

SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN

Minerals

Local Plan 1996 - 2006

(Adopted Plan - April 2000)

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SHROPSHIRE, TELFORD & WREKIN Minerals Local Plan 1996 to 2006

(Adopted Plan - April 2000)

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foreword...

People in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin value their local environment, their countryside and open spaces. Mineral working can sometimes be a threat to these, whether it be from disturbance due to noise, dust and heavy traffic or from permanent changes to the local landscape and effects on wildlife. Yet local prosperity depends to a degree on a ready supply of construction materials, to build roads and houses, and coal to generate power.

Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council are responsible for mineral planning in the Plan area and have jointly adopted this Plan. The Minerals Local Plan sets out the policies which will be used to test planning applications for mineral working. For the residents of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, it should provide more certainty as to where future working is or is not likely to take place.

Planning is about balancing development needs against the implications for communities and the environment. In developing the Plan, the two authorities have sought and received public comment and discussion about planning for mineral development. The authorities therefore feel confident that the more sustainable approach to mineral development which is adopted as the main principle of the Plan strikes the right balance and will act as a useful guide to mineral development in the coming years.



John Everall

John Everall
Chairman, Environment Committee
Shropshire County Council
April 2000



Charles Smith

Charles Smith
Chair, Environment & Development Board
Telford & Wrekin Council
April 2000

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part A

introduction

775B

INTRODUCTION

part A

section 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

PURPOSE OF THE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN

- 1.1 Minerals are an essential raw material for the construction industry and for power generation. The Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin area is underlain by extensive deposits of economically valuable minerals such as sand and gravel, rock, coal and clay. These minerals have been worked in the Plan area for centuries and there continues to be a demand for them. Increasingly, however, there is a recognition that mineral working can have a significant impact on the environment and quality of life. Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council are the Mineral Planning Authorities (MPAs) for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin respectively. The MPAs, in determining planning applications for mineral development, are required to balance the need for minerals with the need to protect the environment. The Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Minerals Local Plan will guide the MPAs' decisions during the period 1996 to 2006.
- 1.2 Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 introduced a presumption in favour of proposals that are in accord with the 'Development Plan'.¹ The Minerals Local Plan is one of a series of documents which together form the Development Plan for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. The other documents are: the Shropshire Structure Plan, prepared jointly by the County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council; the District Local Plans, prepared by each of the five District Councils and Telford & Wrekin Council; and the Waste Local Plan, being prepared jointly by the County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. The Minerals Local Plan, along with the other Plans, provides the policy framework to guide planning decisions about the use of land in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.
- 1.3 Please note that the Minerals Local Plan applies to the former Shropshire administrative area. Since 1 April 1998, the responsibilities of the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) of this area have been split between Shropshire County Council and the new Telford & Wrekin (unitary) Council. References to 'Shropshire' refer to the area which is the administrative responsibility of Shropshire County Council. References to 'Telford & Wrekin' refer to the area which is the administrative responsibility of Telford & Wrekin Council. References to the 'Plan Area' refer to both areas together.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN

- 1.4 **Part A** contains background about the Plan process, describes the Plan area and its mineral resources and explains the broad context for the policies in Part B.
- 1.5 **Part B** contains the 'Written Statement' of policies and proposals, together with explanatory information or the 'reasoned justification'. Section 5 sets out general policies dealing with issues such as the need for minerals and the protection of sensitive sites; specific policies to deal with issues relating to individual minerals, including areas for future working; policies to ensure the proper reclamation and aftercare of sites, and the review of existing mineral planning permissions; policies to safeguard and conserve mineral resources and finally a description of the proposed areas for future sand and gravel working. The Written Statement is accompanied by a 'Proposals Map' which highlights a series of 'Inset Maps'. The Proposals Map can be found inside the back cover. The Inset Maps accompany the relevant text.

- 1.6 **Part C** contains the Appendices to the Plan, including a summary of the mineral resources in the Plan area, including a geological map; a summary of the environmental appraisal of the Plan's policies and proposals; the minerals policies in the Shropshire Structure Plan, 1989-2006 and detailed guidance to assist applicants with the preparation of new proposals.
- 1.7 There is a Glossary to explain technical terms and an Index of the policies, proposals and subject areas.

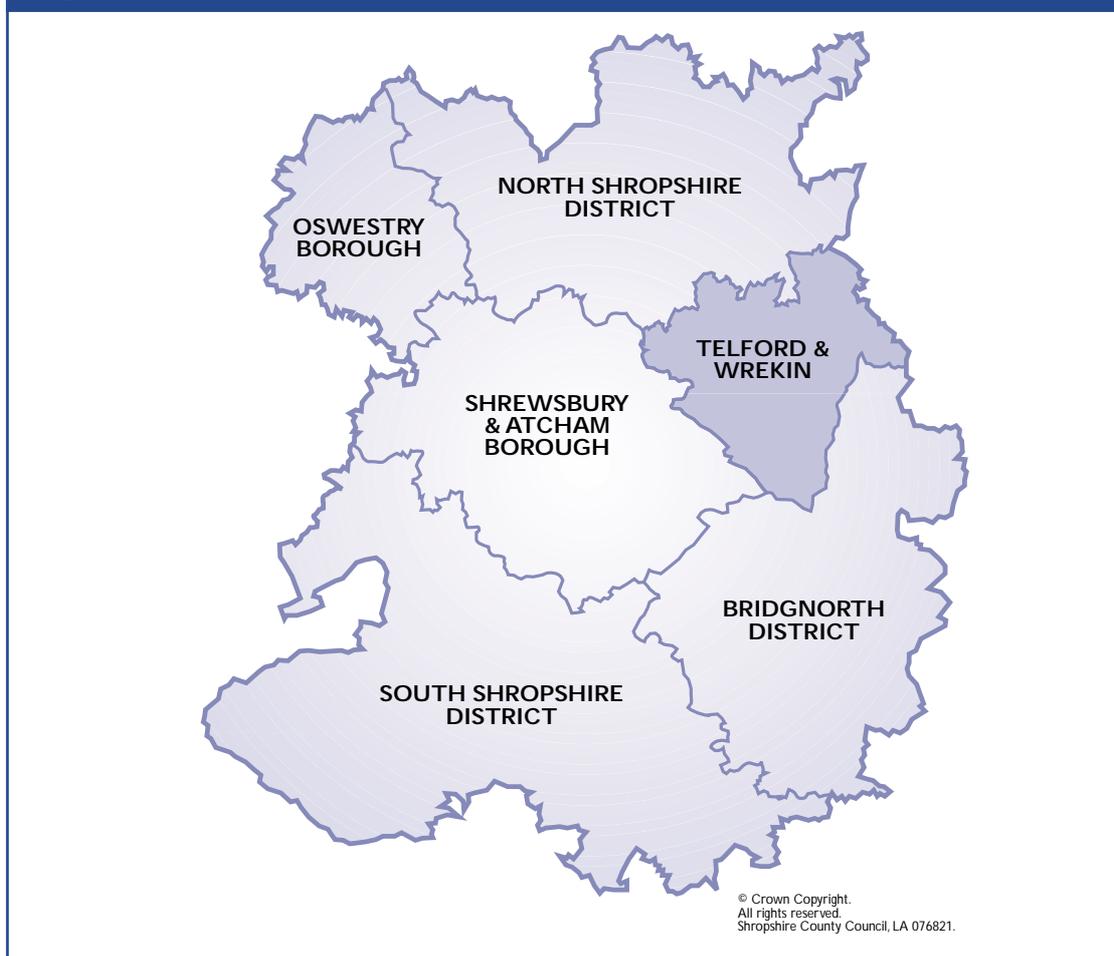
HOW THE PLAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

- 1.8 It is a requirement that Local Plans indicate how policies and proposals will be implemented and by which agency. The Minerals Local Plan will be implemented through the working of the development control process, i.e., by the MPAs taking decisions on planning applications. Development, use and reclamation of sites will be carried out by private mineral operators, subject to planning controls set out in the planning conditions which accompany the planning permission.

REVIEW OF THE PLAN

- 1.9 The Government expects that Local Plans should be reviewed every five years or so. It is expected that the first review of the Minerals Local Plan will start during 2001, and will take account of updated survey information, forecasts and any revised national policy guidance.

