

# DERBYSHIRE AND DERBY MINERALS LOCAL PLAN

## TOWARDS A STRATEGY FOR BUILDING STONE

NOVEMBER 2016



Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council (the mineral planning authorities) are working together to prepare a joint minerals local plan. It will be called the Derbyshire and Derby Joint Minerals Local Plan and cover the geographical area of Derbyshire, excluding the Peak District National Park. It will cover the period to 2030.

Minerals are essential raw materials, which are used to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that our country needs. They are vital for economic growth and our quality of life. They are, however, a finite resource and can only be worked where they are found. It is important therefore, that we make the best use of them to enable their long term conservation.

The Plan area has a wealth of mineral resources. Mineral extraction and development has, for a long time, been a part of the Derbyshire landscape and an important part of the local economy, making an important contribution to the national, regional and local need for minerals. Whilst mineral working can also provide environmental benefits, residents and local businesses are often concerned about any unwelcome impacts.

A clear, long-term Minerals Local Plan is a way of setting out the future scale and location of mineral working in the Plan area to support economic growth whilst protecting the environment and local communities. It is important that the Minerals Local Plan gets the balance right between the needs of the economy, the environment and local communities. It is vital, therefore, that communities, businesses, organisations and people throughout Derbyshire and Derby are involved in developing the Minerals Local Plan so that, as far as possible, it contains an agreed set of priorities that will deliver sustainable minerals development that is right for the Plan area.

**This consultation presents a series of papers, which seek to develop further the emerging vision and objectives, strategies and policies of the Minerals Local Plan. We now need your comments, suggestions and input on these papers, which will then be used to feed into the Draft Minerals Local Plan. We will ask for your views on this document later in the process.**

**This paper sets out the progress that we have made in developing a strategy for the provision of building stone in Derbyshire and Derby and how your comments have been used to develop the strategy. It concludes by proposing an emerging approach for further comment.**



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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The main source of building and roofing stone in the Plan area is the sandstone/gritstone of Carboniferous origin. Limestone is also produced in small amounts for this purpose as a by-product at some of the limestone producing quarries.
- 1.2 The market for building stone is small but profitable and is concerned mainly with the repair and restoration of historic buildings or with the repair/extension of existing properties or new build properties and structures in areas of high environmental value, such as conservation areas where it is important to preserve and enhance local distinctiveness and local building character.
- 1.3 In the Plan area, the majority of resources of building and roofing stone are in Derbyshire, often in areas of landscape which are close to the Peak District National Park. The need to protect the landscape will, therefore, be an important consideration in many proposals to work this resource.
- 1.4 This emerging strategy discusses the issues and principles regarding the provision of building stone in the Derbyshire and Derby Joint Minerals Local Plan (MLP).

**More detailed information regarding building stone is available in the Building Stone Supporting Paper, November 2014.**

## **2 National Policy Considerations**

- 2.1 Part 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the national approach to planning for the sustainable use of minerals. At paragraph 144, it states that LPAs should consider how to meet demand for small scale extraction of building stone at or close to relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets and to recognise the mainly small scale, intermittent nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries.
- 2.2 Part 12 of the NPPF sets out the national policy approach to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, referring to the treatment of historic buildings and the wider historic environment and the wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation and enhancement of the historic

environment can bring. It recognises that new development within historic areas can make a positive contribution to the area.

### **3 Vision and Objectives**

- 3.1 A separate paper will seek your views on the emerging vision and objectives for the MLP. It will ask you to think about matters relating to the provision of building stone, including maintaining an adequate and steady supply of minerals to contribute to the national and local mineral supply; to providing minerals for the delivery of sustainable economic development and regeneration of Derby and Derbyshire; and to making the most sustainable use of mineral resources, including by ensuring the most efficient use of high quality minerals and the minimisation of waste materials.

### **4 Duty to Co-operate**

- 4.1 National Planning Practice Guidance sets out that in planning for minerals extraction, mineral planning authorities are expected to co-operate with other authorities on strategic matters.
- 4.2 The provision of building stone is considered to be a strategic matter by virtue of the fact that the market for the material involves significant cross boundary movements. We have liaised with and will continue to liaise with MPAs where surveys show that Derbyshire's building stone is sold, to ensure that provision is maintained at the necessary level to allow these movements to continue.
- 4.3 We will be seeking your views on Duty to Co-operate issues in a separate paper, which will be published later in the process.

