

Report to Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration

Subject: Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan Draft

Date: 23rd August 2018

Author: Service Manager - Planning Policy

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to make Gedling Borough Council's views known to the County Council on the new Minerals Local Plan.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Background

- 1 The County Council has published the Nottinghamshire Draft Minerals Local Plan for consultation which commenced on July 27th and will close on September 28th 2018. Supporting documents published alongside the plan include: a sustainability appraisal report, strategic flood risk assessment, Landscape Character Assessment and technical documents.
- 2 Gedling Borough Council was consulted at the earlier issues and options stage which took place during November and December 2017. Gedling Borough Council's comments were approved by way of a Portfolio Holder decision dated 11th January 2018. The most significant issues for Gedling Borough related to options for the provision and allocation of sites for brick clay around Dorket Head and for Sherwood Sandstone around Bestwood 2 Quarry.
- 3 It is proposed that the new Minerals Local Plan will cover the period up to 2036. The new plan provides a long term vision for mineral development in Nottinghamshire, setting out minerals provision policies, mineral requirements and land allocations to meet this need. A suite of development management policies are also included in order to deliver the strategic policies and objectives and to provide criteria against which future minerals development will be assessed. These development management policies relate to specific individual site level criteria such as environmental impacts and standards and provide guidance about how planning

applications for minerals will be assessed. The new plan includes safeguarding policies in order to protect the existing mineral resources from being unnecessarily sterilised by other forms of development. It is supported by a policies map which identifies site allocations and mineral safeguarding areas on an Ordnance Survey base map.

- 4 Important mineral resources located within Gedling Borough include brick clay, Sherwood Sandstone and sand and gravel. The new plan sets out proposals about how much aggregate should be provided over the plan period and what land bank should be maintained for each mineral. Some of the need can be met through existing permitted reserves but for most minerals this will not be sufficient to meet need over the plan period and additional land allocations are needed.
- 5 This draft plan represents an informal consultation stage prior to the new Minerals Local Plan being formally published for six weeks before it is submitted to government for examination. This current informal consultation provides an opportunity for the Minerals Planning Authority to obtain views and it is an opportunity for Gedling Borough Council to comment and potentially influence the content of the plan prior to its formal publication.

Proposal

- 6 It is proposed that the following text in italics identified under the sub heading 'Comments' be sent as representations to Nottinghamshire County Council.

Sand and gravel

- 7 Based on past trends, over 32 million tonnes of sand and gravel resource will be required over the plan period. Once account is taken of permitted reserves, new allocations are proposed largely involving extensions to existing sand and gravel working and also two new sites. This includes a new allocation at Barton in Fabis to supply the Nottingham market. There are no proposals for new sand and gravel quarries within Gedling Borough.

Sherwood Sandstone

- 8 Provision is made for just over 7 million tonnes of Sherwood Sandstone to be identified. Once permitted reserves are taken into account, around an additional 3.3 million tonnes up to 2036 is needed to maintain supplies. In order to meet identified needs the plan proposes to extend two existing quarries including Bestwood 2 in Gedling Borough which has two extensions planned - a larger one to the east and a northern extension. The eastern extension has already been permitted and is expected to have a life of around 11 years. The northern extension will be commenced once the eastern extension has been worked out estimated around 2029. A development brief is included to guide the planning application.
- 9 The planned extensions which are shown in appendix 1 would impact on the Longdale

Plantation Local Wildlife Site and according to the supporting site assessment evidence have a high landscape impact on the Longdale Plantation. The proposed extensions would utilise existing plant and the access road and there are no significant transport issues. There are limited options for the future supply of Sherwood Sandstone and the proposals are relatively modest in scale. The eastern extension already has planning permission. The proposed restoration would be a biodiversity led scheme to create priority habitat in accordance with the Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Strategy. There would be an overall loss of woodland habitat.

Comments

- 10 In response to question 12 what do you think of the draft site specific Sherwood Sandstone allocations? it should be noted that the Sustainability Appraisal notes that there would be a net loss of woodland habitat as the restoration is focussed on heathland/acid grassland and natural regeneration. *It is recommended that Gedling Borough Council does not object to these allocations subject to the County Council being satisfied that its restoration would result in a level of biodiversity that would offset any harm to the Longdale Plantation Local Wildlife Site.*