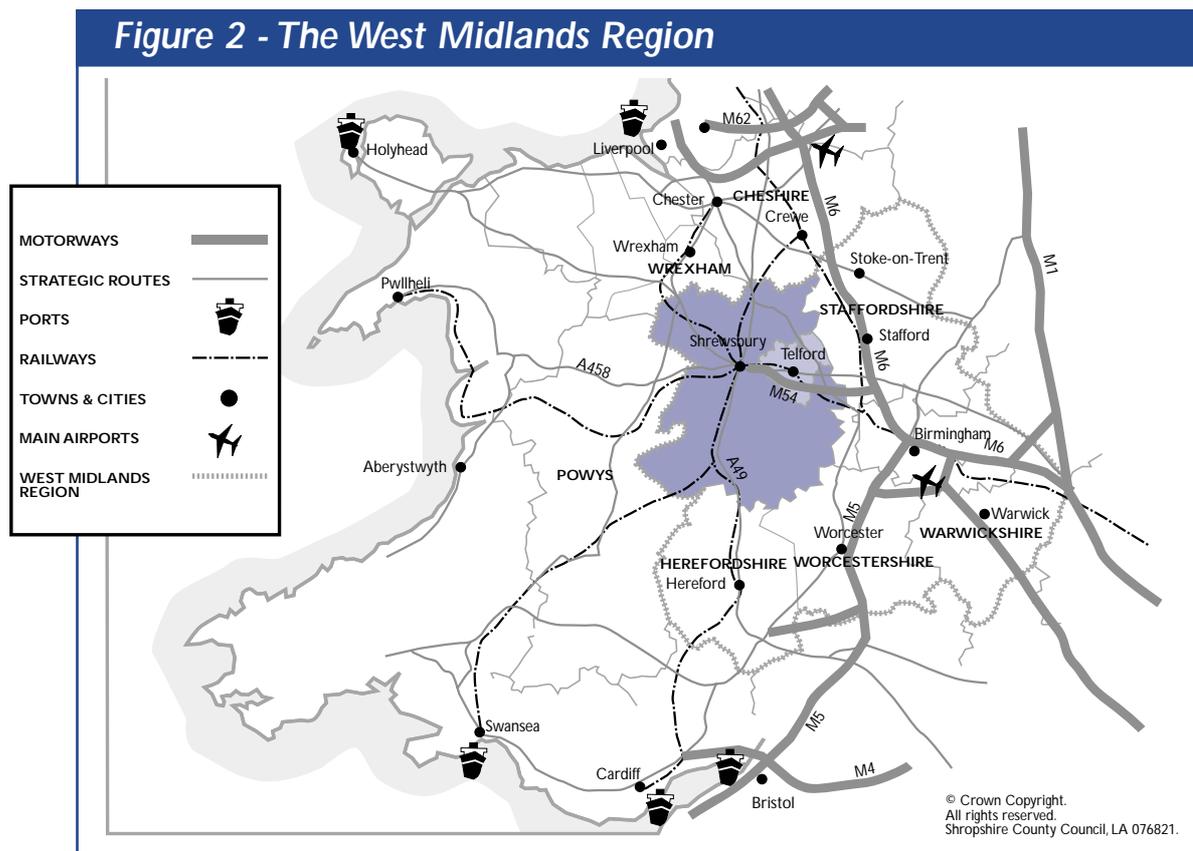
Figure 1 - Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin



chapter 2. THE PLAN AREA AND ITS MINERAL RESOURCES

PROFILE OF THE PLAN AREA

- 2.1 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (Figure 1) have a wide variety of landscape and land use. The Plan area is predominantly rural in nature: 80 per cent of its 349,767 hectares is in agricultural use and one third of its area is upland, mostly in the south and west. The South Shropshire Hills, which are designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, occupy about one fifth of the Plan area.
- 2.2 The Plan area has a population of 424,600 (1997) with the main urbanised areas in Telford (1997 population estimate 129,000) and Shrewsbury (1997 population estimate 67,800). There are also important transport links with the West Midlands conurbation, Cheshire and North Wales (Figure 2).



ECONOMIC GEOLOGY

- 2.3 There is a wide range of rock types in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, and the area is famous for its geological history and diversity. The mineral resources currently worked are aggregate materials (sand and gravel and crushed rock), building stone, coal, fire clay and brick clay. The aggregates industry is the most active. The reserves supply both local markets and a wider area, particularly in the case of crushed rock and fire clay where the destinations are the West Midlands and further afield.
- 2.4 **Sand and gravel** is worked from the glacial drift deposits of the North Shropshire Plain, the alluvial deposits of the river valleys, and the Permo-Triassic outcrop in North and East Shropshire. At June 1999 there were 11 permitted sites in the Plan area, with reserves totalling about 21.6 million tonnes. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin produce about 1 million tonnes of sand and gravel per annum. The material is used in the construction industry.
- 2.5 **Crushed rock** is produced from the older rocks in the south and west of the Plan area, comprising Pre-Cambrian gritstones and volcanic rocks, Ordovician volcanics, Silurian limestones and Lower and Middle Carboniferous rocks. At June 1999 there were 13 permitted sites in the Plan area, with reserves totalling about 81.1 million tonnes. In recent years Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have produced between 3 and 4 million tonnes of crushed rock per annum. Crushed rock is mainly used for road construction and maintenance.
- 2.6 **Building stone**, including dimension stone, is produced from the Triassic sandstones in North Shropshire and from the Silurian Siltstones in Corve Dale, South Shropshire. At June 1999 there were 6 small permitted sites in the Plan area, providing specialist stone for building and conservation schemes. Reserves totalled about 1 million tonnes. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin produce up to about 2,000 tonnes of building stone per annum.
- 2.7 **Coal and Fire Clay** is produced from a series of small coalfields. All of the coalfields have been worked by underground mining methods in the past. In more recent years the only active coal working has been carried out by opencast mining methods in the Coalbrookdale or Broseley coalfield. At June 1999 there were 2 permitted coal sites in the Plan area. The coal seams have often been worked in conjunction with fire clays. The coal is primarily used for electricity generation and the fire clay is mainly used to make engineering bricks and paviers.
- 2.8 **Brick Clay** from the Upper Coal Measures is quarried in Telford and south of Bridgnorth and has been used directly by local brick works, as well as outside Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. At June 1999 there were 4 permitted sites in the Plan area, with reserves totalling about 7 million tonnes.



Triassic New Red Sandstone has been quarried from Grinshill since Roman times. The old quarry is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

- 2.9 **Other minerals** have been worked in the past, including: ironstone, limestone and clay in the Telford area; metalliferous minerals, particularly in West and South Shropshire (lead, zinc, barytes, copper); and peat has been extracted from Whixall Moss in the north of the Plan area. Many of these old mineral sites have found new uses by being reclaimed for amenity purposes. Others have all but vanished into the modern landscape, although extensive areas of abandoned underground workings, spoil heaps and old shafts can retain archaeological, geological or nature conservation interest. There may also be concerns about surface subsidence and pollution unless former mineral sites are properly treated.
- 2.10 More details about the geology and mineral resources of the Plan area are contained in Appendix 1 and in the background information which accompanies the policies for individual minerals in Part B, section 6.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE MINERAL INDUSTRY

- 2.11 About 20 mineral operators are currently active in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. In 1993 600 persons were estimated to be directly employed in mineral extraction and a further 300 persons in linked pipe, brick, block-making and asphalt manufacturing. It is not possible to give detailed figures for reasons of commercial confidentiality and statistics quoted in this section have been rounded to the nearest hundred.²
- 2.12 Since 1971, there has been an overall decline in employment in the industry: in 1971 1300 persons were directly employed in mineral extraction with a further 600 in related industries. However, these figures disguise some fluctuations in the three employment categories as set out below.
- i. Extraction of stone, clay, sand and gravel**
Estimated employment figures have varied over the past twenty years, but are within the 400-500 range. The figures include those employed by two firms which have, or had, headquarters for administrative and sales staff in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.
- ii. Coal**
In the 1960's, 4700 jobs existed in the three deep coal mines in Shropshire (Ifton, Highley/Alveley and Granville/Grange), but by 1981, only one person was directly employed in the coal industry. Then, reflecting a resurgence in opencast mining in the Telford area, the 1993 survey records 200 jobs in the industry. This figure is partly influenced by the presence of a headquarters of one nationally operating company.
- iii. Related Industries**
There has been an overall decline in pipe, brick, block-making and asphalt manufacturing jobs, from 600 jobs in 1971 to 300 jobs in 1993. It is likely that the figures include sales and related activities. These industries tend to reflect the pattern of growth and recession in the construction industry.
- Road haulage is another related industry; numbers employed by the minerals companies in haulage are included in the employment figures for individual minerals. A further point to note is that the coal-fired Ironbridge Power Station is linked to the local coal industry.
- 2.13 The minerals industry supplies raw materials to meet the needs of local construction and energy requirements and therefore has an essential economic role. Although employment in the minerals industry is a very small proportion of the total employment in the Plan area (0.6%), the industry does provide important local employment, particularly in remote rural areas.

chapter 3. POLICY BACKGROUND

THE PLAN CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Minerals Local Plan has been prepared in the context of current national, regional and local planning policy guidance. Where appropriate throughout this document reference will be made to any relevant planning policy guidance.

NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.2 National policy considerations for both supply of minerals and environmental constraints are set out in a series of 'Mineral Planning Guidance Notes' (MPGs) issued by central government. Relevant MPGs currently include MPG1 'General Considerations and the Development Plan System', MPG2 'Applications, Permissions and Conditions', MPG3 'Coal Mining and Colliery Spoil Disposal', MPG6 'Guidelines for Aggregates Provision', MPG7 'The Reclamation of Mineral Workings', MPG11 'Control of Noise at Surface Mineral Workings', MPG12 'Treatment of Disused Mine Openings and Availability of Information on Mined Ground', MPG13 'Guidelines for Peat Provision in England...', and MPG14 'Environment Act 1995: Review of Mineral Planning Permissions'.
- 3.3 More general guidance, also of interest to minerals planning, is set out in the Government's series of 'Planning Policy Guidance Notes' (PPGs). Relevant PPGs include PPG1 'General Policy and Principles', PPG2 'Green Belts', PPG7 'The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development', PPG9 'Nature Conservation', PPG13 'Transport', PPG 14 'Development of Unstable Land', PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment', PPG16 'Archaeology and Planning' and PPG23 'Planning and Pollution Control'. These guidelines contain advice about sustainability issues, biodiversity, the countryside and the local economy, the Green Belt, agricultural land quality, protecting the landscape and areas designated for their nature conservation value, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings, and pollution control considerations. There is also equally important Government advice on development of land in areas that have been previously worked, protecting water supplies, land drainage, water and river pollution; on unscheduled archaeological sites, ancient monuments and the need for archaeological investigation.
- 3.4 Government policy states that:

'Minerals are important natural resources which make an essential contribution to the nation's prosperity and quality of life.'³ Also that: 'The minerals industry....provides a market for other goods and services thereby stimulating competitiveness elsewhere in the economy and providing opportunities for employment, sometimes in remote rural areas, where there are few alternatives.'⁴

- 3.5 Government guidance in "A Better Quality of Life" sets out the challenge of Sustainable Development:

'We have to find a new way forward. We need greater prosperity with less environmental damage. We need to improve the efficiency with which we use resources.'⁵

Sustainable Development of Mineral Resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

- 3.6 Sustainable development was defined in the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report) as:

*'...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'*⁶

- 3.7 As far Government policy is concerned, the revised PPG1, published in 1997, refers to the contribution that the planning system can make to sustainable development. PPG1 makes clear that:

*'Sustainable development seeks to deliver the objective of achieving, now and in the future, economic development to secure higher living standards while protecting and enhancing the environment.'*⁷

- 3.8 In 1999, the Government published 'A Better Quality of Life - A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK'. This document acknowledges the fact that, for minerals:

*'Environmental and Developmental constraints mean that not all resources can be worked. It is important to identify where extraction will have least effect on landscape, environment and quality of life of local communities.'*⁸

- 3.9 The principles of sustainable development continue to be refined by the Government and are appearing in revisions to the Mineral Planning Guidance Notes. The objectives are:

- i. to conserve minerals as far as possible, whilst ensuring an adequate supply to meet needs;
- ii. to ensure that the environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are kept, as far as possible, to an acceptable minimum;
- iii. to minimise production of wastes and to encourage efficient use of materials, including appropriate use of high quality materials, and recycling of wastes;
- iv. to encourage sensitive working, restoration and aftercare practices so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment;
- v. to protect areas of designated landscape or nature conservation value from development, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it has been demonstrated that development is in the public interest; and,
- iv. to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources.⁹

- 3.10 Shropshire County Council supports the principles of sustainable development and has adopted this overall aim in an Environmental Charter which states that:

*'Shropshire County Council is committed to the objective of sustainable development. This means improving the quality of life while staying within the carrying capacity of the natural environment. The Council, in partnership with other agencies, recognises its responsibility of stewardship for the environment of Shropshire, and the contribution it can make to environmental improvement in the rest of the UK and the world. It seeks to enhance the environment and minimise damage to it both through the services it provides and in the way it consumes environmental resources as an organisation itself.'*¹⁰

3.11 The Environmental Charter has also established specific aims relating to 'Pollution' and the 'Natural and Built Environment' which are particularly relevant to the Plan.

i) Pollution

*'The Council seeks a reduction in the pollution of air and water, in the contamination of land and in noise generation.'*¹¹

ii) Natural and Built Environment

*'The Council seeks the protection and enhancement of the County's natural and built landscape, its geological features, its wildlife and their habitats.'*¹²

3.12 The concept of sustainability, as far as mineral resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are concerned, is based on the understanding that the resources are finite. Hence it is essential that the resources should be managed to minimise the use of primary minerals to what are needed by society. It is also important to avoid wastage, maximise the use of secondary aggregates, and minimise any permanent environmental damage. The aim is to ensure that one generation's consumption and their environment is not exploited at the expense of those generations following.

3.13 Sustainable development is not just about the management of natural resources and encouraging reuse and recycling. It is also about protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Part B provides the policy framework which will help to determine whether or not mineral development proposals contribute to a more sustainable approach to the use of mineral resources in the Plan area.

Preserving or Enhancing the Biodiversity of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

3.14 Biological diversity in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin has evolved over millions of years and it is essential that it should be protected and enhanced for the benefit of future generations as well as our own. The variety of life within the area is a reflection of the wide range of landforms, of rock, soil structure and soil chemistry, all of which are in turn influenced by factors such as slope, drainage, aspect and climate to give many subtle variations. For example, Shropshire's central location in the UK has led to the identification of 15 'biogeographical elements' within the flora of the county. Yet, over recent years, there has been a significant loss of our most important habitats. The protection or enhancement of wildlife and natural features is therefore an important consideration when determining the potential effects of mineral development proposals.

3.15 In 1992 the Government signed the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity and in 1994 published 'Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan'. The action plan gave local authorities a key role in the development of strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity in the UK.

3.16 Shropshire County Council began this process by commissioning the Shropshire Wildlife Trust to produce a report entitled 'Biodiversity Challenge - an agenda for conservation in the UK - the Shropshire response', published in June 1996.

3.17 The report highlights the species and habitats that are now under threat in Shropshire and the actions needed to conserve them. In particular, the report has defined a number of important issues which are relevant to the Plan:



Cross-leaved Heath (Erica tetralix) with parasitic wasp, Whixall Moss. (Photo: English Nature)

- i. to maintain and enhance the populations and natural ranges of species and the quality and extent of wildlife habitats and ecosystems.
- ii. to conserve internationally, nationally and regionally important species, habitats and ecosystems and enhance their conservation status where possible.
- iii. to conserve species, habitats and natural and managed ecosystems that are locally characteristic and enhance their conservation status where possible.
- iv. to maintain genetic variation within species and hence habitats and ecosystems.
- v. to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity on a national, European and global scale.
- vi. to ensure that current policies and practices which affect the environment do not damage global biodiversity, but instead contribute to conserving and enhancing it.

3.18 The report concludes that there is a challenge facing everyone to safeguard the area's diverse wildlife and habitats.

3.19 These matters have been considered during the preparation of the policies in the Minerals Local Plan.

REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

3.20 The Government issued 'Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands Region' (RPG11) in April 1998. The guidance provides the framework for development plans in the Region for the period to 2011. It establishes several development principles:

- i promoting economic growth
- ii supporting urban and rural regeneration
- iii promoting a sustainable pattern of development
- iv maintaining and enhancing the environment ¹³

3.21 As far as minerals are concerned, the guidance reiterates advice contained in PPG's and MPG's.

3.22 The only regional guidance for mineral development comes in MPG6 and relates specifically to aggregates (sand and gravel, and crushed rock). MPG6 'Guidelines for Aggregate Provision' sets production guidelines nationally and for all regions, including the West Midlands, for the period 1992-2006. The guidelines are considered in more detail in Part B, section 6.

LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.23 The local policy context for the Minerals Local Plan is determined by a series of Plans produced by the Local Planning Authorities, collectively referred to as the 'Development Plan' for Shropshire. The Plans provide the policy framework to base decisions on planning applications and appeals.
- 3.24 In the Plan area, the Development Plan comprises:
- i. the Shropshire Structure Plan (currently being reviewed jointly by Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council);
 - ii. District Local Plans (prepared by the five District Councils and Telford & Wrekin Council);
 - iii. the Minerals Local Plan (this document); and,
 - iv. the Waste Local Plan for Shropshire (being prepared by Shropshire County Council) and the Waste Local Plan for Telford & Wrekin (being prepared by Telford & Wrekin Council).

