced at **Annex 2** of this report. This process has also included interim results of the ongoing Sustainability Appraisal process; Habitats Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. In addition Authority Officers identified a number of criteria to assess the potential impact of sites on the National Park and its setting, and potential restoration benefits. These are also set out in **Annex 2**.
- 1.6 These appraisals seek to ensure that proposals will not have an adverse impact on European designated habitats, and that impacts on the National Park (and other protected landscapes) will be avoided or, where this cannot be achieved, minimised.
- 1.7 The maps attached at **Annex 3** show the possible allocation sites that were considered at the Options and Issues stage of the plan and were discussed at the informal meeting on 14 June 2007 referred to above. The sites coloured green are those included in the Minerals Plan Preferred Options document (and are listed in paragraph 2.3 below), while those that have been excluded following the appraisal and impact evaluation process are coloured red.
- 1.8 The attached draft version of the Preferred Options document refers only to Hampshire. Before publication, the title and various references within the text of the document will be amended to reflect the full geographic coverage of the document, which includes part of Wiltshire. Paragraph 4.6 will also be amended to make a specific reference to the New Forest National Park impact assessment.

2 Sand and Gravel extraction

- 2.1 One of the main issues affecting the National Park is the distribution of sites to meet the target for provision of sand and gravel. The Core Strategy states that, other than in exceptional circumstances, sites, locations and 'areas of search' for sand and gravel extraction will not be located in, or have an unacceptable impact upon, the New Forest National Park, and other protected landscapes.

Sand and gravel requirements in the period 2007 - 2016

Area	Annual Apportionment (Million tonnes per year)	Indicative requirement from new sites (million tonnes)
North East Hampshire	0.433	1.91
Downland	0.643	5.27
Forest (excluding New Forest National Park)	1.163	6.08
South Hampshire	0.391	3.69

- 2.2 The table above indicates the annual apportionment set out in Policy S8 of the Core Strategy, and the amount of sand and gravel extraction required from new sites in the period up to 2016. The Minerals Plan should identify sufficient sites to provide a total of at least 2.63 million tonnes per year. The Core Strategy also identified a Strategic Reserve covering the period 2017 to 2020. Therefore the Minerals Plan will need to identify 'areas of search' to supply a total of 9.57 million tonnes of sand and gravel in the 'strategic reserve' period. However, it is unlikely that an area of search will be required in the New Forest area as sufficient sites have already been identified for the Plan period up to 2020.

Sites near the New Forest National Park

- 2.3 The Preferred Options document (page 27) identifies sites across Hampshire. In the vicinity of the New Forest National Park it suggests that the sand and gravel requirements should be met from the following existing sites and preferred areas:

Existing Sites

- Bleak Hill, Harbridge (Map ref: EXD1)
- Nea Farm, Somerley (Map ref: EXD2)
- Ibsley Quarry (Map ref: EXD3)
- Avon Tyrrell (Map ref: EXD4)
- Badminton Farm, Fawley (Map ref: EXD5)

Preferred Areas

- Plumley Wood, Ringwood Forest (Map ref: pPA11)
- Land at Roeshot Hill (Map ref: pPA12)
- Downton (Map ref: pPA13)
- Purple Haze (Map ref: pPA15)

Alternative Site

- Ashley Manor Farm, New Milton (Map ref: pPA14)

3 Landfill

- 3.1 Non-hazardous landfill will provisionally be provided predominantly by existing sites with planning permission, including Pound Bottom, which is expected to be full by approximately 2015. Two additional sites are proposed at Ringwood.

4 Aggregate Wharves and Rail Depots

- 4.1 A review of existing wharves and aggregate rail depots in the Plan area was undertaken to assess whether they are appropriate for both safeguarding and / or expansion. A number are proposed for safeguarding, including Marchwood Wharf and extension, where land behind the wharf could be used for the additional storage of aggregates.
- 4.2 The Preferred Options document does not propose Dibden Bay for the importation of crushed rock. Associated British Ports made a representation on the Core Strategy that the land should be identified for this purpose, but Dibden Bay is not considered suitable for this site, and there is no evidence that Hampshire specifically requires such a facility.

5 Strategic Aggregate Recycling Facilities

- 5.1 Provision for strategic aggregate recycling facilities will be made by identifying a combination of existing sites, new sites and an 'area of search' (outside the National Park) for the recycling of incinerator bottom ash. There is an existing strategic recycling facility at Manor Farm, Pennington.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Preferred Options document, and associated technical documents, be published for public consultation in October for a period of six weeks. The Preferred Options document highlights a number of alternative locations with preferred sites, and invites public comment on these sites and the reasoning behind the preferences.
- 6.2 It is considered that the emerging preferred options represent the most appropriate locations in all the circumstances. However, these preferences will be reassessed in the light of any new information and comments received during the public consultation. The results of consultation will be reported to members before the Minerals Plan is finalised for submission.

- 6.3 The Minerals Development Plan Document will have to be approved separately by each of the joint authorities prior to submission to Government, which is expected to take place in October 2008. Following Examination by an independent inspector between April and June 2009, final adoption is expected in November 2009.

Recommendation

To approve the attached Hampshire Minerals Plan - Preferred Options document for public consultation.

Hampshire Minerals Plan – Preferred Options

Site evaluation criteria

- Airport Safety
- Air quality
- Archaeology
- Controlled surface and coastal waters
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Employment opportunities
- Flooding (coastal and fluvial)
- Geology and soil
- Historic built environment and historic landscapes
- Hydrogeology and groundwater risk
- Intermodal transport opportunities
- Landscape (impact on designated landscapes, visual impact and landscape character)
- Opportunity for additional uses eg restoration by non-hazardous landfill to improve biodiversity, back-up grazing etc
- Recreation and public rights of way
- Sensitive human receptors eg housing, hospitals, schools, burial grounds etc – includes consideration of likely impact upon health, well-being and quality of life
- Minerals and waste lorry route – including highways and traffic implications
- Type and use of land - including agricultural land quality and planning history

Additional New Forest National Park specific criteria

- Impact on National Park's special qualities
- Archaeological impacts
- Ecological impacts
- Landscape impacts (visual impact into and out of the National Park; landscape setting of the National Park)
- Impacts on commoning
- Recreation impacts
- Potential restoration benefits including:
 - Ecology – creation of new habitats
 - Landscape setting
 - Provision of land suitable for commoning (back-up grazing)
 - Recreation – locally accessible open space

Possible mineral site allocation map