

Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities

Joint Minerals and Waste Plan

SA/SEA Post Adoption Statement

2022



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1. Introduction

The Joint Minerals and Waste Plan

- 1.1 Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough Council (collectively referred to as the 'Central & Eastern Berkshire Authorities') worked in partnership to produce the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (referred to herein as 'the Joint Plan'), which will guide minerals and waste decision-making in the Joint Plan area.
- 1.2 These Authorities also worked in partnership to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Joint Plan, which incorporates requirements for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). These combined assessments assessed the social, economic and environmental effects of implementing the Joint Plan, and reasonable alternatives, with the purpose of promoting the objectives of sustainable development and ensuring their integration within the Joint Plan. The Joint Plan has been through Examination and with the incorporation of Main Modifications, has been found sound.

Purpose

- 1.3 SA/SEA Adoption Statements are a key tool for improving transparency in the decision making process. This document allows stakeholders to see how environmental and sustainability factors have been considered throughout the Joint Plan's preparation. It demonstrates how consultation comments have been taken into account throughout the process and outlines the measures for monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the Joint Plan.
- 1.4 This Post-Adoption Statement is required by the SEA Regulations¹ to consider and report on the following:
 - how environmental (and sustainability) considerations have been integrated into the Joint Plan;
 - how the Environmental Report (contained within the SA Report) has been taken into account during the preparation of the Joint Plan;
 - action taken by the Authorities to provide public access to consultation documents;
 - how opinions expressed by the public, consultation bodies and where appropriate with EU Member States, during consultation on the Joint Plan and Environmental Report, have been taken into account;
 - the reasons for choosing the Joint Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Joint Plan.

The required information is set out under these headings in the remainder of this report.

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (Regulation 16) - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made>

1.5 This Post Adoption Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents prepared as part of the SA/SEA of the Joint Plan during its preparation:

- SA/SEA Revised Scoping Report (June 2017)².
- SA/SEA Revised Baseline Report (June 2017)³.
- SA/SEA Interim Report (June 2018)⁴.
- Bray Quarry Extension Regulation 18 Consultation (June 2019)⁵.
- Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation: Sand and Gravel Provision and Operator Performance (February 2020)⁶.
- SA/SEA Updated Baseline Report (May 2020).
- SA/SEA Environmental Report (August 2020)⁷.
- Environmental Report SA/SEA Main Modifications Addendum (November 2021)⁸.

² Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment): Revised Scoping Report June 2017 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

³ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment): Revised Baseline Report June 2017 www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

⁴ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Interim SA/SEA Report June 2018 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

⁵ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Bray Quarry Extension Regulation 18 Consultation (June 2019) - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

⁶ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation: Sand & Gravel Provision and Operator Performance (February 2020) - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

⁷ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Environmental Report SA/SEA August 2020 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

⁸ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Environmental Report SA/SEA Main Modifications Addendum November 2021 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

2. How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Joint Plan

- 2.1 As an integral part of the SA/SEA process, various environmental, social and economic issues have been identified through: a review of a wide range of relevant plans, programmes and policies; the collection of a comprehensive environmental and wider sustainability baseline; and the identification of sustainability issues and problems. The review and baseline are set out in the SA/SEA Revised Scoping Report and SA/SEA Updated Baseline Report, respectively, as listed above.
- 2.2 Identified issues have informed the development of the sustainability appraisal framework, which include a set of sustainable development policy objectives (sustainability objectives). This framework was used to appraise the emerging Joint Plan and the reasonable alternatives to its proposals. In this way, environmental considerations have underpinned the appraisal of the Joint Plan and helped to ensure that these are integrated into it. The sustainability objectives used for the assessment are set out in Table 1, below.

