

# NORFOLK MINERALS SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD: SINGLE ISSUE SILICA SAND REVIEW (THE PLAN)

## INSPECTOR'S FINAL MATTERS AND ISSUES

### MATTER 1 – Legal requirements and the Duty to Co-operate

#### Issues

- 1. The Council must demonstrate: how it has prepared the Plan in accordance with the Minerals and Waste (Local) Development Scheme (MWDS); how the Plan complies with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI); how the consultation that has taken place has been carried out consistent with the SCI; that the Plan has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and a final report of the findings of the SA prepared; that any requirements for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations were met before publication of the Plan; and that the Plan complies with all of the requirements of the 2004 Act and the 2012 Regulations (both as amended). Further, the Council must also be able to demonstrate that the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate have been met at the date of submission of the Plan. Has the Council suitably demonstrated in the evidence that all of these legal tests have been met? Would it be reasonable for me to conclude that the Council has met all of the legal tests, including the Duty to Co-operate?**

**NCC response:** The **Development Scheme** (June 2013) (F05) only included one consultation stage on the Silica Sand Review; however it was considered appropriate to undertake both an 'Initial Consultation' on the approach and methodology to be used, in addition to the 'Preferred Options' consultation. The 'Initial Consultation' was undertaken in accordance with the timetable in the Development Scheme. However, including a second Regulation 18 consultation on 'Preferred Options', delayed the Pre-Submission representations stage. A further contributing factor was that insufficient sites were proposed by landowners/mineral operators in response to a 'Call for sites' in June 2015, necessitating the definition and assessment of 'Areas of Search'. The reasons for the revision of the Scheme (adopted 1 June 2016), are detailed in section 2.1 of the 2014/15 Monitoring Report (F30).

The Pre-Submission representations stage was undertaken in accordance with the Scheme dated June 2016 (A15). Due to representations highlighting the potential for impacts to the Norfolk Coast AONB the decision was made to publish the Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications (A105), primarily to no longer allocate area of search AOS A, which was the closest Area of Search to the AONB. The Modifications document was published from 14 September to 27 October 2016, which delayed the submission of the Silica Sand Review by three months, until December 2016. As this was an additional representations period which had not been foreseen when the Scheme dated June 2016 (A15) was adopted, the subsequent submission of the Silica Sand Review is not in accordance with the adopted timetable and a further revision to the Scheme will be required.

The **Statement of Community Involvement** was adopted in September 2012 (A20). Details of the consultation activities undertaken are detailed in the Statement of Consultation (A90), Statement of Consultation Part 2 (A92). Consultation has been compliant with the SCI requirements and the relevant regulations.

The Silica Sand Review has been subject to a **Sustainability Appraisal**. The Sustainability Appraisal process commenced in 2015; with the identification of relevant plans, policies and programmes, baseline information and scoping of the SA objectives. The SA Scoping Report (F40) was consulted on in March and April 2015.

The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report was consulted on in November and December 2015 (F160). The Sustainability Appraisal Report (A45 and A50) was updated and published at the Pre-Submission stage and included details of the iterative SA process. In particular p71-73, section 4.2 of the SA Report (A50) details the assessment of options to be used to define the areas of search.

The proposed specific site allocation and each proposed area of search have been assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (in pages 82-142, section 5 of the SA Report). Pages 24-27 of the Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications document (A105) updated the relevant sections of the SA Report that were affected by the Modifications to the Silica Sand Review.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment** - The allocated site and all of the allocated areas of search have been assessed at the Task 1 'Test of Likely Significance' stage (A60). The Task 1 Assessment concluded that silica sand extraction within AOS A could potentially result in likely significant effects on The Wash (SPA, SAC and Ramsar site). The boundary of AOS A was amended to be moved 1km inland from The Wash designated sites and a Task 2 Appropriate Assessment (A65) was carried out on AOS A.

The Task 2 Appropriate Assessment (A65) concluded (section 3.4) that no adverse effects are expected on the integrity of The Wash (SPA, SAC and Ramsar site) from silica sand extraction within AOS A. Natural England's representation (91110) stated that they concur with the conclusions of the appropriate assessment. However, the 'Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications' (A105) subsequently proposed to not allocate AOS A.

The Silica Sand Review complies with all of the **requirements of the 2004 Act and the 2012 Regulations** (both as amended). In particular, the requirement of section 19 (1) of the Act has been met by the Single Issue Silica Sand Review being prepared in accordance with the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (document F05) (June 2013) and the revised Scheme (document A15) June 2016.

The requirements of section 19 (2) of the Act have been met by taking into account national policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adopted Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies DPD (F10).

Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out on the Single Issue Silica Sand Review (documents A45 and A50), as detailed above. In preparing the Single Issue Silica Sand Review the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement (A20) have been complied with, as detailed above.

The Legal Compliance Toolkit (A155) details specific evidence for compliance with relevant parts of the Act.

The relevant parts of the Regulations have been following throughout the process of the preparation of the Single Issue Silica Sand Review. The Initial Consultation, a 'call for sites' and the Preferred Options Consultation were all undertaken in 2015 (Regulation 18 stage) and Pre-Submission publication and Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications (Regulation 19) were undertaken in 2016. The submission of documentation and information follows the requirements of Regulation 22. The Legal Compliance Toolkit (A155) and Soundness Self-Assessment Toolkit (A150) include more specific evidence of compliance with the relevant parts of the Regulations.

The requirements of the **Duty to Co-operate** have been met. The Council has been inclusive throughout the plan making process, engaging and co-operating with the bodies specified in section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 and subsequent legislation, in undertaking a series of public consultations and working closely with key stakeholders. The council considers this process of engagement to be on-going. The following documents explain the extent to which the Council has co-operated with all stakeholders during plan preparation:

- Initial Consultation Feedback Report (June 2105) (F200)
- Preferred Options Consultation Feedback Report (Jan 2016) (F205)
- Pre-Submission Representations Feedback Report (Aug 2016) (A95)
- Pre-Submission Statement of Consultation (Feb 2016) (A90)
- Pre-Submission Statement of Consultation Part 2 (Nov 2016) (A92)
- Duty to Cooperate Statement (Sept 2016) (A75)

The **Legal Compliance** Toolkit (A155) and the Soundness Self-Assessment Toolkit (A150) include specific evidence that all of these legal tests have been met. Therefore, it would be reasonable to conclude that NCC has met all of the legal tests, including the Duty to Co-operate, as detailed in our responses above.

