

## Delegated Decision

26 April 2022



### Joint Local Aggregate Assessment for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear (2019 and 2020 Permitted Reserves and Sales) (April 2022)

## Ordinary Decision

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### Report of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

**Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director - Regeneration Economy and Growth**

#### Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

#### Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report seeks final approval from the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth for the annual update to the Joint Local Aggregate Assessment for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and (Joint LAA).
- 2 The Joint LAA was discussed at a meeting of the North East Aggregate Working Party (NEAWP) on Friday 12 November 2021. This report provides an overview of the feedback on the Joint LAA from the NEAWP

#### Executive Summary

- 3 This report seeks final approval for the annual update to the Joint LAA. The preparation of an LAA on an annual basis is a requirement of the National Planning Framework (NPPF). An LAA is a key technical evidence base documents for both plan making and for making decisions on planning applications for aggregates working. For many years Durham County Council has prepared a Joint LAA with Northumberland and the Tyne and Wear local authorities.
- 4 The Joint LAAs conclusions and key recommendations for County Durham are similar to that of the previous Joint LAA which was finalised in April 2021. It concludes that the prospects for maintaining supply of crushed rock over the period to 2036 remain very good. However, the prospects for maintaining supply of sand and gravel is now only moderate and that in order to maintain supply the Council should seek

to make additional provision to maintain both supply and an appropriate landbank of sand and gravel over the long-term. It recommends that this should be achieved by seeking to allocate land for longer term working in Durham County Council's emerging Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document which will reach its Publication Draft stage later this year.

- 5 The Joint LAA was submitted to the NEAWP in November 2021. The NEAWP has advised that Joint LAA is comprehensive, it uses the most up to date data available and provides an appropriate examination of aggregates supply and demand in County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. It also advised that the approach to calculating future demand which was based on the three year sales average (2017-2019) was appropriate but should be reviewed next year to ensure that the approach adequately captures likely demand from sources such as housebuilding and infrastructure projects. A number of minor wording changes were also suggested, which have been addressed in the LAA.

### **Recommendation**

- 6 The Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth is recommended to:
  - a) Note the comments of the Aggregates Working Party;
  - b) Agree to the final approval of the Joint LAA.

## **Background**

- 7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) prepare on an annual basis a LAA either individually or on a joint basis with other Council's, based on sales data and other relevant local information. The NPPF also advises that councils should make provision for the land-won and other elements of their LAA in their local and mineral planning documents taking into account of the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties (AWPs).
- 8 Within the North East of England, Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park Authority, Sunderland City Council, South Tyneside Council, North Tyneside Council, Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council prepare a Joint LAA. This is a longstanding approach to joint working on this matter of cross boundary strategic importance.
- 9 The NEAWP is chaired by Northumberland County Council and is made up of local authorities in the North East of England and representatives of the minerals industry including operators and industry bodies.
- 10 The Joint LAA is prepared on an annual basis taking account of updated information. Once finalised this Joint LAA will replace the previous Joint LAA which was finalised in April 2021.
- 11 On the 29 November 2021, under delegated powers, the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth agreed that the Joint LAA could be submitted to the AWP for scrutiny. In addition, it was agreed that following consideration, the Joint LAA would be updated as necessary, with final approval for the document being sought from the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth under delegated powers.

### **The Joint Local Aggregate Assessment for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear (2019 and 2020 Permitted Reserves and Sales) (April 2022)**

- 12 The principal focus of the Joint LAA is to ensure that a steady and adequate supply of aggregates (crushed rock and sand and gravel) can be maintained in the long term thereby ensuring the supply of the construction materials required by the economy and society.
- 13 In respect of crushed rock, the Joint LAA explains that County Durham makes a significant contribution to the steady and adequate supply of crushed rock in North East England. Sales in 2019 were 3.256 million tonnes and in 2020 they fell to 2.613 million tonnes owing to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the construction industry. These sales

levels can be compared to sales in 2018 which were 3.484 million tonnes and which were the highest in the last ten years.

