

**Environment and Economy**

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Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Changes to the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme – Revised Timetable for the preparation of the Minerals Local Development Framework**

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the County Council is required to prepare and keep up to date a Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (MWDS), which sets out the programme for the production of its Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents.

This Scheme has recently had to be reviewed because of the requirement stemming from PPS25 to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and consider it as part of the Core Strategy preparation for the Minerals Development Framework.

Following advice from the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) the Core Strategy must now also contain strategic site allocations in addition to the general policies for development, where they are central to the delivery of the Core Strategy. Other authorities which had not included these with their Core Strategies prior to submission, were told that their plans could be found unsound.

**Background**

The SFRA, as required by Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25) – Development and Flood Risk, must be completed during the Core Strategy stage. Clarification sought from the Environment Agency, Communities and Local Government (CLG) and GOWM confirmed that this does need to be in place as a part of the evidence base prior to submission of the Minerals Core Strategy for independent examination. The County Council, together with the Warwickshire Districts, Coventry City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Council have therefore commissioned consultants to undertake this work

jointly. The County Council was not in a position to revise its MWDS until the consultants for the SFRA had been appointed and the timetable they are working to had been established.

The Minerals Core Strategy must also contain strategic site allocations in addition to the general policies for development. Previously, we had consulted on Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages of the plan but following this advice, work towards the final submission of the plan was temporarily halted. The GOWM, CLG and PINS's 'emerging guidance' is that that core strategies should be "allocating strategic sites and areas critical to the delivery of the strategy's vision" and making the difficult decisions in the Core Strategy.

Therefore, in relation to the Minerals Core Strategy, it is considered that in order to deliver the strategy in Warwickshire, it will necessitate the identification of strategic sites at the Core Strategy stage. In line recent with new emerging guidance "Streamlining Local Development Frameworks" strategic sites for development may be allocated, provided they are central to the achievement of the core strategy. This is a major change in direction and will require a lot more detailed evidence and site information to be in place by the time the Core Strategy is submitted for Examination. Consequently the Core Strategy timetable has been substantially revised (see Appendix).

### **The Next Stages**

The new timetable has now been agreed with the GOWM and is now in effect. We intend to consult in May 2008 in respect of sites for inclusion in the document. We shall also be revising the Core Strategy Spatial Options (in the light of the new guidance and following the extensive consultation we previously carried out). Consultation on the core strategy and site allocations will be made in January 2009 and the Preferred Options later in the year in November 2009. This does mean that the timetable will be later than previously envisaged. However, the overall preparation time and estimated adoption date is only seven months after that previously agreed with the Government Office for the Minerals Core Strategy and Site Allocations Document.

If you have any questions in respect of these changes please contact either Jim Davies on 01926 412907 email [jimdavies@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:jimdavies@warwickshire.gov.uk) or Tony Lyons on 01926 412391 email [tonylyons@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:tonylyons@warwickshire.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely



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