



MINERALS & WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Minerals Specific Site Allocations Adopted Version

September 2009



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Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction	5
Chapter 2 - Background	8
Chapter 3 - Proposed Sites	10
Appendix A - Summary of Proposed Sites Sustainability Appraisals	

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new development plan process to England. Under the old system there were three tiers in the planning 'hierarchy': Regional Planning Guidance (e.g. RPG6 for East Anglia), County Structure Plans and Local Plans.
- 1.2 Suffolk County Council had responsibility for producing three documents: the County Structure Plan (adopted in 2001), the Minerals Local Plan (adopted in 1999) and the Waste Local Plan (adopted in February 2006). The Suffolk Structure Plan and Local Plans (including the Minerals and Waste Local Plans) comprised the "Development Plan" for Suffolk.
- 1.3 Under the new planning system, there are two tiers: the Regional Spatial Strategy (*The East of England Plan*) and Local Development Frameworks (the successor documents to Local Plans). Suffolk County Council has retained strategic planning responsibility for minerals and waste matters and is therefore required to produce a Minerals and Waste Development Framework (M&WDF).
- 1.4 In undertaking the M&WDF, the County Council has to prepare the following constituent documents:

- Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (the Scheme).

This is the project plan and timetable for preparing the constituent Minerals and Waste Development Documents. The County Council's Scheme was formally adopted in April 2005 and the second revised version was adopted in June 2007.

- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The SCI explains how the County Council intends to engage all "stakeholders" (e.g. local communities, industry groups, other Local Authorities, Environment Agency etc) in the production of the Development Plan Documents and to encourage continuing public participation from the very earliest stages of the process. The SCI was formally adopted in May 2006.

- Series of detailed minerals and waste development plan documents:

a) a core strategy, including generic development control policies (produced separately for minerals and waste);

b) a specific site allocations document identifying individual sites (again to be produced separately for minerals and waste); and

c) a proposals map (covering both minerals & waste).

- Annual Monitoring Report. (AMR)

This covers the financial year (e.g. 1st April to 31st March the following year). The 2006-7 AMR was published in December 2007.

- 1.5 The two Core Strategy Documents and two Specific Site Allocations Documents will be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA, incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive).

Minerals Core Strategy Development Plan Document

- 1.6 The Minerals Core Strategy establishes the framework for all other Mineral Development Plan Documents (DPDs), which must conform to its principles. The Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the minerals planning framework for the County, based on a Vision, Aims and Strategic Objectives. Spatial policies and generic development control policies have been derived from the spatial planning framework.
- 1.7 The Minerals Core Strategy (Submission version), which sets the policy 'framework' for minerals development, was approved by County Council on 13 September 2007. Following Submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State, public consultation was carried out. Relatively few representations were made. As a result of these representations the County Council proposed some minor amendments to the Core Strategy, and the objections to the Core Strategy were as a result withdrawn. The Inspector appointed to examine the Core Strategy subsequently confirmed that there was no need to hold a Public Examination session. The Inspector's Report was received on the 4th June and concluded that, with the amendments recommended in his report, the Minerals Core Strategy is sound and satisfies the requirements of section 20(5) of the 2004 Act. The proposed allocations of land (sites) for minerals extraction are in line with the policies of the Core Strategy.

Minerals Specific Site Allocation DPD– Issues & Options Stage

- 1.8 During the Issues & Options stage, there have been a number of separate consultation exercises. The first of these exercises were three 'calls for sites', in September 2005, and again in January and May 2006. As a result, a total of 25 potential sites were submitted to the MPA for consideration (although Site 15, Culford/Ingham, was later withdrawn due to adverse geological results).
- 1.9 Criteria for selecting and assessing the sites were consulted on in May 2006, and the criteria were revised in the light of comments received.
- 1.10 The 24 submitted sites were issued for public consultation in July 2006. No assessment or sustainability appraisal of the sites was made, with only factual information reported (e.g. any nature conservation constraints, possible after-use(s), the site area and the estimated quantity of material). The aim of this early consultation was to raise awareness publicly of the potential sites, and allow local communities and residents to feed back any comments prior to the MPA assessing the sites.
- 1.11 Following receipt of the comments, the MPA undertook sustainability appraisals of all 24 sites. No conclusions were drawn on the suitability or otherwise of the sites, but the appraisals made clear the MPA's opinions on potential constraints (e.g. landscape, HGV impacts). These appraisals were included in the revised Issues & Options paper, which was issued for consultation in April 2007.

Minerals Specific Site Allocations DPD – Preferred Options Stage

- 1.12 After analysing the comments received to the second Issues & Options paper, the MPA revised the sustainability appraisals for each site. From this, the list of 'preferred' sites emerged.
- 1.13 1.13 The MPA proposed that 13 potential sites be included in the Preferred Options DPD. These sites were (*e: extension; n: new site*): **Waldringfield** (sites 1A and 2A, e); **Coddenham** (3, e); **Layham** (4, e); **Barham** (5A and 5B, e); **Chilton** (6, n); Timworth (12 and 12A, n); **Homersfield/Flixton** (16 & 17, e); **Worlington/Red Lodge** (19 & 20, e); and **Cavenham** (23 & 24, e). Whilst all these sites have some negative impacts, the MPA believed that these could be controlled satisfactorily through revisions to the site boundaries and/or the imposition of appropriate conditions (e.g. routing agreements for HGVs, noise limits etc).
- 1.14 38 representations were received to the Preferred Options document. Many of these were from statutory bodies and referred to particular constraints to development. Other representations were made by members of the public objecting to the inclusion of preferred sites. Mineral operators also made representations supporting the inclusion of sites or objecting to the exclusions of sites. After careful consideration none of the representations received were considered to be reasons for excluding any of the identified sites.

Minerals Specific Site Allocations DPD – Submission Stage

- 1.15 1.15 Two of the above sites were the subject of planning applications. An application for the eastern extension at Cavenham (site 24) was approved at Development Control Committee on 18 October 2007 and therefore will drop out of the Site Allocations DPD, as this deals with proposed sites rather than approved sites.
- 1.16 1.16 A Planning Application to develop the site at Chilton (site 6) was considered by the Development Control Committee in March 2008. The Committee refused the application against officer advice on the following grounds: a. the proposal was detrimental to the free flow and safety of traffic that used the A134; and b. the proposal had an adverse environmental impact on the existing road network. A further planning application was then submitted with modified access arrangements, and was refused against officer advice in December 2008 on the same grounds. However the site remains as a proposal within the Site Allocations DPD on the basis that the County Council approved the Submission document in July 2008 and potentially planning permission might still be granted via a further application or an appeal.