

**Recommendations from the joint Member Working Group
into the preparation of the new
Suffolk Minerals and Waste Plan**



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1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the initial series of meetings of the Suffolk County Council (SCC) Joint Party Member Working Group established to provide early, cross party oversight and strategic input into the preparation of the County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The introduction of the member working group was endorsed by SCC's Cabinet on 2 December 2025.
- 1.2 The group's role is advisory and to provide feedback on matters that the next Minerals and Waste Local plan will need to address, and to guide officers on evidence and draft policy without predetermining statutory decisions.
- 1.3 Meetings covered a review of the new plan making guidance, plan scope and timetable implications, how the current minerals and waste plan has been implemented, and evidence of demand for minerals and management of waste in Suffolk, the East of England and any potential national considerations.
- 1.4 Members raised recurring concerns about waste infrastructure siting and speculative development, HGV routing and highway safety, residential amenity (noise, odour,).
- 1.5 The working group identified a number of policy areas for the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan, including to review and strengthen policies relating to waste sites and speculative development. Addressing residential amenity impacts such as HGV movements and air quality issues, strengthening site access and lorry routing requirements to protect local communities and highway safety, and embedding modern enforcement and monitoring approaches (for example ANPR and GPS) alongside robust environmental protection standards.
- 1.6 The report recommends that the issues and priorities identified by members, as set out in this report, be taken forward into the next stages of plan preparation and evidence work and seeks member agreement that these topics should inform policy drafting where feasible within the statutory plan timetable.

2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1 The Suffolk County Council Joint Member Working Group provides a structured, cross-party meeting for elected members of SCC to provide early political oversight, strategic direction and practical input into the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Plan.
- 2.2 The group's role is advisory to discuss known issues for the residents and operators in Suffolk and how these can be addressed in the new local plan. The group will help to identify strategic issues, identify member priorities and local considerations, and guide officers on issues to be reflected in draft policies and evidence work.
- 2.3 The group is not the statutory decision-making body for plan adoption; its outputs are intended to inform and help steer the Minerals and Waste plan through the new plan making process, and to seek political oversight ahead of statutory consultation stages, prior to plan adoption. Its outputs are intended to inform the plan making process.
- 2.4 This report covers the initial meetings of the Joint Party Member Working Group and summarises the purpose, discussion points, member input and agreed follow up actions arising from those meetings.

Working Party meetings

- a) Meeting 1 — Introduction to Minerals and Waste Planning.
- b) Meeting 2 — Waste Planning.
- c) Meeting 3 — Implementation of the 2020 Minerals and Waste Plan.
- d) Meeting 4 — Review of recommendations.

Group members

- 2.5 The working group comprises of seven elected members from four political groups, SCC Officers with responsibility for the Minerals and Waste Plan, and welcomed 3 guest speakers for focused discussions:
 - a) **Conservative**; Cllr Alexander Nicoll (Wickham) – Working member group Chairperson; Cllr Elaine Bryce (Carlford); Cllr Joe Mason (Haverhill Cangle); Cllr Nathan Wilson (Chantry).
 - b) **Green, Liberal and Independent coalition**; Cllr Andrew Stringer (Green Party - Upper Gipping);
 - c) **Labour and Co-operative**; Cllr Sandy Martin (Rushmere);
 - d) **Reform UK Party**; Cllr Martin Robinson (Tower);
 - e) **Suffolk County Council Officers**; James Cutting (Head of planning – Attended the initial meeting, has since left his position at the County

Council); Peter Freer (Planning Strategy Manager); Ross Walker (Senior Planning Officer – Minerals and Waste)

- f) **Attendees / speakers;** Deborah Sacks (Secretary of the East Anglia Waste Technical Advisory Body / Independent Waste Specialist); Graham Gunby (NSIP – Development Manager); Andy Rutter (Development Manager¹).

Timeframe

- 2.6 The meetings took place between the 1 December 2025 and 18 February 2026. This allowed an initial set of working party meetings to take place well in advance any formal commencement of the Plan. The series will re-commence once the Planning Department start to produce documentation for consultation. In lieu of regulations at the time of writing, this could be the call for sites consultation or the initial Scoping Consultation, both of which are “pre plan commencement” activities.

Report purpose

- 2.7 To record member engagement to date; assess the strategic input provided; identify where member views should shape policy drafting or further evidence; and present a clear set of actions and recommendations for officers to take forward into the next stages of plan preparation.