Shropshire's Structure Plan

- 3.25 The Shropshire Structure Plan, 1989-2006, was approved by the Secretary of State and came into effect on 1st January 1993. It provides the strategic planning policy framework for the County. The Minerals Local Plan must generally conform to the policies contained in the Structure Plan.
- 3.26 An example is the policy in the Structure Plan relating to 'The Role of the Towns' (Policy 2/7). The Structure Plan recognises the role of Shrewsbury at the hub of the road and rail network in the County; Telford as an important regional growth point; and the role of the other mainly market towns, Oswestry, Whitchurch, Market Drayton and Craven Arms as strategic growth centres. This policy suggests that these are likely to be the areas within Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin where there will be the greatest demand for aggregates used in the construction industry. The Structure Plan also contains important policies relating to the countryside, the historic environment and transportation, amongst others, as well as minerals policies.
- 3.27 The minerals policies in the Structure Plan provide a framework which seeks to balance economic benefits against the environmental consequences of mineral extraction. Safeguarding policies ensure that reserves of mineral bearing land are not sterilised by development, and there are policies to ensure the satisfactory reclamation of mineral sites. Appendix 3 contains the existing Structure Plan minerals policies.
- 3.28 The Minerals Local Plan has developed and updated the Structure Plan minerals policies allowing future versions of the Structure Plan to concentrate on more strategic policies. The Structure Plan is under review and the Deposit Draft document was published in June 2000. In the event that there are conflicts between plans, the more recently adopted plan should prevail.¹⁴

District Local Plans

- 3.29 District Local Plans define areas for future development, other than mineral and waste development. They also have environmental policies for protecting certain areas from new development, which reinforce and define in detail, boundaries of policies in the Structure Plan, for example, the Areas of Special Landscape Character. District planning authorities should always take account of the presence of mineral resources when planning for new development or considering individual planning applications. The Mineral Planning Authorities have defined 'Mineral Consultation Areas' (MCAs) for this purpose and consultation procedures exist between the Mineral Planning Authorities and the district planning authorities (see Part B, section 8).
- 3.30 The Shropshire District Local Plans and the Wrekin Local Plan include statements of support for the Structure Plan policies on minerals. Areas of particular interest and concern relating to the potential environmental impacts of mineral working include:
- i. Wenlock Edge (limestone extraction);
 - ii. Whixall Moss (peat);
 - iii. Titterstone Clee Hill (coal and crushed rock);
 - iv. the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
 - v. the Little Wenlock area (coal and clay working);
 - vi. South-east Hadley (clay working); and,
 - vii. Western Telford (opencast coal workings).

The Mineral Extraction on Wenlock Edge Subject Plan

- 3.31 This Subject Plan was adopted by Shropshire County Council in October 1983. The purpose of the Plan was to reconcile economic arguments for extraction of limestone from Wenlock Edge and the environmental arguments against working. The Plan was also used to determine the extent to which quarrying in the area should continue in the future and how former quarried areas should be restored. This Plan has now been superseded by the Minerals Local Plan.

The Waste Local Plan

- 3.32 Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council, as the Waste Planning Authorities, are preparing Waste Local Plans. Draft versions of these Plans are due to be published during 2001. The adopted Waste Local Plans will provide a policy framework to deal with the deposit, treatment, storage, processing and disposal of refuse or waste materials other than mineral waste.

CONCLUSIONS

- 3.33 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin contain a wide range of sites or areas of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural or geological importance, protected species and important habitats resulting from the varied geology, location, history and predominantly rural land use of the Plan area. All of these assets contribute to the quality of life in the area and need to be protected for future generations as well as our own.
- 3.34 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are also important producers of minerals, particularly aggregates and there will be a continuing demand for minerals, particularly to supply the construction industry. The minerals industry also contributes to the local economy by providing employment and by generating a demand for local services.
- 3.35 The Minerals Local Plan will provide the planning policy framework to help determine the balance between the provision of minerals and the protection of the natural and built environment. However, planning policy has to be framed in the context of Government planning advice; issues such as sustainable development and biodiversity; regional advice on aggregate production; the joint Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Structure Plan and the District Local Plans.

REFERENCES - PART A:

1. The Local Plan has been prepared under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 and the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991. Advice on procedure is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 (PPG12 - February 1992).
2. 1993 Census of Employment, Office for National Statistics.
3. Department of the Environment - Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG1), June 1996, 'General Considerations and the Development Plan System' - para. 2 .
4. MPG1 - para. 3.
5. 'A Better Quality of Life' - May 1999, HMSO CM4345.
6. 'Our Common Future' (The Brundtland Report) - Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.
7. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG1), Revised February 1997, 'General Policy and Principles' - para. 4.
8. 'A Better Quality of Life' - May 1999, HMSO CM4345.
9. MPG1- para. 35.
10. Shropshire County Council - 'Environmental Charter', April 1995 - Aim 1: Overall Aim: Sustainable Development
11. 'Environmental Charter' - Aim 4: Pollution
12. 'Environmental Charter' - Aim 7: Natural and Built Environment
13. Government Office for the West Midlands - Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11), April 1998 - para. 3.3.
14. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG12), January 2000 - paras. 6.5 & 6.6.

part B

written statement of policies and proposals

Photograph courtesy of Lafarge Redland Aggregates Ltd.

chapter 4. About the Written Statement

- 4.1 Part B contains the Mineral Planning Authorities' 'Written Statement' of policies and proposals to control mineral development in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin for the ten year period 1996 to 2006. Mineral development refers to all development associated with mineral working and mineral waste disposal, including borrow pits, ancillary development and the search for and evaluation of minerals.
- 4.2 Part B is divided into five sections; section 5 sets out general policies; section 6 highlights the particular issues related to the development of individual minerals; section 7 provides policies to ensure the proper reclamation of mineral sites and the review of mineral planning permissions; section 8 refers to policies to safeguard mineral resources in the Plan area; and section 9 describes the areas for future sand and gravel working and the issues that will need to be considered.
- 4.3 The policies are clearly set out in boxes to differentiate them from the reasoned justification for each policy. The reasoned justification is all the supporting information in Part B. Each policy has a reference number and title, for example:

M1 A MORE SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.4 The Written Statement is accompanied by a Proposals Map and Inset Maps. The Proposals Map has been inserted in a wallet inside the back cover of the document. The Inset Maps accompany the relevant policies and proposals.
- 4.5 The policies and proposals have been appraised to establish their environmental effects. A summary of the environmental appraisal is provided in Appendix 2.

chapter 5. GENERAL POLICIES

A MORE SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES IN SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN.

- 5.1 The policies and proposals in the Minerals Local Plan need to be prepared and implemented in the context of the principles of sustainable development. Government guidance has established a number of aims for control over mineral development and a set of objectives for sustainable development relevant to mineral planning; Shropshire County Council has adopted the aim of sustainable development in its 'Environmental Charter' (Part A, section 3). From this background, an overall aim has been established for the Minerals Local Plan which will be:

To attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

- 5.2 To support this aim a number of objectives have been defined, which in turn will be translated into detailed policies and proposals in the Plan.

- i. **To preserve or enhance the natural and built environment of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.**

A sustainable approach to mineral development requires the Plan to set out policies to protect sensitive sites or areas of wildlife, landscape, historical archaeological architectural or geological importance, protected species and important habitats from any unacceptably adverse effects of mineral working (see Policy M5). It is also relevant for the Plan to consider any opportunities brought about by mineral development which would enhance the environment (Policy M7).

- ii. **To preserve or enhance the quality of life for everyone in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin**

A sustainable approach requires the Plan to provide policies to ensure that the effects of any proposed mineral working would not result in a significant loss of amenity for the people of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (Policy M3). The cumulative impact of mineral working (Policy M3(viii) and M21) and the effects of transportation of minerals (Policy M11) are examples of the type of concerns which the Plan needs to address.

- iii. **To recognise the need for an adequate supply of mineral resources from both primary and secondary sources, taking into account any agreed national or regional guidelines.**

There will continue to be a need for minerals. A more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin requires the Plan to set out policies to balance the need for minerals with the protection of the environment (Policy M2). However, a developer's need may not necessarily be the same as society's need. It is therefore necessary to have a policy to carry out an overall assessment of local, regional or national demand as part of the balancing process. In some cases, there are national or regional guidelines to assist in the assessment (Policy

M13). However, sustainable development requires that the needs of future generations are taken into account and that finite resources are not needlessly exploited. For example, the Minerals Local Plan can encourage the production of secondary aggregates as an alternative to primary aggregates, provided environmentally acceptable opportunities exist (Policy M17).

- iv. **To encourage sensitive working practices so that the adverse impacts on the environment of mineral operations, and the transport of minerals, are minimised as far as possible, and to encourage sensitive reclamation and aftercare practices.**

A sustainable approach to mineral development encourages developers to adopt best practices. The Minerals Local Plan will therefore provide guidance in terms of the preparation and implementation of proposals and policies to minimise any environmental damage or loss of amenity caused by mineral operations and ancillary activities (Policy M4 and Appendix 4).

- v. **To ensure that land reclaimed after mineral working is suitable for a beneficial and sustainable use.**

To attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, the Plan must set out policies to ensure that land taken for mineral development is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity to a high standard, either to its former use or to an agreed alternative use. In any case, the proposed after use will need to include measures to ensure that it would be sustainable (Policy M27).

