

NORTH WALES REGIONAL AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2nd OCTOBER 2003.

PRESENT:

J H Gibbins	Gwynedd Council (Chair)
W R Mackenzie	ODPM
D T Pollock	QPA
S Hill	QPA Tarmac
T Brown	QPA Hanson
B Hollington	ARAD. Welsh Assembly Govt.
C Morgan	Welsh Assembly Govt.
G Jones	Denbighshire CC
C Thomas	Conwy CBC
R AB Sheffield	Wrexham CBC
G Jones	Cyngor Gwynedd
G Nancarrow	Flintshire CC
A Dale	Countryside Council For Wales
R P Bennion	NWaRAWP Secretary

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1. JHG chaired the meeting in the absence of I Evans. JHG reported that I Evans had responded well to treatment and had resumed work on a part time basis.
- 1.2. Apologies were received from B Marker, ODPM; S Roberts, Welsh Slate; I Evans, Gwynedd Council; D Williams, DP Williams Ltd; J Davies, RMC; A Farrow, Sec, NWRAWP; P Huxtable, BAA; R Carter; Environment Agency; S Martin, WAG; G Lloyd, SNP; J Williams, Anglesey CC.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3rd APRIL 2003.

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record. RPB reminded members that they could now be made available as a public document.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 Ref. para. 1.2 RPB said that he had written to Mr Evans wishing him a speedy recovery on behalf of the NWaRAWP.
- 3.2 Ref. para. 3.3 GN provided copies of the 95- 00 report prepared by the National Stone Centre for Flintshire. RPB said he would arrange for the distribution of the remaining copies.
- 3.3 Ref para. 4.3 RPB said that there had been no further progress regarding the translation of the report. CM said he would arrange to have the report tested against the WAG criteria to decide how the matter should be dealt with (**Action; C Morgan**)
- 3.4 Ref para. 5.6 RPB said that the final response of the NWaRAWP had been sent to WAG. No further amendments had been received and a copy of the final response had been circulated to all members.
- 3.5 Ref. para 7.1 RPB said that there had been no further progress as it had been decided to leave the matter in abeyance pending the anticipated revised role of the RAWPs in Wales.
- 3.6 Ref. para. 7.2 all the responses to the 2002 minerals and road planings surveys had been received, RPB thanked the MPOs for their help.

4. SECRETARIES REPORT

- 4.1 A response to the draft Minerals Technical Advice Note - Aggregates was sent to WAG. WAG decided to set up a Technical Advice Group to assist with the drafting of the final document; the first of two meetings took place on 19th June 2003. As with the NWaRAWP response there was much agreement, both in favour and objection to aspects of the MTAN. The group was

able to identify those aspects of the MTAN where there was a difference in opinion between, essentially the MPAs and industry and it would be for WAG to decide on the final outcome. The second meeting is to take place on 19th October 2003 at which the final MTAN will be considered. The final drafting of the MTAN would be informed by the ARUP research project, commissioned by WAG, entitled "Establishing a Methodology for Assessing Aggregate Demand and Supply", which was to be formally launched at a seminar in the next week.