Intended audience

- 2.8 Members of the Joint Party Member Working Group, senior officers in the Planning and Environment teams.
- 2.9 Once finalised the report will be made public and published on the new Minerals and Waste Planning webpage. The report will form part of the new Plan evidence base.

What this report does not do

- 2.10 This report does not substitute for statutory consultation or formal decisions required under the plan making regulations; determine final policy wording or site allocations without the formal decision process; determine final policy wording or site allocations without the formal decision process.

¹ Graham Gunby and Andrew Rutter, previously oversaw and produced the adopted Suffolk minerals and Waste Local Plan 2020.

3. Background and policy context

- 3.1 The setting up of the member group was endorsed by SCC's Cabinet on 2 December 2025 to provide early political oversight, recommendations for the development of policy areas and practical input into the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Plan.
- 3.2 The group's role is advisory, and views will inform officers on the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Plan and have reference to the council's timetable and reports to formal decision bodies, while being managed and recorded to avoid predetermination within the plan process.
- 3.3 This early documented engagement is particularly important under the Government's new plan-making system established through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (2023) and supporting legislation, which introduces defined gateway stages and an accelerated 30-month timetable for plan making.
- 3.4 Alongside securing and safeguarding minerals and waste infrastructure, the new Minerals and Waste Plan must also respond to the statutory environmental duties introduced through the Environment Act 2021, particularly the requirement for all qualifying development to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and for plan-making to align with the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Suffolk. Together, these introduce new legal expectations meaning mineral allocations, restoration policies and waste infrastructure planning will need to demonstrate measurable biodiversity outcomes and alignment with LNRS spatial priorities.
- 3.5 Authorities must therefore be agile and efficient to comply with new procedural requirements, the Joint Party Member Working Group helps ensure member input is timely, transparent and aligned with those statutory expectations for stakeholder engagement and best practice guidance.

4. Summary of meetings

Meeting 1 — Introduction to Minerals and Waste Plans

- 4.1 **Date:** 1 December 2025
- 4.2 **Attendees:** Cllr Alexander Nicoll (meeting Chair); Cllr Elaine Bryce; Cllr Nathan Wilson; Cllr Sandy Martin; Cllr Joe Mason; Cllr Martin Robinson; Cllr Andrew Stringer; James Cutting; Peter Freer; Ross Walker.
- 4.3 **Objective:** Introduction to Minerals and Waste Planning, need for a new plan, scope of the new plan, the emerging new plan making system and its required processes and delivery.

Key discussion points:

- a) Discussed the incoming plan making system;
- b) Set out the delivery timetables and procedures for the new plan process;
- c) Minerals supply and land bank including Local Aggregates Assessment's (LAA);
- d) Site selection criteria for call for sites;
- e) Procedure for determining un-allocated sites.
- f) Digitalisation of plans;
- g) Discussions on waste sites (EA Waste Interrogator) / food waste (AD plants).

Member input and views:

- h) Members highlighted the use of technical language and acronyms in the plan not being universally known – a review of the glossary of terms should be reviewed. (“land won aggregate” - was given as an example of an industry term. where a clear definition would be useful)
 - i) Members would like input in the call for sites assessment criteria (draft ‘Call or sites pro forma’ resented to the working group in ‘Meeting 4’).
 - j) Members interested in how food waste in relation to the June 2026 changes to household collections, would be dealt with in Suffolk, asked for more information at the next meeting.
- 4.4 **Decisions / actions agreed:** Future focused session on waste planning and infrastructure (meeting 2); look to present call for sites criteria at fourth meeting.

Meeting 2 — Waste Planning

4.5 **Date:** 23 January 2026

4.6 **Attendees:** Cllr Alexander Nicoll (Meeting Chair); Cllr Elaine Bryce; Cllr Nathan Wilson; Cllr Sandy Martin; Cllr Joe Mason; Cllr Martin Robinson; Cllr Andrew Stringer; Peter Freer; Ross Walker; Deborah Sacks.

4.7 **Objective:** Waste planning and infrastructure.

Key discussion points:

- a) The waste arisings in Suffolk, Food waste – incoming statutory requirement to collect from households
- b) Suffolk waste infrastructure, hard to recycle materials and emerging technologies, secondary and recycled aggregates.
- c) A focus on speculative development approach to Waste sites– to encourage and accommodate facilities to address the waste need in Suffolk.