## **MATTER 2 – Whether appropriate provision is made for the steady and adequate supply of silica sand.**

### **Issues**

- 1. Is the Plan positively prepared to meet its identified need and potentially greater future need, as suggested by the last 3 year sales average in the Monitoring Report - Mineral Data Local Aggregates Assessment and Silica Sand Assessment 2015?**

**NCC response:** Yes, the Plan is positively prepared to meet its identified need, which is contained in the adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (F10) Policy CS1, of 750,000 tonnes per annum during the plan period from 2010 to the end of 2026. The Silica Sand Review (A35) takes into account the remaining permitted reserves of silica sand at 31 December 2015, in a modification to paragraph 2.7 of the Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD (A25), to plan for the remaining 11 years of the plan period. The calculations used to assess the silica sand need are in the Silica Sand Review (A35) (paragraph 1.4).

In January 2017, updated information on the permitted reserves, and the 3 and 10 year average sales, were provided by Sibelco UK Ltd, the sole silica sand operator in Norfolk. Sibelco have carried out a reassessment of the permitted reserves based on recent borehole drilling at the permitted site (Grandcourt Farm). The total quantity of additional silica sand required over the remaining Plan period (2017 to 2026) (previously 2016-2026) is 7.5 (previously 8.25) million tonnes, minus the existing permitted reserve of 2.62 (previously 2.64) million tonnes.

The Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD (A25) allocated one site (MIN40) with an estimated resource of 3 million tonnes. The purpose of the Silica Sand Review is to address the remaining predicted shortfall of 1.88 (previously 2.61) million tonnes. The Silica Sand Review allocates one specific site (SIL01) with an estimated resource of 1.2 million tonnes, which leaves a remaining shortfall of 0.68 (previously 1.4) million tonnes to be met from an extraction site within the allocated areas of search.

Based on previous silica sand workings within the Leziate beds it is estimated that approximately 12 (previously 20) hectares of land would be required from within the areas of search to meet the adopted target in Core Strategy Policy CS1 up to the end of the Plan period in 2026. However, it is considered that 20 hectares would be the minimum likely size of a silica sand extraction site, based on previous silica sand extraction sites in Norfolk.

The updated three year average of silica sand extraction in Norfolk from 2014-2016 was 785,400 tonnes; the previous three year average for 2013-2015 was 793,200 tonnes (2012-2014 was 790,400 tonnes). This data suggests that trends in recent years have fluctuated but have seen an increase in demand, compared with the longer term 10 year average of 681,900 tonnes (2007-2016). It is considered that the likely cause of this has been silica sand extraction in other parts of the country (sites in Cheshire and Staffordshire) reaching the end of their operational lives. There is currently a planning application being determined in Cheshire which may help to address the national need for silica sand.

Notwithstanding this application, the Silica Sand Review has been prepared with the flexibility to respond to any greater level of demand in the future. As the total area of the five proposed Areas of Search (D, E, F, I and J) is approximately 1,000 hectares, it is considered that this provides ample flexibility to address any potential future increase in demand during the Plan period to 2026. The approach taken also provides sufficient areas of search to take into account longer term requirements, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 157.

**2. Is the Plan justified and consistent with national policy, insofar that it identifies Areas of Search (AoS) rather than Preferred Areas, which the latter is given greater priority in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance? (Paragraph: 008, Reference ID: 27-008-20140306)**

**NCC response:** The Plan is justified and consistent with national policy, in identifying Areas of Search rather than Preferred Areas as knowledge of the silica sand resource in Norfolk is limited and relies on the British Geological Survey mapping which indicates an inferred resource. The silica sand resource in Norfolk is subdivided into two different deposits, the Leziatite Beds and the Mintlyn Beds. These deposits have different general compositions, such that the highest potential for sand suitable for glass making occurs in the Leziatite Beds, and the Mintlyn Beds would generally be unsuitable for this use. Therefore, as part of the methodology for defining the Areas of Search only the Leziatite beds have been considered, as the existing plant site at Leziatite is for the processing of glass-sand. As the Leziatite beds are an inferred resource, and the County Council does not hold any additional information from borehole logs and assessment for these areas, it is not possible to define Preferred Areas, which would be based on areas where a known resource of silica sand has been proved. A mineral resource cannot be proved where exploratory investigations have not taken place. National Guidance is clear that in locations where knowledge of mineral resources may be less certain an appropriate designation would be an Area of Search. The methodology used for defining the Areas of Search has sought to remove those areas of the resource subject to the highest level of constraints, so that they represent areas where planning permission may be granted subject to a suitable planning application.

**3. Is the Plan effective and justified, with regard to the number and overall coverage of the five identified AoS, when compared to the identified need? Further to this, would the Plan lead to large areas of land being unnecessarily safeguarded?**

**NCC response:** It is considered that the Plan is effective and justified, with regard to the five identified Areas of Search. The methodology which has been applied to define the Areas of Search has removed those areas of the silica sand resource subject to the highest level of constraints (see our response to Matter 3, Issue 1). Given the nature of the Areas of Search it would not be justified to further reduce their size as there are currently no locations within the Areas of Search where there is appropriate evidence which would prove that they would be more preferable for silica sand

extraction. Further information on potential constraints (such as protected species, archaeology etc.) and mitigation measures would be required in any future planning application where the precise location and working method of any mineral extraction would be detailed by the applicant. The level of knowledge of the silica sand resource is limited to the area inferred by the British Geological Survey (BGS) as containing the Leziate beds. The resources have not been proved because no information on additional exploratory investigations into the silica sand resource is available. Therefore, it is not possible to provide an increased certainty of suitable silica sand resources occurring within the Areas of Search or Leziate Beds generally. In addition, there is no guarantee that operators or landowners are interested in developing within the areas of search for silica sand extraction. Therefore, it would not be justified or effective to further reduce the coverage of the Areas of Search.

