

Kit Bennett

3. Bearing in mind that minerals can only be worked where they are found, does the MWJP seek to achieve the most appropriate spatial strategy for minerals development? How is this reflected in the Plan?

Although the spatial strategy towards hydrocarbon development is restrictive, the inclusion of such restrictions is not inappropriate. The spatial strategy should be even more restrictive towards hydrocarbon development. Such restrictions are necessary to make the plan sound and consistent with national policy. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF, commits to minimising the impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. This paragraph also commits to preventing new and existing development from contributing to or being put at risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF, which gives great weight to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Parks and AONBs. This is why buffer zones are needed. Paragraph 117 of the NPPF, which calls for identifying designated sites but also wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Paragraph 118 of the NPPF, which calls for refusing planning permission for development that would cause the loss of habitats including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees unless the need and benefits of the development outweigh the loss. This paragraph also says that development inside or outside a SSSI that would have an adverse impact on the development should not normally be permitted. There should therefore be a buffer zone around SSSIs like those already included for residential receptors and National Parks and AONBs.

I will deal with specific issues regarding restrictions on hydrocarbon development in my response to other MIQs.