

Draft Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration

A Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration for North East Wales 2019-2024: *The approach to meeting the sub-regional need for aggregate minerals*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Regional Technical Statement second review (RTS2) states that where local authorities are unable to meet their individual indicative apportionment for the provision of aggregate minerals, there is a need for all of the local authorities within that sub-region to collaborate, and work co-operatively in order to ensure that the overall sub-regional apportionments are still met, to provide the steady supply of aggregate minerals throughout the sub-region.
- 1.2 This Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration (SSRC) has been prepared in collaboration between Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council, and presents the first agreed SSRC for the North-East Wales sub-region for the provision of aggregate minerals.
- 1.3 This agreed SSRC will be used for the evidence base for LDP policy making with respects to meeting the sub-regional apportionment figure for aggregate minerals, as set out in the Regional Technical Statement (RTS). It will also be used when assessing the need for aggregate minerals in the consideration and determination of planning applications for aggregate development in the sub-region, and used in development management and the decision making process as a material planning consideration with respects to need, and the need for aggregate minerals in the sub-region.
- 1.4 This first SSRC demonstrates that all constituent parts of the North-East Wales Sub-Region is committed inter-authority collaboration with respects to the provision of aggregate minerals, to provide the sub-regional apportionment of the RTS on a sub-regional basis, to ensure the steady supply of aggregate minerals across the sub-region, and beyond.
- 1.5 This SSRC provides clarity and confirms that Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council are in agreement that the individual apportionment figures of the North-East Wales authority areas presented in the RTS2 will be considered as a total sub-regional apportionment figure thus agreeing that, whilst the RTS may state that the authority area has an individual apportionment, this will be aggregated and together will be considered as a combined sub-regional apportionment figure.

2 RTS2 apportionment figures

2.1 The RTS2 sets out the required apportionment of crushed rock and sand & gravel for each of the North Wales Local Planning Authority areas for the period 2019 - 2024. After this time it will be subject to another review.

The Supply of Sand and Gravel in the North-East sub region

2.2 The following table presents an extract from Tables A6 of the RTS2 and sets out the apportionment figures of the RTS2 for the North-East Wales sub-region with respects to sand and gravel.

Table A6: Apportionments, Reserves and Allocations for Sand & Gravel in North East Wales

Local Planning Authority	New Annualised Apportionment for sand & gravel (mt)	Total Apportionment Required over 22 years (mt)	Existing Permitted Reserves 2016 (mt)	Minimum Allocation needed	Additional reserves Dormant sites, 2016 (mt)
Denbighshire	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0
Flintshire	0.223	4.912	1.369	3.543	0.5
Wrexham	0.646	14.217	12.652	1.565	0

2.3 At present, according to the RTS2 figures, Flintshire and Wrexham need to make provisions within their LDP or subsequent LDP review for a small amount of sand and gravel in the form allocations or designations such as 'areas of search' or 'preferred area' throughout the plan period. Proposed allocations set out in the deposit draft of the Flintshire LDP amount to 1.4 million tonnes (mt) and therefore, there is a marginal shortfall of 2.143mt to be accounted for over the plan period. Coupled with the apportionment for Wrexham of 1.565 mt, the North-East Wales authorities have agreed to meet this combined sub-regional apportionment collaboratively by way of either an extension of an existing sand and gravel site, or the identification of a new site in the sub-region. This SSRC confirms that the authorities of the North-East Wales sub-region have agreed that any shortfall would considered as a sub-regional apportionment shortfall and this shortfall would be met by either; extensions to existing sand and gravel quarry sites in the sub-region, or a new sand and gravel quarry site within the sub-region. A new site promoted by a landowner or minerals operator provides far more certainty to delivering the sub-regional apportionment as opposed to a blanket 'area of search' or 'preferred area' approach to meeting and delivering the required apportionment.

- 2.4 Any potential future uplift in apportionment for Denbighshire following a subsequent review of the RTS with respects to sand and gravel may also be met by a new site identified within the North-East Wales sub-region.

The supply of crushed rock in the North-East sub region

- 2.5 The following table presents an extracts from Tables A7 of the RTS2 and sets out the minimum apportionment figures of the RTS2 for the North-East Wales sub-region with respects to crushed rock.

Table A7: Apportionments, Reserves and Allocations for Crushed Rock in North Wales

Local Planning Authority	New Annualised Apportionment for crushed rock (mt)	Total Apportionment Required over 25 years mt	Existing Permitted Reserves at end of 2016 in mt	Minimum Allocation needed to meet Required Provision	Additional reserved Dormant sites, 2016 (mt)
Denbighshire	0.860	21.500	21.710	0.000	0
Flintshire	3.359	83.968	48.040	35.928	1.41
Wrexham	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0

- 2.6 At present according to the RTS2 figures, neither Denbighshire nor Wrexham are required to make any crushed rock allocations. The RTS2 recognises that the crushed rock mineral resource present within Wrexham is heavily constrained by the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB where there is a presumption against new mineral development, and has therefore set the crushed rock provision for Wrexham at zero.
- 2.7 Denbighshire’s zero apportionment figure is reflected in the County’s large landbank of crushed rock resource which are held in mothballed quarries within the County. However, the RTS2 figures are set from 2016 data and since then, Denbigh Quarry and Graig Quarry have recommenced operation. Furthermore, Burley Hill is set to recommence operations in 2021. As a result, the landbank in Denbighshire will reduce, and it is likely that in the next RTS review, Denbighshire will be required to provide crushed rock allocations in the LDP.
- 2.8 Flintshire is required to provide at least 36 mt of crushed rock. The deposit Flintshire LDP was drafted using RTS1 figures. The crushed rock allocations proposed in emerging Policy EN25 of the Flintshire’s deposit draft LDP amount to 24 mt that would be derived from extensions from two existing quarries; Cemex’s

'Pant y Pwll Dŵr' Quarry and Tarmac's 'Hendre' Quarry. This would have been more than sufficient to meet the apportionment of the RTS1 which was at least 3.84 mt. However, now there is a shortfall of at least 12 mt which Flintshire now need to demonstrate at examination how this will be met through the LDP, throughout the plan period.