- 14 Permitted reserves of crushed rock have fallen from 122.259 million tonnes in 2018 (equivalent of a landbank of 40.2 years) to 97.468 million tonnes on 31st December 2020 (equivalent to a landbank of 31.2 years). This was due to a combination of sales in 2019 and 2020, together with a reduction of permitted reserves at a number of sites including at Force Garth Quarry where permitted reserves fell by approximately 12 million tonnes due to a new scheme of working being agreed in 2020. However, in overall terms future prospects of supply are still very good.
- 15 With regard to sand and gravel, County Durham makes a significant contribution to the steady and adequate supply of land-won sand and gravel in North East England. Sales in 2019 were 537,000 tonnes and in 2020 they were 438,000 tonnes. Permitted reserves of sand and gravel fell from 6,474,000 tonnes on 31 December 2018 (equivalent to a landbank of 17.7 years) to 5,247,000 tonnes on 31 December 2020 (equivalent to a landbank of 11.98 years). In overall terms, it is considered that the future prospects of supply have changed from good/moderate to only being regarded as moderate.
- 16 Similar to in previous years, the Joint LAA recommends that future provision is based upon the three year sales average, however, in acknowledgement of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic it is recommended that future provision is based on three year sales for the years preceding 2020. This would serve to ensure that the coronavirus pandemic and in particular the impact of the lockdown periods does not shape future provision.
- 17 Therefore, for County Durham, the Joint LAA sets out that the overall scale of forecast demand for crushed rock to 2036 can be accommodated through existing permissions and allocations. However, it is noted that over the same period the forecast demand for sand and gravel cannot be accommodated through existing permissions and allocations. The LAA recommends that there will be a requirement to make provision for a further 5.059 million tonnes of sand and gravel to meet identified need to 2035. This is an increase on the 2.98 million tonnes figure which was set out in last year's Joint LAA. However, this will still be able to be accommodated by the proposed allocations set out in the Council's emerging draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document.

## **Scrutiny of Joint LAA by the North East Aggregates Working Party**

18 The Joint LAA was discussed at a meeting of the NEAWP on Friday 12 November 2021. Following consideration, the NEAWP have provided comments and advice a summary of which is provided below. They advised that Joint LAA is:

- Comprehensive and covers the supply of primary aggregates, secondary and recycled aggregates, marine aggregates, imports of crushed rock by sea and imports from other areas.
- That the Joint LAA uses the most up-to-date information available in terms of primary aggregates sales and reserves.
- That work which was undertaken to supplement survey work the Joint LAA was strongly supported as it has helped to improve the understanding of sources of supply in the area.
- That that the approach to calculating future demand which was based on the three year sales average was appropriate but should be reviewed to ensure the approach adequately captures likely demand from sources such as housebuilding and infrastructure projects.

19 The NEAWP also proposed a small number of minor wording changes which have been considered through work to finalise the Joint LAA.

### **Conclusion**

20 The Joint LAA has been scrutinised by the NEAWP, a number of minor wording changes have been made and final approval is now sought prior to its publication in April 2022.

### **Background papers**

- Joint Local Aggregate Assessment for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear (2019 and 2020 Permitted Reserves and Sales) (April 2022).

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

None.

### **Finance**

None.

### **Consultation**

In accordance with the protocol for LAA production which has been prepared by the North East Aggregates Working Party (NEAWP) views of NEAWP members were sought in order to assist the NEAWP discharge its scrutiny role.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

None.

### **Climate Change**

Preparation of the emerging Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document and decision on aggregate planning applications will fully take into account NPPF guidance on planning for climate change.

### **Human Rights**

None.

### **Crime and Disorder**

None.

### **Staffing**

None.

### **Accommodation**

None.

### **Risk**

None.

### **Procurement**

None.