

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**MONDAY 15 OCTOBER 2001 AT 10.00 A.M.**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 15 OCTOBER 2001 AT 2:15 PM**

Agenda item No.

**3**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN**

Report of the Director of Environment

Author: Sue Davidson Tel: 01992 556265

Executive member: Iris Tarry

Local members: Janet Anderson, Mary Bayes, Eleanor Clarke, Nigel Copping, David Beatty, Frank Clayton, Anthony Dodd, Francis Escott, Jill Gipps, Bryan Hammond, Aislinn Lee, Bob Mays, Rosie Sanderson, Bill Storey, John Usher, George Wenham.

Aggregates Panel Members: J Anderson, R N Copping (Chairman), R Sanderson, HM Saunders, WA Storey, G F Wenham

**1. Purpose of Report**

To advise Cabinet of the Aggregates Panel's recommendations for the next stage of the process with regard to the progress of the Minerals Local Plan Review and seek approval for a public consultation exercise as outlined in this report. The Aggregates Panel last met on 19 September 2001.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 Hertfordshire has only a limited range of indigenous minerals – predominantly sand and gravel, which mainly underlies the southern half of the county and is used for construction. Limited pockets of brickclay also exist in the extreme west of the county (used for specialist bricks) and pockets of chalk in the west, north and east of the county (used for agricultural lime).
- 2.2 Policies relating to the extraction of mineral in the county are currently set out in the Minerals Local Plan, a statutory document produced and adopted by the County Council.
- 2.3 The Minerals Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan for Hertfordshire, guiding where and how future mineral extraction should take place. The Minerals Local Plan was adopted in July 1998, after a very lengthy process which started in 1991.

- 2.4 Development Plans should be up-to-date and relevant and Government policy is that development plans should be reviewed every 5 years. In his report following the Minerals Local Plan Inquiry into the now adopted Minerals Local Plan, the Inspector emphasised this requirement and recommended that the current Plan include a commitment to an early evaluation of those resources from which further areas for future working will be identified, demonstrating that all the costs and benefits of working these resources have been evaluated and compared. This recommendation was adopted and the current Mineral Local Plan indicates that the first review would commence within 12 month's of the Plan's adoption (para 2.4.39).

## **Conclusion**

The Cabinet is requested to consider:

- i) the proposals for public consultation for pre-deposit consultation on the Minerals Local Plan Review based on the Key Issues Document, and
  - ii) the consultation process recommended in Section 4 of the report
- and make an appropriate proposal to the Executive Committee.

## **1. Background**

### **Review of progress so far**

- 1.1 In line with the revised procedures set out in Government Guidance (PPG12) and the County Council's own guidance on sustainability appraisal, work on the Review of the Plan has included:
- adopting a Framework for Site Selection Strategy (Environment Committee - October 1998);
  - scoping the current plan to identify any shortcomings against government and other guidance which indicate that the Plan needs to be updated;
  - a desk top evaluation of the mineral resources in the county to identify economically viable resource blocks, including discussions with operators and key landowners;
  - testing these blocks against an initial series of environmental and other constraints (known as "sieving") to identify areas suitable for further investigation as potential sites for mineral extraction;
  - the drafting of 8 Key Issues Papers as the basis for the pre-deposit draft consultation exercise.

## **2. Pre-deposit Consultation**

- 2.1 The Aggregates Panel considered the process for pre-deposit consultation at its meeting on 19 September 2001 and suggests the following way forward. The Panel recommend that the first public consultation on the Minerals Local Plan Review (i.e. the pre-Deposit consultation) should be based on the publication of

a Key Issues document outlining the main issues which need to be addressed in reviewing the Minerals Local Plan. The results of this exercise would be used to inform the First Deposit version of the Minerals Local Plan Review. This approach is consistent with Government guidance. (PPG12 states that pre-deposit consultation should be based on a key issues approach which identifies the main matters and choices which need to be resolved by the Plan and which focuses on those local communities, businesses, organisations and individuals relevant to the proposals being put forward.) It would also accord with the County Council's objective of community participation in the review and implementation of the development plan.

