

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
25 May 2022
Public Questions

Agenda item 5	Public Question Time
5.1	<p>Question from Jimmy Bennett</p> <p>Why is MIN 212 no longer proposed as a Mineral Site Allocation in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan?</p> <p>In both earlier versions, Site MIN 212 is considered suitable to allocate for sand and gravel extraction.</p> <p>It is difficult to understand why MIN 212 has been excluded. At each consultation there has been minimal objection and no objection from local residents.</p> <p>Officers would appear to have made an arbitrary decision without consultation or reasoned explanation. The only other site excluded in this way is MIN 213 but this is easier to understand as the site attracted no less than 56 objections, mostly from local residents.</p> <p>Please reinstate MIN 212.</p> <p>Response from the Chair, Cllr James Bensly</p> <p>We recognise that the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee Report did not include the reason why proposed site MIN 212 at Mundham is not allocated in the draft Publication version of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The 4.95 hectare site was proposed as a new site for the extraction of 325,000 tonnes of sand and gravel at 30,000 tonnes per annum over an 11 year period with the extracted mineral being processed at an existing processing plant site at Caistor St Edmund chalk quarry. This would necessitate 14 HGV movements a day travelling through Trowse (along The Street and White Horse Lane) and then onto Caister St Edmund Quarry off Stoke Road. Whilst the Highway Authority did not object to the location of the proposed mineral working, they raised concerns about the location of the plant site at Caistor St Edmund which necessitates the routing of HGVs through Trowse village. Therefore, there are other more acceptable alternative sites for sand and gravel extraction proposed in the Plan. One of the key advantages of adopting an allocative approach to planning, is that it allows the authority to compare all the potential sites available and then select only the best sites sufficient to meet the mineral requirements of Norfolk.</p>

Question from Bryan Robinson

The DfT noted in its Local Transport Plan Guidance Bulletin 1 dated 13 May 2022 that the target date for updated LTPs, reflecting the Decarbonisation policies and guidance, is Spring 2024. Given that many of the principles of the policies in LTP4, including carbon reductions, are already incorporated in the extant LTP3, should not this Select Committee therefore be recommending a short extension to the LTP3 IP, instead of the endorsing an unworkable, inadequate halfway measure which will be effective for less than 2 years (not the 15 year period to 2036 as stated in the LTP4 title)?

Response from the Chair, Cllr James Bensly

The Bulletin referred to, included a frequently asked question section. One of these questions was “We have recently updated our LTP, do we have to update it again?” and the answer given as “We appreciate that some LTAs [Local Transport Authorities] will have updated their LTPs recently. It is ultimately the responsibility of the LTA to consider whether their LTP aligns with the new guidance and whether their plans would benefit from partial or wholesale updates.”

Norfolk County Council has consistently stated that it will consider the new guidance once it is published and take any action considered necessary. The Department for Transport has not yet published its guidance on Local Transport Plans. It is inappropriate to set out any action that might be considered appropriate to take until after we have seen the published guidance.

Supplementary Question from Bryan Robinson:

A short interim LTP3 IP would give time for informed consideration of decarbonisation, including the mandatory key issue of quantifiable carbon reductions (QCRs) to be fully incorporated in LTP4 IP. What specific benefits are to be gained from a time limited stop gap LTP4 IP which is non-aligned to current government policy, specifically that it still does not set out how QCRs will be delivered?

Response from the Chair, Cllr James Bensly

LTP4 aligns with government policy. It brings the local transport plan up to date and aligns it to current council objectives. Adopting it as planned will allow the council to make an early start on instigating some of the workstreams, such as the carbon assessments and working towards the proposed net zero target. Waiting for government guidance and then refreshing the local transport plan would likely result in a delay of well over a year before a new plan could be put in place.