The Policies Map (A30) accompanying the adopted Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD delineates the boundaries of the Minerals Safeguarding Area, which covers the whole of the silica sand resource, based on the appropriate BGS mapping. Therefore, as the whole of the resource is already safeguarded, the Silica Sand Review would not lead to any increase in the safeguarded area. In accordance with the adopted Core Strategy Policy CS16 (F10), the allocation of an Area of Search does not confer any greater level of safeguarding within the existing safeguarded silica sand resource. Due to the national importance and scarcity of silica sand and in particular glass sand, the adopted Mineral Safeguarding Areas were found sound at the examination of the Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD.

**4. Is there a potential future need for new plant and infrastructure to be required, in order to secure the steady and adequate supply of silica sand? If so, should the wording of the AoS Policy reflect this?**

**NCC response:** The purpose of the Silica Sand Review is to address a shortfall between the quantity of silica sand extraction sites allocated in the adopted Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD and the target in adopted Core Strategy Policy CS1. Policy CS1, in accordance with National Policy and Guidance, sets out to provide a steady and adequate supply of silica sand to meet the needs of the existing processing plant site at Leziate, including an allowance for future investment. The Silica Sand Review is based on the premise that all silica sand extracted would be transported to the existing processing plant site at Leziate. The Areas of Search Policy requires that development will ‘...address the shortfall in silica sand supply to meet the requirements of the existing processing plant (as set out in the NPPF)’. The Areas of Search Policy will apply to planning applications which come forward to meet the requirement of adopted Policy CS1. The Silica Sand Review is not reassessing any future requirements for new processing plant or proposed capital expenditure; this will be a matter for the future review of the Core Strategy policies.

The adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (F10), the adopted Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD (A25) and the Silica Sand Review (A35 & A105) do not contain any requirement for plant or infrastructure for the processing of silica sand at a new location in Norfolk, as there is already considerable

infrastructure at the existing plant site at Leziate, and adopted Policy CS1 recognises the industry's intention to make further investment at this location. It is expected that the only infrastructure that would be required at future extraction sites would be facilities such as welfare buildings/site office, weighbridges and mobile plant and equipment which would all be temporary in nature and limited to the duration of extraction. Therefore there is no need for the wording of the AoS Policy to be amended in this regard.

### **MATTER 3 – Whether the allocated site and areas of search are acceptable in environmental terms and in all other regards.**

#### **Issues**

#### **1. Is the area of search selection process, including its methodology and criteria justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**

**NCC response:** It is considered that the selection process for areas of search is sound and legally compliant in all respects. The Silica Sand Review process has been carried out in order that the Mineral Planning Authority will plan for a steady and adequate supply of silica sand by designating sites and areas with the greatest certainty of meeting future need.

An Initial Consultation (F50) stage was carried out in 2015 on the issues which were likely to be used to identify and assess potential sites and areas of search. The Initial Consultation also highlighted that if insufficient specific sites were put forward then the Mineral Planning Authority would seek to define Preferred Areas and/or Areas of Search, and sought views on the methodology that would be used to define them.

Following the Initial Consultation stage a 'call for sites' stage was undertaken in 2015. Insufficient specific sites were proposed and therefore the Mineral Planning Authority used the methodology and criteria, which had previously been subject to consultation, to define draft Areas of Search. Due to the level of information available on the silica sand resource it was considered inappropriate to define Preferred Areas, as resources are inferred and have not been proved (see our response to Matter 2, Issue 2).

The methodology and criteria sought to remove those parts of the silica sand resource which were subject to the greatest level of constraints that were likely to impact on the potential deliverability of an extraction site. The Preferred Options Consultation document (F150) (pages 38-41) detailed why this methodology was used. The criteria were defined as:

- a. The starting point for the areas of search is the extent of the Leziate Beds silica sand resource*

Reason: The purpose of the Silica Sand Review is to meet the shortfall in allocated sites suitable for the production of glass sand, as required by the existing processing facility at Leziate. The majority of previous extraction of silica sand for glass manufacture has taken place from the Leziate Beds and this deposit has the highest probability of providing deposits of a suitable quality and grade for this use.

- b. The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has been excluded*

Reason: The Norfolk Coast AONB is a statutory designation, NPPF paragraph 116 states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. AONBs have a high level of statutory protection; Section 11a(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, requires Planning Authorities have regard to the purposes of AONB in the performance of any function in relation to, or so as to affect land. NPPF paragraph 144 states that as far as is practical landbanks of non-energy minerals should be outside AONBs. It is therefore not considered appropriate for the areas of search to include the AONB, as locations outside the AONB would be preferable.

*c. All ancient woodland and 250 metres around them has been excluded*

Reason: The NPPF classifies ancient woodland as an irreplaceable habitat (paragraph 118). An area of 250 metres surrounding each ancient woodland site has also been excluded from the areas of search. This distance has been used because uncontrolled dust can have a significant effect on ancient woodland habitats and it is considered that 250 metres would allow for the mitigation of dust with the minimum of controls. A planning application may be able to provide information to support an acceptable distance close than this, but 250 metres is considered appropriate for an Area of Search. It is recognised that impacts on local hydrology from mineral extraction may occur at a distance greater than 250 metres from an ancient woodland, and any subsequent planning application within an area of search will need to address this (in accordance with the AoS Policy).