- 2.2 Initially, eight Key Issues Papers (KIPS) were drafted as free-standing documents. Having seen the draft Papers, the Panel now recommend that they be brought together in a single Key Issues Document to avoid duplication and to ensure that readers have all the necessary information to hand with regard to related issues.
- 2.3 The Key Issues chapters cover a range of inter-related topics. It is likely that Chapter 4, which looks at potential locations for future working will be of particular interest to a number of key stakeholders. The Panel have recommended certain amendments which have been incorporated in the respective Chapters. A summary of each Chapter is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Amongst other matters, the Minerals Local Plan needs to identify the County Council's preferred areas from which sand and gravel could be extracted in order to maintain a seven year "landbank" of planning permissions (subject to proposals coming forward from the industry) at a rate agreed by the Regional Aggregates Working Parties throughout the Plan period (currently 2.4 million tonnes per annum for Hertfordshire). The currently adopted Plan looks forward to 2006 and identifies 2 preferred areas but fails to indicate all of the potential areas from which the seven year landbank (until 2013) can be maintained at the end of the Plan period.
- 2.5 Government advice is that Minerals Local Plans should cover a period of at least 10 years from the anticipated date of adoption. The draft timetable anticipates adoption in 2004. The Minerals Local Plan Review therefore should cover the period until 2016 to coincide with the Structure Plan review and with which it should conform.
- 2.6 The process for the identification of future sites for mineral extraction is clearly an important issue for the Review of the Plan. Chapter 4 describes the sieving process undertaken to date to identify resource areas. This reflects the "Framework for Site Selection Strategy" that the County Council adopted in 1998, following consultation with stakeholders. Each stage of the process is referred to as a 'Sieve', because at each stage some locations will be 'caught' by the terms of that particular assessment, while others will fall through for further analysis at later stages.
- 2.7 Having been tested against a range of environmental and sustainability criteria all the resource areas under consideration have been categorised on a scale of 1-

4 (best to worst). The Panel recommend that those categorised as 3 or 4 are now excluded from the next stages of the process.

2.8 On that basis, some twenty-one ‘potential locations for mineral extraction’ will remain in the frame to go forward for further testing against detailed local criteria with the best of those then going on to a final comparative evaluation. These potential locations are indicated in the table at Appendix 2.

2.9 The Panel consider it very important to emphasise that these locations do not represent any decisions about which sites should, and which sites should not, be included in the Deposit Plan, merely that they are locations where it would be appropriate to investigate their potential further. The Panel also considers that it would be inappropriate to decide on the number or size of sites that should be included at this stage. It is recommended that decisions on these matters should not be taken at least until stakeholders have had a chance to comment on all of the issues raised in Key Issues Document including those in Chapter 4.

2.10 The Panel consider that the need to involve stakeholders at this stage is an important factor in the transparency of the plan making process. This is particularly so in relation to the identification of sites. Following the Local Plan Inquiry into the currently adopted Plan, the Inspector recommended that *"sites for inclusion should be subject to a rigorous, public, comparative evaluation, in order that it can be demonstrated that the sites selected represent the best balance of costs and benefits, and the best distribution of working throughout the county"*. (MPG6 makes it clear that this should be a balance of environmental, social and economic costs.) The Panel therefore recommend that the 21 potential locations now identified be included as part of the public consultation stage on Key Issues in order to inform the more detailed sieving and comparative evaluation and in the interests of transparency. Experience from the last Inquiry suggests that the ‘audit trail’ of how we get to the sites/areas which are ultimately identified in the deposit draft will be scrutinised in detail at the Local Plan Inquiry in any event.

2.11 The Panel has received advice on emerging DTLR guidance on good practice, which recommends a consultation approach that introduces local skills, knowledge, experience and resources – advising that some knowledge is simply not available elsewhere. The guidance further recommends avoiding the more traditional “Decide – Announce – Defend” approach. The Panel therefore consider that it would not be appropriate to progress to next stage of the Review of the Plan without the stakeholder contributions.

2.12 Such an inclusive consultation approach would also help inform another Key Issue in terms of whether we should go for a larger number of small sites or a smaller number of large sites and their distribution across the county.

### **3. Implications of the Government’s Review of Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG) Note 6: Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England**

3.1 The Panel are aware of the Government’s intentions to revise MPG6 and have considered the implications of any review. The current MPG6 was published in

1994. It ultimately determines how much aggregate extraction mineral local plans should plan for, which in turn has to be translated into identifying the County's preferred areas where the mineral could be extracted.

