

**Report to:** Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

**Date of Meeting:** 18 July 2016

**By:** Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

**Title:** Revised Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between the Shoreham Harbour Planning Authorities and the Shoreham Port Authority June 2016

**Purpose:** To respond to the revised SoCG which has implications for the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:**

- (1) Agree the changes to the SoCG and authorise the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to sign the revised SoCG: and**
  - (2) Authorise the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to consider and agree any future revisions to the revised SoCG**
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## **1. Supporting Information**

1.1 The Waste & Minerals Plan (WMP), which covers East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and part of the South Downs National Park (the Plan Area), was jointly adopted in February 2013. The WMP includes planning policies for the provision of aggregates. Levels of land-won aggregates are historically low and the Plan Area is therefore heavily reliant on imports (marine dredged and crushed rock). Marine imports of sand and gravel are received at the three Ports in the Plan area (Rye, Newhaven and Shoreham). The provision of marine imports through local ports makes a valuable contribution to meeting aggregates demand for constructional needs in the context of dwindling land-won resources.

1.2 In order to secure these imports, the WMP aims to safeguard existing, planned and potential railhead and minerals wharf facilities, and their consequential handling capacity. Policy WMP 15 sets out these requirements. Proposals for alternative uses at mineral wharves would only be acceptable where evidence demonstrates that there would be no net-loss of potential capacity for handling minerals within the Port. The draft East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Sites Plan (WMSP) (submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination on 15 April 2016) includes a safeguarding policy for wharves in the Plan Area and identifies the areas affected.

1.3 Shoreham Port straddles the Brighton & Hove and West Sussex (Adur District) boundary. The Port receives significant aggregate imports (1,090,138 tonnes in 2014). In 2011 over 60% of sand and gravel received on the Brighton & Hove side of Shoreham Port was used within the Plan Area. Mineral wharves located within West Sussex at Shoreham Port also serve markets in the Plan area.

1.4 Adur District Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and Shoreham Port Authority (SPA) are partners in the preparation of the Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) which sets out a 15 – 20 years plan to guide the regeneration of Shoreham Harbour. The JAAP outlines proposals for housing, employment and economy and environmental improvements. In order to achieve this, some consolidation of operations and redevelopment of mineral wharves (particularly in West Sussex) is proposed. Ferry Wharf (a vacant mineral wharf) on the Brighton & Hove side of the port is proposed for redevelopment. The JAAP was first consulted on in 2014. A draft consultation plan is due to be published in December 2016 with submission timetabled for autumn 2017.

1.5 The WMP acknowledges the JAAP regeneration proposals. Policy SP9 in the WMSP will be the mechanism for assessing the impact on wharf capacity at the Brighton & Hove section of the Port from

any development proposals in this area. The policy area safeguards facilities to land, process and handle, and associated storage of minerals and their consequential capacity.

1.6 It is recognised that the provision and safeguarding of minerals wharfage is a key issue if the JAAP aims are to be achieved. To this end the JAAP partners, together with South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and East Sussex County Council, agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) in 2014. The purpose of the SoCG was to underpin effective cooperation and collaboration between the partners in addressing strategic cross-boundary issues as they relate to planning for minerals infrastructure and safeguarding in Shoreham Harbour. Lead Member authorised the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport (CET) to sign the SoCG on 28 April 2014.

1.7 The 2014 SoCG recognised the importance of aggregate wharves at Shoreham to the supply of minerals to West Sussex, East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and other areas in the South-East, and that there would be a likely increased reliance on minerals (both land won and marine dredged) landed at Shoreham from East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. The SoCG also stated that WSCC would progress its Minerals Local Plan (MLP) safeguarding policy in line with a previous Wharves and Railhead study. WSCC and the SDNPA are now preparing a joint MLP and published a consultation draft in April. (The Director CET recently responded to this consultation). Further assessments of wharf capacity and landings carried out to support the joint MLP have indicated that the scenarios in the previous Wharves and Railhead study are no longer being considered suitable. WSCC are now seeking revisions to the SoCG to reflect their updated approach to safeguarding in the joint MLP.

1.8 The main changes proposed in the revised SoCG are based on an updated wharf capacity at Shoreham, increased from 1.89 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) to 2.27mtpa. There has also been a change of approach in calculating aggregate demand, using landings rather than sales data. Updated calculations of aggregate demand, taking account of planned housing and highways development in neighbouring authorities including East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, have indicated a figure of 1.34 mtpa to 2033.

1.9 The revised SoCG sets out a range of options including maintaining capacity (although this would not allow for regeneration), safeguarding specific wharves to give a lower figure than an existing capacity, and safeguarding specific wharves in Shoreham and Littlehampton and potential wharf/s in Brighton & Hove. Options relating to the latter may give capacities close to or exceeding the existing capacity, whilst also allowing for regeneration.

1.10 Of these options, the revised SoCG supports an approach based on safeguarding an excess of capacity (2.49mtpa) known as “W4”. This option involves safeguarding four wharves in the Eastern Harbour Arm and a wharf at Littlehampton, as well as the currently vacant Britannia Wharf in Brighton & Hove and Rombus Wharf in West Sussex. Rombus Wharf is not currently in mineral use. SPA own and operate both wharves and have stated that they would seek to bring them back in to minerals use in future should demand arise for it.

1.11 The joint MLP considers safeguarding policy approaches using these new figures and sets out preferred approach based on Option W4 in policy M10. Britannia Wharf is not included in this policy as it is located outside West Sussex in Brighton & Hove.

## **2. Comments/Appraisal**

2.1 The Plan Area is heavily reliant on marine imports and it is expected that this dependence will increase in the future. The recently adopted East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) 2015, (considered by Lead Member on 22 December 2015) provides detail on aggregate supply and confirms that in particular East Sussex and Brighton & Hove is very dependant on imports at Shoreham. The LAA also emphasises the importance of safeguarding wharves and railheads for aggregate imports.

2.2 The main issue for the County Council with the redevelopment of Shoreham Harbour is to ensure that aggregates can continue to be landed at the Port, as at present, and that there is flexibility in capacity should demand increase in the future. WMP policies require that there is no net loss in capacity when considering alternative proposals for development. The revised SoCG is consistent with this policy and can therefore be supported in principle.

### **3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

3.1 The Statement of Common Ground is essential to maintain capacity for aggregates to be landed at Shoreham Harbour in order to serve the construction industry and development needs in East Sussex. The Lead Member is therefore recommended to ensure continuing involvement of the County Council in safeguarding marine aggregate imports, and to authorise the Director of CET to sign the revised SoCG. In order to reduce the requirement for the Lead Member to consider minor amendments to the SoCG in future, the Lead Member is also recommended to give authority to the Director of CET to agree future appropriate changes.

RUPERT CLUBB

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#### **LOCAL MEMEBERS**

ALL

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste & Minerals Plan (adopted February 2013)

Draft revised Statement of Common Ground between the Shoreham Harbour Planning Authorities, June 2016

East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste & Minerals Sites Plan Submission draft 2015

East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Local Aggregate Assessment 2015

Draft West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan April 2016