Brick Clay

- 11 Nottinghamshire has two existing brick works, one of which is located in Gedling Borough at Dorket Head and which is one of the most important brick manufacturers in the United Kingdom and an important local employer. The brick works is designated as a protected employment site in the recently adopted Local Planning Document. At the issues and options stage, the County Council sought views as to whether the Minerals Local Plan should identify a specific replacement quarry (remote extension/new site) to the Dorket Head clay pit or alternatively include a criteria based policy against which proposals for the remote extensions or new sites would be assessed. In response, Gedling Borough Council acknowledged the economic importance of the brickworks to the local economy and expressed its preference for the Minerals Local Plan to identify additional resource by making a site specific allocation for a remote extension/new site in the interests of clarity.
- 12 The NPPF requires a 25 year land bank of permitted reserves to be available to each brickworks. Planning permission has been granted for a small southern extension to the existing Dorket Head Quarry and taking this into account reserves are likely to last until around 2030. The Minerals Local Plan puts forward a remote extension on land north of Woodborough Lane which would provide additional reserves for a further 20 – 25 years from the early 2030s. The proposed extension is shown on the plan attached as appendix 2. No additional processing plant would be required as the clay would be transported across the B684 to the stockpile within the existing quarry. There are no details about the type of crossing although the Sustainability Appraisal indicates this is likely to be by dumper trucks crossing from the north side of the B684 to the south side. From the stockpile on the other side of the B684 within the existing quarry the clay would then be conveyed to the brick works via the existing conveyor belt system running along the south side of the B684. It is proposed that the land proposed for the extension would be restored to current ground levels using inert waste.
- 13 From Gedling Borough Council's perspective, the key issues arising from the extension are the impact on the openness of the Green Belt and also the acceptability

of the proposals in terms of landscape and visual impact. In terms of the Green Belt, mineral extraction can be appropriate development provided the development would not cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The County Councils supporting evidence base indicates that landscape impact would be moderate to high both in the operational phase and in the medium term. The supporting evidence also acknowledges a potential adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

- 14 In this context, Gedling Borough Council acknowledges that minerals can only be worked where they are found and that minerals working is a temporary use of land albeit over a fairly long timescale. Openness of the Greenbelt is characterised by a lack of built development and in this context it is not proposed to develop processing plant on site which would be more likely to impact on the openness in this location.
- 15 Turning to the potential landscape and visual impact of the proposed extension, the Nottinghamshire Landscape Character Assessment includes the site within the Dumbles Rolling Farmland and partly within the Woodborough Sloping Farmlands Landscape Policy Zones. The Dumbles Rolling Farmland has a strong rural character and is distinctive in the landscape and the rolling hills can be seen from the surrounding area. The landscape strategy is to conserve and enhance the landscape. The site is visually prominent being on a high plateau and part of the open countryside with views across the Dumbles to Lambley and vice versa.
- 16 The new Minerals Local Plan is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Assessment which assesses landscape impact and concludes that there would be a negative impact during the operational period remaining slightly negative in the long term post restoration. The proposal may also result in a potential adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt during the operational phase but this would be temporary once the land is restored. Accordingly, the Landscape and Visual Assessment includes a number of recommendations to help mitigate the impact of the proposal on the landscape including over the long term.
- mitigation measures including an advanced planting scheme to screen the operational stage;
 - a landscape buffer required along Woodborough Lane and to screen the footpath along the ridgeline to the north; and
 - the retention of field trees, ponds and hedgerows.
 - The restoration phase to include the replacement of field trees, improvement of hedgerows and to increase field ponds and avenues of trees.
- 17 The County Council's overall assessment in its site selection document is that against sustainability appraisal objectives, the site scores slightly negatively during the operational phase and in the long term. The site would be worked for Brick Clay and there are no other options which have been presented for future supply of this resource in Nottinghamshire. As a result of the above, given the need for future supplies of this resource in Nottinghamshire and the overall site assessment, it is considered **appropriate** to include the proposal as an allocation in the Draft Minerals Plan.

Comment

- 18 In response to question 15 which asks what do you think of the draft site specific allocation for brick clay? *It is recommended that Gedling Borough Council expresses concern about potential negative impacts on the landscape character of the Dumbles Rolling Farmlands and Woodborough Sloping Farmlands Policy Zones. Gedling Borough Council would seek reassurance from the County Council about the extent and scope of appropriate mitigation measures to minimise the impact on the landscape and openness of the Green Belt particularly during the operational phase. Gedling Borough Council would ask the County Council to ensure that appropriate wording is included within the supporting text to Policy MP6 (at paragraph 4.70 or alternatively within the Development Brief in appendix 3) to recognise the sensitivity of the landscape character of the Dumbles Rolling Farmlands and to identify the need for a detailed Landscape and Visual Assessment to be undertaken at the planning application stage to make recommendations for advanced planting schemes to screen the operational phase and to provide the necessary landscape buffers along Woodborough Lane and to the north of the site.*

Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultations Areas

- 19 Gedling Borough Council supports in principle the identification of Minerals Safeguarding and Minerals Consultations area. The approach taken to making these areas coterminous is strongly supported. Whilst there are concerns that the mineral resource covered by the policy is extensive and, for clay, covers large parts of the Arnold/Carlton urban fringe, the identification of such areas is helpful. Experience from the recent examination of the Local Planning Document shows the importance of taking into account the presence of potentially workable and viable mineral deposits at an early stage in Local Plan preparation and also demonstrates the benefits of working in partnership with the Minerals Planning Authority and operators in terms of considering whether the prior extraction of minerals is feasible and practical prior to housing development.

