

Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan

Policy M7 – Aggregate Wharves and Rail Depots

Main Matter 5 - Protecting mineral resources, infrastructure and facilities

Question 5.12 - Is the allocation TA1 at Monkey Island Wharf justified having regard to environmental considerations and its relationship to the likely sources of supply of aggregates and markets?

Monkey Island Wharf

Regarding our soundness points about the Monkey Island site allocation we may be able to resolve this but only on the understanding that a river restoration compensation scheme will be submitted as part of the application. Although the local plan doesn't say that The Cut will need to be dredged to allow barges to navigate along it, we are certain that dredging will have to occur. Compensation for this (in the form of a river restoration scheme) will therefore need to be undertaken. This should consist of habitat restoration for the equivalent amount of river they will be making navigable, and should be located immediately upstream of this. The type of river restoration we will be looking for includes bed raising by adding gravels and creating marginal shelves to restore the channel to more natural dimensions. Any restoration scheme should be submitted to the Environment Agency for our approval.

Following our soundness comments we have had a meeting with the planning authority. In this meeting we discussed the possibility of compensation measures to allow this site to stay in the local plan. If comprehensive river restoration upstream is undertaken, we believe this could compensate for the adverse impacts to the river downstream that will have to occur to allow it to become a navigable section of river.

To be clear this is the only way would remove our soundness points on this proposal to go ahead in terms of biodiversity impacts. If the compensatory river restoration scheme an obligatory part of this proposal can't be met, then we will have to maintain our soundness points regarding the impact on biodiversity in the river environment for this site allocation.