- 3.2 The latest anticipated publication date is for a draft MPG6 to be produced in spring 2002. However, there can be little confidence at present that this timetable will be met, given the slippage that has already occurred. The anticipated Planning Green Paper may also have implications for its timescale, given the links between Regional Aggregates Working Parties and regional planning as a whole.
- 3.3 Whether or not the concept of landbanks survives it is highly likely that the identification of areas within which future extraction might be acceptable will continue to be a central element of aggregates planning in a plan led system and to give certainty in the planning process. The question remaining therefore is how many sites might ultimately need to be identified, but this is not an issue at this stage of the Plan Review process, although it may arise at the Draft Deposit Stage next Spring. Given that the current Minerals Local Plan was adopted over 3 years ago, and the County Council's commitment to an early review of the Plan, the Panel consider it would be inappropriate to delay consultation on the key issues until the review of MPG6 is complete.

#### **4. Public consultation process**

- 4.1 The form of consultation which is appropriate before the deposit stage is generally left to the discretion of the authority. There is no longer a requirement to consult with statutory consultees prior to finalising local plan proposals. Instead authorities are advised to encourage local people to participate actively in the preparation of plans from the earliest stages so that they can be fully involved in decisions about the pattern of development in their area. The only requirements are to consider representations made by consultees, and for the preparation of a statement explaining whom the local authority have consulted, the steps taken to publicise the proposals and how they have provided an opportunity for interested parties to make representations.
- 4.2 The Aggregates Panel of 19 September 2001 considered a report on the possible approach to Pre-deposit consultation for the Minerals Local Plan Review.
- 4.3 The central document is the Key Issues Document, a draft of which is attached to this report. As indicated previously, the Panel had initially considered a series of free-standing but inter-related papers but now considered that a consolidated document is the more appropriate format. This would be distributed to a wide variety of people and organisations (including trade organisations, interest groups, such as Friends of the Earth, CPRE, Campaign Against Gravel Extraction [CAGE] and other known action groups) in order to gain an insight into public opinion. A time limit would be set for people to respond to the key issues documents in order for the process to be controlled and progress on the plan review sustained.

- 4.4 The document, together with representation forms, would be available at all the district/borough council offices, County Hall and libraries as well as being accessible on the HertsDirect web site. Representation forms can then be copied from the pack and posted, printed from the web site or sent back via email. The consultation period for the key issues document is proposed to be six to eight weeks.
- 4.5 At the key issues stage members would be informed both of the progress being made through the member's newsletter service as well as being consulted directly. County Council staff would be informed through the HertsNews paper. Both the HertsDirect web site and newspaper will be used to publicise the consultation process.
- 4.6 Press releases would be published in each of the local newspapers at the appropriate times. In addition it is intended that tailored correspondence will be sent to the parish councils to alert them of the relevance to their area. A questionnaire covering broad issues surrounding mineral extraction, restoration and planning is currently being produced to be sent out to the citizen's panel.

## **5. Recommendations of the Aggregates Panel**

- 5.1 Inevitably, any consultation on potential locations for mineral extraction is likely to engage public and other stakeholder interest. However it will be important to ensure that both the site identification process and consultation on other issues is as inclusive and transparent as possible and that local skills, knowledge, experience and resources are brought into the process as early as possible. The Panel therefore consider it appropriate that the Key Issues consultation process should invite comment on all of the locations that have potential for further investigation as possible sites for mineral extraction, as well as the other issues set out in the Topic chapters.
- 5.2 The Panel do, however, recommend that the consultation be on a single document to avoid duplication and to ensure that readers have all the necessary information to hand with regard to related issues.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The consultation exercise will be carried out within existing budget provision for the preparation of the Minerals Local Plan Review.

### Background Papers

PPG 12 Development Plans

Aggregates Panel Papers 19 September 2001

Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan adopted July 1998

## APPENDIX 1

### SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES DOCUMENT BY CHAPTERS

#### *KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 1: PLANNING FOR MINERALS IN HERTFORDSHIRE*

A1.1 Chapter 1 outlines the importance of planning for minerals at national, regional and local levels. It introduces the planning system; describes the minerals worked in the county; explains the need for minerals and Hertfordshire's contribution to the supply of aggregates; outlines national, regional and local planning policy; and indicates the reasons why the adopted Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan needs to be reviewed.

