

Chairman: **Dr. Ian Selby** (University of Plymouth)

Secretary: **Dr. Alan Thompson** (Cuesta Consulting Ltd.)

Minutes of the 36th Meeting of the UK Minerals Forum held at the IOM³ offices, 297 Euston Road, London, NW1 3AQ on Thursday 21st June 2018 at 11am.

Present:

Ian Selby (**IS**) – Chairman (University of Plymouth)

Alan Thompson (**AT**) – Secretary (Cuesta Consulting Ltd.)

Gordon Best (**GB**) – QPANI

Peter Close (**PC**) – Natural England

Lauren Darby (**LD**) – Ceramfed

Peter Day (**PDa**) – POS

Rob Donnelly (**RD**) – University of Derby

Peter Dorans (**PDo**) – The Wildlife Trusts

Trevor Evans (**TE**) – BAA

Nick Horsley (**NH**) – MPA

Jo Mankelow (**JM**) – BGS

Brian Marker (**BM**) – Independent consultant

David Payne (**DP**) – CBI Minerals Group

Richard Read (**RR**) – The National Trust

Guy Robinson (**GR**) – Historic England

Nigel Symes (**NS**) – RSPB

Andy Tickle (**ATi**) – CPRE + CNP

Lonek Wojtulewicz (**LW**) – POS

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Apologies for absence

2.1. Apologies were received from:

Ruth Bradshaw (**RB**) – CNP

Marie Cowan (**MC**) – DOE Northern Ireland

Jim Davies (**JD**) – Environment Agency

Lester Hicks (**LH**) – independent

David Highley (**DH**) – independent

Peter Huxtable (**PH**) – BAA

Bob Fenton (**BF**) – MAUK

William Carlin (**WC**) – Scottish Government

Mark North (**MN**) – MPA

Barney Pilgrim (**BP**) – Banks Group

Joanna Russell (**JR**) – Natural England

Jo Smith (**JS**) – Welsh Government

Andrew Tyler (**ATy**) – Omya UK

Robert Westell (**RW**) – Raymond Brown

Paul Williams (**PW**) – Hanson

3. Minutes of the last meeting (35th meeting held on 22nd March 2018), as amended

3.1. The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. Action points from last meeting and matters arising not covered elsewhere

4a. Web – hosting of material from the Sustainable Aggregates website

4a.1 **DP** noted that the MPA website is currently in a state of flux but would eventually contain the material rescued by BM from the former MIRO website. Follow-up needed from **PH** regarding similar action by BAA.

Action DP, PH

4b. Options for Video- or Tele-Conferencing

4b.1 **AT** reported that the option for video-conferencing had been offered to members but that no-one had taken-up the offer. It was suggested that telephone conferencing might be a better option to offer next time. **AT** will enquire with IoM³.

Action AT

4c. Academic representation on UKMF

4c.1 Mark Osbaldeston has agreed that the University of Derby will join the forum to provide academic representation. For this meeting the University was represented by his colleague, Rob Donnelly (**RD**).

4d. Involvement of Junior Colleagues

4d.1 **IS** expressed disappointment that no-one had yet responded to the open invitation to bring along junior colleagues for them to gain personal development experience in strategic discussions and to provide both diversity and fresh perspectives. The invitation remains open, subject to giving notice to the Secretary in order to maintain manageable numbers. **RD** offered to bring one or two students to a future meeting, and this was welcomed.

Action ALL

4e/f. Collaborative funding of Working Group on Good Practice Guidance on Avoiding Conflicts

4e.1 With no progress on this having been achieved so far, **IS** offered to get things moving by preparing a scoping document to be circulated to members, inviting collaboration.

Action IS

4g. Proposed Working Group to prepare a new BGS Silica Sand factsheet

4g.1 **JM** noted that he had been approached by Teresa Green of British Glass, regarding the likely costs of updating this factsheet. **NH** also noted that it would be discussed at his forthcoming meeting with all silica sand producing authorities in England. Update awaited.

Action: JM.

4h. UK Central Government Engagement – response to letters

4h.1 **IS** reported that, of the three letters sent to MHCLG, Defra and BEIS, requesting re-engagement with the UKMF, the only replies received to date had been from Michael Gove and supporting staff at Defra.

