

## APPROVED MINUTES

### East of England Aggregate Working Party

Meeting on 25 January 2022 starting at 10am

Venue: Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

#### ATTENDEES

Authority Members	
Richard Greaves (RG)	Essex County Council (Chairman)
Phil Dash (PD)	Essex County Council
Roy Romans (RR)	Bedfordshire Authorities
Jerry Smith (JS)	Bedfordshire Authorities
Emma Fitch (EF)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Chris Stanek (CS)	Hertfordshire County Council
Caroline Jeffery (CJ)	Norfolk County Council
Andrew Rutter (AR)	Suffolk County Council
Adrian Smith (AS)	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Industry Members	
Mark North (MN)	Mineral Products Association
Peter Huxtable (PH)	British Aggregates Association (BAA)
Mark Page (MP)	Hansons / MPA
Alan Everard (AE)	Tarmac / MPA
Kirsten Hannaford-Hill (KHH)	Aggregate Industries / MPA
Shaun Denny (SD)	Breedon Aggregates / MPA / BAA
Angela Watts (AW)	Brett Aggregates / MPA
Tom Forbes-Cox (TF-C)	Cemex
Others	
Julia Webberley (JW)	EEAWP Secretariat
Dave Pitt (DP)	EEAWP Secretariat
Christina Davey (CD)	DLUHC
Vineeta Sharma (VS)	DLUHC
Nick Everington (NE)	The Crown Estate
Apologies	
Emma Chapman (EC)	Hertfordshire County Council
Graham Gunby (GG)	Suffolk County Council
Richard Drake	Norfolk County Council
Claire Victory	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Cameron Clow	Suffolk County Council
David Spray	Marine Management Organisation
Peter Lemon	Midd Aggs / BAA
Simon Smith	Longwater

Item No.	Subject	Owner
1	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b>	<b>RG / JW</b>
	RG welcomed everyone to the meeting. JW ran through a list of apologies. Apologies are as set out above.	
2	<b>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</b>	<b>RG / JW</b>
	<p>RG ran through the list of action points which had arisen from the last meeting held on 12 October 2021. These are listed below in blue with relevant comments shown after each one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) It is suggested that participating mineral planning authorities include a copy of the link to the DJA EEAWP webpage on their websites: <a href="https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/">https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/</a> <b>Members are encouraged to action this if they have not done so already.</b></li> <li>b) AWP members are invited to give input to DLUHC into the revision of the National Guidelines and how they are to be calculated. See CD update below.</li> <li>c) RR to try and identify the most appropriate source of data for assessing quantities of recycled and secondary aggregates. RR to circulate the minutes of the national RWTAB chairs meeting when these are available. JW to seek member comments on RR's note before submitting to VS for review. This matter to be added to the next agenda for discussion at the next meeting. See RR update below (agenda item 4).</li> <li>d) JC and MN to follow up with Cemex / Breedon on data required from two significant sites which is needed by Suffolk for its LAA. MN actioned and Breedon submitted data.</li> <li>e) JW to present the BGS survey figures in the annual report and use these to calculate averages. JW to make sure that locally obtained figures are also shown. Completed. LAAs which seek to use their own figures should make sure any inconsistencies with the BGS data are explained. Assumed completed.</li> <li>f) <u>Deadlines for specific comments on LAAs</u> (which should be sent directly to the relevant mineral planning authority) are as follows: i) Herts: By 20<sup>th</sup> October; ii) Essex and Norfolk: by 27<sup>th</sup> October; iii) Others – within 2 weeks of circulation of the draft LAA (as opposed to circulation of the dashboard summary). Completed. JW commented that it would be useful if she could be kept apprised of when LAAs are being circulated for comment and also be sent a final copy of the completed LAA. <b>Members are asked to action these points, please.</b></li> <li>g) Productive capacity: JW to circulate the section within the SWAWP survey which deals with productive capacity. This should be added to future agendas for continued discussion.</li> </ul>	

Section circulated but JW noted that the EEAWP survey forms already contain similar sections seeking information on productive capacity. RR noted that responses to these sections were usually limited. AE commented that there are often constraints on HGV movements etc and time limits on daily operations. MN pointed out that information on productive capacity provides a useful guide on what the country is able to produce per annum and what it would be able to supply if there were pressure on demand. RR agreed that it would be interesting to see the wider picture on this and suggested that members should focus more on obtaining information on these sections as part of the operator surveys. **Members are asked to action this point, please.**

(It was noted that 'allocations' are separate from productive capacity, that allocations are commented on in LAAs and assessments made as to whether they are likely to come forward and that issues relating to allocations should trigger a review of the relevant minerals plan).

