

MSPHD AS27 - 05

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Mineral Sites Plan Examination

Further Hearing - AS27 Land at Horton Heath

14th February 2019

**STATEMENT BY DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF
BOURNEMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL AND THE BOROUGH OF POOLE
(THE MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES)**

February 2019



Introduction

This statement sets out the position of the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) regarding the site AS27 Land at Horton Heath, nominated for inclusion in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Mineral Sites Plan (MSP) as a site for aggregate (sand) extraction.

MPA View

The MPA consider that it is not necessary to include the AS27 site in the Mineral Sites Plan as an allocation. If required, and if the proposal meets the criteria set out in the revised Policy MS-2 Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Mineral Sites Plan, the AS27 site could come in the future come forward under this policy without requiring to be allocated at this time. Policy MS-2 has been completely revised since the Mineral Sites Plan Hearings in September/October 2018, and an **officer draft** of the policy is attached to this statement.

Soundness

The MPA do not consider that exclusion of the AS27 site as an allocation from the MSP affects the soundness of the Plan. The MPA considers that the existing sand and gravel reserves, together with the sites proposed for allocation following the 2018 Hearings, are adequate to demonstrate compliance with Policy AS1 of the Minerals Strategy 2014 in terms of sand and gravel supply.

Justification

Policy AS1 of the Minerals Strategy 2014 states that:

An adequate and steady supply of locally extracted sand and gravel will be provided by maintaining a landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves equivalent to at least 7 years' worth of supply over the period to 2028, based on the current agreed local annual supply requirement for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

At the end of 2017 (the most recent figures held by the MPA) permitted sand and gravel reserves were 12,607,012 tonnes.

The ten-year average for sand and gravel sales over the past 10 years, for sales between 2017 and 2008, was 1,480,000 tonnes. This figure is the basis of the annual supply figure to be used in planning for future supply.

On the assumption that the MSP is adopted in 2019, it will run to 2034. The amount of sand and gravel to be supplied and therefore planned for over this time will be:

$$1,480,000 \times 15 = 22,200,000 \text{ tonnes}$$

The remaining permitted reserves and the amount proposed through site allocations can be subtracted from the figure of 22.2 million to determine whether the sand and gravel provision proposed through the Plan is adequate to meet expected demand.

Table 1

Tonnes	Description of Supply
22,200,000	Amount of sand and gravel to be provided for through the MSP
- 12,607,012	Remaining reserves at end of 2017

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Tonnes	Description of Supply
= 9,592,988	Amount of sand and gravel to be provided for through site allocations
- 2,000,000	AS06 Great Plantation
- 3,500,000	AS13 Roeshot Quarry
- 330,000	AS15 Tatchell's Quarry Extension
- 2,100,000	AS19 Woodsford Quarry Extension
- 3,100,000	AS25 Station Road
- 3,300,000	AS26 Hurst Farm
= - 4,737,012	This figure is a 'surplus' of site allocation provision for sand and gravel

The 'surplus' figure of over 4 million tonnes is the amount of sand and gravel in excess of what is required, taking into account the possible yield of the sites proposed for allocation and **not including** the AS27 Land at Horton Heath site.

It is acknowledged that the yield from each site may not be as high as set out above in Policy MS-1 of the MSP, but even if some of the sites fall short it is still expected that the amount proposed for allocation will be enough to provide supply over the Plan period. The Mineral Planning Authority has a commitment to monitoring permitted reserves.

The MPA are satisfied that the level of sand and gravel supply proposed through the MSP is adequate to meet demand without needing to allocate AS27 as well.

Flexibility

In addition to the allocated sites, the MSP builds in provision to meet unexpected rises in in aggregate demand, or shortfalls in supply. Policy MS-2 is an 'Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites' policy which provides for unallocated sites to be permitted provided certain criteria are met.

The version of the MSP submitted for Examination contained a policy, MS-2, which proposed the designation of an Aggregates Area of Search. The AS27 site was not included within the Area of Search and therefore could not have come forward under this policy.

Policy MS-2 and the Aggregates Area of Search was not supported at the Examination Hearings and has since been completely revised, removing the Area of Search designation. Policy MS-2 'Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites' which replaced it corresponds spatially to the Aggregate Resource Blocks designated through Policy AS1 of the Minerals Strategy 2014.