*d. All SSSIs and 250 metres around them has been excluded (except for Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog – see below)*

Reason: All NNRs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites are also SSSIs. Therefore, excluding all SSSIs and 250 metres around them, means that all NNRs, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites have also been excluded from the areas of search. SSSIs are designated and protected at the national level. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF states that 'proposed development ... likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI ... should not normally be permitted'. An area of 250 metres around each SSSI has been excluded from the areas of search because it is considered that this distance would allow for the mitigation of dust and noise with the minimum of controls. However, it is recognised that the special biological or geological features of interest for which SSSI has been notified will vary from site to site and the vulnerabilities of the features will also vary. This variation means that the impacts from mineral extraction, including the distance at which an impact may occur, will differ between each SSSI. A number of the SSSIs which occur within 5km of the silica sand resource are vulnerable to changes in water flow and levels. Any subsequent application within an area of search will need to assess the impact of mineral extraction on SSSIs and European designated sites, in accordance with the AoS Policy.

*e. The hydrological catchment around Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog has been excluded*

Reason: Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog are designated as SSSIs, NNRs, SAC and Ramsar sites. Therefore these sites are protected at a national, European and international level from development that would be likely to have a significant effect on their important interest features. Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog are sensitive and vulnerable to changes in water flow and levels and water chemistry. Natural England therefore

recommended avoiding the hydrological catchment areas for Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog when defining areas of search.

*f. Registered Common Land has been excluded*

Reason: Legislation, including the 1899 Commons Act and the 2006 Commons Act, protects the activities which can and cannot be carried out on registered common land. Therefore it would not be appropriate for common land to be included within the areas of search for mineral extraction because the deregistration of Common land for mineral extraction would be a significant barrier to delivery.

*g. Designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, Conservation Areas) and 250 metres around each heritage asset has been excluded*

Reason: All of these heritage assets are designated at a national level by Historic England, except Conservation Areas, which are designated by the local planning authority and usually contain a number of listed buildings within them. The NPPF (paragraph 132) states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets when considering development which may impact upon significance. Areas of Search are large areas within which permission for silica sand extraction may be granted on a smaller area of land. Therefore the precise location and operational details of any future extraction site within an area of search are not known at this stage. Therefore, an area of 250 metres around designated heritage assets has been excluded from the areas of search. This 250 metre area is not intended to be the setting of the heritage assets and it is recognised that the extent of the setting of each heritage asset will be different and may extend more or less than 250 metres from the heritage asset. The 250 metre distance is considered as a starting point for the consideration of setting within which appropriate mitigation measures would be most complex to deliver. Any subsequent planning application within an area of search would need to provide a Heritage Statement if the proposal could potentially impact upon a heritage asset or its setting. The Heritage Statement would provide the necessary detail, in accordance with the AoS Policy, to define the settings and significance of heritage assets in relation to the precise location of extraction.

*h. Sensitive receptors to amenity impacts (residential dwellings, educational facilities, workplaces, healthcare and leisure facilities) and 250 metres around each sensitive receptor has been excluded*

Reason: An area of 250 metres around sensitive receptors has been excluded because this represents a distance at which amenity impacts, such as noise and dust, could be mitigated to acceptable levels with the minimum of controls. A planning application may be able to provide information to support mineral extraction close than 250 metres from a sensitive receptor, but 250 metres is considered appropriate for an area of search.

*i. Agricultural land grades 1 and 2 have been excluded*

Reason: Agricultural land grades 1 and 2 are defined nationally as the highest quality agricultural land and the NPPF (paragraph 112) contains requirements to ensure that the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land is safeguarded. Grade 3 agricultural land has not been excluded from the areas of search because only subgrade 3a is classified as BMV agricultural land. The subgrades of 3a and 3b are not mapped and therefore it not possible to differentiate between them when defining the areas of search.

*j. Allocated, current and restored mineral extraction sites have been excluded*

Reason: The estimated resource in the specific site allocated for silica sand extraction and the permitted reserve in the current silica sand extraction sites have already been taken into account in calculating the silica sand shortfall. Additional silica sand resources to meet the shortfall will not be found within sites where mineral extraction has already been completed.

*k. The areas of the Leziate Beds silica sand resource that were remaining at this point were all potential areas of search*

*l. Potential areas of search below 10 hectares in size have not been taken further*

Reason: Based on planning permissions for previous extraction sites, it is considered unlikely that a commercial silica sand extraction operation would take place on less than 20 hectares of land. Therefore areas of search below 20 hectares in size are unlikely to be deliverable.

*m. The remaining ten areas of search are above 20 hectares in size were included in the Preferred Options consultation document.*

County Wildlife Sites have not been excluded from the areas of search because they are designated at county level and silica sand is a nationally important industrial mineral. However, impacts on County Wildlife Sites and appropriate mitigation will be assessed through the implementation of Policy DM1 of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the relevant specific site and area of search policies. There are no Local Nature Reserves within the area underlain by the Leziate Beds.

No flood zones have been excluded from the areas of search because silica sand extraction is considered to be water compatible development in the NPPG. The Environment Agency stated in their response to the Initial Consultation that land within flood risk zones 2 and 3 did not need to be removed from areas of search; however, a sequential approach has been taken to the selection of areas of search.

Using of this methodology ensures that Areas of Search would have a greater certainty of containing locations within which planning applications could come forward which would not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health (in accordance with paragraph 144 of the NPPF) with the implementation of mitigation measures normally contained in applications for mineral working (G20); further information on mitigation measures is contained within the Preferred Options document (F150). The process used to define areas of search is consistent with national policy for minerals, set out in NPPF paragraph 143. Ten draft areas of search were included in the Preferred Options document which was subject to public consultation in 2015.

Following consideration of the Preferred Options Consultation responses, revisions were made to the boundaries of some draft areas of search. Some areas of search were amended simply to remove small pieces of land which were separated from the main area of search by a road. Other areas of search were amended to address significant constraints. This process resulted in the removal of four draft areas of search which were considered to be undeliverable as a result. The reasons why AOS B, AOS C, AOS G and AOS H were not allocated are detailed on page 147 of the Submission Sustainability

Appraisal Report (Part B) (document A50). The remaining six Areas of Search were included in the Pre-Submission publication (A35).

