

Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

3. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph

See text

Policy

Policies Map

4. Do you consider the Local Plan is:

Please tick as appropriate

4 (i) Legally Compliant

Yes

☐

No

☒

4 (ii) Sound*

Yes

☐

No

☒

4 (iii) Complies with the Duty to co-operate

Yes

☐

No

☒

*If you have entered No to 4 (ii), please continue to 5. In all other circumstances, please go to question 6.

5. Do you consider the Local Plan is unsound because it is not...:

(i) Justified

☐

(ii) Effective

☒

(iii) Positively prepared

☒

(iv) Consistent with National Policy

☒

6. Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments

ALL Comments are directed to the Silica Sand Site Selection Process

R. - GLASS RECYCLING AS A SILICA SAND SUBSTITUTE.
- PROTECTION OF WOODLAND
SEE ATTACHED.

(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Glass Recycling as a Silica Sand Substitute A

Glass recycling can potentially contribute to the shortfall of silica sand extraction though it is far from being straight-forward. However, Sibelco have a celebrated history in Belgium of developing a supply chain for the provision of suitable glass cullet. Sibelco UK have not encouraged such a development in the UK and it is not included by N.C.C. in the new Policy MPSS1. Glass recycling would indeed support the presumption of sustainable development. The main issue is to provide a clear glass cullet that is not contaminated. The NMWLP, 2022, and NMWLP Preferred Options, July 2019 do not consider this option.

The issue was discussed at length in a public consultation document ID no.94688, dated 26/10/2019 submitted by CATSS, Campaigners Against Two Silica Sand Sites. A recent British Geology Survey/DEFRA Mineral Planning Fact Sheet entitled, *Silica Sand*, dated January 2020 is also very relevant. These documents make a compelling case for Norfolk to do more to meet the potential market for recycling selected glass cullet suitable to supplement silica sand extraction.

In 2020, 38.5% of UK glass container manufacture comprised recycled glass. This reduced the demand for raw materials. Every ton of glass cullet saves 1.2 tons of extracted sand. Furthermore, as it takes less energy to melt; every ton of cullet in container glass manufacture saves 580kg of CO₂, aiding global warming amelioration. Flat glass manufacture by the float glass process is highly sensitive to impurities and so demolition site glass and most curbside collected glass is particularly difficult to use. Flat glass cullet from downstream fabricator glass wastage in the automobile and double-glazing industries can however be readily substituted. Preparative technologies are continually improving the cullet that can be used.

In several places in the "consultation" record in the document, NMWLP Statement of Consultation, May 2022, the possibility of supplementing the Norfolk silica sand extraction with appropriate glass recycling is raised in order to conserve both resource and landscape. Variations on a standard response is generated, such as that on page 58: *"Norfolk already has a well-developed and effective collection process for glass recycling at the kerbside, through Household Waste Recycling Centres, and bring banks. The glass collected through these methods in Norfolk is sent to existing glass recycling facilities located elsewhere in the UK. Silica sand is a necessary ingredient in the remelt feedstock for recycled glass. The NM&WLP contains criteria-based policies which would be used to determine planning applications for waste management facilities including glass recycling and other inert waste recycling. The plan does not fail the Sustainability appraisal Report."*

While these statements are reasonably correct, they hide the fact that the N.C.C. "well-developed and effective collection process for glass recycling" is very much unsuitable for the supplementation of silica sand extraction. Furthermore, Norfolk's performance in

general glass recycling does not hold comparison with European performance, and so the deficits in performance are not being acknowledged. It is true that in some areas of Norfolk, 99% of glass is recycled for general glass reclamation, but the figures are patchy across the County. The total recycling of domestic waste glass was 44.21% in 2021/22, compared with 46.71% in 2016/17 so there appears to be no improving trend. The retention of business glass waste is probably better. These figures have not met the 2015 MRF target for the separate collection of glass. It has to be remembered that glass is essentially inert and that theoretically almost all glass can be recycled in a circular economy with optimal recycling, and the availability of materials recycling and reprocessing facilities.

In the EU, the average closed-loop glass recycling figure is 74%, with 61% in France and 77% in Germany. This includes 90% of bottles in the EU. There has been considerable investment in bottle bank systems, and in public education. Clearly there are substantial technicalities, but these comparative figures have some legitimate force. DEFRA has proposed that by 2030, 83% of glass should be recycled with an 82% remelt target. The biggest losses are occurring at the collection stage where the conventional curbside collections result in unacceptable contamination. Deposit-return schemes elsewhere in the western world have resulted in up to 98% recycling of beverage glass. Universally-available glass and bottle collection facilities are also fundamental. The scaling up of refillable glass packaging schemes too are being promoted.