The AS27 site is now included within the spatial area covered by Policy MS-2, and subject to meeting the criteria of the proposed policy could come forward for development through this new Policy MS-2.

A copy of the new Policy MS-2 of the Mineral Sites Plan is attached, as MS-2 is substantially revised and can be considered a new policy. The new policy has not been the subject of public consultation yet. This

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draft text of Policy MS-2 is an officer draft at this stage. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to comment on the new MS-2 policy along with all other modifications during February/March 2019.

AS27 Land at Horton Heath

It is acknowledged that the sand at AS27 would contribute to the supply of a type of aggregate that is in relatively short supply in Dorset. However, preliminary assessment of AS27 has identified a number of constraints potentially affecting its development including heritage, access, impact on users of Rights of Way, biodiversity, hydrology and traffic/transport.

Although no constraints have been identified which would require outright rejection of AS27 as an allocation, the MPA consider that given the level of constraint in the area and on the site specifically it would be preferential not to allocate the site in the Plan but to see it come forward as an application under Policy MS-2, when it would be accompanied by the more detailed Environmental Impact Assessment that would be required for an application such as this. This would allow the identified issues and constraints to be considered in detail.

To reiterate, the MPA consider that it is not necessary in terms of sand and gravel supply over the Plan period to include the AS27 site in the Mineral Sites Plan as an allocation. The site can come forward if necessary as a planning application through the new Policy MS-2 'Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites' of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Mineral Sites Plan instead. This Policy MS-2 has been completely revised since the Mineral Sites Plan Hearings in September/October 2018, and an **officer draft** of the policy is attached to this statement. Policy MS-2 now includes the AS27 site area.

Appendix 1 - (revised) Policy MS-2 and supporting text - incorporating amendments following Examination Hearings in September/October 2018

Officer Draft

Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites

Introduction

Aggregate demand over the Plan period will be met through existing permitted reserves together with allocated sand and gravel sites as set out in Policy MS-1. Together these are expected to be sufficient to meet demand during the life of the Plan.

However, there are specific situations, such as a shortfall in sand and gravel supply that cannot be met from existing sites and/or the new sites allocated through Policy MS-1, in which the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) will permit the development of an unallocated site/sites provided that they comply with Policy MS-2.

Minerals Strategy 2014

Policy AS1 of the Minerals Strategy 2014 requires that new sand and gravel quarries are located within the designated Superficial and Bedrock Aggregate Resource Blocks. The Resource Blocks are spatial areas, designated through Policy AS1 of the Minerals Strategy 2014, within which the British Geological Survey (BGS) has identified significant reserves of sand and gravel considered to be economically viable. The Resource Blocks excluded land subject to various constraints, e.g. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where there is a policy presumption against mineral extraction. Their spatial extent can be seen on pages 60 and 61 of the Minerals Strategy 2014.

The Minerals Strategy 2014 also refers to unallocated/windfall sites (primarily smaller sites such as prior extraction opportunities and agricultural reservoirs) being located outside the Resource Blocks, and also extraction of sand and gravel in association with ball clay taking place outside the Resource Blocks. It notes that extraction within the AONB may be possible in exceptional circumstances, where no harm results from the development or harm can be satisfactorily mitigated.

The policy stance is clear that new sand and gravel quarries should be located within the Resource Blocks. If new quarries are proposed outside the Resource Blocks, they would have to be justified through demonstrating exceptional circumstances.

Unallocated Sites within the Resource Blocks

Planning applications proposing the development of an unallocated site within the Resource Blocks will be required to include all the associated detailed assessments and will be subject to all the relevant policy requirements of the development plan. In determining whether to permit an unallocated site, the MPA will consider a range of factors including (but not limited to):

- i. Is the site needed? In considering this, the MPA will have regard to whether there is, or is likely to be, a shortfall in supply of Poole Formation or River Terrace, that the site could meet or contribute to meeting?
- ii. Would developing an unallocated site have a negative impact, including unacceptable cumulative impacts, on a permitted or allocated site? The development of allocated or permitted sites should not be prejudiced by an unallocated site - particularly if the allocated and unallocated sites would both serve the same market.
- iii. Does development of the unallocated site provide environmental net gain as set out in National Planning Policy Framework, such as creation of significant areas of on-line wetland functionally linked to rivers in the catchment of Poole Harbour which would contribute to reducing nutrient levels within the European sites; creation of local wildlife areas/greenspace corridors which would

contribute to the wider ecological network; restoration to heathland or other priority habitat; or woodland creation?

