

DERBYSHIRE AND DERBY MINERALS LOCAL PLAN

Towards a Minerals Local Plan: Spring 2018 Consultation

CHAPTER 6

6.4 Reducing Quarrying in the Peak District National Park

December 2017

Introduction

6.4.1 National minerals policy seeks to maintain landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside designated areas, such as National Parks. In order to help to deliver this approach on a local scale, the Peak District National Park Authority has a policy in its adopted Core Strategy (2011) to not allow further new quarries or extensions to existing quarries in the National Park in order to help protect the special qualities of the landscape. This strategy sets out how the Councils have cooperated and will continue to cooperate with the Peak District National Park to help achieve this aim by agreeing to compensate for the reduction in quarrying in the National Park by increasing its provision figure for aggregate crushed rock (limestone and gritstone). This can only be achieved for aggregate minerals with a level of accuracy because there is a national system for determining levels of aggregate provision (Managed Aggregate Supply System). Such a system does not exist for minerals which are used for building and roofing stone.

Vision and Objectives

6.4.2 The draft Vision of the Plan, included in Chapter 3, seeks to protect the special qualities of the area by assisting in achieving a progressive reduction of minerals obtained from sites in the Peak Park. The Objectives of the Plan seek to deliver this Vision. The following objectives are relevant to this element of the Plan.

Objective 7 “Protecting the Peak District National Park” refers to the aim of helping to achieve a progressive reduction in mineral extraction from the Peak District National Park. The Plan will continue to help protect and preserve the special qualities and characteristics of the Peak District National Park through the implementation of its policies and proposals. This will include making sufficient provision for minerals from within the Plan area to help achieve a progressive reduction in mineral extraction from the Peak Park area to help minimise the impacts of further developments.

Objective 6, “Protecting the Natural and Built Environment” is also relevant. This sets out that the Plan will conserve and enhance the area’s natural and built environment, including its distinctive landscapes, habitats, wildlife and other important features by avoiding, minimising and mitigating potential adverse impacts of minerals developments.

Evidence Base

Peak District National Park Core Strategy 2011

- 6.4.3 Minerals Policy 1 in the Peak District National Park Core Strategy seeks to reduce quarrying in the National Park through not permitting new proposals for mineral extraction or proposal which would extend existing operations other than in exceptional circumstances (other than fluorspar and small scale proposals for building stone).

System for Determining the Provision of Aggregate

- 6.4.4 The Managed Aggregates Supply System (MASS) has provided the mechanism to deliver long term planning for the supply of aggregates. It seeks to meet imbalances in supply and demand for aggregates. The underpinning concept behind the Managed Aggregate Supply System is that Mineral Planning Authorities which have adequate resources of aggregates make an appropriate contribution to national as well as local supply, while making due allowance for the need to reduce environmental damage to an acceptable level.
- 6.4.5 The key principle under the Managed Aggregate Supply System is now the Local Aggregate Assessment, where each Mineral Planning Authority is expected to prepare an assessment of the demand for and supply of aggregates.
- 6.4.6 The latest document was published in 2017 using 2016 data. Derbyshire, Derby and the Peak District National Park Authority have agreed, through and with the agreement of the East Midlands Aggregates Working Party, to adjust their provision figures for aggregate crushed rock in the joint LAA to recognise and cater for the progressive closure of quarries in the Peak District National Park as they become exhausted over the coming years. The similarity of the mineral resources as well as the similarity of the markets for the mineral provide justification for the authorities taking this approach. The Joint LAA reduces the provision figure for the Peak Park by 10% and this is added to the provision figure for Derbyshire.

The joint LAA concludes, therefore, that Derbyshire will provide 6.95mtpa of aggregate crushed rock annually and the Peak District National Park 2.39mtpa.

National Planning Policy Framework

6.4.7 The NPPF, at paragraph 144, seeks to provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside environmentally sensitive areas, such as National Parks.

6.4.8 The NPPF also provides at paragraph 115 that 'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks', and at paragraph 116 that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these areas except in exceptional circumstances.

Further more detailed evidence regarding aggregate crushed rock is available in the Crushed Rock for Aggregate Background Paper, December 2017, and the Local Aggregate Assessment, 2017.