Glass recycling for silica sand replacement has to be based upon the reclamation of clear glass with minimal contamination. However, a much higher-value glass cullet is required. Although not obligated by the NPPF, it makes eminent sense in a situation where the selection of potential silica sand extraction sites in Norfolk has become increasingly difficult to the extent of N.C.C. now proposing to abandon its main proposals under the NMWLP. 2022, to optimize its recovery of silica sand-worthy recycled glass. This seems to be just another denial of the facts.

Sibelco UK has recently acquired glass processing centres in Peterborough, Sheffield and Motherwell. The company seeks to increase the UK average glass recovery to the European average of 90%, and to improve glass collection away from contamination in domestic waste. Is not the prospect of optimising the substitute replacement of silica sand raw material with good quality colour-sorted cullet of correct composition and low levels of contamination for both glass container and flat glass manufacture an important strategic opportunity for Norfolk in collaboration with Sibelco UK?

Protection of Woodland

In Policy 8.1, it states, "*The Climate Change Act 2008 sets up a framework for the UK to achieve its longterm goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to ensure that steps are taken towards adapting to the impacts of climate change. That Act also introduced a requirement into the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, for local planning authorities to address climate change in preparing Local Plans. In 2019, the Climate Change Act was amended to commit the UK government by law to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. The government's Net Zero Strategy, Build Back Greener (2021), sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet net zero target by 2050.*"

Policy 8.3 adds, "*Forestry and woodlands act as carbon sinks and capture greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, habitat creation and the expansion of existing habitats can increase the resilience of the natural environment to cope with climate change.*" It goes on to support these objectives in the reclamation of mining sites.

Policy MW3 states, "*Proposals for new minerals and waste developments (including extensions to existing sites) will therefore be expected to:*
*(f) take opportunities to incorporate trees, **retain existing trees** and include measures to assist habitats and species to adapt to the potential effects of climate change wherever change is possible.*"

The NMWLP establishes 'ancient woodland' and 'veteran trees' as landscape features that will be strongly protected. Development Management Policy DM 8.23, (NMWJP, Preferred Options, July 2019) for example, states, "*There are also important areas of ancient woodland across Norfolk, often with veteran trees.....All of these landscape features will be strongly protected from any adverse impacts arising from minerals and waste management development.*"

To help allay Net Zero, the UK government is dedicated to plant 1M acres of trees by 2050, increasing national tree cover from 14.5 to 17.5 %. In September 2019, the Norfolk County Council committed to planting 1 million trees over the next 5 years. In the Cabinet Members Delegated Decision Paper on the Preferred Options Consultation, dated December 10th, 2019, there was an important statement. Under a heading, Policy MP13 Silica Sand Area of Search AOS E and Policy MP2, it was stated, "*(this) suggests a significant policy shift in the important roles that trees play in County Council operations. It is clear that much more attention needs to be given the retention of existing tree cover, with additional recreational opportunities. An elevated status needs to be given this in the planning balance as to whether an Area of Search should be designated at Shouldham. The Borough Council view is that the County Council should remove the AOS for this reason.*"

It continues, "*Additionally, Policy MP2 provides a degree of protection for areas with defined characteristics. Clause a) refers to 'ancient woodland.'* In view of the County

Council decision referred to above, it would be appropriate to delete the word "ancient" leaving an enhanced level of protection to woodland in general." The next sentence refers to this new protection of woodland in the decision to remove AOS E from the preferred options site selection.

This change of definition is yet to find its way into the NMWLP document. It should be modified to affect this change.

7. Please set out the modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified at 5 above. (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why each modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change. There will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

Glass Recycling as a Silica Sand Substitute B

1. Both these issues deal with potential, enhanced-sustainability improvements to the NMWLP.
2. Suggest the formation of a C.C. committee, involving glass industry and waste specialists, to determine whether glass recycling can be improved in Norfolk, and with particular reference to silica sand substitution, with modification of the NMWLP to accommodate such change, if appropriate.
3. Change of the informing documents and of the NMWLP to recognise the formal protection of trees in established woodland from felling for minerals extraction, in accordance with both the Norfolk and HMG climate policies and cabinet decision-making. The opportunity for tree planting in mining mitigation measures and in site restitution should be codified in order to support the climate initiatives
4. Important public recreational landforms to be protected ad infinitum from surface mining, in the absence of a formal change of use. Shouldham Warren, West Bilney Woods, and other significant public recreational sites to be fully protected from inclusion in the Norfolk opencast mining safeguarding maps and from planning orders.