Following consideration of the representations received at the Pre-Submission publication stage, an Addendum of Modifications (A105) was published which included a main modification to remove Area of Search A due to the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of the Norfolk Coast AONB making AOS A less preferable than the other Areas of Search.

The reason for not allocating AOS A is detailed on page 8 of the 'Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications' (document A105). The northern boundary of AOS A is 180 metres from the AONB to the north and the southern boundary of AOS A is 370 metres from the AONB to the south-west, at the closest point. The Norfolk Coast Partnership and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk made representations (91122 and 90881) at the Pre-Submission stage objecting to AOS A due to potential landscape character impacts.

The decision to not allocate AOS A is based on these representations and takes into account the Norfolk Coast Partnership's vision for the AONB in their Management Plan 2014-2019 (document E430, Page 31). Due to its proximity to the Norfolk Coast AONB and the potential for views of AOS A from within the AONB it is considered that there is the potential for silica sand extraction within AOS A to affect the setting of the AONB and the landscape character of the area. The Pre-Submission document contained a specific site and six areas of search totalling 1,405 hectares, to meet a forecast need of approximately 40 hectares over the plan period, to 2026. Therefore AOS A is not allocated in the Silica Sand Review because the potential for effects on the setting of the AONB mean that it is considered to be the least preferable area of search for silica sand extraction.

In response to a representation from Historic England (rep no 91601) the southern boundary of AOS D was amended to move it north, to within the existing plantation woodland, to prevent potential harm to the setting of the Remains of Pentney Priory (which is a Scheduled Monument and contains two Listed Buildings). This amendment was included in the 'Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications' (A105) and is justified, effective and consistent with national policy on the historic environment.

The iterative use of Sustainability Appraisal (F45, F155, F160, A45, A50, A55) has formed an integral part of the plan-making process, including the consideration of reasonable alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal process commenced in 2015; with the identification of relevant plans, policies and programmes, baseline information and scoping of the SA objectives. The SA Scoping Report (F40) was consulted on in March and April 2015.

The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report was consulted on in November and December 2015 (F160). The Sustainability Appraisal Report was updated and published at the Pre-Submission stage and included details of the iterative SA process. In particular p71-73, section 4.2 of the SA Report (A50) details the assessment of options used to define the areas of search. The Sequential Test (A70) has provided information for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Silica Sand Review, and been used in the process for defining and allocating Areas of Search and the Specific Site.

The proposed specific site allocation and each proposed area of search have been assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (in pages 82-142, section 5 of

the SA Report). Norfolk County Council is satisfied that the Sustainability Appraisal gives reasons for rejecting any reasonable alternatives and that those reasons are still valid. When compared to the Sustainability Appraisal findings for all of the defined areas of search, AOS A, AOS B and AOS C have the most negative scores and therefore are the least preferable alternatives. None of these areas of search area allocated. The summary of the reasons for rejecting alternatives is contained within chapter 6 (page 147) of the SA Report (A50) and updated on pages 26-27 of the Pre-Submission Addendum: Modifications document (A105).

It is considered that the five remaining Areas of Search provide sufficient potential locations where a planning application for silica sand could come forward to provide a steady and adequate supply of silica sand to the existing processing plant at Leziate. It is considered that the Area of Search selection process outlined above is justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

**2. Can future proposals come forward within AoS D without causing unacceptable harm, most notably, but not limited to: highway and pedestrian safety; landscape; ecological features; heritage assets; and local residents and businesses in the area?**

**NCC response:** Areas of search are large areas within which permission for silica sand extraction may be granted on a smaller area of land; it is not the intention of the Plan for the whole of AOS D to be extracted. It is considered that future proposals could come forward from any of the five submitted Areas of Search without causing unacceptable harm, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures normally found within mineral permissions; this includes AOS D. Any future planning applications in AOS D would need to comply with the requirements of the AoS Policy, and the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (F10) (see our response to Matter 3, issue 6). The AoS Policy and policies in the Core Strategy require there to be no unacceptable adverse impacts from development in relation to transport (CS15), landscape (CS14), ecology (CS14), heritage assets (DM8 & DM9) and amenity (CS14).

It is considered that extraction could take place with AOS D without causing unacceptable harm to highway and pedestrian safety. In the submitted Plan, as modified, the final bullet point of the AoS D characteristics notes that whilst transporting the mineral to the processing plant site may take place by road, other transportation options (such as a conveyor, pipeline or off-highway haul route) should be considered in any future application. Existing silica sand operations (Grandcourt Farm, permission C/2/2004/2034) (document G20) make use of off-highway haul routes, and potential exists for such a solution to link to other existing accesses to the A47. Conveyors to transport the mineral to the processing plant site have been used in previous silica sand workings.

Notwithstanding these alternatives, the Highway Authority and Highways England consider that an acceptable highway solution could be found in principle (paragraphs D.1 and D.2, document A35). Common Lane is a designated lorry route (and HGV access route) from the existing sand and gravel extraction site (where the permitted operation will cease and be restored by December 2024), and the asphalt plant (where the permitted

operations will cease and be restored by March 2018) located at its southern extent, where limitations regarding highway improvements exist. It would be preferable for any highway access point to be as far north as possible on Common Road to minimise highway impacts. It is likely that highway improvements, including suitable localised widening to create formal passing places, would be required and are feasible. It would be for the detail of a future planning application to consider what level of additional traffic would be acceptable to comply with the requirements of Policy CS15 'Transport'. Other mineral extraction planning permissions in Norfolk have controlled the maximum number of HGV movements, any required highway improvements and designated access routes by condition.

It is considered that extraction could take place within AOS D without causing unacceptable harm to the landscape. Mitigation measures set out in a landscaping scheme (such as planting and soil bunds), would be conditioned as part of any future planning permission, to ensure no unacceptable adverse impacts on landscape. Planning permission C/2/2004/2034, for the existing silica sand extraction site at Grandcourt Farm, contains the type of condition successfully used (Condition 12). AOS D is largely an area of commercial coniferous plantation which will be subject to a programme of planned felling over the Plan period and beyond. If extraction was to take place in the wooded area, opportunities would exist for the retention of a screen of existing trees, in addition to other mitigation measures, such as planting and soil bunds, considered appropriate.

