Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Transport and Environment Committee

17 November 2021

Agenda Item:8

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAM LOCAL AGGREGATES ASSESSMENT – 2019 AND 2020 SALES DATA

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform the Committee of the 2019 and 2020 sales figures for aggregate minerals in Nottinghamshire and to approve the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Aggregates Assessments (LAA).

Information

2. As a Minerals Planning Authority (MPA), Nottinghamshire County Council is required to prepare a Minerals Local Plan against which applications for minerals development can be assessed. As part of the ongoing monitoring of the adopted Plan, it is important to track the sales of aggregate minerals to ensure that a steady and adequate supply of minerals can be provided over the plan period.

3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires MPAs to undertake an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA). The LAA should include average 10-year sales data and other relevant local information. This could for example include significant house or road building, new infrastructure for major projects or issues such as the exploitation of major new resources or resource depletion affecting future output.

4. Due to delays in gathering sales data during the Covid-19 pandemic, this report covers two Local Aggregates Assessment periods. The first LAA covers the period 2010-2019 and the second LAA covers the period 2011- 2020.

5. The NPPF also requires MPAs to participate in an Aggregate Working Party (AWP) and take account of the advice of the AWP when preparing their LAA; for Nottinghamshire this is the East Midlands AWP.

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LAA

6. The Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LAA covers the County as well as the City as most mineral consumed within the City will be extracted within the county or further afield. Below is a summary of the key findings. Both LAAs are appended to this report for reference.

Sand and Gravel

7. Sand and gravel sales are very sensitive to economic conditions and as a result of the recession, fell sharply between 2007 and 2010. Since 2010, sales in Nottinghamshire have remained subdued as some existing permitted quarries in the county have not been worked. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and winter flooding along the River Trent is also likely to have reduced 2020 sales figures.

8. Sales of sand and gravel in 2019 (1.47mt) fell slightly compared to 2018 (1.56mt), however sales in 2020 fell significantly to 0.91mt. See table 1a.

Table 1a: sand and gravel sales

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sales (Million Tonnes)	1.56	1.71	1.55	1.39	1.43	1.52	1.27	1.30	1.56	1.47	0.91

9. The 2019 10-year sales average (1.47mt) was comparable to the 2018 figure (1.46mt) but fell to 1.41 million tonnes in 2020. The 3-year sales average increased slightly in 2019 (1.44mt) compared to 2018 (1.38mt) but fell in 2020 to 1.31mt. See table 1b.

Table 1b: 10 and 3-year sales averages

	10-year sales average 2010-2019 (million tonnes)	10-years sales average 2011-2020 (million tonnes)	3-year sales average 2017-2019 (million tonnes)	3-year sales average 2018-2020 (million tonnes)
Sand and gravel	1.47	1.41	1.44	1.31

10. Permitted reserves of sand and gravel have steadily fallen year on year as mineral is worked but not replaced by new quarry permissions. However, the landbank as of December 2020 still stands at 12.74 years, well above the minimum 7-year requirement set out in national guidance. See table 1c.

Table 1c: Permitted reserves and landbank figure

	Permitted reserves Dec 2019 (million tonnes)	Permitted reserves Dec 2020 (million tonnes)	Landbank Dec 2019 (Years)	Landbank Dec 2020 (Years)
Sand and gravel	18.94	17.97	12.85	12.74

Sherwood Sandstone

11. Sherwood Sandstone sales are much lower than sand and gravel as it is used in more specialist markets. As with sand and gravel, sales fell significantly between 2007 and 2010 due to the recession. Since 2010 sales have remained relatively stable albeit at a lower level. As with sand and gravel the Covid-19 pandemic will have influenced 2020 sales.

12. Sales of Sherwood Sandstone in 2019 (0.40mt) fell slightly compared to 2018 (0.46mt), however sales in 2020 fell significantly to 0.15mt. See table 2a

Table 2a: Sherwood Sandstone sales

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Sales (Million Tonnes)	0.32	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.34	0.38	0.32	0.38	0.46	0.4	0.15

13. The 2019 10-year sales average (0.37mt) was comparable to the 2018 figure (0.36mt) but fell to 0.35 million tonnes in 2020. The 3-year average showed a small increase in 2019 (0.41mt) compared to 2018 (0.39mt) but fell to 0.34 million tonnes in 2020. See table 2b.

Table 2b: 10 and 3-year average sales

	10-year sales average 2010-2019 (million tonnes)	10-years sales average 2011-2020 (million tonnes)	3-year sales average 2017-2019 (million tonnes)	3-year sales average 2018-2020 (million tonnes)
Sherwood Sandstone	0.37	0.35	0.41	0.34

14. Permitted reserves of Sherwood Sandstone increased between 2019 and 2020 due to an extension to Bestwood 2 quarry and the reassessment of reserves at other quarries. As a result, permitted reserves have increased and the landbank currently stands at 25.66 years, well above the minimum 7-year requirement set out in national guidance.

Table 2c: Permitted reserves and landbank figure

	Permit74ted reserves Dec 2019 (million tonnes)	Permitted reserves Dec 2020 (million tonnes)	Landbank Dec 2019 (Years)	Landbank Dec 2020 (Years)
Sherwood Sandstone	8.1	8.98	21.9	25.66

Crushed Rock (including aggregate limestone)

15. Nottinghamshire only has one dedicated aggregate limestone quarry (at Nether Langwith). The quarry was originally opened to supplement a much larger quarry in Derbyshire, however it has been inactive since 2007. No sales were recorded in 2018, in line with previous years.

Alternative Aggregates

16. Alternative aggregates are made up of recycled and secondary materials and includes some types of construction and demolition waste, asphalt road planings, Desulphogypsum (DSG) and ash from power stations.

