

**Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole Minerals Core Strategy  
Stakeholder Meeting 2  
25<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

**Outcomes from the Yellow Group – Facilitated by Emma Barnett**

**Workshop 1 – Key Issues for Minerals Planning**

The Group began with a general discussion on issues associated with future mineral planning.

They noted that Dorset was subject to significant environmental constraints at both national and international level and that this was likely to have a significant impact on mineral extraction in the County. This was countered by the view of some members of the Group who felt that some constraints actually represented opportunities and that the variety of local building materials available actually helped to maintain local distinctiveness. Block stone and building stone are the vernacular architecture of the local area; the need to preserve this local distinctiveness would therefore have to be balanced with the environmental constraints such as the AONB particularly as minerals can only be extracted from where they occur. It was also stated that it needed to be made easier for small quarries to remain open.

In terms of the demand for Purbeck stone it was noted that only a small percentage is used locally and that a significant proportion is exported out of the County. The Group discussed the issue of foreign imports such as Indian sandstone at length. One member of the Group confirmed that such imports were necessary as they subsidised the cost of locally produced stone. It was noted that transport costs become a smaller proportion of total costs the more expensive the stone is. The impact of planning requirements on the viability of some quarries was also discussed. In particular it was stated that the planners restrict the use of waste stone as they don't want aggregate production in Purbeck. However, utilising the waste stone could make quarries viable in their own right and would avoid the need to rely on foreign imports. From a sustainability perspective the Group felt that it was important to use materials as close to source as possible.

The Group also identified restoration and after-use as a key issue. In particular they felt that this should be considered as an opportunity and not a problem. Depending on the original condition of the landscape, restoration could result in potential for improvements or enhancements. Sensitive restoration was essential and it is important that it is sympathetic and comprehensive rather than piecemeal. It was also noted that it might not always be appropriate to restore former mineral workings e.g. a cliff quarry can be an interesting and attractive feature in its own right and can have significant biodiversity benefits. The Group felt that it was important that after-use should be considered from the beginning of the planning process and should involve the local community. Such community input was considered to be vital in ensuring some public benefit arising out of the restoration and aftercare proposals. It was concluded that a balance is needed between the impacts during operation of the quarry and the potential for long-term benefits arising out of the after-use.

Traffic and transport was also identified as a significant issue in relation to minerals planning generally. The Group felt that it was important to understand the implications

of market forces in determining patterns of traffic movements on both the local and trunk road network. The Group particularly highlighted the likely distribution patterns and markets in relation to sand and gravel. It was felt that it was important to maximise opportunities for road/rail transfer. It was agreed that the minerals industry is of national importance and therefore if there is a need for mitigation to resolve traffic impacts, this needs to be factored into the decision. The proximity to markets should also be taken into account as part of the decision-making process to enable the impacts to be considered alongside the cost and damage to the environment. The Group concluded however that it was not feasible to restrict the operator to serving particular markets, as these markets are susceptible to change.

The Group then went on to discuss whether there were any specific issues that would be applicable to a particular mineral. They considered that the extraction of ball clay was of national significance. In determining whether it would be appropriate to seek to work the sand and gravel from ball clay sites they felt that the fact that the infrastructure was already in place was an advantage, however they noted that a larger void would need to be restored as a result and this was likely to necessitate the importation of fill material. In this respect the issue of the shortage of fill material as a result of increased recycling rates was raised. The viability issue was also raised in comparison with sea-won aggregate.

The Group concluded that the general issues outlined previously would be largely applicable to all minerals however they accepted that the scale of the impact would vary e.g. the production of hydrocarbons would have comparatively less impact than that associated with the extraction of ball clay, aggregates or blockstone.

In conclusion the Group identified the following key issues:

- Transportation and traffic movements – emphasis on perceived markets although recognising that is subject to change.
- Maintain material source for restoration of historical buildings and preserving local identity through use of local building stone
- Impact on local environment and amenity
- After-care and restoration – input from local community
- Local markets for waste materials to reduce need for foreign imports
- Intensity of mineral extraction (demand) should be balanced against environmental considerations

## **Workshop 2 – Options for Future Minerals Planning**

The Group discussed potential options for dealing with the issues identified in the first workshop.

### **Transportation**

In terms of the first issue, the Group felt that the objective should be to seek to transport material with the minimum journey lifetime per cubic metre. Options for delivering this objective were identified as follows:

- Meet demand through a combination of primary and recycled aggregate to minimise transportation impacts
- Provision of strategic recycling facilities
- Provision of small local recycling facilities to enable recycling at point of need

- Use of conveyor belts to transport material where practicable and to by-pass poor road infrastructure
- Upgrade road infrastructure as a last resort
- Utilise other forms of transport where viable
- Creation or re-establishment of strategic rail heads for both imports and exports

#### Use of Local Building Materials (Portland and Purbeck building stone)

- Encourage mining and resist opencast quarrying (Portland only)
- Creation of stone catchment areas (can help to quantify demand) to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document
- Waste stone should be used as aggregate

#### Impact on Local Environment and Amenity

- Include buffer zones around mineral workings to protect amenity
- Create mineral consultation zones to avoid building on or close to known mineral deposits so as future extraction does not compromise local amenity
- Prioritise sites in terms of sustainable transport opportunities
- Prioritise sites and phase extraction to minimise impact on community

#### Aftercare and Restoration

- Public consultation forum in relation to restoration plans

#### Local Markets for Waste Materials

- Use Purbeck waste stone for local market as aggregate

#### Managing demand in terms of environmental considerations

- Use more secondary and recycled aggregates (promotion and awareness)

### **Workshop 3 – Delivering the Options**

The Group considered each of the options they identified against a number of sustainability objectives. The options were assessed as either having a positive, negative or neutral impact. The results of this assessment are shown on the attached matrices. Where comments or caveats were identified, these are reflected in the matrix.