Member input and views:

- d) Members raised Concerns over Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plants, along with the nuances regarding whether they are determined by the County Council or District Council.
- e) Members highlighted the need for collaboration with District and Borough Authorities and the possible use of cross authority training sessions, or the production of separate guidance to focus on circumstances where waste sites permitted by District Authorities start scaling up operations and importing waste.
- f) Members reinforced the need to make sure the SCC Minerals and Waste Plan is explicitly given regard by other Suffolk Authorities when considering the 'development plan' in decision making.
- g) Members were interested in emerging waste / recycled waste streams (for example solar panels, light tubes, and other electronics).
- h) After raised by Deborah Sacks (waste consultant) Members discussed the support of specialised re-processors, and emerging forms of recycling practices that could be focussed towards areas of Suffolk, through the use of local development orders or through plan policy.

Decisions / actions agreed:

- 4.8 Next meeting to include topics on HGV / lorry routing, highways and access, and Biodiversity net gain (actioned for next meeting)

Meeting 3 — Minerals Planning.

- 4.9 **Date:** 28 January 2026
- 4.10 **Attendees:** Cllr Alexander Nicoll (Meeting Chair); Cllr Elaine Bryce; Cllr Nathan Wilson; Cllr Sandy Martin; Cllr Joe Mason; Cllr Martin Robinson; Cllr Andrew Stringer; Peter Freer; Ross Walker; Graham Gunby; Andy Rutter
- 4.11 **Objective:** Minerals Planning, development management policies, HGV / Lorry routing and the highway network. Biodiversity Net Gain,

Key discussion points:

- a) Minerals sites, allocations and safeguarding.
- b) Development management policies for both allocated sites and speculative development.
- c) The use of technology for enforcement. Number plate recognition and GPS tracking for operators and contractors.
- d) HGV issues related to site access and access to the lorry routing network.
- e) Discussed networking with other authorities, both inside and outside of Suffolk – for upcoming processes and lessons learned
- f) Biodiversity Net Gain, what are national requirements and what can be addressed through the Plan.

4.12 Member input and views:

- g) Endorsement of wider networking with County Councils from around the country if suitable.
- h) The use of technology for enforcement. Number plate recognition and GPS tracking for operators and contractors
- i) Highlighted higher housing delivery rates required by district authorities in Suffolk moving forward and importance of maintaining a supply of sand and gravel.
- j) Low level frequency noise impacts on residents from plant equipment.
- k) The impacts of HGV / lorries from existing, speculative or allocated minerals sites on residential amenities – noise, air quality and public safety.
- l) Lorries using narrow roads and heavy traffic along routes which pass sensitive locations such as children’s nurseries at drop off and pick up times – would like to see a greater emphasis on lorry routing plans through plan policies.
- m) Highlighted problems for residents caused from lack of lorry parking or on-site queuing resulting in HGV / Lorry parking by the side of roads, or on private roads, and the strain on the wider highways network in terms of public amenity spaces, rest break services and waiting spaces.
- n) Early Engagement with internal stakeholders (including this working group) around methodologies for consultation processes and early public engagement (for example the call for sites consultation)

- o) Early engagement with the public and outside stakeholders, and extended consultation timeframes where possible (subject to the requirements of the 30-month plan making system)
- p) Highlighted the need for proper surveying of habitats during the BNG process, to make sure things like rhizomes (which exist on the soil line and may not be identifiable at certain times of year) are not excluded from any calculations.

Decisions / actions agreed:

- 4.13 SCC Development Management and Enforcement to consider the practical/technical limits of ANPR and CCTV (power supply, permissions, GDPR, licensing, statutory powers) for use in enforcement if required.
- 4.14 Officers to draft a report (this report) to outline issues identified by members to be addressed or used as steer in the production of the new Minerals and Waste Plan. The Document will be presented as a draft, with a review session to amend and finalise the document before circulation.

Meeting 4 and Member questionnaire:

4.15 **Date:** 18 February 2026

4.16 **Attendees:** Cllr Alexander Nicoll (Meeting Chair); Cllr Sandy Martin; Cllr Martin Robinson; Cllr Andrew stringer; Ross Walker.