- vi. **To encourage the efficient working and use of mineral resources and where appropriate encourage the recycling of waste and use of secondary aggregates.**

The principles of sustainable development require that resources are not wasted, i.e. that where a resource is being worked that the mineral is extracted in an efficient manner and any other economic mineral is also worked, provided environmental concerns are met, so as to ensure environmental disruption is minimised (Policy M30). The principles also require that consideration is given to the alternatives to primary resources, such as the recycling or reuse of minerals or other waste materials for secondary aggregate purposes (Policy M17).

- vii. **To safeguard mineral resources from potentially conflicting land uses.**

An important aspect of mineral planning concerns the safeguarding of mineral resources so that they are not unnecessarily sterilised by other forms of development. The Minerals Local Plan will highlight the importance of the established consultation procedures between planning authorities to ensure that, where important mineral resources are known to exist, they are considered before other development is permitted (Policy M29).

5.3 Policy M1 summarises the aim and objectives of the Minerals Local Plan.

M1 A MORE SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for mineral development, the Mineral Planning Authorities will attain a sustainable approach to the development of the mineral resources of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. The objectives for sustainable development are:-

- i. to conserve minerals as far as possible, whilst ensuring an adequate supply to meet needs;**
- ii. to ensure that environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are kept, as far as possible, to an acceptable minimum;**
- iii. to minimise production of waste and to encourage efficient use of materials, including appropriate use of high quality materials, and recycling of wastes;**
- iv. to encourage sensitive working, restoration and aftercare practises so as to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment;**
- v. to protect areas of designated landscape or nature conservation value from development, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it has been demonstrated that development is in the public interest; and,**
- vi. to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources.**

NEED FOR MINERALS

- 5.4 The minerals industry must be able to plan ahead if it is to produce efficiently and economically those minerals required by society. However, where mineral working causes significant environmental impacts and generates planning objections, the need for further mineral development must be considered against all the relevant environmental, economic and social issues, consistent with a more sustainable approach to the development of the mineral resources of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Policy M2 below sets out the general policy to examine the need for the mineral from the proposed site, in determining applications for mineral working.
- 5.5 Government guidance in MPG1 advises that applicants do not usually have to prove the need for the proposed development or discuss the merits of alternative sites, except where an environmental statement is required. However, the guidance does state that where there are material planning objections which are not outweighed by other planning benefits, 'need' may be a consideration (MPG1-40). The guidance varies according to the type of mineral, for example in the case of aggregates production, Government guidelines are set out in MPG6 on a regional basis (see 6.53 to 6.58 and M13).
- 5.6 Policy M2 below sets out the circumstances when the need for the mineral from the proposed site will have to be examined. Appendix 4 provides further guidance to applicants.

M2 THE NEED FOR MINERALS

In the context of a sustainable approach to mineral development (Policy M1), where proposals for mineral working give rise to material planning objections which are not outweighed by other planning benefits, or when an Environmental Statement is necessary, the applicant will be required to demonstrate that there is a need for the mineral.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.7 The decision whether to permit a proposed mineral working has to balance the economic and other benefits against the need to protect the environment, including people's living and working conditions.
- 5.8 Many of the matters to be considered at the planning application stage are generally applicable to most types of mineral development, although they may differ in terms of significance according to the precise nature, scale, location or extent of particular proposals. Policy M3 below combines the development control considerations that will be examined prior to the determination of a planning application for mineral development. In some instances, the policy considerations are expanded in later policies. It is also supported by Appendix 4.
- 5.9 Appendix 4 provides detailed guidance to applicants, and others with an interest in mineral development, about the range of information that may be required by the Mineral Planning Authorities in order to determine the potential environmental effects of a particular proposal.
- 5.10 The following information supports the individual development control considerations set out in Policy M3.

i. Local Communities and the Built Environment

- 5.11 Protecting local communities and the built environment in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin from any adverse effects of mineral development are important considerations. Applicants will need to provide information about the potential environmental effects of their proposals. The impacts will include the effects of noise, dust, vibration, blasting, visual intrusion, traffic, taking account of the general level of activity in the area, as well as any economic or social implications. Applicants will also need to provide mitigation measures to control or offset any adverse effects. Further guidance is contained in Appendix 4.

ii. Sensitive Sites and Species

- 5.12 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have a wide range of international, national and locally sensitive sites or areas of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural or geological importance. A number of protected species of flora and fauna, and important habitats are also present in the Plan area. (Collectively they will be referred to as 'sites and species'). The effect of proposals on sensitive sites and species will be considered. Policy M5 describes the detailed policy considerations.
- 5.13 A more sustainable approach to mineral development is not simply a matter of protecting what is best and most rare, it is also about keeping the range of familiar and common. In preparing proposals, developers also need to consider the impact on the surrounding environment. For example, there are often important features which provide corridors, links or stepping stones from one habitat to the next and help to sustain biological diversity (PPG9).¹ In a similar way, the importance of sites of historical interest often need to be considered in the context of the wider historic landscape which provides their setting (PPG16).² Appendix 4 advises applicants to carry out ecological, landscape and archaeological assessments at an early stage so that there is an opportunity to take account of the sensitivity of a site or its surroundings before the proposals have been firmly fixed.

iii. The Countryside and the Local Economy

- 5.14 A more sustainable approach to mineral development requires that consideration should be given to the protection, and where possible, enhancement of the overall quality of the environment in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (Policy M1). As the Plan area is predominantly rural, Government advice on the countryside in PPG7 is particularly relevant.³ PPG7 seeks to encourage planning authorities to adopt positive development plan policies for economic activity which respect the countryside. PPG7 states that development plans should consider how any acceptable development would respect or enhance the character of the countryside. While the Minerals Local Plan generally aims to control the negative effects of mineral development, Policy M7 recognises that there may be opportunities to provide positive effects which can provide overall benefits to the countryside or the local economy.

iv. The Transport Network

- 5.15 Mineral working may generate significant volumes of heavy lorry traffic which can have a serious impact on the quality of life for people living close to the haulage route. The reduction of the adverse effects of traffic is therefore regarded as an important development control consideration. Policy M11 expands on this consideration.

v. Water Resources

- 5.16 Water resources are a vital element of the 'critical natural capital resources' of the Plan area and applicants will need to take account of the potential impact of the proposals on both surface waters and groundwaters. It is also necessary to consider the potential effects on flood plains and any changes to the pattern of run-off or discharge. The Environment Agency carries a responsibility to protect and improve the water environment and will be consulted before planning applications for mineral development are determined.

vi. Agricultural Land

- 5.17 Best and most versatile agricultural land also represents part of the critical natural capital resources of the Plan area and Government advice contained in PPG7 emphasises the weight that should be attached to the protection of such land and the other factors such as farm size and structure, or irrigation and land drainage which may need to be taken into account.⁴ Applicants should consider the quality of the agricultural land and the effects on local agriculture when preparing proposals. Applicants must also be able to demonstrate that proposals to reinstate the physical characteristics of the land are feasible.⁵ The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) carries a responsibility to protect agricultural land and will be consulted about development and aftercare matters before planning applications for mineral development are determined.

vii. Cumulative Impact

- 5.18 It is often the case that new proposals for mineral working tend to be close to areas where mineral working has taken place, is taking place or is permitted but has not yet commenced. In such circumstances it is important to consider what cumulative impact the new proposals would have on the area.⁶ The scale of the impact will vary according to the nature, scale, location or extent of the operations. For example, there may be situations where several areas of land are affected. One area could be in use to store material whilst a second could be undergoing reclamation and aftercare. Meanwhile, a third area may not have had sufficient time to recover from mineral working and is immature in landscape terms.

- 5.19 The scale of operations, the size of modern plant, the transportation of minerals and the impact on the landscape can all contribute to a major loss of amenity to the surrounding area. Consideration of the cumulative impact recognises the special problems caused when there is, or has been, a concentration of mineral working and ancillary operations in an area or where an area would be sensitive to such development. This consideration has been developed later with respect to coal and fire clay working (Policy M21).

viii. Derelict Land

- 5.20 An important part of a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources is to take the opportunity to enhance the overall environment. Mineral operations can sometimes achieve this by treating derelict, contaminated or degraded land as part of a package of proposals. Developers will be encouraged to examine whether or not there may be opportunities to treat derelict, contaminated or degraded land. In such cases applicants should nevertheless have regard to any nature conservation, historic, archaeological or geological interest in the site, together with any public safety, instability or pollution issues that could arise. Applicants should consider the guidance contained in Appendix 4 as well as relevant MPGs and PPGs.

ix. Unstable Land

- 5.21 The stability of land is a material consideration, although the responsibility for determining whether the land is suitable for a particular purpose rests primarily with the developer.⁷ Where the proposed development falls within an area where unstable ground is believed to exist, the developer will be required to submit a stability report with the planning application. Further advice and guidance is contained in Appendix 4 and in Government guidance notes PPG14 and MPG12. Applicants should consult the district planning authority and, in coalfield areas, the Coal Authority, to establish whether or not there are any recorded areas of potential instability such as old mine workings in the vicinity of the proposed site. Similar considerations apply in respect of areas where metalliferous minerals have been worked (Policy M26).

x. Public Rights of Way and Open Spaces

- 5.22 Public rights of way and open spaces in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin provide access to the countryside and are important in terms of the general amenity and recreational value they provide in an area. Applicants should have regard to the effects of their proposals on public rights of way or publicly accessible land in terms of any noise, dust, visual impact and disruption they may cause. Applicants should include measures to minimise the impact of the proposals on such areas or rights of way and consider what opportunities exist to enhance the overall environment by improving public access or the general amenity of the locality affected by the proposals (Policy M7).

