

## **SG Rural Development 4: Minerals**

**We will approve mineral development, subject to other policies, where:**

- 1) it is in an area of search or safeguarded area identified in the Appendix 1; AND**
- 2) sufficient information has been submitted with a planning application to enable a full assessment to be made of the likely effects of development, including impacts on human health, together with proposals for appropriate control, mitigation and monitoring; AND**
- 3) a Transport Assessment has been submitted showing the development will not have significant negative transport impacts on local communities; AND**
- 4) where necessary the Planning Authority and the developer have agreed a buffer distance, in consultation with local communities, that is reasonable, takes into account the specific circumstances of the proposal (the relevant circumstances will include the development's location, size, expected duration and method of working, along with the local topography, the characteristics of the various environmental effects likely to arise and the mitigation that can be achieved); AND**
- 5) in the case of sand and gravel construction aggregates the market area's mineral landbank will not exceed 15 years as a result of the development; AND**
- 6) where the development would result in three or more consented mineral or landfill developments within 5km of a settlement, adverse cumulative impacts can be adequately mitigated in terms of increases in road traffic and the length of time and degree of disturbance to communities and the landscape; AND**
- 7) secondary material from mineral working deposits, including extraction and processing materials such as overburden, waste rock and fines, will be reused wherever possible, and responsibly; AND**
- 8) details of phased working, land restoration, after care, after use, public road maintenance and restoration (including appropriate financial guarantees) have been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.**

### **Reasoned Justification**

This policy aims to contribute to the objectives of the structure plan to use resources more efficiently and effectively, and to protect and improve our valued assets and resources. It reconciles the need for minerals with concern for the natural and historic environment and communities.

Mineral working can be disruptive, if not managed satisfactorily, leading to adverse community and environmental impacts. The identification of areas of search will steer mineral extraction as a priority to the least sensitive areas. Safeguarded areas protect rarer mineral deposits from sterilisation, but are also the "areas of search" for these minerals. Safeguarding is provided by a separate policy instrument. Sensitive working practices during mineral extraction should minimise operational impacts and a high standard of site reclamation should enhance the value of the environment once extraction has ceased.

There is also growing demand for certain non-aggregate construction and industrial minerals. Sites are safeguarded to allow for the reopening of historic and inactive sites and new active sites to ensure a future supply.

Quarry operators are encouraged to reduce the quantity of waste produced when extracting minerals. Applicants will be required to prepare a Waste Management Plan (WMP) to demonstrate how the proposed development meets criterion 7.

Planning Advice Note (PAN) 64, on Reclamation of Surface Mineral Workings, provides advice on how planning authorities and operators can improve the reclamation of surface mineral workings. Further advice on the management of soil resources (handling and storage), landform, drainage and aftercare is covered in the PAN. Planning advice will be prepared on the type of information required for reclaiming surface mineral workings (e.g. the information to be submitted with an application, preferred after uses and reclamation standards, financial guarantees, and monitoring requirements), and on abandoned or dormant sites that are considered unlikely to be reactivated during the plan period.

Continuity of supply of construction aggregates is ensured through requiring a landbank of permitted mineral reserves within market areas. To protect resources it is important to ensure this does not significantly exceed market requirements. Market areas are defined according to the viability of transporting minerals and this will change over time. At all times the landbank should be maintained to provide at least 10 years supply, but should not be allowed to exceed 15 years supply, to avoid any issues of unnecessary blight. The Market area is within a 50km travel distance of Aberdeen City and of the strategic growth areas defined in the Structure Plan. In essence this means that the market area is the whole of the Local Plan area and part of the Cairngorms National Park and Angus. Landbank targets and market areas may be updated if required during the plan period.

All conditions attached to mineral permissions will be reviewed every 15 years to ensure the development is not adversely affecting the natural or historic environment, transport network, landscape character or local amenity. Guidance on the procedures to be applied is given in SODD Circular 34/1996 and SEDD Circular 1/2003.

Bonds may be required to be lodged, to ensure that damage caused to roads by quarry traffic can be repaired.

## **Appendix 1**

Maps showing the location of the areas of search.