

# Policy Evidence Report

## Policy 8: Borrow Pits

**Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste  
Local Plan 2040**

**Hertfordshire County Council**



Supporting Regulation 22(c)(iii)(iv)

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**For information about this document please contact:**

Minerals and Waste Planning Policy  
Spatial Planning Unit  
Hertfordshire County Council  
Tel: +(44) 01992 556227  
Email: MineralsandWaste@hertfordshire.gov.uk  
[hertfordshire.gov.uk/mwlp](http://hertfordshire.gov.uk/mwlp)

Spatial Planning Unit CHN216  
Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Hertford  
SG13 8DN

If you require assistance interpreting or translating this document, please contact 0300 123 4040.

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Hertfordshire County Council is reviewing its adopted Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and supporting documents. These comprise the following documents (with adoption date):
  - Minerals Local Plan Review (March 2007)
  - Minerals Consultation Areas SPD (November 2007)
  - Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (November 2012)
  - Waste Site Allocations DPD (July 2014)
  - Employment Land Areas of Search SPD (November 2015)
- 1.2. The documents listed above are to be replaced by a single Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) covering the period to 2040. The new MWLP will set the overall spatial framework and development management policies for sustainable minerals and waste management development in Hertfordshire.
- 1.3. This Policy Evidence Report provides a context and justification for the creation of Policy 8: Borrow Pits in the emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

## 2. National Policy Context

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provide the basis of national planning policy.
- 2.2. The following points within the NPPF relate to Policy 8:
  - Paragraph 209 states that 'it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.'
  - Paragraph 210: 'Planning policies should: a) provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction; b) so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously; ... h) ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place.'

### 2.3. The PPG section on Minerals states:

- 'Planning for the supply of minerals has a number of special characteristics that are not present in other development:
  - minerals can only be worked (ie extracted) where they naturally occur, so location options for the economically viable and environmentally acceptable extraction of minerals may be limited. This means that it is necessary to consider protecting minerals from non-minerals development and has implications for the preparation of minerals plans and approving non-mineral development in defined mineral safeguarding areas;
  - working is a temporary use of land, although it often takes place over a long period of time;
  - working may have adverse and positive environmental effects, but some adverse effects can be effectively mitigated;
  - since extraction of minerals is a continuous process of development, there is a requirement for routine monitoring, and if necessary, enforcement to secure compliance with conditions that are necessary to mitigate impacts of minerals working operations; and
  - following working, land should be restored to make it suitable for beneficial after-use.'

*Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 27-001-20140306*

- 'For mineral extraction sites where expected extraction is likely to last for a short period of time, it is usually appropriate for the mineral planning authority to impose a detailed set of planning conditions relating to restoration and aftercare as part of the planning permission.'

*Paragraph: 043 Reference ID: 27-043-20140306*

## 3. Local Context

- 3.1. Development proposals for mineral extraction outside of Specific Sites or Preferred Areas may occur in relation to borrow pits where mineral extraction takes place over a limited period for an exclusive use in a specific construction project. Pits would be located in close proximity to the project and worked in conjunction with it, such as a new infrastructure scheme.
- 3.2. Due to the two-tier authority system in Hertfordshire, significant construction schemes occur across the county at various times. Therefore, it can often be more sustainable to provide the project with local mineral resources rather than transport the mineral from other parts of the county or further afield.

## 4. Minerals & Waste Local Plan Policy

4.1. Prior to the publication of the emerging MWLP, the Council was preparing separate Minerals and Waste Plans, which were at differing stages of production. The emerging Minerals Local Plan (MLP) was published for a Regulation 19 Proposed Submission consultation in 2019, and the emerging Waste Local Plan (WLP) was published for a Regulation 18 Draft Plan consultation in 2021. These emerging Plans have now been brought together into a single MWLP. The Policy which this Evidence Report relates to has been formulated from one or more relevant policies in those previous emerging Plans, and takes into account the representations received at those previous stages of consultation.

### Proposed Submission Minerals Local Plan 2019

4.2. The Proposed Submission Minerals Local Plan was published for a ten week Regulation 19 consultation from 14 January 2019 to 22 March 2019. This document included Policy 10: Borrow Pits. The policy read as follows:

#### **Policy 10: Borrow Pits**

Proposals for borrow pits will be permitted where all of the following can be demonstrated:

- the site's proximity to the construction project is more sustainable than importing aggregate;
- the mineral extraction is being used solely for the intended construction scheme;
- the borrow pit will not be retained longer than the life of the construction project it serves;
- the borrow pit will be restored expediently and at least within the same timescale as the completion of the construction project it relates to;
- the proposals are consistent with other policies within this Plan.

Restoration of borrow pits should be achieved without the need for imported material other than that generated from the associated construction project. If importation of additional material is proposed, it must be demonstrated that the use of additional material is the most sustainable option.

4.3. During the Regulation 19 consultation, no representations were made in relation to this policy. Therefore, no changes have been made to the policy as a result of this consultation.

## 5. Alternative Reasonable Options

- 5.1. The following alternative options have been considered (and fully assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal Report):
- Option 1 – A policy allowing borrow pits which are tied to a named scheme and scheme duration (preferred)
  - Option 2 – Have no specific borrow pit policy and instead rely on other policies in the plan
  - Option 3- A similar policy to Option 1, which allows for borrow pits under more flexible circumstances

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1. This Policy Evidence Report demonstrates the justification for the inclusion of this policy in the emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan Draft Plan. It summarises the national policy context and local context, along with the main issues raised through previous consultation and how the council has addressed those issues.
- 6.2. Any representations received on this policy at the Regulation 18 consultation stage will be carefully considered by the county council and used to inform any changes to the policy wording as appropriate.
- 6.3. This Policy Evidence Report was written to support the Draft Plan (Regulation 18) consultation. The next iteration of this report, to be published in support of the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) version of the Plan, will summarise the main issues arising from the Regulation 18 consultation and will form part of the Regulation 22 statement, as set out by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.