

BRIEFING NOTE – ESSEX MINERALS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

What is the current Minerals Local Plan?

The [Essex Minerals Local Plan](#) (MLP) was adopted in July 2014. The Plan provides planning policies for minerals development in Essex until 2029 and identifies future sites for mineral extraction. Alongside other Local Plans, the MLP forms part of the development plan for Essex.

Why are we reviewing the Minerals Local Plan?

Every five years the council is required to review the effectiveness of its MLP. Proposed amendments to the MLP 2014 were consulted on in March/April 2021.

An engagement exercise focusing on mineral provision, which included a call for new sites, was held in early 2022. Up to this stage it was intended to keep the Plan end date to 2029.

Why are we extending the Plan end date to 2040 and why do we need new sites?

Extending the Plan to 2040 ensures that we will have a new plan covering a 15-year period from 2025. New sites will be needed to meet the forecasted demand for aggregates (sand and gravel) over this period to ensure we can provide a 'steady and adequate supply of aggregates' in Essex. Doing so will ensure that the Plan is robust and can help maintain a 'steady and adequate' supply of aggregates¹ and meet the relevant 'tests of soundness'² as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Due to the Plan date extension, a second call for sites exercise was held in September 2022. Both Call for Sites exercises generated 52 site submissions for consideration for inclusion in a new Plan.

What we are doing now and proposing after the February 2024 consultation

The suitability of the 52 submitted sites has been assessed by independent consultants and a report of the findings prepared. A revised Plan has also been drafted, titled "Replacement Essex Minerals Local Plan, 2025-2040 (Regulation 18 – Issues and Options)".

We have responded to the comments received in 2021 and 2022 and stated whether the comments have caused further changes to the emerging Plan.

We are holding a further public consultation on both documents and the associated evidence base from 6 February 2024 to 19 March 2024, which will include the location of the 52 sites and the assessment findings of each one.

Following this consultation, we will assess all comments received. Evidence may be presented that justifies additional amendments to the Plan and any of the site assessments.

Following the drafting of any additional amendments, we will consider the next appropriate step. This may include more detailed technical assessment on candidate sites in light of comments received or moving towards selecting Preferred Site allocations to inform any further consultation (Regulation 19 – Pre-Submission).

Key information about the consultation

Additional sites were called for so to ensure a steady and adequate supply of aggregates to take us to 2040 with a 7 year 'landbank'³ beyond.

¹ Paragraph 213 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

² Paragraphs 35 and 36 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

³ See paragraph 213 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) and paragraphs 80 – 85 of [National Planning Guidance](#)

The submitted sites have not been identified as Preferred or Non-Preferred Site Allocations at this stage.

The submitted sites are not planning applications and their submission does not mean that planning permission will be granted in the future. Sites that are eventually included in the Plan will stand a greater chance of gaining planning permission.