*Post meeting note: The initial Defra response, dated 18th April noted that our letter was 'timely' in relation to Defra's plans for a Waste and Resources Strategy, and asked us to keep the Department informed of future UKMF meetings, so that it 'can engage in the most appropriate way'. A follow-up letter from Defra officials, dated 25th May, provided contact details for Defra's **Head of Waste & Recycling** (Chris Preston), for the **Resource Efficiency***

and Circular Economy Strategy team (contact point: Caroline Tucker); and team leaders for **EU Exit, Strategy and Planning for Resources** (Shelly Beckett and Jackie Vale).

Action (to reply): **IS**

(to notify Defra of future meetings): **AT**

4i. Environment Update Template

4i.1 This had been issued by AT to all Environment sector members and most had responded with information that had been able to be circulated ahead of the meeting. **ATi** commented that this had worked well. The information has been used to inform Item 5c of these minutes. The same format will be used for future meetings.

4j. Minerals Planning Recruitment Talks

4j.1 **PDa** noted that the POS is writing to Universities to further discussions on this. **RD** noted that he teaches an element of mineral planning via a distance-learning course at Derby University, but that this only comprises one small part of one learning module. **AT** advised that he had produced detailed information to support CPD modules on minerals planning, several years ago, via a Leeds University ALSF project run by Toby White (now at Leicester University). Sadly, the Department at Leeds closed down, as did the ALSF, and nothing ever came of the idea, but the documents are still available if required (albeit in need of updating).

4k. UKMF Response to NPPF Consultation

Dealt with at Item 6a, below.

4l. UKMF @ LWM6

4l.1 **IS** gave a preview of his 'Sandstorm' presentation, to be delivered at the 'Living With Minerals 6' Conference in London on 10th July, and explained that this would be followed by a panel discussion including one or more other UKMF members. **DP** confirmed that the final edition of the UK Minerals Strategy would be launched at the conference, with endorsement by BEIS.

5. Regular stakeholder key issues reports:

5a. UK Government policy report (MHCLG / BEIS / Defra)

5a.1 No central Government representatives were in attendance, and no reports were available. **JD** had intended to represent Defra but had had to give apologies at short notice due to other priorities.

5b. Devolved Government reports (Wales/Scotland/ Northern Ireland)

5b.1. Representatives for the Scottish and Welsh Governments (**WC** and **JS**, respectively) had sent apologies but remain fully engaged with the Forum, though no update reports are available at this time.

5b.2. **NH** noted that consultation on the revision of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) had closed (with the revised edition due for publication by the end of the year), and that Welsh Government (WG) was now consulting on its National Development Framework (NDF). **NH** observed that the draft NDF still does not recognise minerals as a natural resource, though it does at least recognise the importance of supply chain issues. **NH** noted that WG had written to MHCLG regarding the importance of funding the AM2018 survey but had received no

response to date. Meanwhile, the contract for the 2nd Review of the Regional Technical Statements (RTS) in Wales has been awarded to Cuesta (**AT**) and the work is now underway, with an intended end-date of December 2019.

5b.3. **GB** provided an update on developments within Northern Ireland, from a QPANI perspective, as follows:

- 9 of the 11 Local Councils in the Province have completed their Local Plan Preferred Options papers, and all of these address minerals safeguarding issues;
- Courses in Minerals Planning are being provided through the IOQ to educate planning officers;
- QPANI is encouraging its members to liaise positively with local Councillors;
- Orion Mining has made a bid for Dalradian Resources: a clear indication that global interests are now being focused on that company's high-grade gold mining prospect at Curraghinalt in the Sperrin Mountains, County Tyrone. (*Post meeting note: the acquisition of Dalradian was completed by Orion on 7th September*);
- Toxicity concerns relating to proposed gold mining and processing in the area have been escalating.

5b.4. **JM** reported that he had attended a meeting in Northern Ireland aimed at setting up a 'Minerals Working Group' and at the benefits of monitoring supply – something of an eye-opener for the local planning authorities in terms of how much effort would be required. He noted that dialogue between the authorities and mineral operators was essential, in order to build-up a useful evidence base.

5c. Environment Update (Defra/EA/NE/HE/CNP/CPRE/RSPB/TWT/NT)

Defra / Environment Agency

5c.1. **JD** was unable to provide any information ahead of the meeting and was unable to attend.

