Topic Paper 12: Minerals and Waste Summary

Introduction

Minerals are essential to provide the infrastructure, buildings, green energy and goods that the country needs, and since they are a finite resource, they can only be worked where they are found, so best use needs to made to secure their long-term management.

Context

Minerals

The Minerals Planning Authorities of Greater Manchester, Merseyside (Including Knowsley) and Warrington (17 unitary local authorities) have worked together to produce a series of joint Local Aggregate Assessments (LAA), reflecting their status as a single aggregate apportionment subregion under the Managed Aggregate Supply System (MASS)1. The latest report2 was published in January 2025 and covers the period January 2019 to December 2022.

The report identifies that the general trend has been one of declining reserves within the sub-region, due in large part to the heavily urban nature of the area and the lack of workable aggregate resources within it. It suggests that there is no easy solution to increasing the sales of both crushed rock and sand and gravel to match the consumption levels required to service Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Halton and Warrington. This is a predominantly urban sub-region, with little scope to expand existing quarries or to initiate new ones. Aggregates imported from elsewhere will likely continue to be important in terms of meeting demand within the sub-region. There is also recognition of the importance of identifying alternative sources of aggregates in order to reduce the amounts of primary aggregate required. There is an important market for recycled and secondary aggregates within the LAA area and it is hoped that this will increase to form a larger part of the sub-region's required aggregate supply in the coming years.

Waste

The waste types assessed in the published Waste Needs Assessment 2024 (WNA)3 are Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW), Commercial and Industrial (C&I)

[1] MASS is a process which looks at the demand and supply of aggregates in England and requires regions, such as the NW, to contribute to meeting this need. The system accounts for the ability of areas to provide aggregates and apportions the requirements out across the historic regional groupings of England.

[2] GMMHW-LAA-2019-2023_final_28Jan25.pdf

[3] Waste Needs Assessment

wastes, Construction, Demolition and Excavation (CD&E) wastes and Hazardous waste. There is also a section covering other controlled wastes, agricultural waste, low-level radioactive wastes (LLRW) and water treatment wastes. These waste streams are assessed to quantify current arising trends and facilities capacities to identify areas of shortfalls of waste handling within the plan area.

This WNA estimates a total of 3,314,399.86 tonnes of overall waste arose within the Joint Waste Plan area (Merseyside and Halton) in 2022. This comprises of 1,339,112.89 tonnes (40.40%) commercial and industrial wastes, 1,187,178.10 tonnes (35.82%) construction, demolition, and excavation wastes, 628,120.15 tonnes (18.95%) local authority collected waste and 159,988.72 tonnes (4.83%) hazardous waste arisings.

In terms of self-sufficiency the Joint Waste Plan area has steadily been importing more waste than it has been exporting overall. The facilities within the area are handling more waste from outside the plan area, however percentages are teetering around the 50% mark.

Key policies, plans and strategies

Minerals

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the development plan should provide for a sufficient supply of minerals of national and local importance. It goes on to state that in relation to aggregate minerals, the development plan should use the Local Aggregate Assessment, the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties and the National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group to identify the provision needed in the plan area. And that the development plan should allocate sites and/or identify preferred areas to maintain this provision.

In relation to industrial minerals the NPPF states that the development plan should use evidence of existing site capacities and demand to identify the level of provision needed to maintain a continuing level of supply for their use in industrial and manufacturing processes; and through cooperation with neighbouring and more distant authorities, identify how these requirements can be met through the allocation of sites and/or identification of preferred areas, taking into account the distribution of industrial minerals deposits.

When looking to prepare a Local Plan the NPPF suggests that relevant development plan policies should take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste can make to supply, in preference to the extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously. The NPPF also states that the development plan should define Mineral Safeguarding Areas, and where necessary require the prior extraction of minerals on sites allocated for non-mineral development where practical and environmentally

feasible. Therefore, if these issues are not addressed at the strategic level in the Spatial Development Strategy, and it is likely that they will need to be addressed by the Local Plan.

