

Devon Minerals and Waste Development Framework

Report of the Executive Director of Environment, Economy and Culture

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee notes the report.

1. Introduction

Devon County Council is the minerals and waste planning authority for Devon, excluding the unitary areas of Plymouth and Torbay and the national parks of Dartmoor and Exmoor, within which the unitary/national park authority exercises this role. The County Council's current policy framework is provided by the Minerals Local Plan, which was adopted in 2004, and the Waste Local Plan (2006).

In the same manner in which district authorities are required to prepare a Local Development Framework, Devon County Council has a duty to prepare appropriate development plan documents within a Minerals and Waste Development Framework. When adopted, these will replace the existing Local Plans and will have a timescale to 2031.

The County Council is currently developing separate Core Strategies for minerals and waste, with each undergoing, or shortly to undergo, consultation.

2. Minerals Core Strategy

An Options Consultation Paper was published on 1 March 2011 and sent to a wide range of organisations and individuals, including district and parish/town councils. The consultation period extends to 29 April 2011, although provision will be made for district councils to defer their response until after the local elections.

The key issues for which options are provided in the consultation paper are:

- ◆ securing a spatial strategy that minimises the distances that minerals are transported by road, supports the county's economy and protects its environment;
- ◆ providing a strong policy context for the continued supply of Devon's minerals of national importance, i.e. ball clay, china clay and tungsten;
- ◆ maintaining the supply of aggregate minerals, including the use of secondary and recycled materials;
- ◆ enhancing the supply of distinctive local building stones; and
- ◆ safeguarding key mineral resources for the long term from sterilisation by other development.

For East Devon, the main issue concerns the future extraction of sand and gravel from the Budleigh Salterton Pebble Beds, which cross the district and continue through Mid Devon into Somerset. Working has been undertaken at Blackhill and Rockbears Quarries, and is to recommence at Venn Ottery, but the available reserves at these sites, together with those in Mid Devon, are unlikely to be adequate for the Core Strategy timescale of 2031.

The Options Consultation Paper therefore seeks views on alternative options for maintaining supply from the Budleigh Salterton Pebble Beds, which supply 85% of Devon's sand and gravel. While it would be undesirable for further resources within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the protected heathlands to be worked in the future, other potential locations exist to the west of Ottery St Mary.

East Devon currently has no operational building stone quarries, which limits the availability of suitable materials for the maintenance of historic buildings or use in new development. The Options Consultation Paper encourages the re-opening of old quarries on a small-scale to supply locally-distinctive building stones, subject to no harm being caused.

It is proposed that existing quarries within East Devon should continue to be safeguarded from other development, while one option also proposes the Budleigh Salterton Pebble Beds resource within the district for safeguarding.

3. Waste Core Strategy

Work on the Waste Core Strategy started in 2010 and has since focused on progressing to the Issues and Options consultation stage. Work undertaken so far has concentrated on technical assessments to establish an accurate understanding of the current waste situation in terms of how waste is currently generated, how it is managed and how much existing waste management capacity there is in Devon. Other work has focused on engagement with the public, Local Authorities, the waste industry and environmental groups.

These two main areas of work have allowed a series of strategic waste issues to be identified which the Waste Core Strategy should address. These issues and options have been written into a Consultation Report which is to be presented to Development Management Committee on 16 March. Subject to approval, a formal public consultation is planned between April and June.

The key issues which the Waste Core Strategy will address include:

- ◆ How much additional waste management capacity will be needed in the period up to 2031;
- ◆ How this capacity should be planned to maximise sustainability and deliverability;
- ◆ How to address future waste management requirements in accordance with the waste hierarchy;
- ◆ How to consider future waste management requirements in terms of Devon and the wider sub-region;
- ◆ How to consider suitable technologies; and
- ◆ Where additional waste management facilities should be located and distributed.

The Issues and Options Consultation Report contains three spatial approaches for addressing future waste management requirements. These are based on centralised,

localised and varied approaches. The centralised approach would include a small number of larger-scale facilities, the localised approach would include a larger number of smaller, community oriented facilities, and the varied approach could include facilities of a variety of scales across Devon.

The centralised, localised and mixed approaches include areas of search for future facilities in East Devon. Depending on the outcomes of the consultation and further assessments, one of these approaches will be developed in more detail to form the spatial element of the strategy. Once this work is undertaken, the potential implications for East Devon will become clearer in terms of potential facility size and location.

One of the implications of the strategy related to East Devon could be the policy status of a site at Heathpark Industrial Estate which is currently allocated as a site for 'strategic waste management facilities' in the Waste Local Plan. There are also current allocations for 'other significant waste management facilities' at Greendale Barton and Hill Barton Business Park. The Waste Core Strategy may consider how the policy status of these sites could evolve in the medium term.

Depending on which of the spatial approaches is taken forward as the preferred approach, a further implication for East Devon could be regarding the potential need for additional waste transfer capacity in the District.

The County Council will work with East Devon District Council in the development of the Waste Core Strategy to ensure that policy and site considerations are seen in the context of the emerging East Devon Core Strategy.

Chris McCarthy

Electoral Divisions: All in East Devon

Local Government Act 1972

List of Background Papers

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Background Papers	Date	File Ref.
1. Issues & Options Consultation Paper	November 2007	-
2. Waste Local Plan	June 2006	

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