5c.2. **PC** noted that there was ongoing consultation on Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and on Defra's Air Quality Strategy. **IS** noted that Defra's intention was to double the number of MCZs and commented that Defra's approach to consulting on these at the same time as on terrestrial National Parks was interesting.

5c.3 **NH** commented that, with regard to implementation of the Water Act 2003 in relation to quarry dewatering, very few applications under the 'transitional' arrangements have yet been submitted. The deadline for such applications is not until December 2019 but there is likely to be a rush towards the end of that period and operators are advised not to leave it too late. Failure to get such applications validated within the required period could mean not being eligible for the benefits of being considered under the transitional arrangements. **LD** reported that a protocol is being developed for clay pits, on the basis of these being outside the scope of the licensing regime (i.e. in relation to the definitions of 'abstraction' and 'source of supply' given within S221 of the Water Resources Act 1991). **RD** has been assisting with this.

Natural England

5c.4. **PC** had advised that there has been no particularly topical news to bring to the attention of the Forum in advance of the meeting. During the meeting, he made reference to the 'New Networks for Nature' initiative, which will be holding its 10th Anniversary event on 15th November (coinciding with the next UKMF meeting, as it happens). **PC** also advised that

Natural England's own response to the NPPF consultation had been only 3 pages long and had not commented on minerals but did not conflict with the UKMF response. **PC** further advised that the *Code of Practice on the Sustainable Use of Soils in Construction Sites*, which had inadvertently been taken off Natural England's website, had now been reinstated.

Historic England

5c.5. **GR** provided the following updates in advance of the meeting. No further comments were added in discussion:

- The project to produce a new practice guide on Minerals Extraction and Archaeology has made limited progress over recent months, and in particular has helped the wide range of views on the topic to be clearly articulated. A revised draft of the guidance was circulated to members of the Minerals and Historic Environment Forum (MHEF) in March, taking into account feedback from the consultation. MHEF has yet to meet to discuss the latest draft. Wording on evaluation trenching remains the most significant outstanding issue where consensus has yet to be reached. This issue is under review but we hope to be publishing something in the next few months.
- In late 2017 Historic England published a range of new web pages on minerals: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/mineral-extraction/>.
- In May 2018 Historic England met with representatives of the Coal Authority and Environment Agency regarding the WAMM (Water and Abandoned Metal Mines) programme.
- Historic England submitted a detailed response to the NPPF, including comments on the minerals section of the revised NPPF. Its response is available for download here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/about/what-we-do/consultations/responses-to-the-consultation/clg2/>
- Historic England commented on the minerals section of the NPPF in two respects: first to clarify the existing policy around the supply of building and roofing stone for building conservation projects (para 201h in the draft) and also suggested some additional words to recognise the importance of natural stone in helping to reinforce local distinctiveness in placemaking work.
- Historic England gave a presentation on minerals and heritage at the RTPI/MPA planning event on 22 May.
- Historic England have commissioned a project on Kent's archaeological potential, including the Palaeolithic, to inform decision-making in Kent on when local planning authorities consult Kent County Council for curatorial advice.

Campaign for National Parks

Review of Designated Landscapes

5c.6. In advance of the meeting, **RB** had noted that the CNP had [welcomed](#) Michael Gove's announcement in May about the review of designated landscapes, and were looking forward to working with Julian Glover and the rest of the advisory panel as they take forward the review. **RB** had observed that this is an important opportunity to ensure that in future National Parks are even more beautiful, better protected and accessible to all.

5c.7. At the meeting, **IS** asked how the Forum ought to engage with the leader of the Review (Julian Glover), who is a journalist by background, rather than a landscape expert. **ATi**

observed that it would probably be very difficult for the Forum to generate any consensus or common ground on issues relating to the National Parks, but that it would be worth looking at the Terms of Reference for the Review (which can be found [here](#)). **IS** suggested that Julian Glover, or a member of his panel, should be invited to speak at the next Forum meeting, in November.

Action: IS

5c.8. **IS** further suggested that all UKMF members should give further thought to the review and should bring position statements to the meeting, so as to facilitate meaningful discussion.

