

Greater Manchester Minerals Plan

Examination in Public

Matter 3 Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Issue: Whether it is appropriate to exclude the urban areas from the MSA's. In particular

- *How will Mineral Safeguarding work in practice?*
- *Who will assess the need to work the mineral to determine whether prior extraction is appropriate?*
- *Does exclusion of land from an MSA weigh against prior extraction of a mineral should it be present?*

The Mineral Planning Group (MPG) comments:

1. Firstly, I fully support the submission on these issues by the MPA.
2. Without reiterating the MPA submission there are a number of issues that need consideration.
3. MSA's are there to ensure that known mineral deposits are not sterilized by built development on the site or in sufficient close proximity to effect sterilization.
4. Likewise, of similar critical importance, that known mineral resources are not sterilized by the development of policy constraints that are simply poorly applied, or in a worse-case-scenario, applied specifically to frustrate future mineral extraction. You might say that such concepts can easily be dismissed as far too Machiavellian. However, I can assure this Hearing that the second any local residents get even a 'whiff' of a possible planning application for mineral development the pressure is on to secure appropriate allocations to ensure that any such idea is frustrated – whether that be through TPOs, areas of 'landscape value', SSSI status or whatever.

With this in-mind, Mineral Planning Authorities dealing with MSAs need to be fully awake to potential pressures that might be brought to bear upon the planning authority not just through applications for built development but requests for designations that might frustrate legitimate proposals for mineral extraction within MSAs. Thus, future suggested planning constraints are just as important as actual built development.

5. The Inspector at this Hearing needs to know that the DPD process can engender commencement of 'battle orders' with sweet little old ladies carrying Great Crested Newts in plastic supermarket bags from outside the MSAs and

depositing them in ponds within (or adjacent to) MSAs so as to specifically attempt to frustrate any possibility of future mineral extraction - I kid you not!

6. Such activities do go on. It is for this reason that I raise the issue of planning constraints and emphasize that they need to be recognised in the planning process as just-as-important as actual built development in creating sterilization of known mineral resources. Thus, any request for a pond to be given SBI status or a group of trees to be TPO'd etc.. needs to be very carefully considered and reviewed before they are enshrined within the system.

How such matters can be properly controlled is a moot-point. Nevertheless, the possibility of unacceptable or inappropriate planning constraints need to be flagged within the Minerals Plan document since they can have a profound sterilization effect.