

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper Minerals



Devon County Council's advice to Local Planning Authorities

This is one of a series of briefing papers prepared by Devon County Council to assist the preparation of Local Development Documents. To view this, and other briefing papers, see <http://www.devon.gov.uk/ldf-briefing-papers> . For more information or comment contact 01392 382275 or email environment@devon.gov.uk

Local Planning Authorities are requested to take the following matters into account in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and other documents:

1. Safeguarding Mineral Resources and Transportation Facilities –:

a) by avoiding the identification of general areas for development or specific sites that would:

- sterilise the working of all viable mineral resources;***
- prevent the tipping of mineral waste;***
- prevent the transportation of minerals by rail or water; or***
- be in such close proximity as to constrain future working.***

b) by showing the boundaries of the Mineral Consultation Areas and including explanatory text in the appropriate DPD referring to the constraints that these Areas place on non-mineral development.

(see Section 3: Safeguarding Mineral Resources and Transportation Facilities)

2. Use of Traditional Building Materials – by including a policy promoting the use of locally-sourced and appropriate materials.

(see Section 4: Use of Traditional Building Materials)

3. Alternative Sources of Construction Materials – by promoting the use of sustainable construction methods including the use of locally-sourced secondary and recycled materials in preference to primary sources of materials.

(see Section 5: Alternative Sources of Construction Materials)

4. Partnership Working

Devon County Council wishes to work in partnership with District Councils, in further developing the above policy areas with colleagues and other organisations and would wish to be fully involved in any discussion relating to them.

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper

Minerals

1. Introduction

Devon's varied geology is reflected in the diverse range of minerals that are extracted, including some whose only UK sources are in Devon and adjoining counties. These minerals serve local, national and international markets, and their continued supply is important for economic and social reasons. It is the role of Devon County Council as the mineral planning authority to make provision for this supply whilst protecting the environment and community interests against the adverse impacts of mineral working and transportation.

The County Council adopted the Devon County Minerals Local Plan in 2004, and has commenced work on a Minerals Core Strategy within its Minerals and Waste Development Framework. Devon County Council is also responsible for determining, in consultation with District Councils, planning applications for mineral development.

District Councils have an important role in minerals planning in three areas – the safeguarding of mineral resources and transportation facilities from sterilisation or constraint by other development, the use of traditional building materials, and the promotion of alternative sources of construction materials that reduce the need for primary sources – and these are addressed below. Before that, however, the Briefing Paper will outline the types of minerals that are worked in Devon.

2. Mineral Working in Devon

a) Aggregates

Aggregates are the materials used in construction and road building, including the production of concrete, asphalt and building sand. They are derived from sand, gravel and crushed rock, all of which are quarried within Devon, with the bulk of the County's production being sold for use in Devon.

Sand, gravel and crushed rock that are extracted from quarries are termed 'primary aggregates', but there are alternative sources of aggregates that are potentially more sustainable to produce. Secondary aggregates are the by-products of mineral working that would otherwise be regarded as waste, but which can be processed for aggregate use. Within Devon, there are two major sources of secondary aggregates which make a significant contribution to supplying local markets:

- china clay waste in the form of sand and crushed rock from the Lee Moor area near Plymouth; and
- ball clay sand from the Bovey Basin near Newton Abbot.

Recycled aggregates are derived from the processing of construction and demolition waste, either at the site where the waste is derived or at authorised processing sites, which are often associated with quarries or landfill sites.

b) China Clay

Within the UK, china clay occurs only in Cornwall and at three sites in the Lee Moor area in Devon (the latter accounting for around 15% of national production). About 80% of UK production is exported with the main uses being for paper, ceramics and pharmaceuticals.

c) **Ball Clay**

Devon is the major source of ball clay in the UK, with its two working areas – the Bovey and Petrockstowe Basins – accounting for around 83% of the national production. The remaining output is from Dorset. The main uses for ball clay are for sanitaryware, wall and floor tiles and tableware, and more than 80% of UK production is exported, with Devon's output being shipped from Teignmouth and Bideford.

Other minerals worked on a smaller scale in Devon are **building stone, brick clay, chalk** and **pottery clay**. **Metalliferous minerals** are no longer worked, although permission remains for extraction of tungsten and tin at Hemerdon in South Hams.

District Councils may wish to make mention of the particular economic importance of certain mineral working operations in their respective areas.

3. Safeguarding Mineral Resources and Transportation Facilities

The safeguarding of mineral resources from sterilisation or constraint from other forms of development is a key element of existing and emerging national and regional planning policy. Structure Plan Policy MN1 provides the strategic context, and the Devon County Minerals Local Plan identifies Mineral Consultation Areas for the safeguarding of existing mineral sites.

Mineral Consultation Areas have also been identified for sites that are, or have been, used for the transportation of minerals by methods other than road, such as rail sidings and wharves. In the interests of sustainable transportation, these facilities should be safeguarded in order that their continued availability for mineral transportation is retained.

In their Core Strategies and site-specific DPDs, District Councils should avoid the identification of general areas for development or specific sites that would:

- sterilise the working of all viable mineral resources;
- prevent the tipping of mineral waste;
- prevent the transportation of minerals by rail or water; or
- be in such close proximity as to constrain future working.

On their LDF Proposals Map, District Councils should show the boundaries of the Mineral Consultation Areas, as required by paragraph 2.22 of PPS12, and include explanatory text in the appropriate DPD referring to the constraints that these Areas place on non-mineral development. The current boundaries of the Mineral Consultation Areas are shown in the Devon County Minerals Local Plan, and the County Council is able to provide electronic versions in some formats.

4. Use of Traditional Building Materials

The maintenance of local distinctiveness depends in part on the use of traditional buildings materials such as locally-sourced stone for the construction and repair of buildings, structures and surfaces. Devon County Council encourages the retention of existing sources of local stone and the re-opening of old quarries where there is a need for their materials. Such quarries are generally located in rural areas and contribute to the diversity of employment opportunities in such areas, as well as reducing the need to transport materials from other areas.

District Councils should include a policy promoting the use of locally-sourced traditional building materials that are appropriate to a locality.

5. Alternative Sources of Construction Materials

The sustainable management of mineral resources requires that, wherever practicable, secondary and recycled sources of materials such as aggregates should be used in preference to primary sources. Devon has significant resources of secondary aggregates through its ball clay and china clay operations, and large quantities of aggregates are produced through the recycling of construction and demolition waste. Structure Plan Policy MN6 provides the strategic context for the use of secondary and recycled materials.

District Councils should, through their Core Strategies and other appropriate DPDs, promote the use of sustainable construction methods including the use of locally-sourced secondary and recycled materials in preference to primary sources of materials.