



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20TH MAY 2014

**SUBJECT: REGIONAL TECHNICAL STATEMENT FOR THE SOUTH WALES
REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To receive details of the Regional Technical Statement (RTS) for the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP).
- 1.2 To consider the role of Caerphilly County Borough Council in the supply of aggregate minerals within the South Wales region and to endorse the document for the purposes of Local Development Plan preparation, if appropriate.
- 1.3 Members' views are sought prior to the presentation of the report to Cabinet.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP) has issued a first review of the Regional Technical Statement (RTS) originally published in October 2008. The RTS sets out a strategy for the provision of aggregates within Wales until 2036, developing national mineral planning policy and providing apportionments and allocations for each local planning authority (LPA) which will be carried through into the Local Development Plan (LDP).
- 2.2 This council, as a member of the SWRAWP, is required to consider the provisions set out in the document and to consider whether to endorse its findings.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The first review of the RTS will inform the first review of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP), which is the statutory framework for the development and use of land in the county borough.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Mineral Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregates (MTAN 1) seek to ensure that there is a steady supply of minerals to meet society's needs and that they are sourced sustainably. The Regional Aggregates Working Parties are technical groups that advise the Welsh Government on aggregates supply and demand. Their membership includes local authority representatives, industry representatives, Natural Resources Wales and other government departments.

- 4.2 MTAN1 provides for each working party (one for North Wales and one for South Wales) to prepare a RTS that provides a strategy for aggregate provision in the region and a strategic basis for local development plans. The RTS sets out the detail supporting national policy allowing it to be implemented.
- 4.3 The first RTS was published in October 2008 and certain elements are now enshrined in local development plans to ensure resources are protected for future generations. The first review of the RTS has been prepared on behalf of the NWRAP and the SWRAWP by Cuesta Consulting Ltd with advice and peer review from a steering group on which Caerphilly CBC was represented.
- 4.4 The first review RTS covers the period up to 2036 but it will be reviewed every five years in accordance with MTAN1 to ensure that it can reflect any significant change in circumstances such as the recession that has informed the first review. This process underpins the plan, monitor and manage approach to aggregate planning in the UK.
- 4.5 The RTS is a strategic document and it does not give site-specific guidance. It gives a recommendation to each local planning authority regarding the amount of aggregates that need to be supplied from its area (apportionment) and the total tonnage of any new areas of future working (allocation) which should be made through the LDP.
- 4.6 The first review RTS has identified the historical supply pattern of demand upon each LPA for the production of primary aggregates based on average sales over a ten year period (2001 to 2010 inclusive). This is a departure from MTAN1, which requires landbanks to be calculated based on a three year average, but it was unanimously recommended by the steering group as a means of avoiding the risk of under provision which would occur if reliance was placed on a three year average which spanned the current recession.
- 4.7 In contrast to the 2008 RTS, having considered factors relating to the availability of alternative materials, imports, exports and economic growth the review indicated that the historic supply pattern over the baseline period provided a good guide for the determination of future apportionments, both in terms of overall quantities and in terms of broad geographic distribution. The new apportionments are geared to meeting an overall level of demand for crushed rock of 10.47 million tonnes per annum in South Wales.
- 4.8 The review found that the existing supply pattern is sensibly balanced in terms of proximity and environmental capacity within the restrictions imposed by the distribution of workable resources and the requirements of commercial viability. However, some areas were identified where there might be merit in adjusting the apportionments and allocations to improve sustainability.
- 4.9 The apportionment for Caerphilly CBC is 0.76 million tonnes a year based on the assumption that supplies of alternative aggregates from marine, secondary and recycled sources will be maintained. The landbank for crushed rock was 27.8 million tonnes at the baseline date 31 December 2010. The reserves (mineral resources with planning permission) at active sites are sufficient to cover the apportionment for the plan period and ten years beyond in accordance with MTAN1 and there is, therefore, no need at this stage to allocate new areas for mineral working in terms of aggregate minerals.
- 4.10 Machen Quarry is currently mothballed and the RTS states that if it does not reopen when the market picks up after the recession, consideration may need to be given to the allocation of reserves elsewhere to compensate. However, the railhead should continue to be safeguarded regardless of the quarry's operational status.
- 4.11 The conclusions of the RTS are not binding on the LPA but any departure from the apportionment and allocation figures may become an issue at the examination in public of the LDP and it would be necessary to demonstrate that the intended departure would not undermine the overall strategy of the RTS.

- 4.12 The first review of the RTS sets out a sensible strategy for providing the aggregates needed to sustain the construction industry in South Wales and its recommendations for Caerphilly county borough are proportionate and achievable.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no implications for the equalities strategy of the council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no new financial implications.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The SWRAWP consulted appropriate organisations and the steering group considered the responses received in bringing together the final RTS.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To note the contents of the report.
- 9.2 To recommend that the amended RTS be referred to Cabinet for consideration and Council for approval.
- 9.3 To advise Welsh Government of the council's decision

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In order to endorse the RTS first review as a basis for planning for aggregates in the County Borough over the next 25 years.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Regional Technical Statement

Appendix 2 RTS Appendix B South Wales.

Copies will be made available in the Members library and on the CCBC intranet, internet and Members portal.