It is considered that extraction could take place within AOS D without causing unacceptable harm to ecology. Any future planning application would be subject to ecological assessments, including a biodiversity survey and protected species surveys. The Areas of Search process has been informed by consultation responses from Natural England (rep 91115) and information provided by Norfolk County Council's Ecologists (including the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service records) and Norfolk Wildlife Trust. Mitigation measures can be controlled through conditions as part of any future planning permission for silica sand extraction. Mitigation measures could include managing the timing and location of the extraction works to minimise impacts; creating, restoring or improving habitats for affected species, and protection of designated trees, through a Conservation Management Plan. Some species, such as reptiles, could potentially be moved to an alternative suitable site, and a suitable barrier installed for the duration of operations. Examples of successful conditions relating to the management of these ecology issues are contained in permission C/2/2004/2034 (conditions 8, 9, 18 and 20).

It is considered that extraction could take place within AOS D without causing unacceptable harm to heritage assets. The southern boundary of AOS D has been revised, in accordance with a representation from Historic England (rep number 90930). Any future planning application within AOS D would need to comply with the requirements of the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (CS14, DM8 & DM9) and the Areas of Search Policy, regarding the assessment of heritage assets, the potential for impacts and identification of appropriate mitigation. Following assessment, suitable mitigation measures for potential impacts on setting, significance, and heritage values would be controlled through the use of conditions in relation to the landscaping, working and restoration schemes. If the archaeological

assessment suggested a programme of archaeological investigation as an appropriate form of mitigation this would normally be required through condition. For example, permission C/2/2004/2034 contains condition 16, related to the implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological investigation.

It is considered that extraction could take place within AOS D without causing unacceptable adverse amenity impacts, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures normally found within mineral permissions. The potential for amenity impacts would be assessed as part of any future planning application, along with details of appropriate mitigation measures to ensure no unacceptable adverse impacts, in accordance with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (F10) and the submitted Area of Search policy. The site location and working scheme would be details for a future planning application. However, it is considered that the Areas of Search methodology would enable any potential amenity impacts to be mitigated. Sensitive receptors to amenity impacts (residential dwellings, educational facilities, workplaces, healthcare and leisure facilities) and 250 metres around each sensitive receptor were excluded from the Areas of Search. All of the holiday lodges at Pentney Lakes are located more than 250 metres from the boundary of AOS D. At the Examination of the Mineral Site Specific Allocations (March 2013), it was concluded that suggested measures were likely to be able to successfully mitigate potential impacts at distances of less than 250 metres, for a number of specific site proposals (for example, MIN 40 and MIN 37). Suitable mitigation may include noise controls (such as setting noise limit levels, use of exhaust silencers and broadband type reserve alarms), dust controls (such as dampening) and monitoring, restrictions on operational hours, screening/bunding, etc. Permission C/2/2004/2034 contains examples of a number of conditions relating to such mitigation measures which have successfully controlled potential amenity impacts, including condition 4 [operational hours], conditions 5 & 6 [noise], conditions 7 & 15 [dust], conditions 10 & 11 [Transport], condition 17 [PRoW], and condition 22 [lighting]).

In terms of potential impacts on the existing public access to West Bilney Wood, there is no intention within the Silica Sand Review for extraction to take place on the whole 85 hectares of AOS D. Therefore not all of the woodland would be put out of use by extraction, in the same way that areas of commercial forestry are closed to the public when forestry operations take place. The effect of development on public rights of way and 'open access land' are material considerations in the determination of a planning application and would be taken into account at the planning application stage. It is possible for public rights of way to be diverted, and this has happened in relation to other mineral extraction operations in Norfolk. The potential exists for improvements in the quality of public access as part of the restoration of mineral extraction sites.

**3. Is reference within Policy SIL01 for the requirement for a project level Habitats Regulation Assessment to be undertaken at the planning application stage, necessary for it to comply with the Habitats Directive, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and national policy?**

**NCC response:** No, it is not considered necessary for a reference to be included within Policy SIL01 for the requirement for a project level HRA to be undertaken at the planning application stage. Natural England's representation (91116) states that "for clarity we recommend that text is added which states that any future planning applications would need to be accompanied by a project level HRA for the site specific allocation SIL01." Natural England have subsequently confirmed (document G30) that they only require the following informative text to be added to the end of paragraph S.7 "A project level Habitats Regulations Assessment would need to be carried out as part of the determination of any future planning application for silica sand extraction within specific site SIL01."

Natural England does not require any change to Policy SIL01 and stated (in representation 91116) that they considered that the plan was legally compliant and sound. The requirement in Policy SIL01 for a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment to be provided with any planning application for silica sand extraction would provide the information required for a project level HRA to be undertaken.

**4. Do Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy comply with national policy, in terms of Heritage Assets and should a historic landscape characterisation and archaeological study be required as part of any future planning applications within such areas?**

**NCC response:** Yes, both policies do comply with national policy in relation to the Historic Environment generally and Heritage Assets in particular. Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy contain requirements for developments to comply with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (F10) and national policy and guidance. Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy also require a Heritage Statement to be submitted at the planning application stage which will provide proportionate evidence on the potential for impacts and identify appropriate mitigation recognising the nature of the Historic Environment in the areas within which the areas of search and SIL01 are located. Recognising the potential for archaeological sites to be contained within the areas of search and site SIL01, the policies require an archaeological assessment to be submitted at the planning application stage, with an appropriate level of investigation and mitigation measures. The identification and appropriate mitigation of potential impacts to the Historic Environment in terms of landscape, setting and significance would be dealt with by the requirement in the policies for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to be submitted at the planning application stage.