4.17 **Objective:** To present timetables updates, review Draft Report, review draft 'call for sites pro forma'

4.18 Following the third meeting in the series a questionnaire with circulated to all Members in the working party. The questionnaire (appendix A) sets out a number of questions inviting members to highlight any issues discussed or any issues of local concern to which the new Local Plan should aim to address.

4.19 Meeting 4 took place on Wednesday 18 February 2026 and discussed the recommendations in this report, the member questionnaire and additional issues raised.

4.20 Members clarified further the need to separate aspects of Policy 'GP4: General Environmental Criteria', to allow for some of the criteria outlined within the policy to be further defined or where necessary split into a standalone policy. Specifically, the; 'environmental', 'air quality' and 'water environment' aspects of the policy.

4.21 Following discussion about the storage of nuclear waste and nuclear sites in Suffolk, Members asked that WP16 be assessed to clarify that any storage of nuclear waste should be "temporary and recoverable". A site-specific policy for

Sizewell B relating to its storage and processing of nuclear waste was also discussed.

- 4.22 Following discussion about the temporary nature of many waste developments, and the implications this has for permissions relating to associated plant, machinery and processes, members highlighted the need for more permanent waste infrastructure where this is appropriate under legislation, to allow for better investment into waste infrastructure. For example, facilities sited on landfill sites are granted temporary permissions linked to the operational life of the wider landfill site, a Recycling Centre (RC) sited independently may be permitted as a permanent facility because it is not tied to a temporary primary use.
- 4.23 Members also emphasised that the absence of adequate driver welfare facilities can have a detrimental impact on residential amenity. This can manifest through queuing on the highway and heavy goods vehicles parking in unsanctioned locations, including industrial estates, public laybys and, in some cases, private driveways. The Plan will seek to address these issues, where possible, through both general policies and site-specific allocations. For example, sites may be required to provide sufficient on-site waiting, turning and parking areas proportionate to the scale and operational activity of the development.
- 4.24 Members also raised concerns about hazardous household waste and the need for clearer guidance to residents on how such materials should be disposed of safely. It was noted that Suffolk County Council, through the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, is responsible for planning sufficient capacity to meet future demand; however, the Plan cannot prescribe how residents should use individual sites. We will work with the Waste Team to identify any gaps in HWRC provision, either through this process or through the Waste Needs Assessment. Where gaps are identified, the Plan may allocate land for new HWRCs or set out the standards that any proposed HWRC must meet when seeking planning permission.
- 4.25 It is noted that the Waste Team already produces guidance on the safe disposal of household hazardous waste, including an online A–Z of hazardous waste types and disposal routes, available on the SCC website. This information was previously provided in leaflet form, but distribution and uptake were limited, and the guidance is now provided exclusively online.
- 4.26 Members also discussed fracking and expressed a desire for a policy stating that fracking will not take place in Suffolk. It was noted that, due to the county's geology, there is no shale formation or mapped shale gas resource present, meaning that fracking is not technically feasible in Suffolk. As a result, a policy explicitly prohibiting fracking would be vulnerable at examination, as it would be unlikely to meet the tests of soundness or necessity.

- 4.27 However, it may be appropriate to include a policy relating to the extraction of hydrocarbons more generally, covering both conventional (oil and gas) and unconventional (shale gas) forms of extraction. Such a policy would need to set clear and robust criteria, including requirements for detailed geological assessment. While it could not impose an outright ban on all hydrocarbon extraction, the requirement for evidence-based geological justification would, in practice, prevent fracking proposals from coming forward.
- 4.28 The information collected through meeting discussions and questions feedback and reviewed and collated to form the outcomes of this report.

5. Summary of recommendations.

Common themes and issues identified through the meetings and feedback

- 5.1 Site access, HGV and lorry routing having an impact on local residents and highways safety.
- 5.2 The desire for use of up-to-date technologies for enforcement purposes (E.g. ANPR and GPS), subject to legal and technical feasibility
- 5.3 New Plan Policies to ensure high environmental protection standards, around both the on-site working practices and associated activities.
- 5.4 Anaerobic digestors being identified as a necessary and sustainable method of managing food waste but highlight the impact they can have on residential amenity (HGV / lorry routing and odour).
- 5.5 Use of inert waste, for the use in climate change infrastructure. (Policies in the current Minerals and Waste Plan 2020 limit inert material use as being for quarry infilling and restoration).
- 5.6 It is noted that the majority of the issues raised related to off-site activities mainly associated with highway activities and public amenity.