- h) JW to circulate an email from North Northants asking for comments on the draft Lincolnshire LAA covering data for 2020 to which members should respond directly to North Northants. Completed.
- i) RR to raise for discussion at the next WTAB meeting the issue concerning delays in EA permitting which is impacting on commencement of extraction. RR confirmed that this issue was raised and that it continues to be a major problem for both the minerals and waste industry. Members consider that the EA is not fit for purpose, that validation delays are increasingly common and that there is continued conflict between the EA approach to planning and permitting. **The worsening situation relating to the EA is considered to be a national issue that needs to be urgently addressed by DLUHC.**
- j) DLUHC is asked: i) to liaise with mineral colleagues to ensure that minerals supply is not just assumed; and ii) to address the EA's approach to noise assessments. VS to relay this back to her team. Assumed that this has been passed back to CD.
- k) JW to liaise with RG regarding specific dates for a meeting in January. Completed.

CD gave an update on matters arising in connection with DLUHC as follows:

- i) DLUHC is progressing discussions re an update to the National Guidelines with senior people within the department. This is also being discussed with other government departments. However, no firm timeframe has yet been agreed. DLUHC would want to engage with AWP chairs on this as it progresses, potentially via the NCG. No approach has yet been decided regarding an

	<p>appropriate methodology and this will be essential to ensure the Guidelines' credibility.</p> <p>ii) DLUHC is aware that there has been a call from various AWP's to reintroduce AMRI as a statutory requirement. This is under discussion but no commitments have been made on it as yet.</p> <p>iii) In terms of the DLUHC team, Guy Skelton is the Head of Environmental Planning Reform and Minerals and Waste. CD is Minerals and Waste Team Leader with VS reporting to CD. Aimee Smith will be leaving the team shortly but a replacement for her is being sought. Members should contact CD and VS regarding minerals and waste matters in the first instance. <b>JW to add CD into the EEAWP distribution list and invite her to meetings.</b></p> <p>iv) VS is reviewing the AWP annual monitoring reports received so far (there are a number outstanding) and will collate key points and trends from across the regions. These will be fed back to AWP's in due course. The aim is to standardise both the annual monitoring reports and the survey forms. A cross AWP end of financial year meeting is likely to be held in March as required by the AWP contracts.</p> <p>CJ commented that it would be useful if the revised National Guidelines could also include data for silica sand and this was endorsed by RR as there is no national picture on demand for this. MN concurred and pointed out that silica sand is key to the minerals industry and efforts should be made to make the UK as self-sufficient as possible.</p> <p>CS advised that hyperlinks from the last minutes did not appear to work. They are all reproduced here, for ease of reference:</p> <p><a href="https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/">https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/en-gb/what-we-do/on-the-seabed/minerals-dredging/">https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/en-gb/what-we-do/on-the-seabed/minerals-dredging/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.ice.org.uk/events/marine-aggregates-in-the-uk-online">https://www.ice.org.uk/events/marine-aggregates-in-the-uk-online</a></p> <p>There being no other comments to indicate otherwise, the minutes of the last meeting are deemed agreed. A copy will now be uploaded on to the David Jarvis Associates website, available here:</p> <p><a href="https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/">https://davidjarvis.biz/east-of-england-awp/</a></p>	
3	<b>Annual Monitoring Report 2020 - feedback</b>	<b>JW</b>
	<p>The annual monitoring report (AMR) for 2020 was submitted to DLUHC, as required, during December 2021. Going forwards, JW would like a <b>little more feedback as to whether members agree or disagree with overall conclusions within the report.</b> RR commented that no response generally indicates agreement but express agreement might</p>	