17. National estimates show an overall increase in the use of alternative aggregates over the last 30 years, peaking at 71 million tonnes in 2007. Sales rise and fall in line with the overall demand for aggregates, with sales in 2016 standing at 66.9 million tonnes. It is estimated that alternative aggregates make up around 29% of total aggregate use – three times higher than the European average.

18. The British Geological Survey and Minerals Products Association acknowledge that further significant growth is likely to be limited due to the high levels that are already being recycled. The availability, cost and suitability of these materials to meet specific technical specifications will also affect their ability to replace primary aggregates.

19. The amount of DSG and ash available from power stations is also likely to fall significantly in the future as the remaining coal fired power stations are to be decommissioned by 2025.

20. Local data for alternative aggregates remains limited. The only data available is throughput data at permitted recycling facilities rather than sales data.

21. As recycled aggregates are available on the open market, their contribution is already taken into account when calculating future demand for primary aggregates owing to their impact on annual sales.

Additional Demand for Aggregates in Nottinghamshire

22. Along with the 10-year average, the LAA is required to take account of other relevant local information in regard to additional future demand. This includes any significant infrastructure projects, future house building and population growth. Future infrastructure projects are likely to include improvements to the A1/A46 junction near Newark, and The High Speed 2 line which will pass along the western boundary of the county. Based on the most recent 10-year housing trajectory data available from the District and Boroughs, house building rates are expected to peak in 2020 / 2021 at 8070 before steadily falling back to 4412 in 2027/2028. However, housing completions in the past three years have been around 4000 per annum, which would suggest a peak of 8070 house completions is unlikely. Future demand from outside the county – particularly from Rotherham and Doncaster is also taken into account.

23. The LAA does not regard these local factors as leading to a significant increase in sales of aggregates in the short to medium term. It therefore suggests that the 10-year sales averages are a reliable basis for considering future demand.

National Sales

24. The 2019 Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales produced by the British Geological Survey for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government provides data on national sales of aggregate minerals. Total sales of primary aggregates produced in England and Wales including marine dredged sand and gravel, excluding imports from outside England and Wales stood at 148.1 million tonnes. This is an 8% increase on sales in 2014 (137 million tonnes). Crushed rock showed the largest increase (16%) from 82.5 million tonnes in 2014 to 95.8 million tonnes in 2019. Sales of land-won sand and gravel increased (1%) from 40.5 million tonnes in 2014 to 40.9 million tonnes in 2019.

East Midland Sales

25. The EMAWP Annual Monitoring Report collates data relating to aggregates sales for each Minerals Planning Authority in the East Midlands. The latest report shows that unlike Nottinghamshire, sand and gravel sales across the East Midlands up to 2018 have been steadily increasing from the low point in 2009. 2018 sales stand at 7.15 million tonnes. Sales of Crushed rock across the area have increased from the low point in 2012. However, from 2016 onwards sales have fallen slightly year on year. 2018 sales stand at 27.83 million tonnes.

Targeted Consultation

26. As required by national planning guidance, the Local Aggregates Assessments have been submitted to the East Midlands Aggregate Working Party to seek their views on the approach set out in the LAA.

27. Concerns were raised by Lincolnshire County Council (as the Minerals Planning Authority) who felt that the sand and gravel 10-year average figure should be increased to take account of imports into the county – in turn increasing the provision figure for Nottinghamshire. Leicestershire County Council (as the Minerals Planning Authority) were happy with the approach set out in the LAA. No responses were received from the minerals industry. It is not considered necessary to amend the Aggregate Assessments in light of these comments.

Conclusion

28. The 2020 data shows that sales of sand and gravel and Sherwood Sandstone in Nottinghamshire have fallen, and this is reflected in the longer term 10 and 3-year averages. The latest 10-year average sales figures (2011-2020) stand at 1.41 million tonnes for sand and gravel and 0.35 million tonnes for Sherwood Sandstone.

29. Sales in Nottinghamshire are likely to have fallen due to a combination of factors. This includes existing permitted quarries not being worked, winter flooding along the River Trent and the Covid-19 pandemic.

30. The future aggregate demand assumptions made in the recently adopted Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan (March 2021) were based on the higher 10-year sales averages from 2007-2016. The plan set annual production for sand and gravel at 1.7 million tonnes per annum and 0.37 million tonnes per annum for Sherwood Sandstone.

31. As a result of the lower sales figures - particularly for sand and gravel, the demand forecasts set out in the Minerals Local Plan remain up to date and will provide flexibility in the event of any future upturn in aggregates sales.

32. The LAA is produced annually and will be used to monitor aggregate sales in Nottinghamshire going forward.

Other Options Considered

33. The only other option would be not to approve or publish a new Local Aggregate Assessment, however the production of this document is a requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework and Managed Aggregate Supply System (MASS) guidance. It is new evidence which supports the review of the Minerals Local Plan and it is important that the Committee approves its publication.

Reason for Recommendation

34. To agree the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Aggregates Assessment as it forms part of the evidence base of the Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan. Production of Minerals Local Plan and associated documents is a statutory requirement.

Statutory and Policy Implications

35. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial implications

36. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. The Committee should note that the City Council contribute £750 per annum towards the production of the document since it covers their obligations as a mineral planning authority.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That Committee approves the publication of the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Aggregates Assessment 2019 and the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Local Aggregates Assessment 2020.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact: Stephen Pointer, Team Manager, Planning Policy, 0115 9939388

Constitutional Comments [SG 13/10/2021]

37. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of the Transport and Environment Committee

Financial Comments [RWK 07/10/2021]

38. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All