



Report

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan Examination

Matter Seven Hearing Statement

October 2016

3 Brindleyplace
Birmingham
B1 2JB

T: +44 (0)8449 02 03 04
F: +44 (0)121 609 8314



Homes & Communities Agency

Prepared By: Eleanor Suttie/Rob Gardner
Status: Final Draft
Draft Date: October 2016

For and on behalf of GVA Grimley Limited

7. Matter 7: Environmental Resources

7.1 Is the Local Plan's approach to the safeguarding of mineral resources, bearing in mind the changes to policy ER2 that are now suggested, clearly expressed and sufficiently justified?

7.1.1 The HCA supports the modifications to policy ER2 to exclude the urban area and considers that it is sufficiently justified in the supporting text the plan. This rationale is based on the lack of interest from developers seeking to extract minerals, and that resources of importance have been previously worked or sterilised by built development.

7.1.2 The HCA notes the Mineral Products Association's (MPA) objection to the changes made to this policy, which considers it to be unsound and not reflective of the NPPF. Although the NPPF supports the principle of safeguarding minerals when preparing Local Plans in (paragraph 143), ensuring that resources are not needlessly sterilised by non-mineral development, the approach taken by the LPA does not undermine this.

7.1.3 The approach taken by the LPA is considered appropriate to ensure that the Local Plan can meet its development objectives and also safeguard resources within the Borough. Extending the minerals safeguarding area into the urban area, or including a buffer zone to the minerals safeguarding area that extends into the urban area, would have implications for non-minerals developments. In simple terms, it would potentially sterilise otherwise sustainable locations for development which accord with the provision of the NPPF. This includes development of many of the housing and employment allocations that are key to achieving the housing and employment requirements of the Borough.

7.1.4 There would also be no guarantee that safeguarding the resources would lead to their extraction at a future date, as the LPA has set out that there has been a lack of interest historically from those seeking to extract minerals, or that resources have already been sterilised by other built development.

7.1.5 When considering the policy against the objectives of the NPPF, it should not be simply considered against the NPPF's policies for safeguarding minerals, but in the context of the NPPF as a whole and the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Therefore, the policy as proposed by the Council is considered to be appropriate and justified, and will safeguard minerals in rural areas, whilst not needlessly preventing or delaying appropriate development in the urban area. We would not be supportive of the approach that is proposed by the Minerals Products Association.

7.2 The HCA make no comment in relation to Q7.2 to 7.6.