

## **Chapter 2 - Background**

### **How many sites does Suffolk need?**

#### **Existing permitted reserves in the County**

- 2.1 The total permitted and committed reserves at the beginning of 2007 were 16.85mt. Since the beginning of 2007 the western extension at Cavenham Quarry containing a reserve of 0.85mt has been permitted giving a total of 17.70 of reserves. Using the sub-regional apportionment figure of 1.73mt per annum, these reserves are sufficient for 10.23 years (until early-2016). To ensure a continuing supply of aggregate for the period of the Plan, up to 2021, a further 8.25mt needs to be identified (i.e. 4.7 years @ 1.73mt per year).

#### **Volume of potential reserves at sites put forward**

- 2.2 Based on information provided by the promoters and /or estimated by the MPA, the proposed sites are estimated to contain 10.53mt of saleable sand and gravel. Only two sites are new standalone sites i.e. Timworth (Site 12 and 12A) and Chilton (Site 6) the remainder being extensions and consistent with Core Strategy Policy 2.

#### **The bringing forward of sites**

- 2.3 The proposed sites, together with permitted reserves, are estimated to contain 2.28mt in excess of what is required over the plan period, but this has to be seen in the context of availability of sites, possible variation in the quality of deposits (historically a high ratio of sand to gravel is likely at the county's quarries), and the point in time at which sites might come forward.
- 2.4 The proposed extensions to existing sites are expected to be developed as existing workings become exhausted. There is a high expectation that these sites will be developed as they have been put forward by the minerals industry. As regards the proposed new site at Timworth this should await the completion of the current workings nearby, and work might be expected to commence in 2014. Two planning applications have already been made in respect of the site at Chilton, and although these have been refused by the Development Control Committee against officer advice, the site may still potentially be granted planning permission via a further application or an appeal.

#### **Windfall sites**

- 2.5 Over the period of the adopted MLP (1999 – 2006) some 1.8mt of sand and gravel became available in the form of windfall sites by the way of extensions. Whilst the possibility of similar volumes coming forward is not certain, it might be considered likely that a similar number of sites will come forward and be acceptable over the period of the Plan. If the level of windfall sites coming forward replicates that previously experienced, this would equate to an additional 3.85mt of sand and gravel.

## **Prime conclusions to support the number and location of sites**

### 2.6

- The preference for extensions to existing sites in the Core Strategy and their location is reflected in the choice of proposed sites;
- The volume of sand and gravel contained within the proposed sites is estimated to exceed that required over the Plan period and provides some flexibility in terms of quality of deposit;
- There is a high probability that the proposed sites will come forward by way of planning applications because they have been promoted by operators and landowners;
- Sales of sand and gravel in the county during recent years have remained level and are below the sub-regional apportionment, which suggests sites may last longer;
- Windfall sites are likely to continue to contribute to sand and gravel supply over the plan period.

## **Proposed sites**

2.7 Details of the proposed sites are shown in Chapter 3 together with a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal results. Appendix A provides a summary of the specific sites Sustainability Appraisals. Detailed Site Plans of the allocated sites are included in Chapter 3. The sites are also shown diagrammatically on the Proposals Map, which is included at the rear of the Suffolk Minerals Core Strategy.

2.8 An ecological assessment of all sites has been undertaken to determine the need for Appropriate Assessments in line with the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. A summary table is contained within Appendix C of the Minerals Specific Site Allocation Issues and Options – Version 2, April 2007 document. Only Site 23 (Cavenham) was identified as requiring an assessment and a copy of the report for this site is included with the following site documentation.

2.9 A Sustainability Appraisal Report outlining full details for each site is available as a supporting document.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

2.10 Chapter 10 of the Minerals Core Strategy sets out the approach to the implementation and monitoring of minerals operations in the County. The Minerals Specific Site Allocations document will be regularly reviewed on a five year basis or sooner if required as indicated by the Annual Monitoring Report. Circumstances that would indicate the need for an early review would include the loss of available sites that would lead to a shortfall in provision being made, to the extent that the sub regional apportionment would not be met.