	<p>be useful. MN commented that it is important that the report states if there are issues with supply as these will be relied on by government.</p> <p>RG suggested that MPAs may not be equally assessing what constitutes a 'major construction project' for the purposes of the AMR and would like better consistency. He noted that the report highlighted problems with an ongoing depletion of reserves. PD commented that mineral planning authorities do not look at replenishment rates, though this would be quite easy to do. MN pointed out that Mineral Product Association members do look at replenishment rates, hence the data in the AMR reporting that between 2008 and 2019 only 75% of crushed rock permitted reserves were replenished and just 63% of sand and gravel reserves.</p> <p>SD commented that, in relation to LAAs, it is not clear when these are to be published and consultation on them appears to be limited, even acknowledging that AWP members are able to comment. RG advised that LAAs are usually produced in September / October and RR commented that they are meant to be factual only and there is only a limited duty to consult. If wider consultation was required, more resources would need to be devoted to this and it is unlikely they could be produced annually. MN suggested that LAAs are not fit for purpose as some authorities do not recognise that imports constitute part of their regional demand and yet inspectors tend to accept what is written in an LAA. They should therefore carry a health warning.</p> <p>CJ agreed with RR to the effect that LAAs should be factual only and that forecasts should be left to development plans* which are consulted on. RR noted that in some AWP regions, LAAs are produced before the AMR meaning that if data in the LAAs is wrong, mistakes will be transposed into the AMR. JW and DP commented that their understanding was that this was the accepted way round because the AMR was supposed to reflect the 'LAA rate'. A discussion ensued on what constituted the LAA rate and <b>JW will seek clarification on both points from DLUHC.</b></p> <p>*Note that following a subsequent meeting of the EEAWP on 21 June 2022, a request was made to edit the asterisked sentence above to clarify that the statement that 'forecasts should be left to development plans' is incorrect as LAAs <i>are</i> required to forecast demand, as per paragraph 213(a) of the NPPF.</p>	
4	<b>Update on Recycled Aggregates Issue</b>	<b>RR</b>
	<p>RR has been chairing a group discussing the question of how to assess quantities of recycled aggregate to ensure consistency. A standardised methodology followed by all authorities would be useful, if possible. Currently, some authorities (including EEAWP members) rely on the EA WDI for this data, whilst others (for example, SWAWP members) rely on surveys. A meeting of the EWTAB was held on 24 January which provided an opportunity for feedback. The EA WDI has been improving over the years and should continue to do so. However, there is no certainty as to when it is published each year but it is usually towards the</p>	

	<p>end of the year. RR proposed that, if the latest WDI is not available, then data from the previous year would need to be used so as not to delay publication of the LAA.</p> <p>JW had circulated an email on this matter at the start of January but some members had not received it. <b>JW will recirculate.</b></p>	
5	<b>Mineral Products Association Update</b>	<b>MN</b>
	<p>MN referred to the following market update which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>UK ECONOMY</b> The UK economic recovery continues even if momentum has slowed. After c.7% growth in 2021, the Bank of England expects GDP growth of 5% in 2022 and 1.6% in 2023, assuming the impact of Covid on activity continues to wane. With the forecast having been published before the emergence of Omicron, recent developments would not have been considered and are now causing concerns. Forecasters' initial assessment suggests that the impact may be relatively small given the economy's adaptability to past restrictions and established vaccination programmes.</li> <li>• <b>CONSTRUCTION</b> Construction output declined by 1.5% in 2021Q3, as supply chain issues and rising costs continue to impact on the sector. Yet, whilst the supply environment remains a challenge, the demand pipeline is robust: new contract awards reached £8.3bn in October, the highest value since April. Construction output is expected to rise by 4.8% in 2022 according to the CPA despite lingering disruptions to supply chains and rising costs. Infrastructure will be the key driver of growth for 2022.</li> <li>• <b>MINERAL PRODUCTS MARKETS</b> Despite some slowdown during 2021Q3, the supply of mineral products has remained brisk to date. On the basis of the outlook for construction as set out by the CPA, MPA expects demand for mineral products to remain relatively robust through 2022 and 2023, although the profile of growth is set to be stronger for crushed rock and asphalt sales compared to other markets given the expected momentum in infrastructure and road projects, assuming timely delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Nigel Jackson will be retiring from the MPA in June. A new chief executive is being sought.</p>	
6	<b>British Aggregates Association Update</b>	<b>PH</b>
	<p>PH reported good progress generally with most mineral sites up and running despite Covid outbreaks. He expressed the hope that the forward momentum would continue.</p>	

