

Cork Environmental Forum

Position Paper 8 - Mineral Extraction Policy Priorities



Mineral Extraction Policy is urgently required in the new County Development Plan, the Department of Marine and Natural Resources and National Roads Authority plans. It must be comprehensive enough to cover planning for: **Prospecting, Geophysical Surveying, Extraction, Recycling, Transportation, Exporting, Processing Waste** across the whole range of minerals used in the construction and agricultural industries. This would include **sand, gravel, aggregates, rock, crushed rock, building stone, metal ores, slates**, etc. Indicators of **existing and projected demand** in the County would be helpful, with **targets for sustainable consumption**. **Existing suppliers**, whether authorised or not should be **inventoried in terms of mineral types, annual outputs, geographical location, catchment area supplied**, to give an indication of the present picture Countywide. The latter could eventually form a **GIS database on County Mineral Resources**.

Development Control:

The absence of a clearly stated and effectively implemented planning policy for quarrying has been a major factor in the proliferation of unauthorised and damaging quarrying activities. Where applications have been made, the criteria for assessment appear to have been fairly confined. Our view is that assessment of quarry applications should be based at least on some, or all, of the following criteria:

1. **Quantifiable local need**
2. **Desired density of quarry operations in a given catchment area**
3. **Visual impacts of operation assessed from nearby public roads and surrounding countryside.**
4. **Social impacts assessed for any loss of private or public amenity.**
5. **Environmental impacts on lakes, rivers, streams, woods and wildlife habitats.**
6. **Noise and dust problems.**
7. **Traffic impacts on the existing public roads network**
8. **Capacity for site reinstatement and restoration**
9. **Large or medium scale quarries should be under IPC licence controls and require an EIS.**





Mineral Resource Management:

- 🌱 High standards and more sustainable techniques (particularly for road development contracts) to reduce use of raw materials
- 🌱 Use of recycled raw materials such as old car tyres as a requirement in developments using hardcore.
- 🌱 Flexible and appropriate development of landscape (should hills be flattened or lakes dug?)
- 🌱 Develop use of timber framed housing and use of slates in place of concrete materials and tiles

Key Objectives:

- 🌱 Recycling of materials
- 🌱 Rigid control and enforcement for management and reinstatement of quarries

References:

-  Sustainable settlements UK, LGMB 1995 - section 2.7 Land & Minerals; p37-40
-  Report of National Minerals Policy Review Group 1995 - publ. Gov. Sales Office, Molesworth St., Dub. 2
-  State of the Environment Report, EPA 1996 - section 4 Env. Pressures; p49 Mineral Exploitation
-  Sustainable Development Strategy, DoE 1997 -section 9 Industry - 'Natural Resource Consumption'

PP8/06/01

To foster, promote & implement sustainable development within the Cork region