Comment

- 20 In response to question 9 – What do you think of the draft strategic policy for Mineral Safeguarding, Consultation Areas and associated minerals infrastructure? *It is recommended that Gedling Borough Council has no objections to the Minerals Safeguarding policy or to the Minerals Consultation Area policies.*

Alternative Options

Alternative options include:

- a) Not making any comments on the new Minerals Local Plan in which case Gedling Borough Council's views would not be made known to the County Council; or
- b) Send comments setting out objections to the proposals for extensions to the existing

quarries. However, in both cases, Bestwood 2 and Dorket Head there is a need to identify future resources and very limited options to secure this resource. The extension of existing sites as opposed to identifying new sites is assessed as being the better option by the County Council.

Financial Implications

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed extensions to Bestwood 2 Quarry

Appendix 2: Proposed extension to Dorket Head Clay Quarry

Background Papers

None

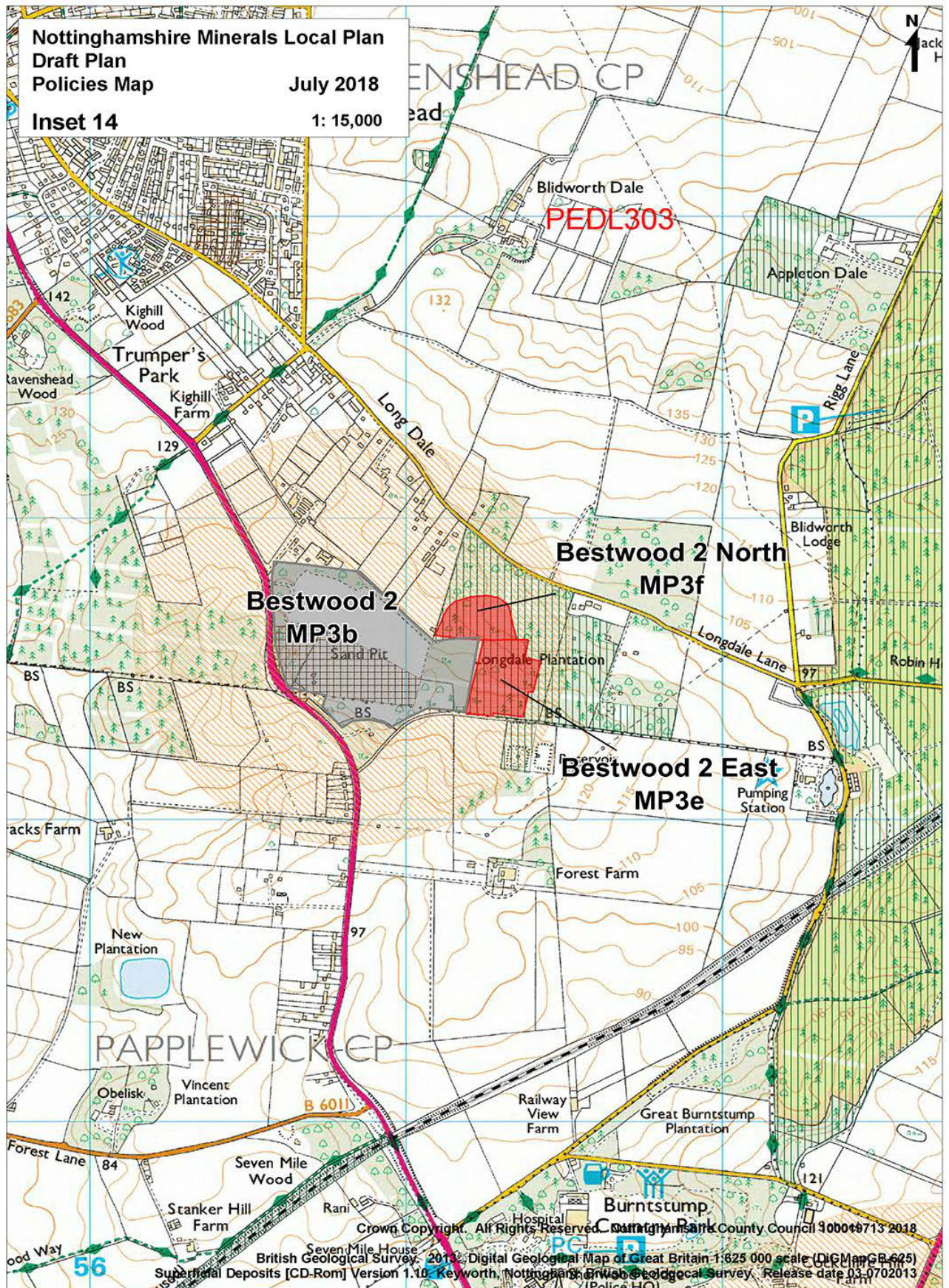
Recommendation

It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder agrees that the comments set out in italics in paragraphs 10, 18 and 20 are sent to the County Council in response to their consultation on the draft Minerals Local Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations

To ensure that Gedling Borough responds to the consultation on the Draft Minerals Local Plan by the deadline of 28th September 2018.

Appendix 1: Proposed extensions to Bestwood 2 Quarry



Appendix 2: Proposed extension to Dorket Head Clay Quarry