Areas of consensus:

- 5.7 “Policy GP4: *General environmental criteria*” to be reviewed, expanded upon, and where appropriate, criteria separated out to form its own standalone policy, to allow the policies in the plan to provide better standards of environmental protections.
- 5.8 Through revision of plan policy an increase in site monitoring standards would be implemented, using up to date technology where legally sound and technically feasible , to address impacts on the highway network and Residential amenity,
- 5.9 Plan policies need to go further in assessing the impacts of allocated and speculative developments and their impacts on residential amenity.
- 5.10 A number of policies and sites were identified by members where potential improvements could be made through policy (these policies and sites are addressed individually below).

Specific policies from the existing minerals and waste plan highlighted for review:

- 5.11 **GP4: General Environmental Criteria** sets out a broad range of environmental requirements that all minerals and waste development must address. The policy currently includes around 20 criteria covering matters such as biodiversity, noise and vibration, air quality, and the water environment (including surface water management and drainage).
- 5.12 Since the adoption of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan in 2020, national legislation and policy have introduced significantly stronger environmental requirements. These include the Environment Act 2021, which brought in mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), strengthened water quality and air quality duties, and introduced Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS).
- 5.13 In light of these changes, the scope of GP4 will need to be reviewed and expanded. Some elements may be better expressed through a revised general environmental policy, while others, such as BNG, may require a standalone policy to set out local expectations and ensure alignment with national legislation. The review will consider which components of GP4 should remain within a consolidated general policy and which should be separated into more focused thematic policies.
- 5.14 **WP2 and WP16:** Members discussed the need for clearer policy wording relating to the storage of hazardous waste, particularly in the context of safeguarding against future sea-level rise. It was noted that both policies in the existing Plan refer to radioactive waste associated with the Sizewell A site. As radioactive waste on nuclear-licensed sites is regulated nationally and outside the remit of local planning, any future policy can only apply to non-nuclear-licensed land or to legacy sites once they have been fully released from nuclear regulatory control.
- 5.15 In this context, Members expressed a preference that any hazardous or radioactive waste storage permitted through the planning system should be clearly defined as “**temporary and recoverable**”, to ensure that material can be safely removed in the future. The review of WP2 and WP16 will therefore consider whether revised wording is required to reflect this principle where it falls within the scope of the planning system, while recognising that Sizewell B and other operational nuclear-licensed sites remain outside the Local Plan’s jurisdiction.

- 5.16 It is noted, Sizewell A site is now beyond a stage of its decommissioning where it would be receiving any form of nuclear waste for processing or storage, and any material currently on site (if any) will have been relocated by the time the incoming Minerals and Waste Plan is adopted, it is likely that these policies WP2 / WP16 will be removed or revised.
- 5.17 **WP7:** Members discussed the in-principal acceptability of locating waste sites close to current waste disposal facilities, rather than on land which is not currently associated with waste treatment or disposal. It may be necessary to add a rider to any policy statement on temporary planning permissions, allowing for better investment and more permanence of Waste infrastructure on the most suitable sites.
- 5.18 **WP11:** To open up the policy on disposal of inert waste to allow for its use in environmental landscaping (E.g. River flood defences) – it is noted that this material would also need to comply with EA Standards and be free of contaminants

6. Specific sites (and site allocation policies) – current areas for consideration

- 6.1 **Sizewell A:** Through feedback from meetings and questionnaires Members discussed the storage of nuclear waste on site as part of the decommissioning process and making sure that any storage of nuclear waste is temporary, to help mitigate against any impact of rising sea levels in the future. It is noted that Sizewell A doesn't have any high-level nuclear waste on site (last was sent to Sellafield in 2014) and the final destination for any nuclear waste currently on site will be a low-level waste management facility (Cumbria).
- 6.2 **Sizewell B:** it was discussed by members' that The Minerals and Waste Local Plan does not include policies relating to the storage of radioactive waste or spent fuel at Sizewell B. it is noted that these activities fall wholly within the national nuclear regulatory framework and are governed by the Nuclear Installations Act 1965, the Nuclear Site Licence, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and the Environment Agency, rather than local waste planning.
- 6.3 If, in the future, any proposals were made for the importation of non-radioactive waste to the Sizewell B site, these would fall within the scope of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and would be assessed against relevant policies (for example, a revised Policy WP16). Proposals involving the importation, storage or management of radioactive waste would remain entirely outside the remit of the Local Plan.
- 6.4 During decommissioning, Sizewell B will continue to be regulated as a nuclear-licensed site, and radioactive waste management will remain a matter for national regulators. Only once the site is fully released from nuclear regulatory control would Local Plan policies apply to any future non-nuclear redevelopment or waste storage.
- 6.5 **Sizewell C:** The ongoing construction of Sizewell C was highlighted by members as a cause of local highways and residential amenity issues.