Action: ALL

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5c.9. Prior to the meeting, **RB** had reported that the CNP's [response](#) to the consultation on the draft revised NPPF had focused on ensuring that a number of the proposed changes are revised or clarified in order to avoid weakening the existing protections for National Parks. In particular, CNP had called for the phrase '*which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty*' to be reinstated as part of new paragraph 170.

5c.9. CNP also [responded](#) to the consultation on draft Planning Policy Wales: Edition 10.

Energy Policy

5c.10. **RB** had noted that the CNP is very concerned about the plans announced in the written statement on energy policy on 17 May, particularly the proposal to introduce permitted development for certain fracking-related activities. CNP is working with CPRE and other NGOs to oppose these changes.

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Designated landscapes review

5c.11. **ATi** reported that CPRE has given a strong welcome to this review which they think offers opportunities for maintaining and strengthening protections and highlighting the hugely important, but possible under-sung role of NPs and AONBs in society, which emphasises the need for appropriate and fair funding for them to deliver even more benefits to the nation. See <https://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/sound-bites/item/4863-cpre-reaction-to-review-of-national-parks-aonbs>

NPPF

5c.12. **ATi** noted that CPRE had responded at length to the proposed revised NPPF (see <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning/item/4846-cpre-response-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-consultation>) including changes to the minerals section. Its principal concern with the latter section was over-weaning support for hydrocarbon development which they found inconsistent with sustainable development and climate change targets.

Revised WMS on fracking (energy policy)

5c.13. CPRE reacted strongly (see <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/energy-and-waste/shale-gas/item/4866-cpre-briefing-response-written-ministerial-statement-fracking-may-2018>) to the proposals to take fracking out of local mpa's decision-making control, by making it part of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) regime. **ATi** noted that, to assist with

resourcing CPRE's campaign work on fracking, he is now working for CPRE nationally on a part-time basis.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

5c.14. **NS** reported that, on behalf of the RSPB, he had attended the "Quarries Alive" conference in Portugal in May. The conference theme was "*Enhancing Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services in Quarries - Challenges, Strategies and Practice*" and further details including outputs can be found [here](#).

5c.15. **NS** also drew attention to the "Quarry Life Awards", sponsored by Heidelberg Cement. Further details can be found at: www.quarrylifeaward.com.

The Wildlife Trusts

5c.16. **PDo** announced the publication of TWT's "*Towards a Wilder Britain*" brochure and gave out printed copies to those attending. The publication outlines new proposals for a Nature Recovery Network to protect, join up and enhance the fragments of nature that remain – for the benefit of people and wildlife. The Network would be part of new environmental policy designed to achieve Government targets for helping species and habitats recovery and increase. Maps, created locally and linked to these targets, would identify existing important places for wildlife as well as key areas where habitats should be restored.

5c.17. **PDo** noted that Defra/EA have been holding a series of workshops on Biodiversity Net Gain, but that, for some reason, the minerals industry had not been invited to take part. He also drew attention to 'District Licensing' of protected species – the concept of linking the creation of habitats for displaced protected species – specifically Great Crested Newts – to the distribution of planned development in a more strategic, coordinated manner, with reduced costs and delays for individual developers. This has so far been trialled with a number of districts between Bedford and South Oxfordshire. **PDo** considers that it could potentially be a very positive benefit to mineral operators. He will investigate both of these issues further and report back.

Action: PDo

The National Trust

5c.18. **RR** advised that there have been no relevant issues to report since the last meeting.

5d. Planning update (POS)

5d.1. **LW** noted that the POS response on the NPPF consultation is on the POS Website.

5d.2. He reported that the Society had experienced difficulty in engaging with MHCLG about continued funding for the Aggregate Working Parties and the need for updated National Guidelines on Aggregates Provision.

5d.3. He further noted that MHCLG appeared to be exploring the idea of increasing the number of Unitary Authorities in England. POS is concerned that this would have an adverse impact on minerals planning in future, with a further dilution of expertise.

5d.4. The Society has engaged positively with the United Kingdom Onshore Oil & Gas organisation (UKOOG), with a good exchange of views on various issues including climate change.

