

Statement on behalf of the **Mineral Products Association (MPA)**.

Independent Examination of the Norfolk and Waste Minerals Local Plan.

**Main Matter 6 – Protecting Mineral Resources, Infrastructure and Facilities.**

**Issue: Whether the Plan adequately balances the needs of competing development.**

*1. Is the appropriate balance struck between the needs of competing development with the need to protect the mineral resource, in particular, is the justification for a 250m buffer clear?*

In respect of buffers the PPG references the BGS document Mineral Safeguarding in England: good practice advice <http://pubs.bgs.ac.uk/publications.html?pubID=OR11046> (see Appendix MPA 2) when guiding local authorities on what steps to take in respect of safeguarding mineral resources.

It is identified as best practice to include buffers within MSAs to guard against proximal development potentially affecting the mineral resource. It is intended by the BGS guidance, and examples of best practice in that guidance that such buffers should be included in the MSA to ensure maximum protection (see Figure 2 and Case Study 3). When considered against NPPF paragraph 206 which says "local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in mineral safeguarding areas where they might constrain potential future use for these purposes;" The national protection accorded to minerals is intended to be within the designated area of an MSA and not outside of it or even adjacent to it. This is because the MSA should contain all minerals of potential economic value and any areas where development is likely to have adverse proximal effects upon it.

Without buffers this will dilute the protection given to minerals by allowing developers to argue that sites outside the MSA do not enjoy the same protection as sites within it even though they are adjacent to it.

Buffers should apply to mineral infrastructure and existing mineral sites as well.

*2. Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance to applicants for non-minerals development and District Council's as to how Policies MP10 and MP11 should be implemented?*

*3. Should Policy MP10 also include facilities for the manufacture of precast blocks and aggregate bagging plants?*

Yes, for clarity and the avoidance of doubt to make the policy effective.

*4. Should the area defined as a mineral resource safeguarding area for silica sand be increased to include the Carstone formation as well as the Leziate Member and Mintyn Member resources?*

Yes. NPPF at para 210 c) requires all known locations of mineral resources of local and national importance (as defined in the NPPF Glossary) to be safeguarded. NPPF is unequivocal.

*5. Are the requirements of Appendix 10 too onerous and should Policy MP11 recognise that the cost of undertaking a Mineral Resource Assessment for smaller scale development, such as smaller housing sites, which are not excluded from safeguarding provisions, may have a detrimental impact on the viability of such development?*

We do not believe the requirements of Appendix 10 are too onerous. The issue of cost is interesting. There is never any suggestion that mineral developers should be given consideration to not properly assess a site on the issue of cost of undertaking surveys etc. Undertaking by a competent person of a mineral resource assessment is not onerous in our view bearing in mind that the value per acre for a housing development, small or big, is substantially higher than the value per acre for a mineral development. We suggest such a cost is de minimis in the whole cost of a housing development. Undertaking proper assessments to inform a planning application is the cost of doing business in the development sector.

*6. Should criterion in Policy MP11 also recognise the effect that the prior extraction of minerals can have on the overall viability of a non-minerals development with a view to demonstrating that prior extraction may not be economically feasible?*

This should be assessed post a mineral resource assessment.

M E North and N Horsley  
Mineral Products Association  
29 April 2024.