7. Issues identified outside the scope of the plan to be addressed.

- 7.1 **Working with other Suffolk Local Authorities:** Members emphasised the need for stronger collaboration between Suffolk County Council and the District and Borough planning authorities, particularly in relation to waste developments that fall outside the County Council's remit. As noted in Meeting 2, members highlighted "the need for collaboration with District and Borough Authorities and the possible use of cross authority training sessions, or the production of separate guidance" to ensure that waste sites permitted by District Authorities are correctly determined and do not scale up operations without appropriate oversight. This will need to be progressed through joint guidance, training and improved communication protocols rather than through the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 7.2 **WP7 governance over agricultural infrastructure:** Members requested that policy WP7 (or a successor policy) address agricultural infrastructure. However, as discussed in Meeting 2 and reiterated in Section 5, agricultural development that does not involve the importation of waste "does not fall under the remit of SCC nor the Minerals and Waste plan functions." Any concerns relating to agricultural buildings, farm diversification or on-farm processes must therefore be addressed through District planning processes or through non-statutory guidance rather than through the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 7.3 **Nuclear sites and radioactive waste regulation:** Members raised several issues relating to Sizewell A, Sizewell B and Sizewell C. While these are important matters for Suffolk, they fall largely outside the scope of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan:
- a) **Sizewell A:** As noted in Section 6.1, the site is nearing full decommissioning and "will be unable to undertake these processes, alleviating the concerns around the permanent storage of nuclear waste on the site." Any remaining radioactive waste is regulated nationally and not through local planning policy.
 - b) **Sizewell B:** Members discussed the desire for policies ensuring that any radioactive waste storage is "temporary and recoverable." However, as clarified in Section 6.2, "the Minerals and Waste Local Plan does not include policies relating to the storage of radioactive waste or spent fuel at Sizewell B," as these activities fall wholly within the national nuclear regulatory framework. The Local Plan cannot regulate radioactive waste on a nuclear-licensed site at any stage.
 - c) **Sizewell C:** Members highlighted highways and residential amenity impacts arising from construction activity. These issues are recognised but fall under the remit of the Development Consent Order (DCO), the Sizewell C Delivery

Framework, and ongoing monitoring and enforcement arrangements, not the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

- 7.4 Where appropriate, SCC will continue to work with the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), the Environment Agency, EDF and local partners to ensure that concerns raised by members are addressed through the correct regulatory channels.
- 7.5 **Highways, HGV routing and driver welfare facilities** A significant proportion of member concerns relate to off-site impacts particularly; HGV routing, queuing, parking, and driver welfare. As summarised in Section 5.6, “the majority of the issues raised related to off-site activities mainly associated with highway activities and public amenity.” While the Minerals and Waste Local Plan can strengthen requirements for lorry routing plans and on-site parking/queuing provision, wider issues such as:
- a) provision of countywide HGV welfare facilities
 - b) management of parking in laybys, industrial estates or private land
 - c) fall outside the scope of the Plan and must be addressed through Suffolk Highways, district councils, and partnership working with operators.
- 7.6 **Hazardous household waste and public guidance** Members raised concerns about hazardous household waste and the need for clearer public guidance. As noted in Section 4.24, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan is responsible for planning sufficient capacity, but “the Plan cannot prescribe how residents should use individual sites.” SCC’s Waste Team already provides an online A–Z of hazardous waste disposal routes, and any improvements to public guidance or communication fall outside the statutory remit of the Plan.
- 7.7 **Fracking and hydrocarbon extraction** Members expressed a desire for a policy stating that fracking will not take place in Suffolk. As explained in Section 4.26, fracking is not technically feasible in Suffolk due to the absence of shale formations. A policy explicitly banning fracking would therefore be unsound. Any further work on public communication or non-statutory statements of position must occur outside the Local Plan process.

