

Tim Judson
Waste Strategy
DEFRA
Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London SW1P 6DE

28th March 2002

Dear Tim,

Possible projects that could be funded through the Sustainability Fund

Following our meeting with you on the Sustainability Fund, members of Wildlife and Countryside Link have developed a list of suggestions (attached) for projects which:

- support the principal purpose of the Aggregates Levy (to reduce the environmental costs of aggregate extraction);
- can be applied nationally for the benefit of the environment, minerals planning authorities, and the construction and aggregates industries; and
- could be set up within the first two years of the introduction of the levy.

As we said at the meeting, we believe it is crucial that projects that are funded by the Sustainability Fund make clear steps towards reducing the environmental effects of aggregate extraction by reducing the amount of material that needs to be extracted.

We hope that you will consider these proposals seriously, and that you will contact us if you would like to discuss any of them further, or if you would like suggestions as to how they might be progressed.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Richmond
Chair, Wildlife and Countryside Link Minerals Group

On behalf of the following Organisations:

Council for British Archaeology
Council for National Parks
CPRE
Marine Conservation Society
National Trust
Ramblers' Association

Copies of this letter have been sent to:

Tim Judson, Waste Strategy Team, DEFRA

Lester Hicks, Minerals and Waste Planning Division
John Huntley and Nathan Beard, Countryside Agency
Richard Bird, DEFRA
Peter Madden, DEFRA
Sue Connaughton, HM Treasury

Possible projects for the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund

Wildlife and Countryside Link, March 2002

Following is a list of possible projects to which Sustainability Fund might be applied. They could be managed directly by DEFRA (through recruiting a consultant) or by the Fund-holding bodies on a more regional level.

We believe that these

1. Support the principal purpose of the Aggregates Levy (to reduce the environmental costs of aggregate extraction);
2. Can be applied nationally for the benefit of the environment, minerals planning authorities, and the construction and aggregates industries; and
3. Could be set up within the first two years of the introduction of the levy.

-
1. The training of Minerals Planning Officers on how to make best use of the minerals planning system in order to encourage efficient extraction with minimal cost to the environment and local communities. This would include training on maximising and simplifying the use of revocation and prohibition orders.
 2. Research into amending contract specifications to cover secondary, recycled and alternative materials, in order to reduce the demand for freshly quarried aggregate.
 3. Development of techniques for recycling demolition waste, and for constructing buildings in such a way that recycling of the material can be done more easily, more efficiently and more effectively.
 4. Research into the use of alternative materials for construction, particularly those less well used in this country such as recycled glass for road surfacing, and more sustainable construction materials for building, (such as timber framing and straw). This could be done through work with bodies such as the Centre for Alternative Technology, or specialist architects.
 5. Development of construction techniques which generate less waste, and the training of construction workers to ensure that less waste is produced. Marketing to construction companies as a distinct opportunity to save money and improve practices.



6. Provision of capital and operational resources for demonstration construction projects, incorporating the efficient use of aggregates, the use of alternatives to aggregates, and/or the use and re-use of reclaimed materials.
7. Identification of key sites in England where millions are spent on beach replenishment despite the fact that the costs far outweigh the benefits e.g. Selsey Bill caravan park, some amenity beaches. Research into the need for this and the potential for alternative approaches, such as compulsory purchase, community relocation and managed realignment.
8. Development of guidance notes for Railtrack to reduce excessive waste of aggregates laid on the track and to retrieve some wasted aggregate. Research alternatives for railways such as recycled aggregate or building waste.
9. Funding an independent study into the impacts on marine habitats and species (including commercial fisheries) of marine primary aggregate extraction.
10. Research into the value of maintaining existing buildings for reuse, particularly into overcoming technical problems of adaptability; and looking at the whole life economics of maintaining historic buildings instead of building new ones.
11. The publication and publicising of guides explaining the process and methods used of successful alternative construction projects such as that at BedZed in South East London.
12. A series of seminars for house builders on the importance of more careful use of aggregates, and of alternative building techniques demonstrating public demand for them.
13. A project to research current stockpiling of materials that could be used for construction, so that predictions for aggregate extraction can be amended.
14. Training specifically for smaller quarry operators on good practice and efficiency techniques.



