

## IS THE NEW NOTTINGHAMSHIRE MINERALS PLAN A THREAT TO US IN TRENT VALLEY?

The answer is: not at this stage; let's keep it that way.

If there were gravel digging at a local site, it could greatly increase flood risks to hundreds of homes, in Burton Joyce, Stoke Bardolph, Colwick and Netherfield, in the Borough of Gedling, and communities on the opposite bank of the Trent, and downstream. The works would create noise and dust pollution over a large part of this area. Thousands of lorries carrying away gravel would create even greater congestion and danger on the main roads we rely on around here, the A612 and A6097.

**Will that happen?** It might. It could have. The County Council is obliged by law to have a Local Minerals Plan. The old plan expired some years ago. That included the option to dig away the river bank in Burton Joyce for gravel. Liberal Democrats were among many locally who opposed the Application, and that was stopped. The replacement Minerals Plan was meant to come into operation last year. That originally did not include any local sites, but during the consultation stage a site further upstream was removed from the Plan, and land at Shelford was inserted to replace it. That land is in some parts only a few hundred yards from the nearest homes in Burton Joyce. We fought against that idea, and in 2017 the whole draft Plan was withdrawn, because of a recalculation of the demand for the minerals concerned. Now a new Draft Plan has been drawn up.

**Where do we stand now?** The new Draft *does not include the Shelford site* or anywhere that affects this area directly. That's good, but it's only back to the earlier stage as before: if the same thing happens in this stage as happened before, then the threat to our environment could be revived. The County Council is doing a Consultation that runs out on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2018. The public are invited to make submissions. The full draft, over 200 pages, is at [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/minerals](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/minerals). People can make representations online, in writing by post etc.

**What is there to say?** Some of the principles in the draft plan are, we think, unsound. And they could make it easier for the threat to our area to be brought back. So we suggest there is no need, from our local point of view, to make a specific comment on the sites currently proposed. But we do disagree with the policy that states extraction sites should be close to the market, i.e. building sites. The extra cost to the quarrying business of taking minerals from further away is less than the real cost to be borne by local residents if quarrying takes place close to towns and villages. (question 1, 6 and 11). We favour sustainable development, as covered in question 2, and so want to stress the need to protect communities from damaging quarries, and to encourage the use of secondary and recycled aggregates instead of gravel, which is also relevant to question 10. We support the policy, mentioned in question 3, of prioritising use of existing permitted sites, not opening new ones. On question 4, we strongly disagree that there is any gain in biodiversity to be found in creating yet more lagoons of stagnant water along the Trent. On question 5 we say the Plan should take account of climate change in two ways. It should encourage the reduced use of concrete, so reducing the demand for gravel, and it should more emphatically take account of the danger of flooding produced by more extreme weather events, and therefore avoid having mineral extraction close to people's homes. Question 7 makes the point of the value of the natural environment. This matters a lot to people around here.

**It's not over yet.** If the Draft Plan is changed at this Consultation stage to add the Shelford site, local people, Councillors and organisations will have to fight to reverse that proposal. Even if that doesn't happen, there is still the threat that a minerals company could apply to destroy that site, and many people's quality of life along with it, in the interim before the new Minerals Local Plan is finalised. We will keep a close eye on developments.