8. Conclusion and recommendations.

- 8.1 The early engagement undertaken through the Joint Member Working Group has provided clear, practical and politically informed insight into issues that the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan will need to address.
- 8.2 Members recommended a full review of Policy GP4, with scope to separate out elements into standalone policies to provide clearer and stronger environmental protection, particularly in relation to air quality, the water environment and biodiversity and the wider environment. Any revised environmental policies will need to reflect statutory duties introduced through the Environment Act 2021, including mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and alignment with the Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 8.3 For minerals, members stressed the importance of maintaining a steady supply of aggregates and the safeguarding of key infrastructure alongside increased housing delivery targets set by District Authorities in Suffolk, while addressing impacts from lorry movements, noise and low-frequency vibration. The group also supported wider networking with other authorities (both District and County level) to share best practice and strengthen cross-boundary working.
- 8.4 Waste-related recommendations included reviewing and strengthening policies which address the speculative development for waste sites, encouraging more permanent waste management facilities where appropriate, and ensuring the Plan provides clear opportunity and criteria for emerging waste streams and specialised re-processors. Members also highlighted the need for clearer policy wording on hazardous and radioactive waste storage, confirming that any such storage permitted through the planning system should be temporary and recoverable, while recognising that activities on 'Active nuclear-licensed sites' fall wholly outside the remit of the Local Plan.
- 8.5 Members consistently emphasised the importance of strengthening policies relating to HGV routing, site access and residential amenity, including requirements for on-site waiting, parking and routing plans to reduce impacts on communities and the wider highway network. There was strong support for embedding modern enforcement and monitoring tools (such as ANPR and GPS) where legally and technically feasible, to support compliance and improve transparency.
- 8.6 A number of issues raised by members fall outside the statutory scope of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, including district-level waste permissions, agricultural development not involving waste, and the regulation of nuclear-licensed sites. These matters will be progressed through separate

guidance, improved cross-authority communication and collaboration with the appropriate regulatory bodies.

- 8.7 The priorities identified through this early engagement will now be taken forward into evidence commissioning, policy drafting and the development of early consultation materials. Continued engagement with Members will ensure that the emerging Plan reflects statutory requirements while responding to the practical concerns raised through this early political oversight.
- 8.8 This early work places the Council in a strong position to meet the accelerated 30-month plan-making timetable introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (2023).

Appendices

Appendix A: Member questionnaire.

Member Working Group Issues Paper – Questionnaire

Minerals

Q: Are there any issues related to the extraction or processing of minerals that you feel the new plan should address, which the current plan fails to?

Q: Are there aspects of mineral site restoration that are causing issues for residents, and how would you like the new plan to address these?

Q: Are there areas of current minerals policy that you feel would benefit from clearer guidance or updated approaches in the new plan

Q: Are there any other minerals-related matters you feel should be considered or addressed through future plan policy?

Waste

Q: Are there any waste-related challenges you think Suffolk may face over the next 10–20 years that the plan may need to consider and address?

Q: Are there specific types of waste facilities, emerging technologies, or waste streams that you feel should be encouraged through the plan, and why?

Q: Are there areas of current waste policy that you feel would benefit from clearer guidance or updated approaches in the new plan?

Q: Are there any other waste-related issues you would like to raise?

Other

Q: Do you have examples of vehicle-movement or routing issues linked to minerals or waste sites, and how could future policies help address these? For example, through the use of technology (Andy is researching ANPR again).

Q: From your perspective, what are the most significant impacts on residents from minerals and waste sites, and how could the new plan help to mitigate these?

Q: Are there cumulative environmental or amenity impacts that you feel need greater attention in future plan policies to limit long-term impacts on residents?

Q: New planning guidance, requires us to produce a “digital plans”, which will result in digitally linked documentation and the use of digital formatting for some elements like

mapping. Do you foresee this causing any issues which may need to be addressed, or something which should be fully embraced.

Q: Are there operational or workforce-related matters, such as welfare facilities for HGV drivers, that you feel should be addressed? (This may also apply to minerals sites.) – please note that some of the issues mentioned in this question might be outside of the scope of the Local plan but we can look into this further if other issues are raised.

Q: Is there any topic of issues you would like to raise in relation to the Minerals and Waste local plan which is not covered in the questions above.

Q: Are there any areas of the Minerals and Waste Plan where you would like additional focused sessions or Member training?

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