- 2.9 The proposed allocation for the extension at Hendre Quarry presented in EN25.1 of the draft Flintshire LDP is for 11 mt. However, since the submission of the allocation, a planning application for this extension has now been submitted and the proposed extension proposed to yield an additional 8.866 mt in addition to that of the proposed allocation. The application proposes an extension of 19.866 mt. Therefore, should planning permission be granted, this extension at Hendre Quarry would contribute significantly to the County's landbank and apportionment figure. Should planning permission be granted, the apportionment shortfall for Flintshire would be reduced to just 3.062 mt.
- 2.10 This SSRC confirms that the authorities of the North-East Wales sub-region have agreed that any shortfall of crushed rock would be considered as a sub-regional apportionment shortfall, and this shortfall would be met by either; extensions to existing crushed rock quarries in the sub-region, or a new crushed rock quarry site also within the sub-region. A new site promoted by a landowner or minerals operator provides far more certainty to delivering the sub-regional apportionment as opposed to a blanket 'area of search' or 'preferred area' approach proposed in an LDP.

3 Windfall sites

- 3.1 The North Wales Minerals and Waste service are in discussions with land owners and mineral operators in the sub-region to explore the possibilities of further extensions of existing sites, and indeed new green-field sites for both potential sand and gravel, and crushed rock quarry sites which could contribute to meeting the sub-regional apportionment figure.
- 3.2 Emerging Policy EN26 of the Deposit Flintshire LDP provides criteria against which a proposal would be assessed. Therefore, there is provision within the deposit Flintshire LDP to assess future windfall sites, should they arise prior to the subsequent review of the LDP when additional sites may be identified.
- 3.3 Policy PSE17 of the Denbighshire LDP provides criteria in which minerals development can be assessed subject to meeting a demonstrable need. Policy MW3 of the emerging Wrexham LDP also provides criteria in which minerals development can be assessed, should windfall sites be submitted in the form of planning applications. Therefore, it is considered that there is a sound policy mechanism to consider windfall sites in the adopted and emerging development

plans of the North-East Wales sub-region, should they be submitted for consideration prior to the review of the LDPs on the sub-region.

- 3.4 This agreed SSRC can therefore be used when assessing the need for aggregate minerals in the North-East Wales sub-region in the consideration and determination of planning applications for aggregate development in the sub-region. It can be used in development management and the decision making process as a material planning consideration with respects to the sub-regional need, as opposed to individual authority apportionments.

4 Subsequent Reviews of the RTS and the SSRC

- 4.1 Every five years the RTS is reviewed and the apportionment figure will fluctuate depending on aggregate sales and projected need, taking into account the existing permitted reserves and the authority areas landbank. As the permitted reserves get worked, the landbank will decrease, which will have a knock on effect on the projected apportionment figure for the next RTS review.
- 4.2 Economic factors play a large role in the demand for aggregate minerals and the effects of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic are unknown. Construction levels may decline and result in a downturn in the economy. Large infrastructure projects such as Wylfa B is no longer being progressed by Horizon. However HS2 is now being developed which will have a significant impact on the aggregate mineral reserves within the sub-region. All of these factors are unknown and difficult to predict. However, the next RTS review will highlight these changes, and the planning system will respond accordingly in the subsequent reviews of the LDPs.
- 4.3 The SSRC for the North East sub-region will be reviewed accordingly, and when required following the publication of the RTS review, and prior to any local authority within the North-East Wales Sub-Region requiring a revised SSRC for their evidence base in their subsequent LDP reviews.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 With a combination of allocations proposed in emerging Policy EN25 of the Flintshire LDP, coupled with future planning applications for extensions of existing quarries, or new green-field sites throughout the sub-region, along with possible fluctuations of the apportionment figures in subsequent reviews of the RTS, Officers are confident that by working collaboratively at a sub-regional levels, the need for aggregate mineral will be met over the Plan period.
- 5.2 This Statement has been prepared in collaboration between Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council. The evidence provided in this statement provides sufficient certainty for the

Examination in Public of the Flintshire LDP that the apportionment figures for the future provision of land-won primary aggregate in Flintshire for both crushed rock and sand and gravel, as stated in the RTS2 can be provided on a sub-regional level through inter-authority collaboration and co-operation.

- 5.3 This first SSRC demonstrates that all constituent parts of the North-East Wales Sub-Region is committed inter-authority collaboration with respects to the provision of aggregate minerals, to provide the sub-regional apportionment of the RTS on a sub-regional basis, to ensure the steady supply of aggregate minerals across the sub-region, and beyond.
- 5.4 The North Wales Minerals and Waste Shared Planning Service are committed to continue to work with the industry and land owners within the sub-region to identify new sites or extensions to existing quarry sites in order to meet the sub-regional apportionment figures over the respective LDP plan periods.

END

Version 3: April 2021