Waste

The NPPF does not address waste planning specifically, waste planning policies are laid out in the National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW). The NPPW is to be read alongside the NPPF, the National Waste Management Plan for England 2021 and the National Policy Statements (NPS) for wastewater and hazardous waste.

In relation to waste the NPPF sets out that achieving sustainable development means that planning system has three overarching objectives these are economic, social and environmental and they are interdependent, the environmental objective includes the need to minimise waste. It goes on to suggest that plans should set out the specific proposals to enable the delivery of sustainable waste management.

The National Planning Policy for Waste 2014 (NPPW) and associated Planning Practice Guidance currently set the planning policy context or waste management in England. The NPPW requires application of the Waste Hierarchy in priority order as one of the key principles of sustainable waste management, the waste hierarchy is set out in figure 1 below.

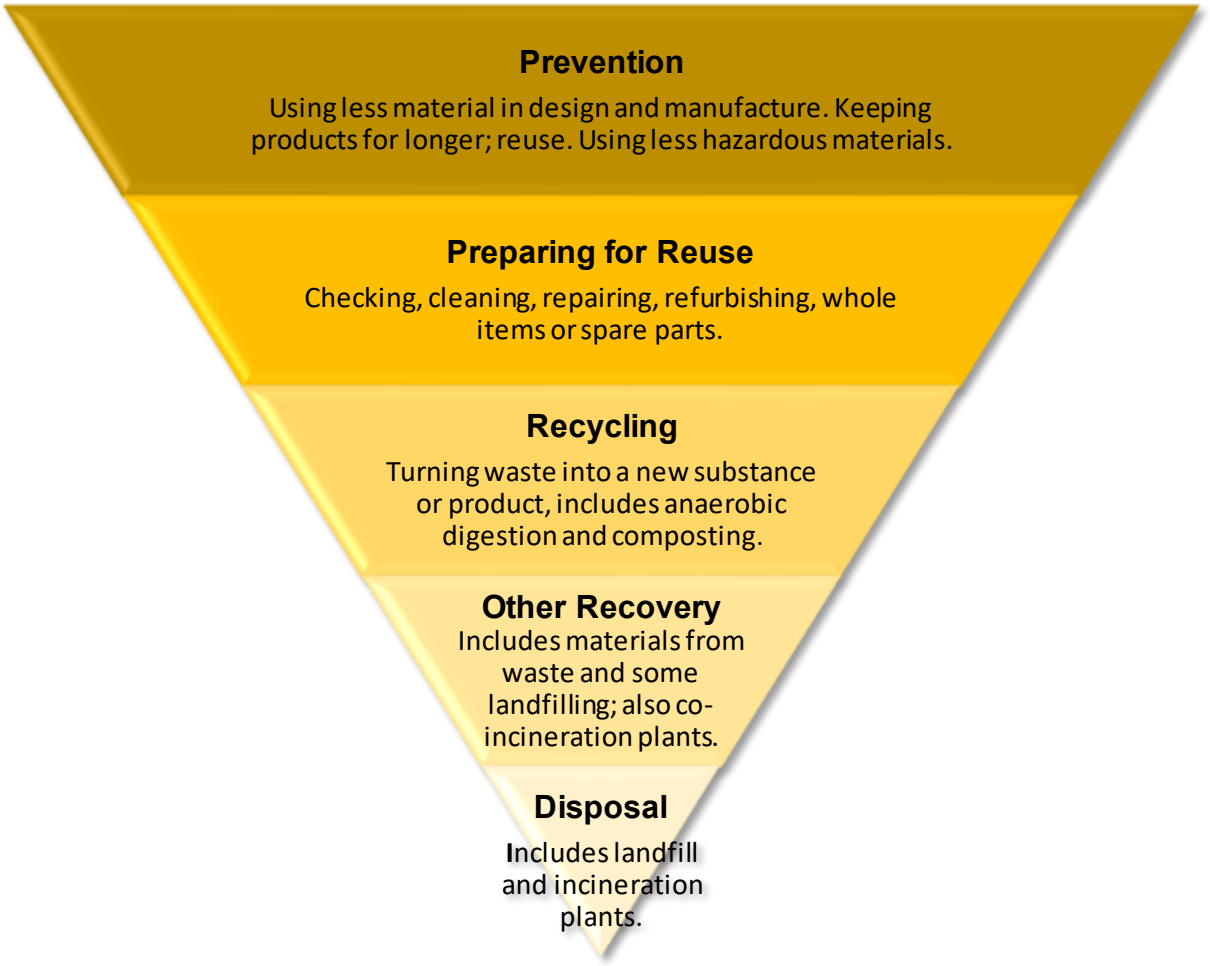

Figure 1: The Waste Hierarchy

The NPPW highlights that positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering the country's waste ambitions, including through ensuring waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns and ensuring the design and layout of new development and infrastructure complements sustainable waste management.

The NPPW states that waste planning authorities should identify in their Plans sites and/or areas for new or enhanced waste management facilities in appropriate locations. The NPPW also looks for the waste planning authority to monitor and report on the take up of allocated sites and areas; the existing stock and changes in the stock of waste management facilities, and their capacity, waste arisings; and the amounts of waste recycled, recovered or going for disposal.

The emerging Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy (LCR SDS) is currently being prepared, its latest consultation took place in November 2023. The first objective is in relation to tackling climate change and creating a cleaner, greener city region, it suggests that this will be achieved by managing and utilising resources,

including minerals and waste, in a sustainable, efficient and responsible way as part of a circular economy.

Key issues to be addressed by the Local Plan

- Declining Mineral Reserves – Existing permitted mineral reserves are finite and will diminish over time as extraction continues. The Local Plan will need to consider how an adequate and steady supply of minerals can be maintained throughout the plan period, taking account of local, sub-regional and national requirements.