A1.2 This chapter provides an overview of the main issues raised in the other chapters, raises a number of other issues which do not specifically appear in the others, and asks a number of questions on which views are sought. These include questions in respect of:-

- the format of the Plan;
- the most appropriate Plan period;
- productive capacity;
- the relationship between the capacity of existing or proposed processing plants and decisions about areas for future mineral working;
- flexibility of supply;
- the emerging guidance in any revised/new MPG6;
- the approach to applications submitted outside sites/areas identified for future mineral working;
- phasing of resources during the Plan period;
- seeking to reduce reliance on primary aggregates (with greater emphasis on secondary and recycled aggregates);
- non-sterilisation of economically viable mineral resources;
- adoption of the landscape character assessment approach (and replacement of previous landscape approaches); and
- cumulative impact.

A1.3 Whilst it would be inappropriate to seek to answer these questions at this stage since this would pre-judge consideration of responses to the Key Issues, there are a number of matters on which it would be appropriate to express a view. For example: the format of the new Plan should be clear, concise and provide a solid basis for decision making on minerals development; the Plan period should most appropriately be to 2016 to coincide with the Structure Plan Review since it will need to conform with this; and the provisions of any new MPG6 will need to be reflected appropriately in the Plan.

A1.4 Based on previous experiences in the preparation of the adopted Minerals Local Plan and subsequently in dealing with proposals for minerals development, the most significant issues arising from chapter 1 are likely to relate to the level of

provision, productive capacity, flexibility of supply, the need or otherwise for phasing, cumulative impact and exactly how the Plan should seek to offset demand for primary aggregates by increasing the use of secondary and recycled aggregates. Responses on these and all other matters are likely to be influenced principally by perceived impacts on individual circumstances (be these commercial or personal).

## ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 2: HERTFORDSHIRE'S AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR MINERALS PLANNING***

A2.1 This chapter sets out the proposed overall approach to minerals planning in Hertfordshire. The County Council wants to ensure that minerals planning in the county is as sustainable as possible and that the environment is protected and enhanced where mineral working occurs. The review of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan provides an opportunity to achieve these overall aims. The chapter sets out clearly, for the first time, the County Council's draft aims and objectives for minerals planning, with a view to establishing targets that may then be monitored on a regular basis.

A2.2 The draft aims, which are largely derived from the objectives for sustainable mineral planning set out in Minerals Planning Guidance Note (MPG1) "General considerations and the development plan system" (June 1996), are:-

1. to conserve minerals as far as possible, whilst ensuring an adequate supply to meet needs;
2. to minimise production of waste and to encourage efficient use of materials, including appropriate use of high quality materials, and recycling of wastes;
3. to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources;
4. to ensure that the environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are kept, as far as possible, to an acceptable minimum;
5. to protect areas of designated landscape or nature conservation value from development, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it has been demonstrated that development is in the public interest;
6. to encourage sensitive working, restoration and aftercare practices so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment; and
7. to enable stakeholders to contribute to planning for minerals in Hertfordshire.

A2.3 A number of draft objectives have been identified within each overall aim. These are set out in section 4 of the chapter.

A2.4 The chapter also identifies the need for a strategic environmental appraisal to be carried out on the Minerals Local Plan Review. This involves the emerging plan being appraised out at various stages of the review process to ensure that the environmental effects and wider sustainability implications of its policies and proposals are fully considered. The chapter sets out a series of draft sustainability themes and associated objectives, which could be used to inform the appraisal process.

A2.5 The main issues raised and questions asked in relation to the draft aims and objectives are whether those detailed in the chapter represent an acceptable basis for the review of the Minerals Local Plan and whether there should be any others. The draft chapter also invites responses to the draft sustainability themes and associated objectives and on what targets should be set in the Plan and how could these be monitored thereafter.

### ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 3: PROTECTING HERTFORDSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENT***

A3.1 Chapter 3 considers how Hertfordshire's environment is affected by mineral working. The chapter includes reference to environmental assets (critical capital and constant assets) and national, regional and local designations and relevant legislation and guidance. Direct and indirect impacts on the people of Hertfordshire themselves are also important considerations. Whilst it needs to be read in conjunction with all the other Key Issues, chapters 7: Transportation of Minerals (Road, Rail and Water) and 8: Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse of Mineral Workings are of particular relevance.