Table 1: SA/SEA Sustainability Appraisals used to test the Joint Plan

SA/SEA Objective	
1) Biodiversity	To conserve and enhance the biodiversity, flora and fauna of the Plan area including natural habitat and protected species.
2) Water quality	To maintain and improve ground and surface water quality in the Plan area.
3) Landscape and heritage	Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness and historic environment of the Plan area.
4) Ground conditions	To maintain and protect soil quality and protect the best and most versatile agricultural land.
5) Quality of life	To improve the overall quality of life of the population.
6) Air quality	To maintain and protect air quality.
7) Emissions / Climate change	To reduce emissions of greenhouse gases associated with climate change.
8) Sustainable materials	To support sustainable extraction, re-use and recycling of mineral and aggregate resources.
9) Economic growth	To reduce poverty and deprivation.
10) Sustainable waste and minerals	To create and sustain high levels of access to waste and mineral services.
11) Flood risk	To alleviate flood risk and the impact of flooding.

3. How the Environmental Report has been taken into account during the preparation of the Joint Plan

- 3.1 The preparation of the SA/SEA was undertaken iteratively, in tandem with Joint Plan preparation. The SA/SEA informed decision making around issues and options, preferred options and policy formulation within the draft Joint Plan. The SA/SEA findings and recommendations have been taken into account when making modifications to the Joint Plan throughout its development.
- 3.2 As options for policies and proposals emerged, the recommendations from the SA/SEA for the enhancement of positive effects and the mitigation of negative effects, have been used to inform those options that have gone forward for further consideration.
- 3.3 An update to the SA/SEA Environmental Report was undertaken to review the proposed Main Modifications, following the Hearings for the Examination in Public. This confirmed that the implementation of the Main Modifications do not affect the findings of the SA/SEA Environmental Report.
- 3.4 It is important to note that the work undertaken on the SA/SEA has been developed alongside the development of an extensive set of evidence base documents to support plan preparation. These include a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The findings of these documents were considered in the plan-making process alongside the SA/SEA at each relevant stage and these documents have also informed the SA/SEA process.
- 3.5 A summary of how the SA/SEA has been integrated into the Joint Plan is shown in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Integration of SA/SEA process with Joint Plan preparation stages

SA/SEA Stages and Tasks⁹	Deliverable
<i>CEB Joint Plan Pre-Production</i>	
<u>Stage A: Setting the context, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</u> A1: identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives A2: collecting baseline information A3: identifying sustainability issues and problems A4: developing the SA/SEA Framework A5: consulting on the scope of the SA/SEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping and Baseline Reports (March 2017) • Revised Scoping and Baseline Reports (June 2017) • Updated Baseline Report (May 2020)
<i>CEB Joint Plan Production</i>	
<u>Stage B: Developing and refining options assessing effects</u> B1: testing the Joint Plan's objectives of the SA/SEA framework B2: developing and refining the options B3: predicting the effects B4: evaluating the effects B5: considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects B6: proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Joint Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim SA/SEA Report (June 2018) • Bray Quarry Extension Regulation 18 Consultation (June 2019) (included SA/SEA) • Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation: Sand & Gravel Provision and Operator Performance (February 2020) (included SA/SEA) • Environmental Report (August 2020)
<u>Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report</u> C1: preparing the Interim SA/SEA Report C2: preparing the Environmental Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim SA/SEA Report (June 2018) • Environmental Report (August 2020)
<u>Stage D: Consulting on the Draft Plan</u> D1: consultation on the Draft Joint Plan and accompanying Interim SA/SEA Report D2: consultation on Proposed Submission Joint Plan and accompanying Environmental Report	
<i>CEB Joint Plan Examination</i>	
D3: appraising significant changes resulting from representations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Report Main Modifications Addendum (November 2021)
<i>CEB Joint Plan Adoption</i>	
<u>Stage E: Monitoring significant effects of implementing the Plan</u> E1: Finalising aims and methods of monitoring E2: responding to adverse effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Minerals and Waste Plan Monitoring Reports

⁹ Tasks as Defined in 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, September 2005'.