M3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS

In determining applications relating to mineral development, regard will be paid to any unacceptably adverse effects of the proposal upon:

- i. towns, villages and nearby houses and occupied property both close to the proposed development site and close to proposed haul routes, including the effect on listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and other sensitive locations;
- ii. sensitive sites and species (expanded in Policy M5);
- iii. the countryside and the local economy (Policy M7);
- iv. the transport network and local roads (Policy M11);
- v. water resources, including the flow and quality of surface waters and groundwaters; the risk of flooding; pollution; and the effects on wetlands, watercourses and other water bodies;
- vi. best and most versatile agricultural land where this would cause the permanent loss, or loss of quality, of land classified as such by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food; also the impact upon local agriculture by considering the structure of local farm businesses and the effect of severance and fragmentation;
- vii. the general area as a result of the cumulative impact of past, present and permitted future workings;
- viii. derelict, contaminated or degraded land;
- ix. the stability of the site and adjoining land; and,
- x. rights of way and public access land, including informal open space (Policy M7).

Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have had regard to the detailed guidance contained in the 'Development Control Guidelines' (Appendix 4).

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.23 In order to properly assess the potential environmental impacts of mineral development proposals, a range of operational matters need to be considered. The considerations are set out in Policy M4. Policy M4 is supported by Appendix 4 which provides the detailed guidelines which applicants should consider before preparing to submit proposals. The information referred to in the guidelines will be relevant to the consideration of the planning application and will often be reflected in planning conditions attached to planning permissions. Further guidance on reclamation and aftercare is provided in section 7 later.
- 5.24 Developers are advised to carry out a 'scoping' exercise as part of the early preparation of their development proposals. This should involve early consultation with the Mineral Planning Authorities, statutory consultees and local interest groups who may have information about the likely environmental effects. Public consultation with the local community should also be regarded as an important aspect of the preparation of proposals.

- 5.25 A key objective of the Plan is to ensure that proposals associated with mineral working incorporate 'best practices' so that modern standards of working and reclamation are adopted to help minimise the adverse environmental effects of mineral operations. Developers should be prepared to demonstrate that they are aware of the potential impacts of their proposals and be willing to adopt sensitive practices which would be effective in minimising the potential impacts. The submitted details should include evidence to show that the proposed methods of site management, reclamation and aftercare will work in practice. For example, applicants may wish to refer to the way a similar site is currently being managed or how reclamation and aftercare has been carried out on a similar site elsewhere.⁸

M4 OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In determining applications relating to mineral development, regard will be paid to the following operational considerations:

- i. the measures to protect people and the environment from any unacceptably adverse effects, including visual, noise, dust, or traffic impacts; effects on surface waters or groundwaters and from the risk of flooding;**
- ii. the method, phasing and management of the working proposals;**
- iii. ancillary development (expanded in Policy M10);**
- iv. site access and traffic movements (Policy M11); and,**
- v. the method, phasing and management of the reclamation and after-use proposals (Policy M27).**

Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have had regard to the detailed guidance contained in the 'Development Control Guidelines' (Appendix 4).

SENSITIVE SITES AND SPECIES

- 5.26 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have a range of international, national and locally sensitive sites or areas of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural or geological importance. A number of protected species of flora and fauna, and important habitats are also present in the Plan area (Collectively they will be referred to as 'sites and species'). If a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources is to be achieved, such sites and species need to be properly protected.
- 5.27 Government advice draws a distinction between the protection that should be given to sites and species of international and national importance and those of more regional or local importance.⁹
- 5.28 Policy M5 makes clear that the protection of sensitive sites and species will be a material planning consideration and the weight to be attached to their protection will reflect their relative importance. Parts A, B and C to the policy set out the considerations which may need to be taken into account.

M5 PROTECTING SENSITIVE SITES AND SPECIES

In determining applications relating to mineral development, regard will be paid to any unacceptably adverse direct or indirect effects of the proposal upon any sensitive site of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural or geological interest, protected species and important habitats.

The protection afforded to sites and species will reflect their importance in international, national or regional / local terms.

Planning permission will only be granted where it has been demonstrated that there are material considerations which override the importance of the site or species.

Parts A, B and C to this policy identify the sensitive sites and species and the considerations which may need to be taken into account.

INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

5.29 The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance requires contracting parties to designate 'Ramsar Sites'. There are currently 7 Ramsar Sites in the Plan area collectively known as the Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar Site Phase 1, with a further 7 proposed for future designation. The European Community (EC) Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds requires Member States to classify 'Special Protection Areas' (SPAs). There are currently no such areas in the Plan area. The EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive) requires the notification of 'Special Areas of Conservation' (SACs) and in due course their designation. Three sites in the Plan area have been submitted to the European Union as candidate SAC's.

5.30 English Nature (EN) hold the most up to date information on these sites and areas. The EC Habitats and Species Directive 1992 lists internationally important species and habitats. The Ironbridge Gorge is acknowledged as a 'World Heritage Site' in accordance with the World Convention (adopted by UNESCO in 1972 and ratified by the UK in 1984) (see PPG15).



White Mere is a wetland of International importance.

M5(A) PROTECTING INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT SITES AND SPECIES

Regard will be paid to any unacceptably adverse direct or indirect effects of the proposal upon any internationally important sites and species.

The internationally important sites or species include:

- i. Ramsar Sites (designated or proposed);
- ii. Special Protection Areas or Special Areas of Conservation;
- iii. Habitats or species (listed in the EC Habitats and Species Directive);
- iv. The World Heritage Site or its setting.

Where the proposal would cause an unacceptably adverse effect upon an internationally important site or species, planning permission will only be granted if there is no alternative and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for them.

Where the proposed site is the host to a priority habitat or species (as listed in the EC Habitats Directive) planning permission will only be granted if the development is required for reasons of human health and public safety, or where there would be beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

- 5.31 There are currently 3 'National Nature Reserves' (NNR's) and 101 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI's) in the Plan area. The Shropshire Hills are designated as an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (AONB). The AONB is shown on the Proposals Map. There are also about 7,200 listed buildings, about 375 scheduled archaeological sites (under review by English Heritage as part of the Monument Protection Programme) and an estimated 5,700 unscheduled archaeological sites, 32 registered parks and gardens and one registered battlefield.
- 5.32 English Nature hold the most up to date information on the NNR's and SSSI's in the Plan area and English Heritage hold records on nationally designated features of historic importance. The revised schedules which accompany the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 identify the species of national importance.

M5(B) PROTECTING NATIONALLY IMPORTANT SITES AND SPECIES

Regard will be paid to any unacceptably adverse direct or indirect effects of the proposal upon any nationally important sites and species.

The nationally important site or species include:

- i. National Nature Reserves;**
- ii. Sites of Special Scientific Interest;**
- iii. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;**
- iv. Listed Buildings;**
- v. Scheduled or nationally important Unscheduled Archaeological Sites;**
- vi. Registered Parks and Gardens;**
- vii. Registered Battlefields;**
- viii. Species found in Annex (iv) to the Habitats Directive; and,**
- ix. Any nationally important habitats.**

Where the proposal would cause an unacceptably adverse effect upon a nationally important site or species, planning permission will only be granted where it has been demonstrated that there are material considerations which override the national importance of the site or species.

REGIONAL OR LOCAL IMPORTANCE

- 5.33 Shropshire County Council has defined 10 Areas of Special Landscape Character (ASLC's), which are indicated on the Proposals Map. The County Council manages 14 Country Parks (or nature reserves). There are currently 112 Conservation Areas, 250 locally important Historic Parks and Gardens, 3 Local Nature Reserves, more than 700 Wildlife Sites and about 9,000 hectares of ancient, semi-natural woodlands. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are also renowned for their geology and a number of Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) are in the process of being designated (41 of the SSSI's in the Plan area are recognised for their geological importance).
- 5.34 Shropshire County Council maintains an Environmental Record (ER) and a Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which contain details about the nature and location of all recorded areas of wildlife, landscape, historical and archaeological importance in the County. 'The Biodiversity Challenge - An Agenda for Conservation in the UK - The Shropshire Response' was published in June 1996. This document establishes the priorities and objectives for the protection and enhancement of the species, wildlife habitats and ecosystems which contribute to local biodiversity.¹⁰

M5(C) PROTECTING REGIONALLY OR LOCALLY IMPORTANT SITES AND SPECIES

Regard will be paid to any unacceptably adverse direct or indirect effects of the proposal upon any regionally or locally important sites and species.