Consultations Undertaken and Comments Received

6.4.9 The development of the Minerals Local Plan has included a series of consultations to ascertain the views of relevant local authorities, organisations and bodies with an interest in mineral development and the potential implications of mineral development and the people of Derbyshire and their representatives.

Stakeholder Workshops 2009

6.4.10 In July 2009, Derbyshire County and Derby City Councils held a workshop for key stakeholders. This helped to identify the key issues and themes that people thought the Minerals Local Plan should address and sought the input of stakeholders in developing the vision and objectives for the Plan. The

outcomes of the workshop were published on the Council's website and in a newsletter that was circulated to all stakeholders.

Issues and Options 2010

6.4.11 Stakeholders identified the reduction in quarrying in the Peak Park as a key issue at the initial stage in the development of the Minerals Local Plan. As a result, we included it in the Issues and Options paper in 2010. Responses to this indicated continued support for the development of an approach which would help to reduce quarrying in the Peak District National Park.

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6.4.12 The draft proposals set out in the Issues and Options Paper were prepared prior to the introduction of significant changes in international and national planning policy, notably the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. Other emerging local policies and strategies and new evidence base were also considered to be important factors that should be taken into account in the formulation of the vision, objectives and policies for the new Plan, including the approach of the Plan to the reduction of quarrying in the Peak District National Park.

6.4.13 There were 11 responses to this paper from 6 respondents at this stage, as follows.

- Whilst most support the overall aim of helping to reduce in quarrying of aggregate in the Peak Park over time, this is tempered by concerns relating to whether this would lead to a significant increase in quarrying in Derbyshire and the resulting environmental and social impacts.
- This section seeks to justify an increased apportionment figure by suggesting that providing 'a secure platform for the economic recovery' is an important underpinning principle of the NPPF. We consider that this is a misreading of the NPPF. While we agree that the NPPF supports sustainable economic growth, we believe that it is neutral in relation to the economic cycle and that

economic recovery does not take precedent over social and environmental concerns.

- One particular area of concern is around Rowsley, where it is feared new stone quarries would open/re-open to compensate for those closing in the adjoining Peak Park.
- One comment sets out that the mineral planning authority must have evidence that the resources are interchangeable; if there are unique resources in the Peak Park this should be addressed.
- One comment suggests that the policy should also cover building stone not just aggregates and therefore that Derbyshire should increase its supply of building stone.
- Amendments and additions to wording to this policy are also suggested.

6.4.14 **Assessment of Comments and Outcomes for the Plan**

- Permission for extensions to quarries or for new quarries will only be given in exceptional circumstances where they offer significant benefits to the environment and/or community. As part of this, the councils may also seek to negotiate reductions to the overall landbank with the mineral operator concerned. There are considered to be sufficient reserves of limestone in Derbyshire outside the National Park to ensure that the relatively limited additional production as a result of the progressive closure of quarries within the National Park can be replaced without having any significant additional impact in environmental terms. The issue will of course be monitored over the course of the Plan period.
- The Strategy addresses the need for Derbyshire to replace the production of aggregate crushed rock from the Peak Park over time (not building stone). It is the limestone production which will be replaced and this will come mainly from the quarries around Buxton. It is unlikely to mean that small gritstone quarries near Rowsley will be reopened to meet this run down in production of aggregate in the Peak Park.

- This policy is purely about replacing progressively the production of aggregate crushed rock. This product is of a very similar quality within and outside the National Park in Derbyshire, unlike industrial grade limestone and building stone, which have more specific and unique qualities over a relatively small area.

6.4.15 As a result of all responses received, we have amended the Strategy. In doing so, we have continued to work closely with the Peak District National Park Authority in the development of the strategy.

6.4.16 Given the size of its landbank of crushed rock and the fact the quarries serve similar markets to the Peak District National Park quarries, the two councils have agreed to compensate for the reduction in production in the Peak District National Park by increasing the Derbyshire apportionment figure for aggregate grade crushed rock. The Derbyshire and Derby Councils undertake a joint Local Aggregate Assessment with the Peak District National Park.