### **5 Progress So Far - What You Have Said and How We Have Responded**

- 5.1 The situation with building stone is not the same as for aggregates because there is no specific target output or apportionment required. It is almost impossible to develop a framework to predict the need for building stone. As a result, the need for the stone has to be assessed when planning applications for a specific site are submitted. At the Issues and Options stage in 2010, we asked you whether we

should identify specific quarries or devise a general policy against which to assess all proposals.

- 5.2 There was more support expressed for a criteria based, rather than a site specific, policy, but this was not unanimous. There was also support for a combination of the two options. The sustainability appraisal (see below) also provided no clear direction regarding this issue.

The Sustainability Appraisal found that the impacts of either option are uncertain until either sites or policy criteria are chosen.

It concluded that Option 1 (specific sites) would provide certainty to meet specific needs to support the character of buildings and settlements reliant on the types of building stone found in Derbyshire. It concluded that the significance of the effects of both options on heritage and landscape will depend on the specific locations of the specific sites and their extensions identified under option 1 and the criteria proposed under option 2.

It states that Option 1 may not maximise its support to the building stone industry and therefore have negative effects on the achievement of economic objectives. This would meet a particular market need but may not provide flexibility for the industry to bring forward proposals to respond to market demand over the plan period or from other operators, which do not have existing building stone quarries.

- 5.3 As a result of the responses to the Issues and Options Paper giving no clear steer regarding this issue, and taking account also of the conclusions of the sustainability appraisal, we suggested at that time (as reported in the Analysis of Responses to the Issues and Options Paper, 2011) that specific quarries could be allocated to ensure that specific conservation projects have sufficient stone to meet future needs and that a general criteria based policy would enable other proposals to be assessed as they came forward.
- 5.4 Since that time, we have had more detailed discussions with experts at English Heritage and the National Stone Centre regarding the issue of building stone, in particular regarding the Strategic Stone Study, a joint project led by English Heritage with the British Geological Survey and Derbyshire County Council. This establishes

the significant building stones used in historical buildings in each county and the potential quarries which could supply it.

5.5 It became clear through these discussions that the identification of specific sites for the working of building stone would, in reality, be highly problematic. This is because future proposals for building stone result from a specific conservation need and, as shown by the Strategic Stone Study, would therefore relate to a particular location and specification of material. Also, given the specific characteristics of building stone and the significant variation between localities, it was advised that the identification of specific site would be problematic.

5.6 When this strategy was first published in November 2014, given the advice from English Heritage set out above and the fact that no specific sites had been put forward, we considered that a criteria policy would be the most appropriate and realistic approach to enable provision to be made for the working of this resource over the Plan period. There was overall support expressed for this approach. However, in October 2016, a site at Bent Lane Darley Dale was put forward as a potential building stone site. This has altered the options in terms the proposed approach that we should take.

## 6. Next Steps

6.1 We must now consider, therefore, whether the site at Bent Lane, Darley Dale should be allocated in the Plan alongside a criteria policy for assessing other sites which may come forward during the Plan period. The site will have to be assessed and if this assessment, together with people's comments, indicates that the site has the potential to be worked, it may be included as a proposed allocation. If not, then a criteria policy alone could be used for assessing all proposals that come forward for building stone. This policy would set out that proposals for the extraction of building stone will be supported, where it can be demonstrated that it is needed to maintain traditional, small scale levels of production. Conditions will be imposed to ensure that extraction will be primarily for building stone rather than for aggregate use.

## **Emerging Approach For Building Stone**

**Option 1: Do you think the site at Bent Lane, Darley Dale should be allocated for the quarrying of building stone and a criteria policy be used for determining other sites that may come forward during the Plan period?**

**Option 2: Do you think that there should be no specific allocations and to just rely on the proposed criteria policy (below) for determining all proposals for building stone?**

Planning proposals for new building stone quarries or extensions to existing ones will be dealt with through a criteria based policy. This will make appropriate provision for the material in order to maintain traditional, small scale levels of production, whilst minimising the social and environmental impact of the proposal on the area. It will ensure also that extraction is primarily for building stone rather than aggregate. Criteria will be included to this effect.

**Which approach would you support?** Please explain your reasons for your answer, highlighting what you agree or disagree with.