7	<b>Mineral Local Plans Update</b>	<b>MPAs / All</b>
	<p>The Minerals Local Plan Update had been circulated prior to the meeting. <b>A further copy will follow as Bedfordshire's update had not made it in.</b></p> <p>RR commented that the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan was meant to be subject to review this year; however, attempts to recruit a Principal Planning Officer as dedicated staffing resource for this project had resulted in zero applications. Alternative approaches are now being considered.</p> <p>PD advised that Essex is now doing a Call for Sites, and that as part of this, it is re-assessing its approach to mineral provision given the expiration of the National and Sub-National Guidelines that currently underpin the MLP. It is now proposed that the MLP forecasts future need on the basis of an average of 10 year rolling sales + 20%. This represents a figure of 3.74mtpa, down from 4.31mtpa. To support the Call for Sites, Essex is also undertaking a non-statutory engagement on Policy S6 which quantifies mineral need. The Call for Sites and engagement on Policy S6 is taking place between 11th February – 25th March 2022. A full Regulation 18 consultation on Policy S6 and its proposed list of Preferred/ Unpreferred Sites is likely to follow in due course.</p>	
8	<b>RTPI/MPA Conference</b>	<b>MN</b>
	<p>This is scheduled for 15 June 2022 to be held both live (near Westminster) and online. Input is sought from members into themes and topics that might be useful for discussion. <b>Please can feedback be sent directly to MN on this.</b></p>	
9	<b>Any other business</b>	<b>All</b>
	<p>RR commented that a task group had now been set up in relation to the Ox-Cam Arc to look at mineral issues. However, despite repeated suggestions that it would be of real benefit to see demand data for minerals, there is continuing uncertainty in this regard and surrounding the Arc generally and it appears that the government is not pushing this forwards as it is not clear how it fits with the levelling up agenda. MN concurred with RR and commented that it does not appear that government is listening to industry or mineral planning authorities and that without an overall understanding of the local demand for minerals, there is a risk that it could only ever be a piecemeal development.</p> <p>EF commented that there has been good feedback in respect of the mineral and waste groups but, politically, the number of houses proposed and their location is an issue. A government steer is needed for the Ox-Cam project to continue.</p> <p>NE advised that the Marine Aggregates tender was now closed for bids.</p>	
10	<b>Dates and times of next meetings</b>	<b>RG</b>

	<p>It was agreed that the next two meetings will take place in June and November and that the aim will be to discuss a draft AMR at the June meeting as this is what has been done in previous years. The meetings will be held online.</p> <p><b>JW will liaise with RG regarding specific dates in June and will circulate suggested dates in due course.</b></p>	<p><b>ALL TO NOTE</b></p>
	<p>The meeting finished at 12.15pm.</p>	

Action points

- a) Members are encouraged to include a copy of the link to the DJA EEAWP webpage on their websites if they have not done so already.
- b) Members are asked to apprise JW as to when LAAs are being circulated for comment and to send her a final copy of the completed LAA.
- c) Members are asked to focus on obtaining information on productive capacity as part of the operator surveys.
- d) DLUHC is asked to look into the worsening situation relating to the EA which is considered to be a national issue that needs to be urgently addressed.
- e) JW to add CD into the EEAWP distribution list and invite her to meetings.
- f) JW to upload a copy of the final minutes of the previous meeting on to the David Jarvis Associates website.
- g) Going forwards, members are asked to provide a little more feedback as to whether members agree or disagree with overall conclusions within the draft AMR.
- h) Guidance is sought as to what constitutes a 'major construction project' for the purposes of the AMR. JW to liaise with DLUHC on this.
- i) JW to seek clarification both as to what constitutes an 'LAA rate' and on the order in which LAAs should be produced in relation to the AMR.
- j) JW to recirculate an email regarding recycled aggregates which some members had not received it.
- k) JW to recirculate a copy of the MLPU to include Bedfordshire's update.
- l) Members to send feedback to MN regarding matters for discussion at the RTP/MPA Conference.
- m) JW to liaise with RG regarding the meeting date in June.