

NCG (07) Minutes 1

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING GROUP FOR THE REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTIES.

NOTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2007 AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, LONDON.

Attendees:

Stephanie Hurst	-DCLG/Planning-Resources and Environment Policy Division (chair)
Peter Bide	-DCLG/Planning -Resources and Environment Policy Division
William Mackenzie	-DCLG/Planning -Resources and Environment Policy Division
Will Hawes	-DCLG/Housing Markets and Planning Analysis Division
Andrew Lipinski	-DCLG/Planning- Resources and Environment Policy Division
Martin Hooker	-South Wales RAWP/Bridgend County Borough Council
Jasbir Kaur	-West Midlands RAWP/Warwickshire County Council
John Kilford	-South East of England RAWP
Ian Thomas	-East Midlands & North Wales RAWPs/National Stone Centre
Phil Hale	-South West RAWP
John Leavitt	-East of England RAWP/Essex County Council
Lonek Wojtulewicz	-East Midlands RAWP/Leicestershire County Council
Chris Waite	-Convenor, RAWP Secretaries
Ken Hobden	-Quarry Products Association
Nigel Jackson	-Quarry Products Association/Lafarge
Chris Dobbs	-Quarry Products Association/Tarmac Central Ltd
Mick Daynes	-Quarry Products Association/Hanson Aggregates UK Ltd
Keith Frost	-Quarry Products Association/Cemex UK Operations Ltd
Peter Huxtable	-British Aggregates Association
Hugh Llewelyn	-DEFRA/Landscape Conservation Division
Richard Gill	-BERR/Regulatory Impact Construction Products Team

Apologies:

Apologies had been received from Paul Wilcox (West Midlands RAWP/Staffordshire County Council) represented by Jasbir Kaur, Gordon Halliday (North East RAWP/Northumberland County Council), Gareth Jones (North Wales RAWP/Gwynedd County Council) represented by Ian Thomas, Andy Farrow (North West RAWP/Cheshire County Council), Mark Jones (South West RAWP/Cornwall County Council) represented by Phil Hale, Peter Watson (Yorkshire and the Humber RAWP/Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority), Graham Tombs (Essex County Council/East of England RAWP) represented by Roy Leavitt, Adam Day (Quarry Products Association/Day Aggregates), Jeremy Murfitt (Quarry Products Association/Aggregate Industries UK Ltd), Mike Courts (Quarry Products Association/Robert Brett and Sons Ltd), Ian Mitchell (The Scottish Government), David Coleman (DEFRA/Sponsorship, Landscape and Recreation) represented by Hugh Llewelyn, Peter Fletcher (London AWP/London Borough of Havering), Natalie Bennett (Natural England), Mark Russell (British Marine Aggregate Producers

Association), Howard Button (National Federation of Demolition Contractors), Susan Martin (Welsh Assembly Government) and Nigel Gooding (Marine and Fisheries Agency).

Agenda Item 1: Chair’s Introduction and Apologies for Absence.

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting, noted the apologies for absence and explained that she and Sue Bonfanti had replaced Lester Hicks, who had retired from DCLG. She explained that the main objective of the meeting was to consult and seek the NCG’s advice on the draft fourth monitoring report and the draft revised guidelines for aggregates provision before submitting these to Ministers and subsequently publishing them for public consultation.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the meeting of the Technical Sub-Group (16 August 2007), the minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Group of the Technical Sub-Group (6 September 2007) and the minutes of the National Co-ordinating Group (10 July 2006).

2.1 The Chair presented the minutes of the NCG meeting and reported that DCLG had completed all the actions arising from the meeting. DCLG had received no comments on the minutes of the meeting.

Agenda Item 3: The draft Fourth Monitoring Report and draft revised National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England, 2005-2020 (Paper NCG 2007/01).

3.1 Peter Bide introduced the paper “The draft Fourth Monitoring report and draft revised National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England, 2005-2020”. The draft report had been revised on the advice of TSG, which met on the 16 August, and a sub-group of the TSG, which met on the 6 September, and incorporated comments made at both meetings.

3.2 CLG reported that the same methodology was used to prepare the revised forecasts as for the previous monitoring reports and was informed by Cambridge Econometrics forecasts of construction activity (February 2007) and the 2005 Aggregate Minerals (AM) Survey.

3.3 CLG reported that the forecasting model indicated a 5.2% decrease in demand for all aggregates nationally as compared to the June 2003 guidelines. Although this reduction would not normally be regarded as enough to warrant any change to the aggregate guidelines, it masks significant changes in forecasted demand for all aggregates at the regional level in the North East, South East and London regions. As a result of these variations, CLG decided to revise the guidelines and to roll forward these for the period 2005-2020. The guidelines were revised to 1,492mt for crushed rock, 1,028mt for sand and gravel and 259mt for marine sand and gravel.

3.4 Members asked whether the increase in the constraint in the growth of supply met from alternative aggregates to 65mt per annum by 2016 was informed by robust survey data and whether it could be exceeded if additional supplies of material were made available to the market. CLG reported that the constraint was informed by latest

estimates of production from the 2005 CDEW survey and could be exceeded, subject to the identification of additional supplies of material and for these to be technically acceptable as substitutes for primary aggregates.

3.5 The QPA reported that the delivery of additional supplies of alternative aggregates would depend on the allocation of sites and planning permissions for recycling facilities being granted by MPAs. However, it was difficult to obtain planning consents for recycling facilities in the Green Belt as they were perceived by the planning system to conflict with Government policies to maintain openness in the Green Belt. Members suggested that CLG should consider issuing specific guidance to facilitate the delivery of recycling facilities by the planning system.