A3.2 The main issues raised in this chapter relate to:-

- the need to strike an appropriate balance between the protection to the residents of Hertfordshire and the needs of other stakeholders;
- the best way to integrate the landscape character assessment work into the new Plan (and the implications of this for existing landscape designations and the area policies in the adopted Minerals Local Plan);
- the need to ensure sufficient protection to international, national, regional and local designations or assets;
- the extent to which existing assets could/should be enhanced; and
- whether separate policies should be provided to deal exclusively with applications submitted under the terms of the Environment Act 1995 (i.e. RoMPP).

A3.3 The existing impacts of mineral working on residents (whether real or perceived, direct or indirect), together with the growing importance attached to the environment in its widest sense, means that this topic is likely to be of interest to a large number of people and interest groups.

### ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 4: POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR FUTURE SAND AND GRAVEL WORKING***

A4.1 Chapter 4 describes the sieving process undertaken to date to identify resource areas. This reflects the "Framework for Site Selection Strategy" that the County Council adopted in 1998 following consultation with stakeholders. Each stage of the process is referred to as a 'Sieve', because at each stage some locations will be 'caught' by the terms of that particular assessment, while others will fall through for further analysis at later stages. In summary, the stages of the process are:-

- **Sieve 1** - Resource Assessment: Identifying where economically viable sand and gravel deposits are likely to be found.
- **Sieve 2** - Assessing the areas passing through Sieve 1 against a series of major planning constraints.
- **Sieve 3A** - Assessing the surviving areas against more detailed and local constraints and issues.
- **Sieve 3B** - Assessing the areas passing through Sieve 3A against a detailed set of sustainability criteria, and undertaking a comparative assessment of all the surviving sites to identify those which appear most suitable for inclusion in the Deposit Plan.

A4.2 The existing “preferred areas” (land at British Aerospace and land south of Napsbury Hospital) have also been incorporated into this process. Neither preferred area has yet come forward as a planning application in the three years since the Plan’s adoption. By including them in the process it gives an opportunity to test whether circumstances have changed (particularly in the case of land South of Napsbury) and whether it is still therefore appropriate to include them as preferred areas.

A4.3 Having been tested against a range of environmental and sustainability criteria all the resource areas under consideration have been categorised on a scale of 1-4 (best to worst). The Panel recommend that those categorised as 3 or 4 are now excluded from the next stages of the process.

A4.4 On that basis some twenty-one category 1 and 2 ‘potential locations for mineral extraction’ will remain in the frame to go forward to Sieve 3B. These are indicated in the table at Appendix 2.

A4.5 The next stage will entail more detailed sieving against local constraints with the best of those then going on to the final comparative evaluation stage to identify which sites should be proposed for inclusion in the Plan.

A4.6 The main issues relate to the process – notwithstanding its prior adoption by the County Council, whether there are issues arising from its operation in practice; detailed comments, issues and constraints in relation to the 21 locations identified. In addition views are sought on whether future working should be concentrated at a small number of large sites or a larger number of smaller sites; geographical spread across the county; whether extensions or greenfield sites are preferable and whether the potential for subsequent waste disposal should carry any weight.

### ***KEY CHAPTER ISSUES 5: OTHER MINERALS (CHALK AND CLAY)***

A5.1 Chapter 5 examines issues relating to minerals other than sand and gravel (i.e. chalk and brick clay) and considers the approaches that the Minerals Local Plan Review could take in respect of these. In particular, consideration is given as to whether the Plan should continue the current approach of using the same policies for all minerals and not having any potential areas for future working identified, or whether it may be desirable to include specific policies on the working,

restoration, aftercare and afteruse of land worked for chalk and brick clay (including, possibly, potential areas for future chalk and brick clay working).

A5.2 The main issues raised relate to:-

- the need, or otherwise, for the new Plan to identify any areas for future chalk or clay working; and
- whether the new Plan should contain any specific policies for the working, restoration or afteruse of chalk or clay workings.

A5.3 Notwithstanding the relatively small number of working chalk and clay quarries in the county, experiences in dealing with recent planning applications for these activities suggest that planning for chalk and clay production will be of interest to many residents and other stakeholders. Many of the impacts associated with working these minerals are also dealt with in other chapters (particularly 3, 7 and 8).

### ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 6: SECONDARY AND RECYCLED AGGREGATES***

A6.1 Chapter 6 examines policy and issues relating to the production, use and import/export of secondary and recycled aggregates in Hertfordshire. Although these matters are already dealt with in the Waste Local Plan (which has policies specifically relating to facilities for their production, and others designed to encourage their use), it will be necessary for the Minerals Local Plan Review to consider what role it should have in respect of this subject – particularly in terms of the relationship between primary land won aggregates and secondary and recycled aggregates (in replacing these).

A6.2 The main issues raised relate to:-

- the extent to which secondary and recycled aggregates should be dealt with in the new Minerals Local Plan; and
- whether encouragement for the use of secondary and recycled aggregates should be based on the active discouragement of primary aggregate use or merely the promotion of such alternatives.

A6.3 In many respects the issues raised are rather difficult to deal with in the context of the Minerals Local Plan Review. Many appear to go beyond the scope of what is conventionally dealt with in any detail in minerals local plans and are generally dealt with in the context of waste local plans. It is hoped that the way in which the subject should best be addressed will be clarified in the new MPG6. In the event of this requiring a greater emphasis on secondary and recycled aggregates in minerals local plans (particularly if the guidance were to seek to link their supply to apportionments in the same way as for primary aggregates) it may be necessary for additional input to the emerging Minerals Local Plan Review during the later stages of the plan preparation process. The development plan process is capable of accommodating this.

## ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION OF MINERALS (ROAD, RAIL AND WATER)***

A7.1 Chapter 7 considers how transportation associated with mineral working impacts on the environment and residents of Hertfordshire. It considers why minerals need to be transported; the nature of potential impacts from on and off-site transportation of minerals and associated products; and existing national, regional and local transportation policy and guidance. Particular issues considered include: the desirability of safeguarding existing rail served aggregates depots; whether the Plan should seek to identify and allocate land for additional rail or water served facilities; the potential nature of conditions which may be applied where permissions are granted; the nature and extent of any developer contributions which may be sought towards transport related matters; and whether a specific policy should be included to deal with potential applications for borrow pits.

A7.2 The main issues raised relate to:-

- the effectiveness of minerals transportation policies in protecting the amenity and safety of the residents of Hertfordshire (as well as other road users) from the adverse traffic effects associated with mineral working;
- the relationship between minerals traffic and the roads hierarchy expressed in the Local Transport Plan;
- whether policies should be introduced to safeguard existing rail-served aggregates depots;
- whether the Plan should seek to identify new rail or water served aggregates depots;
- the approach to be taken in respect of remote processing plant (i.e. where plant is located some distance from extraction areas); and
- the treatment of borrow pits.

A7.3 The transportation effects associated with the distribution of aggregates and 'value-added' products (e.g. ready-mix concrete) and restoration activities (including waste disposal) probably affect more stakeholders (particularly residents) than any other issue. On this basis it can be anticipated that this chapter will attract a high level of interest from the public. This is the main reason why a separate chapter has been prepared on the subject.

## ***KEY ISSUES CHAPTER 8: RESTORATION, AFTERCARE AND AFTERRUSE OF MINERAL WORKINGS***

A8.1 Chapter 8 considers all issues relating to the restoration, aftercare and afteruse of mineral workings. It refers to: national regional and local policy and guidance (including changing attitudes on restoration of the best and most versatile land to agricultural use and the latest advice on soil handling); the problems experienced in achieving the satisfactory restoration of existing sites and how these might be overcome; and the most appropriate restoration and afteruse (taking account of issues such as the Watling Chase Community Forest). In particular, the chapter

considers how the existing 'Area Policy' approach in the adopted Minerals Local Plan might be replaced in the context of the Hertfordshire Landscape Strategy Volume 2: Landscape Character Assessment, Evaluation and Guidelines for Southern Hertfordshire (October 2000).

A8.2 The main issues relate to:-

- the most appropriate form of restoration (e.g. low, intermediate and original levels) and the resulting impacts associated with achieving these;
- the most appropriate afteruse of mineral sites;
- whether the new Plan should seek to actively promote alternatives to agricultural restoration and afteruse, in the context of agricultural land diversification, in order to better reflect the aims of the Watling Chase Community Forest and the Bio-diversity Action Plan;
- the relationship between restoration and afteruse of mineral sites and the landscape character assessment work;
- whether restoration policies should continue to relate to all minerals regardless of type (as currently) or be mineral specific;
- the provision of enhanced public access to the countryside;
- progress with restoration of mineral working sites; and
- the requirement for annual monitoring reports to assess progress with site working and restoration.