The AoS Policy and Policy SIL01 also make specific reference to the following adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies in relation to the Historic Environment requirements:

Core Strategy Policy CS14 – ‘Environmental Protection’, which states that developments must ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on, and ideally improvements to heritage assets and their setting; Development Management Policy DM8 – ‘Design, local landscape and townscape character’; this policy gives appropriate protection to the historic character of the wider landscape, as well as specific protection in relation to designated heritage assets and their settings. It is considered that in complying with this policy any future planning application would need to assess the historic landscape character of, and surrounding, the proposed extraction site.

Development Management Policy DM9 – ‘Archaeological sites’; this policy requires the potential for proposals to affect heritage assets, or areas of high archaeological importance to be assessed and appropriate mitigation measures to make the proposal acceptable be identified. For heritage assets of national/regional importance, development would only be permitted if the significance of assets, including their settings, were not adversely affected. For all other heritage assets development could be acceptable subject to appropriate mitigation measures.

Development Management Policy DM15 – ‘Cumulative impacts’; this policy requires that the potential for cumulative impacts from the proposed development in conjunction with other minerals or waste management developments is considered, where operations may be acceptable individually. In addition to these requirements, any future planning application for mineral extraction would need to meet the requirements of the Local list for validation (E510) regarding the Historic Environment.

For all of the reasons above, it is considered that the AoS Policy and Policy SIL01 are consistent with national policy, and already contain requirements which will ensure that any future planning application will appropriately assess all aspects of the historic environment, including landscape and archaeology. Compliance with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies CS14, DM8, DM9 and DM15 will also ensure that development within site SIL01 or the areas of search will only be permitted if there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on heritage assets.

## **5. Is Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy effective in being able to control any potential noise impacts?**

**NCC response:** Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy are effective in being able to control potential noise impacts. Both policies require development to provide ‘A programme of mitigation measures (e.g. standoff areas, screening and/or bunding) to deal appropriately with any potential amenity impacts, including noise and dust, to comply with the requirements of policy DM12’. These policies also require planning applications for silica sand extraction to include ‘An assessment to consider the potential for impacts on environmental designations, and suggest suitable mitigation, to comply with policies CS14 and DM1’.

Both Policy SIL01 and the AoS Policy also state that development will be subject to compliance with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (F10). Relevant policies are:  
Core Strategy Policy CS14 – ‘Environmental Protection’ is a policy to ensure that developments have regard to a number of potential environmental issues

including that 'developments must ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on... residential amenity e.g. noise, vibration, dust, lighting and visual intrusion.'

Core Strategy Policy CS15 - 'Transport' requires that transport from mineral developments does not result in unacceptable impacts on residential and rural amenity, including from noise.

Development Management Policy DM8 – 'Design, local landscape and townscape character' states that 'Applicants will be expected to show how their proposals will address impacts on landscape and townscape.' This would include 'landscape and townscape sensitivity and capacity, e.g. ... remoteness and tranquillity, and noise and light pollution.'

Development Management Policy DM12 'Amenity' states that 'Development will be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that the scale, siting and design of a proposal is appropriate and that unacceptable impact to local amenity will not arise from the construction and/or operation of a facility.'

Development Management Policy DM15 – 'Cumulative impacts' would require cumulative impacts, including noise, to be addressed in any proposals for mineral extraction.

## **6. Is the AoS Policy proportionate and effective in being able to control any potential impacts of proposals coming forward within such areas, including any cumulative affects?**

**NCC response:** The AoS Policy requires that proposals for silica sand mineral extraction within the Areas of Search comply with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies. It is considered that the requirements in the AoS Policy and in the adopted Core Strategy (F10) would appropriately control any potential impacts of proposals that come forward within the Areas of Search.

The AoS Policy requires any planning application within an Area of Search to address potential impacts on: amenity, landscape, heritage assets, archaeology, hydrogeology, groundwater, environmental designations, protected species, Water Framework Directive waterbodies, agricultural land, transport and air quality, including appropriate mitigation measures and following a sequential approach to flood risk. A planning application within an Area of Search will also need to include a comprehensive working and restoration plan.

The adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (F10) relevant to silica sand extraction within an area of search include:

Policy CS14 – 'Environmental Protection' states that

*".. developments must ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on, and ideally improvements to:*

- *Natural resources, including water, air and soil;*
- *The character and quality of the landscape and townscape, including nationally designated landscapes (the Norfolk Coast AONB);*
- *Biodiversity and geodiversity, including nationally and internationally designated sites and species, habitats and sites identified in Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans;*
- *Heritage assets and their setting, and cultural assets; and*

- *Residential amenity e.g. noise, vibration, dust, lighting and visual intrusion.*

*Where any development proposals would potentially have adverse impacts on any of the assets listed above, the adequacy of any proposed mitigation measures will be assessed on a case-by-case basis."*

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for: a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to identify potential landscape impacts and suitable mitigation; a Heritage Statement to identify heritage assets and their settings, assess the potential for impacts and identify appropriate mitigation; assessment of potential impacts and suitable mitigation on environmental designations; and protected species assessments and where appropriate mitigation measures.

Policy CS15 – 'Transport' states that all proposed minerals extraction sites must assess the potential for non-HGV transport of minerals to and/or from the site, principally by rail or water. Minerals development proposals will be considered satisfactory in terms of access, where HGV movements do not generate unacceptable risk to the safety of road users and pedestrians, unacceptable impacts on: the capacity and/or efficiency of the highway network (including the trunk road network), air quality, residential and rural amenity, the natural and historic environment and the highway network (e.g. road or kerbside damage).

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for a Transport Assessment or Statement to identify potential transport impacts and appropriate mitigation.

Policy DM1 – 'Nature Conservation' states that development that would harm locally designated nature conservation and geodiversity sites and/or habitats, species or features identified in UK and Norfolk biodiversity and geodiversity action plans will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that sufficient measures to mitigate harm to the site, habitat(s) and/or species can be put in place. If appropriate mitigation measures cannot practicably be implemented, compensatory habitats or geological exposure of at least an equivalent standard at a suitable alternative location should be provided.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for assessment of potential impacts on environmental designations and suitable mitigation; and protected species assessments and where appropriate mitigation measures.