- 4.2 The ODPM consulted on the acceptability of environmental NGOs being represented on the National Coordinating Group (NCG) and RAWPs. The secretary had responded on behalf of the NWaRAWP (letter appended to the minutes), essentially the reply said that objection to the NCG was unlikely but in view of the robust objection of the QPA members it was unlikely that any representation of, in Wales, Wales Countryside Link (WCL), (the umbrella group for some 30 environmental groups), would be possible. DP agreed with this assessment of the current position and said that QPA felt that the inclusion of WCL would compromise the confidentiality of the RAWPs and anticipates a role for the RAWPs with which the industry felt uncomfortable. CM said that as the role of the RAWPs evolved in Wales it was anticipated that WCL could have a role to play. RB pointed out that the NWaRAWP had, to some extent, already anticipated the new role with the inclusion of CCW and EA. RB said that the representative of the Council for National Parks had said, at the TAG meeting, that the environmental groups had felt excluded from the process but it had been pointed out that all the minutes of RAWP meetings were public documents and provided a means for such bodies to be kept informed.
- 4.3 The 2002 survey was complete. The secretary requested help with the compilation of a glossary of technical definitions. A copy of the 2002 report of the North West RAWP was tabled; it contained the statistics for 2001 and of interest to the NWaRAWP was critical of the draft MTAN. SH said that these comments were to some extent historical and the concerns may well be addressed in the revisions to the MTAN.
- 4.4 The Welsh RAWPs put in bid with ARUP to the Sustainability Fund for support for a research project entitled "Improving the Information Base on Secondary Minerals and Construction and Demolition Waste for Use as Aggregates in Wales". The purpose is to give a broad overview of the secondary minerals and CDW situation in and available to, Wales. The outcome will inform the emerging MTAN on realistic targets for primary aggregate substitution in Wales and will provide RAWPs with the information required them to meet the objectives set out in the MTAN for monitoring and promoting the use of secondary minerals and CDW. The secretary was grateful to the Sustainability Fund for recognising the value of this project by providing the financial support.
- 4.5 The secretary had represented the NWaRAWP on a steering panel for a WAG research project entitled "The Sand and Gravel Resources Of North West Wales". The final report was currently in preparation. It will identify workable areas of sand and gravel and will make recommendations on options for working. The issues raised by the report will require further detailed consideration primarily involving the industry and the secretary suggested that this would form a subject that the RAWP could consider through a sub group. It was agreed that the secretary should liaise with interested parties to form a suitable sub group to consider the final report. **(Action; RPB to arrange S&G research sub group)**
- 4.6 The secretary listed the challenges facing the NWaRAWP in the next twelve months;
 - Meeting the requirements set for the RAWPs in the final version of the MTAN including, as seems likely, the preparation of a regional minerals plan or strategy.
 - Dealing with the issue of apportionment across the region. To date there has been no formally adopted scheme of apportionment on any basis within the region, this matter will need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Members were reminded of the inspector's decision on the recent Public Inquiry into the refusal to grant planning permission for an extension to Burley Hill quarry, in his report he stated, inter alia, that apportionment should be set at sub regional level. However it would be for the NWaRAWP to reach its own decision.
 - The issue of safeguarding areas of mineral interest was proving contentious in Wales and was a matter that the RAWP should investigate and recommend on. CM said that only some of the Welsh UAs were failing to comply with the safeguarding requirement. Where the landbank was sufficient for a long time beyond the plan period, it may not be necessary to allocate safeguarded areas.
 - The collection of statistics is currently under review by ODPM and a subgroup had been formed to recommend a way forward. This could have serious consequences for RAWPs if

they had no control over the information to be collected particularly in Wales if the role currently proposed in the draft MTAN becomes a requirement.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2002

- 5.1 RB said that the draft report had been circulated and a number of comments had been received, a second draft had been issued which had taken into account most comments made, however the observations of the QPA required more fundamental changes than he considered could be made without the agreement of the RAWP. RB said he had included commentary to (a) promote debate and research into certain relevant issues in the region and (b) make the report more informative and of use to a wider audience. DP said that the QPA was not comfortable with the report and would prefer a simple document that merely listed the statistics and left it to the reader to draw conclusions. After considerable discussion it was agreed that a sub group of SH for QPA, GJ (DCC) for the MPAs and RB would meet to agree the final amendments, the outcome would be circulated to members. **(Action; RH, GJ (DCC), RB to meet to agree final draft)**
- 5.2 RB said the issue of reliability of returns by operators remains a concern.
- 5.3 It was agreed that the final report should include a list of dormant sites for which returns had been received and had, therefore, been included in the landbank calculations. A glossary of technical terms was also required.

6. MTAN. AGGREGATES – WALES

- 6.1 A technical advice group had met in June consisting of representatives from WAG, the Welsh RAWPs, MPAs, CCW and environmental bodies. A number of concerns and recommendations had been made which were being considered by WAG and would be discussed at a further meeting in October 2003.
- 6.2 CM said the MTAN would be issued late 2003 or very early in 2004.
- 6.3 RB said that the anticipated MTAN contained requirements for the RAWP which had implications with the way it functioned. For instance RB would need to liaise more closely with the NWRAWP, England to discuss matters such as apportionment, CDW arisings and the impact on the N Wales. DP disagreed and said that these were matters for the NWRAWP to consider alone in line with the ODPM guidelines, Wales should then supply aggregates in accordance with the requirement set by the NWRAWP. RB said this would not be in the best interests of sustainability in Wales as the NW of England could continue to rely on imports when the better option might be to increase recycling rates within the region.
- 6.4 AD asked if the MTAN would be addressing the matter of how dormant sites should be dealt with particularly with reference to the issue of prohibition notices. CM confirmed that it would.

7. MINERALS RESEARCH.

- 7.1 The ARUP research on “Establishing a Methodology for Assessing Aggregates Demand and Supply” was complete and would be launched at a dissemination seminar on 9th October 2003. The recommendations will be included in the MTAN and WAG will be going out to tender in the near future on a contract to carry out the environmental capacity assessment across Wales.
- 7.2 The research into “The Sand and Gravel Resources in NW Wales” was complete and the final report was in preparation, this would be launched at a dissemination seminar at Plas Tan y Bwlch during the week commencing 8th December 2003.
- 7.3 The research into “Improving the Information Base on Secondary Minerals and CDW for use as Aggregates in Wales” was nearing completion and the finding would be presented initially to the MTAN TAG in October.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 None

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

9.1 This was fixed for 11.00 on Thursday 18th March 2004, to be held in Dolgellau, Gwynedd.