4. Action taken by the Authorities to provide public access to consultation documents

- 4.1 SA/SEA documentation was made available in line with the Statements of Community Involvement of the Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities.
- 4.2 A dedicated website¹⁰ was created to provide a central location where all documentation relating to all key stages of Joint Plan preparation (including SA/SEA) can be accessed, for the benefit of statutory bodies, key stakeholders and the general public.
- 4.3 Interested parties have been able to view documents in hard copy format at the offices of each of the Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities, with necessary adjustments made during COVID-19 restrictions. All documents were also available in large print, Braille, audio cassette or alternative language formats, upon request.

¹⁰ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan Website - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

5. How opinions expressed in response to consultation have been taken into account

5.1 Statutory bodies, key stakeholders and the public have had opportunities to comment on the various stages of Joint Plan preparation including the associated stages of SA/SEA, as follows:

- ‘Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation’ that ran for six weeks from 9 June to 21 July 2017 (included Revised SA/SEA Scoping and Baseline Reports June 2017);
- ‘Regulation 18 Draft Plan Consultation’ that ran for ten weeks from 6 August to 12 October 2018 (included SA/SEA Interim Report June 2018);
- ‘Additional Regulation 18 (Site Specific) Consultation’ that ran for six weeks, from 9 July to 19 August 2019 (included SA/SEA of the new site – Bray Quarry Extension);
- ‘Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation - Sand and Gravel Provision and Operator Performance’ that ran for six weeks from 11 February to 23 March 2020 (included SA/SEA of two additional sites, an ‘Area of Search’ approach and inclusion of a new draft Policy 15: Past Operator Performance);
- ‘Regulation 19 Proposed Submission Consultation’ that ran for six weeks from 3 September to 15 October 2020 (included SA/SEA Environmental Report August 2020); and
- ‘Regulation 24 Public Examination Main Modifications Consultation’ that ran for six weeks from 28 February 2022 to 11 April 2022 (included Environmental Report SA/SEA Main Modifications Addendum November 2021).

5.2 The Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities published the following consultation documents relating to the consultations listed above, detailing the representations made and how they were addressed (including for the SA/SEA process and associated documentation):

- Consultation Statement: Post Regulation 18 – Issues and Options (September 2017)¹¹.
- Consultation Summary Report: Post Regulation 18 – Draft Plan (April 2019)¹².
- Consultation Summary Report: Addendum (August 2019)¹³.
- Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation: Summary Report (April 2020)¹⁴.
- Consultation Statement (Proposed Submission) (July 2020)¹⁵.

¹¹ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Statement: Post Regulation 18 – Issues and Options September 2017 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

¹² Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Summary Report: Post Regulation 18 – Draft Plan April 2019 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

¹³ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Summary Report: Addendum August 2019 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

¹⁴ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Focussed Regulation 18 Consultation: Summary Report April 2020 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

¹⁵ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Statement (Proposed Submission) July 2020 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

- Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) document (February 2021)¹⁶.
- Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) Annex 1 (February 2021)¹⁷.

5.3 The Authorities considered the representations made at Examination when preparing the schedule of Main Modifications for consultation. When preparing the final report of the Joint Plan’s Examination in Public, the Inspectors considered the representations made in response to the Main Modifications consultation held between 28 February 2022 and 11 April 2022.

5.4 Although the SA/SEA process began pre-Brexit and in compliance with the European SEA Directive, no transboundary consultations were deemed necessary as part of the Joint Plan preparation process.

¹⁶ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) February 2021 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

¹⁷ Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan – Consultation Statement (Regulation 22) Annex 1 February 2021 - www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult.

