



## Examination of the Sheffield Plan: Our City, Our Future

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Dear Mr Johnson

## Inspectors' Letter: Minerals and Waste

### *Minerals*

1. Minerals will form part of the discussion on Duty to Co-operate as part of the Stage 1 hearings, with further discussion on detailed policies timetabled during Stage 3 hearings in November 2024 (Matter 22). In advance of issuing Matters, Issues and Questions for Stage 3, we write to request further evidence relating to this topic.

### *Mineral safeguarding*

2. Paragraph 210 c) of the September 2023 version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that planning policies safeguard mineral resources through the identification of Mineral Safeguarding Areas. Even if it is not anticipated that mineral extraction will take place during the Plan Period, mineral resources within the Plan area which are of local or national importance (listed in the Framework's glossary) should be identified on the policies map. Such minerals may be needed in the future, and to prevent them from being sterilised by development, they should be subject to a specific safeguarding policy. If a mineral is widespread throughout the Plan area, such as coal, this can be explained rather than shown on the Policies Map, as was done in the adopted Unitary Development Plan.
3. Framework paragraph 210 e) is concerned with safeguarding of existing, planned or potential sites for bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals, manufacture of concrete and concrete products, and recycled and secondary aggregates. If any such sites exist or are proposed within the Plan area, they should also be identified and safeguarded.

### *Mineral extraction*

4. Framework paragraph 210 f) requires policies to set out criteria to ensure that proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, and on human health. The Plan needs to clearly set out how any proposals for mineral extraction (including the limited extraction of building stone for the repair of historic buildings) would be assessed. Please can you consider whether the Plan currently meets this requirement, and if not, whether any modifications are necessary.

### *Aggregates supply and demand*

5. As a minerals planning authority, the Council is required by Framework paragraph 213 to prepare an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA), which can be a joint document. This requirement is also set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which says that an LAA is required if an area produces, imports or exports aggregate (paragraph: 067 Reference ID: 27-067-20140306).
6. We note that the Council does not have an up-to-date LAA. For the purposes of examining the Plan, we need to be satisfied that there is likely to be a continuous supply of aggregates to meet demand. If not, the level of development proposed by the Plan (or the plans of neighbouring areas) may not be achievable.
7. To support the minerals policies in the Plan and meet the requirements of national policy, the Council should therefore produce an LAA in advance of the Stage 3 hearing sessions. This does not need to be a long document, but should be sufficient to meet the guidance on LAAs contained in the PPG. In particular, it should identify the anticipated demand for aggregates which the Plan is likely to generate, and the likely sources of supply. If any potential shortages, or impediments to supply, are identified, information should be provided as to how this can be addressed.

### Waste

8. We note that the issue of waste is to be dealt with in a separate joint waste plan, to be produced with the other South Yorkshire authorities. According to the submission Plan, progress on the joint waste plan was due to start in 2022. Please can you provide an update on progress with this joint waste plan - is it on track? What is the anticipated adoption date?
9. Whilst waste policies will not form part of the formal examination of the Sheffield Plan, we need to be sure that the waste policies in the adopted Core Strategy, intended to be 'saved' until replaced by the new waste plan, stand up on their own once other Core Strategy policies have been replaced. We also need to ensure that they are consistent with policies in the Sheffield Plan. To address this

issue, the Council may wish to include additional text in the Plan to explain the what the waste policies cover, and how they relate to the wider Plan strategy.

10. On a more detailed note, the supporting text to Policies CS 68, CS 69 and CS 70 all refer to additional detail provided in the City Policies document – what is the status of that, both now and once the Sheffield Plan has been adopted?

*Submission of further evidence on minerals and waste*

11. With the exception of the LAA, the information requested above should be produced for submission, together with details of any suggested modifications to the Plan, by 19 July 2024.
12. The LAA should be produced for submission by 6 September 2024, alongside the Stage 3 hearing statement for Matter 22: Climate Change and Natural Resources.
13. Participants will have the opportunity to respond to this additional evidence before the Stage 3 hearings take place in November 2024. We will aim to issue any supplementary questions relating to the LAA by 13 September 2024.
14. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us via the Programme Officer.

Yours sincerely

*J Gilbert*      *R Morgan*      *D Troy*

Inspectors