3.6 John Kilford proposed that the demand forecasts should be representative of the actual production and consumption for all aggregates, and comprise of two elements: a forecast of construction activity and a forecast of aggregates demand. CLG reported that it would keep under review the forecasting methodology to ensure that the forecasts are representative of the relationship between forecast construction activity and aggregates consumption.

3.7 Members enquired why the contribution to the overall supply of aggregates made by marine aggregates was increased in the revised guidelines. CLG reported that this was informed by data from the latest surveys of marine aggregate sales (AMRI 2005, AM 2005 and Crown Estate surveys), which reported an increase in sales.

3.8 Members enquired about the timetable for the publication of the revised guidelines. CLG reported that the Department will submit the revised guidelines to ministers to seek approval to publish these for public consultation, hopefully in February 2008. The consultation period will run for 12 weeks. The timetable is to publish the finalised guidelines in September 2008.

Agenda Item 4: DCLGs 2007/2008 Aggregate Minerals Research Strategy (paper NCG 2007/02).

4.1 Peter Bide presented the paper “DCLGs 2007/2008 Aggregate Minerals Research Strategy”. Five pieces of research have been commissioned, four of which are funded by the ALSF and one by the joint DCLG-BGS research programme.

4.2 CLG reported that a Strategic Co-ordination Group had been convened, whose objective is to ensure the co-ordination and interconnection of the projects and to give the contractors guidance, as necessary, on technical and policy issues that might affect their research. The projects should be completed in March 2008 and published soon after. A free-standing overview report has been commissioned, to present the results and recommendations from the projects, which should be completed in April 2008.

4.3 Jasbir Kaur suggested that the key policy objectives from *PPSI Delivering Sustainable Development* are incorporated into the objectives of the research strategy to ensure that the strategy is consistent with the Government’s policy objectives to deliver sustainable development.

4.4 Martin Hooker enquired whether the “Aggregate Resources – Options for future aggregate minerals supply in England” project would present information for unconstrained aggregate resources to inform the analysis of a variety of aggregate supply options. CLG reported that the contractor (BGS) will prepare GIS maps of unconstrained aggregate resources which are not constrained by designated environmental designations, major infrastructure and urban areas.

4.5 Members enquired about the next steps to disseminate the results of the research strategy. CLG reported that the outcomes from the research strategy will be published (paragraph 4.2) and presented to TSG and NCG in 2008 for consideration.

Agenda Item 5: Draft Terms of Reference for the Regional Aggregate Working Parties (paper NCG 2007/04).

5.1 Peter Bide introduced the paper “Draft Terms of Reference for the RAWPs”. The terms of reference of the RAWPs was promulgated in MPG6, which was legally cancelled in November 2006, when MPS1 was published. It was, therefore necessary to adopt the terms of reference outside of MPG6.

5.2 Members agreed that the Terms of Reference should be adopted and proposed that CLG should clarify the role and responsibilities of the RAWPs and the relationship between them and the Regional Assemblies. It was further agreed that if Regional Assemblies wanted the RAWPs to undertake work in addition to that required by the RAWP contracts, they would need to commission and pay for this themselves.

5.3 One amendment was suggested, that Part 7(b) should read “sub-regional apportionment of provision for recycling sites for CD&EW”.

Agenda Item 6: RAWPs Annual Monitoring reports: Draft Core Contents (paper NCG 2007/05).

6.1 Peter Bide presented the paper “RAWPs Annual Monitoring Reports: Draft Core Contents”.

6.2 Members agreed that the Draft Core Contents for the Annual Monitoring Reports should be adopted. They suggested that the publication date for each RAWP annual monitoring report should be consistent with the calendar year for which the annual surveys were undertaken.

Agenda Item 7: Sustainability appraisal of the options for sub-regional apportionment of primary aggregates in the South East of England (paper NCG 2007/03).

7.1 Chris Waite presented the paper “Sustainability appraisal of the options for sub-regional apportionment of primary aggregates in the South East of England”.

7.2 Members welcomed the methodology adopted in the South East for the review of the sub-regional aggregate apportionment in the region. Members proposed that that the methodology adopted by regions for the sustainability appraisal of options for the

sub-regional apportionment of primary aggregates should be consistent between regions.

7.3 Peter Bide reported that the Department had published good practice guidance on the environmental appraisal of aggregates provision in 2004, which provided a methodology for the appraisal of aggregates supply options at the regional and sub-regional level. It was up to RPBs whether to follow this guidance or to develop a methodology that was appropriate for their region. CLG would arrange a workshop to consider how a consistent approach across regions to the methodology for the appraisal for the sub-regional apportionment of aggregates, based on that in the South East and Yorkshire and the Humber should be developed for more general application.

Agenda Item 8: Next Steps.

8.1 CLG to submit to Ministers a draft consultation document on the fourth monitoring report and the revised guidelines for aggregates provision for clearance to publish for public consultation.

8.2 CLG to continue to monitor the performance of the forecasting model to ensure that it provides a sufficiently robust representation of the relationship between forecast aggregates consumption and construction activity.

8.3 CLG to liaise with the RAWP Secretaries to revise the RAWP Terms of Reference.

8.4 CLG to arrange a workshop to consider how the work on the methodology and options for the sub-regional apportionment of aggregates provision in the South East might be applied more generally.

Agenda Item 9: Date of next meeting.

9.1 The next meeting to be arranged for the summer of 2008 to consider the post-consultation draft of the fourth monitoring report and of the revised guidelines.

Agenda Item 10: Any other business.

10.1 Ian Thomas reported that the draft Regional Minerals Strategy for South Wales was published in November 2007 and for North Wales will be published on the 2 January 2008 for public consultation.

10.2 Peter Huxtable reported that the BMAPA report “Strengths from the depths: a sustainable development programme measuring performance from the initial strategy” was published in November 2007.

DCLG/Planning Resources and Environment Policy Division
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