- Availability of Future Mineral Resources – Opportunities for future mineral extraction may be constrained by environmental designations, existing development, infrastructure, land ownership and potential impacts on local communities. The Local Plan will need to balance the safeguarding of mineral resources against competing land-use priorities.
- Mineral Resource Safeguarding – Important mineral resources can be sterilised by non-mineral development. The Local Plan should safeguard economically viable mineral resources where appropriate and ensure that development does not unnecessarily prejudice future extraction opportunities.
- Dependence on Imported Minerals – The borough is reliant on minerals sourced from outside its boundaries to support housing, commercial development and infrastructure projects. The Local Plan should recognise the importance of maintaining an adequate and resilient supply of construction materials to support sustainable growth.
- Recycled and Secondary Aggregates – Recycled and secondary materials have an increasingly important role in reducing reliance on primary mineral extraction and supporting the transition to a more circular economy. The Local Plan should support facilities and infrastructure that enable the recovery, processing and use of recycled and secondary aggregates where appropriate.
- Sustainable Use of Mineral Resources – New development should promote the efficient use of minerals and construction materials, helping to reduce demand for primary aggregate resources and supporting more sustainable patterns of development.
- Waste Minimisation – The Local Plan should support development that reduces waste generation through sustainable construction practices, resource efficiency and the reuse of materials, helping to minimise the environmental impacts associated with waste production.
- Waste Management Infrastructure – Sufficient land and facilities will be required to manage the collection, transfer, treatment, recycling and disposal of waste arising within the borough. The Local Plan should ensure that an appropriate network of waste management facilities is maintained and enhanced to meet future needs.
- Moving Waste up the Waste Hierarchy – The Local Plan should support infrastructure and facilities that prioritise waste prevention, reuse, recycling and

recovery, reducing reliance on landfill and contributing to a more sustainable approach to resource management.

- Spatial Distribution of Waste Facilities – Waste management facilities should be located in appropriate and accessible locations that minimise impacts on communities and the environment whilst providing an effective and resilient waste management network across the borough.