6.4.17 The latest LAA was published in 2017 using 2016 data. This has concluded that Derbyshire will provide 6.95mtpa of aggregate crushed rock annually and the Peak District National Park 2.39mtpa. This proposed figure for Derbyshire allows for the continued compensation for the progressive loss of production from the PDNP and also by setting a slightly higher figure than recent past sales would otherwise suggest (the most recent 10 year average for DCC (2007-2016) is 6.68mt and the most recent 3 year average (2014-2016) is 6.18mt), this also provides a degree of flexibility should production increase as a result of infrastructure projects both national and local, and provides a secure platform for the economic recovery (an important underpinning principle of the NPPF).

Duty to Cooperate

6.4.18 In order to obtain as much relevant information as possible about this issue, Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council have engaged in meetings and discussions with relevant authorities. We also corresponded with

organisations and individuals with relevant knowledge and experience to develop our evidence base for the 2015/2016 Consultation exercise and for developing the proposed approach set out below.

- 6.4.19 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. This is considered to be a strategic matter by virtue of the implications of increasing gradually the production of aggregate crushed rock in Derbyshire while production in the National Park reduces. This may affect supply patterns nationally, given the widespread use of the rock from Derbyshire and the Peak District National Park. We have cooperated, and will continue to co-operate, with the Peak District National Park Authority and other relevant bodies regarding this issue.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 6.4.20 The Sustainability Appraisal process is a way of testing the impact of the Plan against a series of Sustainability Objectives. Where the process recommends improvements to the Plan, these will be incorporated. A sustainability appraisal has been undertaken on all the Papers that constituted the Towards a Minerals Local Plan Rolling consultation 2014-2017, including those concerning the proposed reduction of quarrying in the Peak District National Park. It reported on this issue as follows:

The first Interim Sustainability Appraisal concluded that Option 2 (to reduce the landbank of crushed rock in DCC and the Peak Park) is expected to perform better than Option 1 (to reduce the landbank of crushed rock in DCC) in terms of achieving environmental and social objectives by reducing permitted extraction in the Peak District National Park and therefore assist in the delivery of the Park's objectives and also maintain potential recreational areas for Derby's and Derbyshire's communities.

In terms of meeting economic objectives, both options would reduce the overall land bank for crushed rock however this is not expected to result in provision for less than what is required as part of the apportionment set out in the national and regional guidelines for aggregates provision and both options would still grant new permissions where these are applied for therefore still encouraging minerals extraction where this is needed. This would also help to maintain the important role the extraction of this aggregate plays in national supplies as Derbyshire has the second highest annual output of limestone in England.

6.4.21 The full appraisal is set out in the following document:

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Interim Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report, December 2017**

The Proposed Approach

6.4.22 The Local Aggregate Assessment includes a lower apportionment figure for the PDNP, with Derbyshire compensating for this in its apportionment figure for aggregate grade crushed rock. This strategy will be monitored over the Plan period and Derbyshire may increase its apportionment further to compensate for further reductions in quarrying in the PDNP. The Councils will continue to work with the PDNPA regarding this issue.

Policy MS6: Helping to Reduce Quarrying in the Peak District National Park

Derbyshire will compensate for a continued reduction in quarrying from the Peak District National Park over the Plan period through an increase in the apportionment figures for aggregate crushed rock, as set out in the Local Aggregate Assessment.

Monitoring

6.4.23 As set out at in Chapter 3, the Plan will contain a number of objectives to be achieved over the Plan period, in order to achieve the Plan's overall Vision. The effectiveness of the Plan's policies and proposals, put in place to meet those objectives, will be monitored so that, if necessary, issues can be identified and addressed through a revision of the Plan, either in whole or part.

6.4.24 Policy MS6 sets out that there will be an increase in the provision of aggregate crushed rock from Derbyshire to allow for the continued reduction of quarrying from the Peak Park. Through the Local Aggregate Assessment, the MPA will monitor the supply of aggregate crushed rock and liaise with the relevant adjoining MPAs to ensure that supply is maintained at the required level to allow this to continue. Further information on this issue can be found in the updated Duty to Cooperate Paper.

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**Duty to Cooperate Report: Background and Progress, December
2017**

Do you have any comments on the approach to reducing the supply of aggregates from the Peak District National Park, as set out in this Chapter?