



Report to Cumbria County Council

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PLANNING & COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 SECTION 20

REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE CUMBRIA MINERALS & WASTE CORE STRATEGY & GENERIC DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

Documents submitted for Examination on 21 April 2008
Examination hearings held on 11-21 November 2008

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Economic and community benefits

8.10 A key strategic issue for Cumbria, highlighted in the Community Strategy, is the need to regenerate and expand the economy by creating and diversifying jobs. CS Policies 2 & 3 aim to optimise economic and community benefits arising from minerals and waste developments, and seek packages of community benefits where large national/regional waste management facilities (such as those related to the nuclear industry) are proposed. CS Policy 2 requires developments to show that they have realised their potential to provide economic benefit, including jobs, and do not prejudice regeneration and other development initiatives. In our view, this is not an unduly onerous requirement, particularly given the likely investment in new waste management facilities in Cumbria in the future.

8.11 CS Policy 3 ensures that community benefits are proportionate to the impacts of national/regional waste management facilities, and reflects national policy in local government legislation and Circular 5/2005. The principle of such packages related to radioactive waste facilities has been used in the past at the LLWR near Drigg and is supported in the latest national policy on managing radioactive wastes [LD42/44]. This approach accords with RSS Policies DP2, DP3, W1 & CNL2, and saved Structure Plan Policy ST4, has evolved from previous Structure & Local Plan policies, and is linked to CS Policy 6 & DCPDPD Policy DC17 on planning obligations. The detailed requirements for particular proposals will be addressed at the planning application stage.

8.12 Specific references are made in the text accompanying CS Policy 3 to its application to proposals for managing radioactive wastes. Although this policy is mainly related to radioactive waste proposals, it might also be relevant to other major waste management facilities (such as a waste resource park), so it is appropriately located in this chapter of the CS. With the suggested change to the accompanying text confirming joint working with other local authorities (¶ 3.41), we consider these policies provide a reasonable and proportionate response to the need to optimise the economic and community benefits arising from new minerals and waste developments.

Environmental assets

8.13 A key theme of the strategy is to create a high quality environment in Cumbria. CS Policy 4 aims to protect, maintain and enhance the county's environmental assets, including National Parks, AONBs, SACs, SSSIs and other wildlife, biodiversity, geological, landscape and historic sites/areas, and realise the opportunities for expanding and increasing environmental resources. It is supported by DCPDPD Policies DC10-DC15. The focus on enhancing such resources is in line with the latest RSS (Policy EM1(B)), whilst differentiating between international/national and other areas and environmental assets accords with national policy in PPS9. CCC suggests some minor changes to the policy and accompanying text, to clarify the importance of eco-systems and the extent of cross-boundary environmental features, to include all relevant types of sites/areas (Box 4) and refer to the latest Biodiversity evidence base. These changes would ensure that the section is factually correct and up-to-date.

8.14 As regards defining *major* and *non-major* minerals development, this is clarified in national policy (MPS1; ¶14), and so no further explanation is needed in these DPDs. Policies DC10-DC15 set out detailed criteria on biodiversity/geodiversity; historic/archaeological environment, landscape, flood risk, water environment and protection of soil resources. CCC suggests minor amendments to some of these policies and the accompanying text, but these are largely editorial/updating changes, covered by our final recommendation. Consequently, we are satisfied that these policies of the CS & DCPDPD provide a soundly based framework to protect the county's environmental assets.