- iv. Is the mineral extraction from an unallocated site required as prior extraction in advance of built development which would sterilise mineral in the ground? Proposals for the prior extraction of minerals to allow strategically important non-mineral development could justify an unallocated site. The Minerals Strategy 2014 identifies a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA). The MPA will support prior extraction of mineral in advance of non-mineral development, (e.g. built development allocations coming forward through local plans) within the MSA subject to the safeguarding requirements as set out in Policies SG1, SG2 and SG3, and supporting text, of the Minerals Strategy 2014.

In seeking to establish whether there has been a shortfall in supply, and the extent of the shortfall, the MPA will particularly focus on the findings of the Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA). Such a shortfall could result, for example, from one of the allocated sites proving to be undeliverable, or significantly increased sales for several consecutive years leading to a shortfall in provision within the life of the Plan.

Unallocated Sites outside the Resource Blocks

Points i-iv also apply to the proposed development of unallocated sites outside the Resource Blocks. Proposals for unallocated sites outside the resource blocks are likely to comprise land within an AONB, or other constraints such as environmental designations. In these cases exceptional circumstances would have to be demonstrated in line with the NPPF.

Proposals for unallocated sites outside the Resource Blocks and the AONB are thought to be unlikely. However, if proposals come forward they will be judged on their merits and against all relevant policies in the Mineral Strategy and Mineral Sites Plan.

All unallocated sites

All sites being considered through this policy will undergo a robust assessment, taking account of a range of factors including geographical location and proximity to the market. Although the Resource Blocks predominantly exclude AONB designated land, there are some limited areas of overlap. If any unallocated site (either within or outside of the Resource Blocks) is within an AONB, the necessary tests as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework must be applied. Development proposals within these areas should also comply with the requirements of Policy DM4 of the Minerals Strategy 2014.

Unallocated sites can only be developed if it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European and Ramsar sites. Such effects are fully discussed in Policy DM5 of the Minerals Strategy 2014 and the supporting text of that policy, which should be read in conjunction with this Plan.

(MM 9)

Any unallocated site proposed for development through Policy MS-2 which is within any Aerodrome Safeguarding Area as defined on the Policies Map will be required to undergo an Aviation Impact Assessment in consultation with the relevant airport. **(MM 10)**

Policy MS-2: Unallocated Sand and Gravel Sites

Proposals for sand or gravel extraction from unallocated sites within the Superficial and Bedrock Aggregate Resource Blocks, as shown on the Policies Map, will only be permitted where they meet all of the following criteria:

- i. There is a demonstrable shortfall in supply (determined through assessing the size of the landbank and the existing and/or projected level of demand), particularly if a site proposal contributes to meeting a shortfall in a specific type of aggregate; or unless it involves prior extraction of sand and gravel in advance of non-mineral development where this would avoid the permanent sterilisation of safeguarded minerals;

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- ii. The proposed development would not delay or otherwise prejudice (including through causing or resulting in unacceptable cumulative impacts) the development of allocated or permitted site(s) particularly where these have the potential to produce the same specific type of aggregate mineral and which would serve the same geographic market;
- iii. In all cases any adverse impacts must be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Mineral Planning Authority;
- iv. Sites will only be considered where it has been demonstrated that possible effects (including those related to hydrology, displacement of recreation, species, proximity, land management and restoration) that might arise from their development would not adversely affect the integrity of European and Ramsar sites either alone or in combination with other plans or projects; and
- v. Applications for sites proposed for development which lie within an Aerodrome Safeguarding Area, as defined on the Policies Map, must undertake, in consultation with the relevant airport, and submit an Aviation Impact Assessment. **(MM 11)**