

**Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole Minerals Core Strategy
Stakeholder Meeting 1
7th March 2006**

Outcomes from the Green Group – Facilitated by Maureen Darrie

Workshop 1 - Sustainability Objectives

The Group considered the general sustainability objectives identified by the Council and discussed whether they were sufficiently comprehensive in terms of covering all of the key issues facing Dorset, whether they should be expanded or reduced or whether the detailed wording was appropriate. The six objectives were discussed in turn as follows, prior to which the Group discussed the general approach to sustainability and identification of specific objectives.

The Group felt that objectives must be both realistic and deliverable. It is important to distinguish the difference between peoples “wants” and their actual “needs”. In this respect the Group discussed, in general terms, Dorset’s characteristic needs. The Group did not identify a specific list of those needs but felt it was important to emphasise to the Council that Dorset may not be the same as other places and that work needs to be carried out in respect of this.

In general terms the Group felt that “less beaurocracy and less paperwork” was the way forward. They appreciated that Government Guidance and publications were leading towards increased “front-end” consultation but they were concerned that there may be limited gains when viewed against the money spent. Overall the Group was concerned that “consultation fatigue” will affect the real value which can be achieved through consultation.

The Group felt that the list of objectives under discussion were too generic and included “jargon” that should be avoided. They felt that sustainability objectives should take the form of an over-arching philosophy for development and that the list presented is too extensive and detailed in nature. The result is that some of the objectives are confused and duplicate intent. Objectives spanning such a wide scope will always result in some conflicting with each other and others complimenting. The Group felt that a sustainability objective should aim to change / challenge the current development aspirations in the County which appear to them to simply “provide for growth”. Sustainability objectives should inform long-term policy. Such policy should be adhered to, not changed or moved away from. Overall the Group felt that further examination of the interactions, conflicts and impacts of each objective on each other should be carried out. They felt they were not equipped to carry out this exercise with any great meaning given the timescales involved.

The Group was keen to ensure that the objectives reflect and cater for Dorset’s indigenous population.

The Group considered whether it would be appropriate to prioritise the objectives. They felt this would be difficult and would ultimately be cost dependent and evaluated against the value of each objective. Overall they felt there was merit in aligning local, national and regional objectives.

The Group felt that community cohesion and communication between groups and people is critical to achieving spatial planning and sustainability. People need to work together to avoid conflicts.

Specifically the Group raised the following points under each heading:

Objective 1

The Group generally agreed that objective 1 was appropriate, however they felt that the reference to meeting 'peoples needs' should be clarified. There is often confusion between "needs" and "wants".

Objective 2

The Group agreed with the general thrust of this objective however they did feel that Objectives 1 & 2 could be combined.

In the context of Objectives 1, 2 and 3 they discussed the concept of "fairness and equality of opportunity" and how this could be reflected in the objectives. They concluded that these are very difficult to define. The Group felt that it was important to make the distinction between catering for the indigenous population and those moving into the County to live and in addition the tourist population.

Objective 3

In terms of this objective, the Group felt it was laudible but the sub-headings need to ensure fairness and equality of opportunity. Safe, healthy and active lifestyles should be open to all.

Sub-heading 5 should be re-written to delete "enable" and replacing that with "ensuring".

Objective 4

The Group agreed with the principles of the objective but felt it was important to reflect the national and wider importance of some of Dorset's environment.

Objective 5

The Group felt that this objective was appropriate. They discussed the wording and felt that replacing the word "minimise" by "husbanding" would ensure that the objective is approached in a more positive and proactive light. They also felt that this objective would benefit from the use of the word "efficiency". The key to consumption of resources and waste reduction is promotion of efficient use at all levels.

Objective 6

In terms of encouraging fair and inclusive communities, the Group felt that this was a critical objective. This objective needs to be expanded to include communication between groups and communities. The Group felt that there needs to be "joined-up thinking" to achieve sustainable development. The Group was concerned that there will always be issues in terms of reaching those groups referred to by Government as

“hard to reach”. With this in mind the Group felt that further consideration needs to be given in respect of how this is to be achieved. Circulation of papers is not necessarily the way ahead, the Council will need to consider alternative means of communication such as TV advertising, however this will require additional funding and further consideration of the financial implications of achieving results.

Overall the Group concluded that “Dorset is a good place” and that needs to be borne in mind in shaping these objectives.

Workshop 2 - A Vision for the Future

In determining an appropriate spatial vision for minerals planning in Dorset to overarch the core strategy, the Group considered a number of key issues relevant to Dorset and derived their “spatial vision” after identification of the following key words and phrases:

- Safeguarding mineral resources
- Needs of the population
- Integration of minerals planning with other plans and policies
- Community focus
- Communication
- Balance between competing demands
- Environmental issues associated with extraction
- Achieving continuity of supply
- Conservation of and husbanding of resources
- Integration
- Mitigation of impacts
- Meeting / dealing with conflicts between environmental designations and where minerals are located
- How to deal with the rate of change in legislation
- How self-sustainable does the County wish to be?
- Manage the decline in reserves
- Recognise the special qualities associated with some of the minerals e.g. stone

After much deliberation the Group identified the following spatial vision:

‘An integrated plan for Dorset that recognises the value that the minerals industry plays in the County and to manage the decline in reserves whilst capitalising on the economic opportunities whilst balancing the competing interests and promoting enhancement through restoration and afteruse.’

Workshop 3 – Objectives for Future Minerals Planning

The Group considered the seven objectives contained within the existing Minerals and Waste Local Plan and discussed whether they should be included in the Minerals Core Strategy. The Group went through each objective in detail and suggested the following changes:

Objective 1

The general consensus was that this objective was appropriate subject to the deletion of the references to waste disposal facilities. They concluded it should read:

‘To manage the balance between the need for minerals facilities and the need to sustain and enhance protect the environment.’

Objective 2

The Group suggested objective 2 was reworded as follows:

‘To actively promote within policy the most efficient use of all resources, waste minimization, re-use, recycling, and where practicable, the use of less damaging materials or technologies, in order to reduce the requirement for additional resources.’

Objective 3

The Group considered that this objective should be re-worded as follows:

‘To identify areas where mineral working and aggregate recycling can take place without unjustifiably prejudicing the county’s environment or its amenities and the living conditions of its residents now and in the future.’

Objective 4

The Group generally agreed with the premise of objective 4 but felt that it would benefit from some minor re-wording as follows:

‘To ensure that land taken for mineral working is restored at the earliest opportunity, and, wherever practicable, progressively, to an agreed after-use and standard that sustains or enhances the quality of the County’s environment.’

Objective 5

As with the previous objectives, the Group generally agreed with the aims and suggested minor re-wording as follows:

‘To seek, where appropriate and practicable, a positive contribution in terms of landscape enhancement, biodiversity, geo-diversity, public access or recreational use on the restored sites.’

The Group considered it would be appropriate to merge objectives 5 and 6, thus deleting objective 6.

Objective 6

In terms of objective 6, the Group felt that it should be deleted.

Objective 7

The Group agreed with this objective subject to the minor re-wording as follows:

'To prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral or aggregate recycling resources by other forms of development that may prejudice use'.

Additional Objectives

The Group did not identify any additional objectives.

Adams Hendry Consulting Ltd
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