5d.5. POS has agreed the scope of a new minerals safeguarding initiative with the MPA

5e. Industry update (MPA/BAA/BCC/MAUK)

5e.1. **NH** reported that the industrial sand sector has challenged a French proposal to label all silica sand products as carcinogenic. The proposal has now been withdrawn. He also noted a European proposal to harmonise national mineral surveys (although, having discontinued the AMRI surveys, this would not be able to include the UK).

5e.2. **NH** noted that, with the phasing out of coal-fired power stations by 2025, the future supply of secondary aggregates from these sources would decline.

5e.3. **GB** noted the need to reconnect mining with people in a fossil fuel free future.

5e.4. **IS** commented that the resurgence of interest in mining in the UK in recent years is now becoming a reality, both onshore and offshore (Orion in NI, Cornish Lithium, Sirius in North Yorkshire).

6. **Current Topic Papers:**

6a. NPPF Review

6a.1. **IS** thanked **AT** for coordinating the UKMF consultation response, which he felt had been a very worthwhile exercise in airing views, building consensus and making a valid and effective contribution to the process. All agreed: even though a consensus was not able to be reached on all matters, the exercise had led to a very good exchange of views. **NH** noted that there had been over 29,000 consultation responses and that MHCLG was aiming to digest these and publish the final version before the summer recess. **DP** advised that he and others from MPA had met with Simon Gallagher at MHCLG regarding critical changes that were needed and had received assurance that some of the omissions in the draft were inadvertent errors rather than deliberate changes in policy. He noted that the MPA would be holding a further meeting with MHCLG officials on 3rd July and agreed that they would point to the UKMF submission as evidence of an important consensus of views on some of the key issues.

Post-meeting note: the finalised revision of NPPF was published in July 2018 and incorporated many of the changes which had been supported by the UKMF response. Whilst some of our suggestions have been overlooked, most of the critical changes (such as acknowledging the 'essential' need for minerals, quantifying the minimum required landbanks / stocks of permitted reserves, and listing important types of mineral) have been made.

6a.2. **DP** noted that one additional issue within the draft NPPF, which had not been picked up in the consultation response, was that the definition of irreplaceable habitats has been widened, and now includes 'some types of sand dune, saltmarsh, reedbed and heathland', as well as the original Ancient Woodland. The industry is concerned that the phrase 'some types of' is far too vague. *Post-meeting note: the phrase has been dropped in the finalised version, although the extended list of habitat types has been retained.*

6b. *"The Threat of MASS Extinction"* – reflections on the recent MPA/RTPI Conference, including the need for aggregate guidelines.

6b.1. **NH** commented that Tom Clifford's paper re-emphasised the need for minerals supply issues to be explicitly addressed in proposals for major infrastructure projects. Several other speakers picked up on the same issue.

6b.2. **AT** noted that the need for this, and for developing a system that is capable of dealing with the associated 'spikes' in demand, had specifically been recognised in the scope of work for the 2nd Review of the RTS documents in Wales.

6b.3. **RR** observed that it was equally important to consider the 'knock-on' effects of such projects in terms of necessitating additional supplies from other sources to make up for those diverted into the major projects.

6b.4. **AT** reported that there had been much discussion at the conference regarding the need for alternatives to Government Guidelines on future Aggregates Provision, if MHCLG were no longer going to produce those. Suggestions had included developing predictive formulae based on a variety of economic and other parameters. **LW** warned that, if not careful, such ideas might convince the Ministry that Guidelines were not required. **DP** commented that industry needed to do something about this.

6c. UKMF at the EIG Conference, September 2018.

6c.1. **IS** confirmed that he will be chairing a 40-minute discussion workshop at the Extractive Industry Geology Conference in September, entitled: ***"A Conversation about Getting Fit – Opportunities for the Next Generation of Extractive Industry Professionals to Upskill for the Future"***. The aim is to promote the work of the UKMF and to encourage future participation by younger professionals. Further information on the conference can be found at www.eigconferences.com.

7. Any other business:

7a. **IS** confirmed that he would invite Julian Glover, or a member of his committee, to speak to our next meeting. Further suggestions for topical speakers at future UKMF meetings were welcomed and should be sent to Ian.

8. Date of next meeting:

- **Thursday 15th November 2018, 11am-1 30pm**
IoM³ offices at 297 Euston Road, NW1 3AQ, followed by a buffet lunch.]