Policy DM3 – 'groundwater and surface water' states that planning applications will need to demonstrate that proposed development would not adversely impact upon groundwater quality or resources and surface water quality or resources. A hydrological/hydrogeological risk assessment must be submitted, where applicable, to demonstrate this.

In addition, the AoS Policy requires a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment, based on proportionate evidence, to identify potential impacts and appropriate mitigation measures to address these, and an assessment of potential impacts on Water Framework Directive waterbodies and appropriate mitigation.

Policy DM4 – 'Flood Risk' states that a Flood Risk Assessment is required for sites greater than a hectare. Developers are expected to ensure flood risk is not increased as a result of mineral extraction.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for development of extraction sites within the AoS to follow a sequential approach to flood risk.

Policy DM7 – ‘Safeguarding aerodromes’ states that proposed developments within 13km of the centre point of safeguarded aerodromes that have the potential to attract birds, due to landscaping, must be subject to a bird hazard assessment. In particular cases where the risk cannot be mitigated satisfactorily planning permission will be refused.

Adopted Policy DM8 – ‘Design, local landscape and townscape character’ requires a planning application to address potential individual and cumulative effects on landscape character (e.g. visual intrusion, public access), sensitivity and capacity (e.g. local distinctiveness, semi-natural habitats, remoteness, tranquillity, noise and light pollution). Development will only be permitted where it would not adversely impact on the historic form, character and/or setting of heritage assets. Development will be permitted if it will not harm key characteristics of its surroundings with regard to the character of the landscape and townscape.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to identify potential landscape impacts and suitable mitigation; a Heritage Statement to identify heritage assets and their settings, assess the potential for impacts and identify appropriate mitigation.

Policy DM9 – ‘Archaeological sites’ states that applicants whose proposals could potentially affect heritage assets, or which are in areas with high potential for archaeological interest, will be required to prepare and submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation with their application. Development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the significance of heritage assets. Where proposals for mineral extraction would affect heritage assets of national/or regional importance, there will be a presumption in favour of their preservation in situ. Development which would potentially affect other heritage assets could be acceptable if subject to appropriate mitigation measures.

In addition, the AoS policy requires an appropriate archaeological assessment, highlighting the potential for field surveys and trial trenching, and appropriate mitigation.

Policy DM10 – ‘Transport’ states that planning applications for new minerals sites must be accompanied by a transport statement and details what the contents of the transport statement must demonstrate. If highway improvements are required a more detailed Transport Assessment will be necessary.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for a Transport Assessment or Statement to identify potential transport impacts and appropriate mitigation.

Policy DM12 – ‘Amenity’ states that development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that unacceptable impact to local amenity will not arise from the construction and/or operation of a facility. Where appropriate, buffer zones, advanced planting and/or screening and other mitigation measures, such as restriction on hours of working and dust suppression measures will be required.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for mitigation measures to deal appropriately with any potential amenity impacts.

Policy DM13 – ‘Air quality’ states that planning applications must include *“information to demonstrate that proposals effectively minimise harmful emissions to air and would not impact negatively on existing Air Quality*

*Management Areas nor lead to the declaration of a new AQMA. Development will be permitted if adequate measures can be agreed through planning conditions to mitigate potentially harmful air quality impacts to human health."*

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for an air quality assessment, identification of potential impacts and suitable mitigation.

Policy DM14 – 'Progressive working, restoration and after-use' states that proposals for new mineral workings must be accompanied by a scheme for the phased and progressive working and restoration of the site throughout its life. Restoration and after-use of mineral extraction sites will be determined on a case-by-case basis, prioritising the most appropriate after-use for each site. This will include consideration of restoration to enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape; support for green infrastructure; potential to restore and/or improve agricultural soil quality, and to facilitate leisure and recreational development (including footpaths). The after-use and restoration proposal must demonstrate that: the appropriate restoration and after-use is both feasible and achievable in the proposed timescales, due consideration has been given to opportunities to improve public access, and to supporting the aims of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for a comprehensive working and restoration scheme to consider opportunities for ecological enhancement, public access improvement, and geological study, on restoration.

Policy DM16 – 'Soils' states that when minerals extraction is proposed on agricultural land of grade 3a or above, it will only be permitted where either provision is made for high standard of soil management that would enable restoration to a condition at least as good as its previous agricultural quality, or the benefit of restoring the land to another after-use can be shown to outweigh the loss of the agricultural land.

In addition, the AoS Policy also contains a requirement for a detailed land survey where an application for mineral working within the AoS includes Grade 3 agricultural land, and an appropriate working scheme.

Policy DM15 – 'Cumulative Impacts', states that planning applications must be *"supported by information demonstrating how proposals relate to other development nearby and details of how any cumulative effects are proposed to be mitigated satisfactorily"*.

It is considered that compliance with the AoS Policy will ensure that the potential for impacts are addressed and controlled in a proportionate and effective manner.

## **MATTER 4 – Monitoring**

### **Issues**

- 1. In order for it to be effective, should the proposed new policies in the Plan be subject to a monitoring framework?**

**NCC response:** A monitoring framework is already in place within the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Framework. Section 8 of the adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (F10) contains a monitoring and implementation framework to assess progress towards the adopted targets. The Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD (A25) contains policies for the allocated sites which are the mechanism by which the adopted targets are met. Therefore, the existing site allocation policies are subject to the monitoring framework contained in the adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (F10). The Silica Sand Review is a single issue review of the Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD. Site SIL01 and the five Areas of Search would form part the Minerals Site Specific Allocations DPD if found sound, legally compliant and adopted. Therefore, the existing monitoring framework would be effective in monitoring the delivery of SIL01 and the Areas of Search. The implementation of the monitoring framework is through the monitoring reports produced by the Mineral Planning Authority, including the Local Aggregate Assessment and Silica Sand Assessment (the 2015 report is document F345) and the Policy Implementation and Monitoring Report (the 2015-16 Report is document F365).