A 8.3 It is important to acknowledge that restoration, aftercare and afteruse cannot be viewed in isolation from other elements of mineral working or from each other. All form part of a single process that begins with site planning and preparation and continues until the land is being used beneficially after restoration has been satisfactorily completed. Even when the land is being used beneficially it may still be necessary to undertake measures to ensure that this can continue. In many respects, restoration, aftercare and afteruse are the most important aspects of minerals planning. If mineral working is permitted in any area, it is vital that an appropriate afteruse is determined beforehand and that the working, restoration and aftercare best provide for this use in the long term. The effects associated with mineral extraction and the movement of vehicles are temporary, however, the continuing beneficial use of land after mineral working is not.

A8.4 In view of the importance of the continued beneficial use of land in the long term, and evidence of poor restoration in the past, this chapter is likely to be of particular interest to many stakeholders. It asks a variety of questions designed to ensure that all stakeholders can have an input to the long-term future of Hertfordshire.

## APPENDIX 2

### Proposed Locations (PL) for further study as potential areas for mineral extraction

PL No.	Location	Area (ha)	Parish(es)	Local member(s)
4	Southwest of Sawbridgeworth	95.0	High Wych, Gilston, Sawbridgeworth	Mary Bayes Anthony Dodd
7	North of Stanstead Abbots	120.1	Stanstead Abbots	Anthony Dodd
8	East of Ware	77.1	Wareside, Ware	Anthony Dodd Nigel Copping
10	East of High Cross	110.6	Thundridge	David Beatty
11	North of Hertford	404.1	Sacombe, Stapleford, Bengoe Rural, Hertford	Bryan Hammond Francis Escott
12	Between Welwyn and Hertford (Panshanger/Bramfield Park)	481.5	Bramfield, Hertingfordbury, Tewin	Bryan Hammond Bob Mays
13	Southwest of Welwyn Garden City	388.6	Hatfield	Frank Clayton
15	West of Hatfield (Bae)	227.2	Hatfield, Colney Heath	Rosie Sanderson Frank Clayton George Wenham
16	Southeast of St Albans (Highfield/Hill End)	200.5	Colney Heath, London Colney	Rosie Sanderson Jill Gipps
17	Northeast of London Colney	76.4	Colney Heath, London Colney, Ridge	Rosie Sanderson John Usher
18	Northeast of M25 Junction 22 (London Colney)	99.4	Shenley; Ridge	John Usher
19	West of London Colney (south of Napsbury Hospital)	73.0	London Colney	Rosie Sanderson Aislinn Lee
21	Bucks Hill	101.7	Sarratt	Janet Anderson Eleanor Clarke
23	South of Welwyn / East of Hatfield	349.5	Hatfield, Essendon, Hertingfordbury	Frank Clayton Bill Storey Bryan Hammond
26	Ware Park	12.2	Hertford	Francis Escott
27	Howe Green (Waterhall Quarry)	24.0	Little Berkhamsted	Bryan Hammond
IS2	Farm Fields (Waterhall Quarry)	23.9	Little Berkhamsted	Bryan Hammond
IS <sup>1</sup> 3	Broad Green (Waterhall Quarry)	18.1	Bayford	Bryan Hammond
IS 4	Bunkers South (Waterhall Quarry)	20.9	Bayford	Bryan Hammond
IS 6	Sleapshyde	26.9	Hatfield, Colney Heath	Rosie Sanderson George Wenham
IS 9	Salisbury Hall	14.1	Shenley	John Usher

<sup>1</sup> (IS indicates the site has been promoted by the industry but does not necessarily meet our criteria in terms being considered an economic resource. Locations 26 and 27 are also industry promoted but on further evaluation were considered to meet our economic resource criteria )

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Timetable**

**15 October** – Cabinet/Executive approves Key Issues Document for consultation and publication of timetable.

**Late October – December** (6-8 weeks) Consultation on Key Issues Document

**21/5/02** - County Council approves First Deposit Draft

**June/July 2002**– First deposit period

**Late Autumn 2002** – approval and deposit of Second Deposit Draft

**Spring/Summer 2003** – Local Plan Inquiry

**Winter 2003/2004** – Modifications

**2004 - ADOPTION**