6. Reasons for choosing the Joint Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives

- 6.1 The SEA Regulations requires that ‘reasonable alternatives’ are taken into account. Sustainability considerations have been taken into account throughout the development of the Joint Plan. Early drafts and subsequent iterations of the Joint Plan (including the vision, objectives, policies and sites) have been subjected to SA. At each stage the likely effects of emerging options were appraised against the SA Framework.
- 6.2 A full explanation of the options considered during Joint Plan preparation are set out in the Environmental Report SA/SEA: Proposed Submission (August 2020), in particular the following sections:
- Section 3: Developing and refining options;
 - Appendix D: Objectives options;
 - Appendix E: Development Management Policy options;
 - Appendix F: Waste Policy options; and
 - Appendix G: Minerals Policy options.
- 6.3 Three potential scenarios were considered in the SA/SEA with respect to managing minerals and waste resources: ‘no plan’; ‘business as usual’ and the development of a new Joint Minerals and Waste Plan. The SA/SEA also considered reasonable options with respect to: the Joint Plan in its entirety; alternative policies; and alternative sites.
- 6.4 Only ‘reasonable’ policy options were taken forward for SA/SEA. For the purposes of the assessment, the criteria used to determine whether a policy was ‘reasonable’ included whether it complied with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and/or it was applicable.
- 6.5 The NPPF states that Mineral Planning Authorities should make provision, in the form of specific sites or locations, to meet the requirements identified in the Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA). The LAA sets out how a steady and adequate supply of aggregate will be achieved including the maintenance of a minimum of a seven year landbank (seven years-worth of permitted mineral reserves based on an average rate of depletion). Therefore, the scenario of ‘no plan’ was not considered a reasonable option and was eliminated as it would not comply with national planning policy.
- 6.6 The ‘business as usual’ option, effectively meaning a continuation of the existing plan, was also discounted due to the need to update and improve policies in line with statutory requirements.
- 6.7 Due to the limited number of site options, the approach was taken to assess the sites on their own merits / constraints allowing plan-makers to determine whether each site should be considered as an allocation taking all factors into consideration.

7. The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Joint Plan.

- 7.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, requires local planning authorities to prepare reports containing information on how plan preparation is progressing and the extent to which policies set out in those plans are being achieved. This report, known as an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), which will be made publicly available, monitors and assesses:
- the effectiveness of adopted minerals and waste planning policies;
 - progress in preparing new local development documents; and
 - how well the Authorities are achieving the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 7.2 The report helps the Authorities assess the effectiveness and relevance of the Joint Plan and can prompt alterations to policies to reflect changing circumstances. Although the plan has been produced jointly, there is no requirement to produce a joint monitoring report.
- 7.3 Each of the policies contained within the Joint Plan has associated monitoring indicators to measure its effectiveness, and thresholds for when a policy should be reviewed. These thresholds may relate to a breach over a 5-year period or less. The monitoring information will be collated and reported annually. In addition to monitoring how each of the policies is performing, the inter-relationship of the policies will be monitored in order to measure the effectiveness of the policies to provide mitigation and adaption to the effects of climate change.
- 7.4 Additional to the above monitoring indicators, Policy DM2 – Climate change mitigation and adaption requires applicants to submit a Climate Change Assessment. This must outline a commitment to supply the data to the relevant Authority for reporting in the Authority Monitoring Report. Furthermore, Policy DM15 – Site history requires monitoring information to be submitted by applicants to support the determination of a planning application, particularly where developments have a long or complex history of issues.
- 7.5 Monitoring of waste arisings and progress in increasing capacity will be particularly important as waste quantities can vary considerably from year to year, making predictions of growth less reliable. Growth rates will be regularly checked, while allowing enough time for yearly fluctuations to even out.
- 7.6 Annual aggregate monitoring will be reported in the Local Aggregate Assessment to ensure that, if required, permissions can be granted for mineral extraction before the landbank falls below 7 years.

8. Concluding Statement

- 8.1 This SA/SEA Post Adoption Statement shows that the Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities have undertaken a comprehensive, rigorous and robust integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan that is compliant with the SEA Regulations (and EU SEA Directive pre-Brexit), and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requirements on SA.
- 8.2 This document also shows that the Authorities have met the statutory requirements for consultation with statutory agencies and the general public, that the SA/SEA has effectively informed the Joint Plan through its development and that appropriate measures have been established to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the Joint Plan.

A summary of this document can be made available in large print, in Braille or audio cassette. Copies in other languages may also be obtained. Please contact Hampshire Services by email berks.consult@hants.gov.uk or by calling 0370 779 5634.