The regionally or locally important sites or species, include:

- i. The Areas of Special Landscape Character;**
- ii. Conservation Areas,**
- iii. Country Parks;**
- iv. Unlisted Historic Parks and Gardens;**
- v. Historic Landscapes;**
- vi. Unlisted Historic Buildings;**
- vii. Unscheduled Archaeological Sites;**
- viii. Local Nature Reserves;**
- ix. Wildlife Sites;**
- x. Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites;**
- xi. Ancient woodlands;**
- xii. Tree Preservation Orders;**
- xiii. Hedgerows;**
- xiv. Wetlands, watercourses other water bodies; and,**
- xv. Habitats and species identified in the Shropshire response to the Biodiversity Challenge.**

Where the proposal would cause an unacceptably adverse effect upon a regionally or locally important site or species, planning permission will only be granted where it has been demonstrated that there are material considerations which override the regional or local importance of the site or species.

PROTECTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

- 5.35 Archaeological remains are an important aspect of the historic environment. They are a finite, non-renewable and often fragile resource, and their preservation and where possible enhancement is important for the sake of future generations as well as our own. Great care must therefore be taken in dealing with planning applications which could either directly or indirectly damage or destroy the interest of the site or its setting forever.
- 5.36 It is essential that developers consider the impact on the archaeology of the area at an early stage in the preparation of their proposals. This is reflected in Government planning guidance (PPG16 - Archaeology and Planning) and best practice advice within the industry (CBI Code of Practice for Mineral Operators).

5.37 Where there is potentially an adverse impact, the applicant will be expected to make satisfactory provision for the archaeological assessment, including any excavation if needed, recording, analysis, publication and curation of the remains. Further guidance is contained in Appendix 4.



Archaeological find - the bones of a mammoth found at Norton Farm quarry, near Condover, Oct. 1986.

5.38 Policy M5 sets out the considerations that will be given to designated archaeological sites and their settings. However, the majority of sites are not protected by formal designation. Policy M6 is necessary to ensure that applicants provide sufficient information to assist the Mineral Planning Authorities in assessing the importance of the site and its surroundings before the planning application is determined.

M6 PROTECTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that the impact on sites of archaeological interest has been fully taken into account.

Where the County Sites and Monuments Record or other reliable source of archaeological information indicate the likely presence of archaeological remains, developers will be required to undertake an archaeological assessment, including any preliminary geophysical work and / or archaeological evaluation to help determine the importance of any remains prior to the planning application being determined.

There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation in situ of nationally important archaeological remains whether scheduled or not, and their settings.

Where it is decided that a site, or part of a site, is not sufficiently important to merit physical preservation in situ, planning permission may be granted subject to the applicant having made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the assessment, including any excavation if needed, recording, analysis, publication and curation of the remains.

THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

5.39 The varied landscapes of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin range from the North Shropshire Plain, to the South Shropshire Hills (designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). There are meres and mosses, moorland, woodland and intensively farmed lowland. Much of the landscape also reflects historic land uses. There are hill forts, castle sites, parks and gardens and industrial remains. It is this variety which contributes to the attractiveness of the countryside and which is so valued by both local people and visitors alike. Although mineral development can have significant adverse effects on the countryside, it can in some cases make a beneficial contribution. In particular, mineral development can create new opportunities to conserve and improve the landscape; helping to conserve the diversity of our wildlife, by protecting and re-establishing habitats, or by improving recreational facilities.¹¹

- 5.40 The countryside also relies on a vibrant local economy to sustain it (PPG7). Whilst mineral development can reduce the attractiveness of the countryside for visitors and potential investors, quarries do provide jobs which can bring direct and indirect benefits to the local economy. Also, with increasing diversification taking place in the local economy, the reclamation of mineral sites can present opportunities to create new land uses which can benefit the local economy.
- 5.41 In considering proposals in the countryside, account must be taken of the 'Green Belt' designation which affects the eastern part of the Plan area, adjacent to the West Midlands conurbation. The precise Green Belt boundary is defined in the Bridgnorth Local Plan. Green Belt is a material consideration when assessing the effects of proposals on the countryside because Green Belt helps to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. As far as the control of development in the Green Belt is concerned, there is "a general presumption against inappropriate development within them" (PPG2). However in the case of mineral development, because minerals can only be worked where they are found, and their extraction is a temporary activity, Government advises that "mineral extraction need not be inappropriate development" provided high environmental standards are maintained and the site is well restored. All mineral developments should display high environmental standards and all sites should be well restored, regardless of the fact that a site is situated within the Green Belt. The specific requirements concerning the reclamation and after-use of mineral sites are considered in section 7.
- 5.42 Policy M7 below sets out the planning considerations that will be taken into account in determining the potential effects of proposed mineral developments in the countryside. Where appropriate, applicants should be prepared to make use of planning obligations. Further guidance on planning obligations is given in connection with Policy M8.

M7 BENEFITS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

In determining all applications relating to mineral development, including the reclamation and after-use of mineral sites, consideration will be given to any benefits of the proposal upon the countryside and the local economy.

Where proposed development would give rise to material planning objections (Policy M2) which are not outweighed by other planning benefits, or when an Environmental Statement is necessary, the applicant will be required to demonstrate what benefits if any the proposed development would bring to the countryside, or the local economy, where these are necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development, and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and which outweigh any unacceptable adverse effects.

PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

- 5.43 Planning conditions are legally restricted to the planning permission area and other areas in the applicant's control. However, minerals operations can have effects beyond the area which can be covered by planning conditions. In such cases, planning obligations can be used to offset impacts or enhance the quality of the development, provided there is a

reasonable relationship between the obligation and the proposed development. Government guidance states that planning obligations should be sought where they are necessary to make a proposed development acceptable in land-use planning terms. However, benefits which go beyond what is necessary should not affect the outcome of a planning decision.¹²

- 5.44 The following examples are taken from existing practice in the Plan area and illustrate some of the circumstances where it may be appropriate to seek planning obligations:
- i. when off-site landscaping and reclamation work is proposed;
 - ii. where necessary to secure the long term after use, management and maintenance of the site;
 - iii. when off-site highway improvements and traffic management measures are proposed;
 - iv. where an applicant is offering to exchange or surrender a planning permission; and,
 - v. when the proposals include provision for the maintenance of water supplies.

M8 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Where planning conditions would be inappropriate, and before planning permission is granted, Planning Obligations will be sought where necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects, in order to overcome any unacceptably adverse effects of the proposed development and to secure the terms of agreement, or undertaking, to mitigate these adverse effects.

MINERAL EXPLORATION

- 5.45 Land owners or developers who wish to explore mineral bearing land are not generally required to seek planning permission from the Mineral Planning Authorities. The General Permitted Development Order grants planning permission for mineral exploration, subject to certain limitations and conditions. This type of development is referred to as 'permitted development'. Nevertheless, there are situations when land owners or developers require planning permission, perhaps because the proposed operations do not conform to the terms of the statutory provisions. In these cases consideration will be given to Policy M9.
- 5.46 Deep exploratory borehole drilling is one example where the operations tend to have a greater impact on the surrounding area than most other forms of mineral exploration, largely owing to the greater depth to which it is necessary to drill and the size and type of equipment required. The actual location of the borehole is therefore of greater relevance in relation to residential properties, especially where the drilling operations are proposed to take place on a 24 hour basis. The duration of the proposed operations will need to be taken into account. The impact on water resources can be significant and where the site is important for wildlife and archaeological reasons. Detailed location plans and measures to overcome any such problems will therefore be required as part of the application.
- 5.47 Mineral exploration can be valuable in improving knowledge about mineral resources and provide important information to support an application for mineral working. However,

developers should not regard permission to carry out mineral exploration as an indication that permission for any subsequent mineral development would automatically follow. The Mineral Planning Authorities would have to consider the proposals against the policies in the Minerals Local Plan and be satisfied that they would help to attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources.

M9 MINERAL EXPLORATION

Mineral Exploration which is not permitted by part 22 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 will only be permitted where it does not have an unacceptably adverse effect on the environment, local amenities or communities. Full reinstatement of occupied land and removal of all temporary and permanent works associated with the exploration will be required.

ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT

- 5.48 The working and re-working of primary or secondary minerals generally require land for ancillary development, for example to process and stockpile minerals or to service or repair plant and machinery. In the same way that mineral exploration constitutes 'permitted development', the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 gives mineral operators permitted development rights to erect or alter buildings and plant subject to certain limitations and conditions. In general, the Government takes the view that such rights should not be withdrawn. However, ancillary mineral development does have the potential to create unacceptable adverse effects on the environment from noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion, traffic or during the reinstatement of the site. In some cases, the limitations and conditions attached to permitted development rights may not be adequate to ensure that the development is acceptable, taking into account the scale, nature or extent of the ancillary development at a particular location. To enable mineral development that is otherwise acceptable to proceed with adequate controls to safeguard the environment, permitted development rights would be withdrawn or restricted. This policy will apply to applications for ancillary development in these circumstances.
- 5.49 Structure Plan Policy 2/85 refers to the importance of locating ancillary uses associated with mineral extraction within the proposed mineral site unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is to avoid encroachment onto surrounding land and the establishment of inappropriate permanent development in rural areas after the completion of mineral working.
- 5.50 Policy M10 sets out the specific considerations that will be taken into account when considering the implications of proposed ancillary development associated with mineral working. Appendix 4 provides further guidance to applicants.

M10 ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT

Where ancillary development could have an unacceptably adverse effect on the local environment, a condition will be attached to the planning permission withdrawing permitted development rights so that the ancillary development can be properly controlled by the terms of the planning permission.

In determining applications relating to ancillary development associated with mineral working, the development control considerations referred to in Policy M3 and M4 will be relevant.

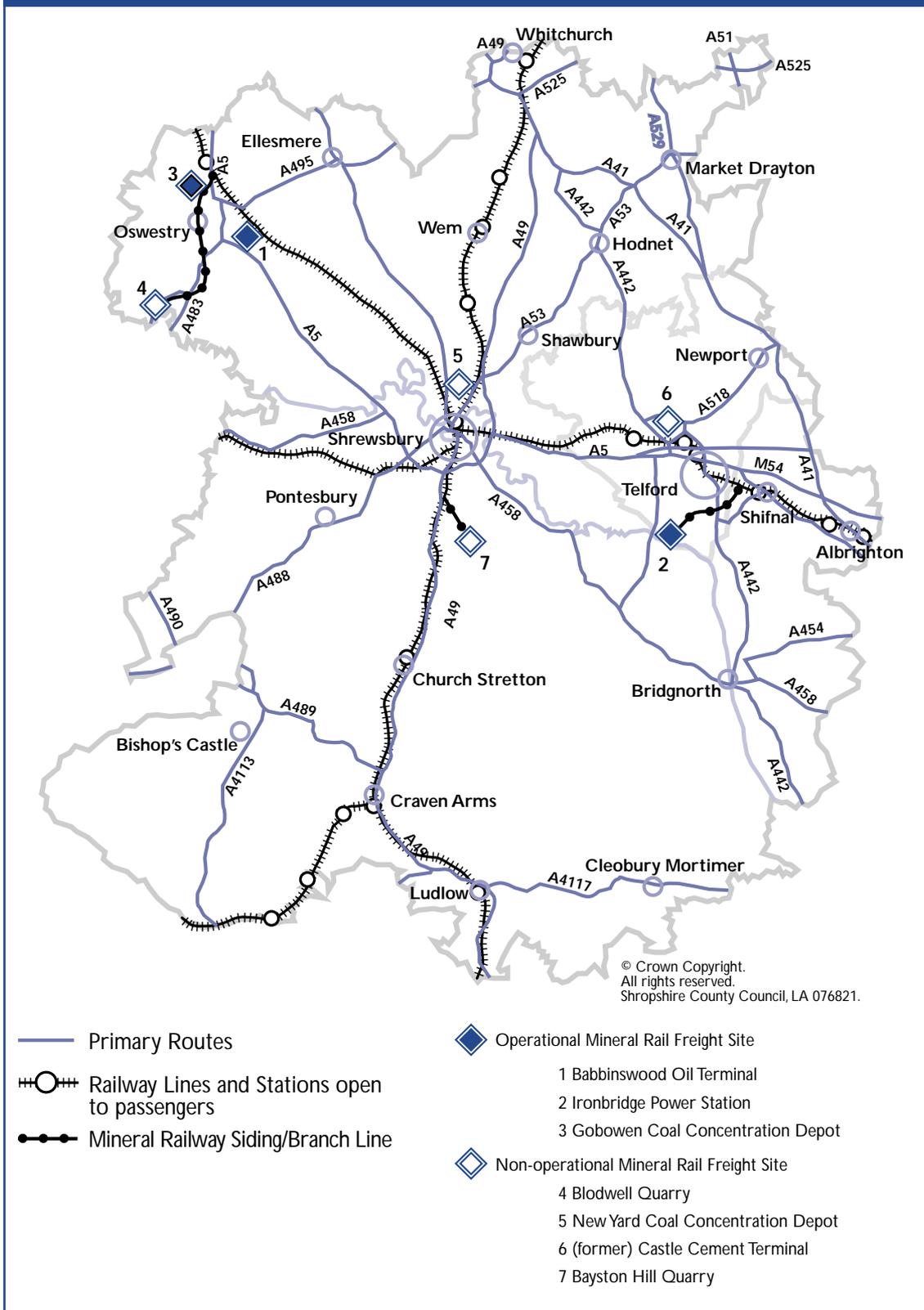
Projects should include satisfactory measures to minimise any unacceptably adverse effects associated with ancillary development. The measures should include:

- i. locating the ancillary development within or immediately adjacent to the area proposed for mineral working;
- ii. restricting the principal purpose to a purpose in connection with the winning and working of minerals at the site or the treatment, storage or removal of minerals excavated or brought to the surface at that site;
- iii. where it is proposed to import minerals, limit the quantities involved to control the volume and type of traffic, and the establishment of an acceptable route for the traffic to and from the site; and,
- iv. cessation of the ancillary development when working of the mineral for which the site was primarily permitted has ceased and removal of plant and machinery to allow reclamation of the site.

TRANSPORT OF MINERALS

- 5.51 Minerals extracted in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are all currently transported by road. The West Midlands Aggregate Working Party's Aggregates Monitoring Survey of 1989 concluded that very nearly 100% of sales of sand and gravel and crushed rock in the West Midlands Region were transported by road. Lorry transport clearly plays an essential role in the distribution of minerals, but in doing so it creates familiar problems for people and the environment. Typical concerns are: noise and vibration; air pollution, smoke, smell and dust; effect on local traffic and pedestrians on rural roads; congestion; possible damage to buildings and paving.
- 5.52 As far as the transport of minerals by rail is concerned, the 1993 Aggregates Monitoring Survey published in July 1995, reported that there are now no rail served aggregate reception depots in the West Midlands. The two depots operating in 1989 have since closed.
- 5.53 In the Plan area, only two quarry areas are still served by rail links. Bayston Hill, south of Shrewsbury, has disused sidings on the Crewe-Cardiff line (Inset Map 1) and Blodwel Quarry, near Oswestry has a rarely used 12 km single track branch line which leaves the Chester-Shrewsbury main line at Gobowen (Proposals Map). There are also three operational rail freight sites in the Plan area which handle minerals at the Gobowen Coal Concentration Depot, Ironbridge Power Station and the Babbinswood Oil Terminal. The non-operational sites include former coal depots and a cement works (Figure 3).

Figure 3 - Primary Route Network and Railway Lines



- 5.54 In the context of sustainable development, use of rail would have advantages, particularly when minerals are being transported over long distances. However in the Plan period, the use of rail transport may not be a realistic proposition for the industry to develop because there are very limited direct rail links between quarries and market destinations. The value of the minerals, particularly sand and gravel, does not provide an incentive to carry out major investment in rail facilities. Nevertheless, there is considerable support for the use of rail to transport minerals and economic circumstances can change.
- 5.55 Government planning advice encourages Mineral Planning Authorities to include policies in development plans to favour the transport of minerals by rail (or water) and safeguard existing rail facilities because of the environmental benefits.
- 5.56 At its meeting on 4 June 1991, Shropshire County Council's Planning Committee passed a resolution seeking to reduce the impact of heavy lorries on the environment.
- 5.57 Structure Plan Policy 2/40 has the objective of reducing the number of lorries entering sensitive areas and using unsuitable roads. Policy 2/44 promotes the increased use of railway lines for goods traffic and encourages the greater use of private sidings.
- 5.58 Despite the environmental benefits associated with the transport of minerals by rail, the depots used for mineral transport can have potentially significant adverse impacts due to the scale, nature, location or extent of the operations. In the event that proposals for mineral development include the use of rail facilities, there will be a need to balance the benefits of using rail facilities against any potentially significant environmental impacts.
- 5.59 The Minerals Local Plan aims to attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources, so it has been important to consider ways in which the transport of minerals can be minimised in terms of the number and length of journeys as well as the impacts of those journeys on the environment.
- 5.60 Preparing the Plan has provided an opportunity to examine the future distribution of sites relative to the market for the minerals and relative to each other. In the context of the Plan area, Structure Plan policy recognises the role of Telford as a regional growth centre and the role of the other mainly market towns as the locations where future growth should be concentrated. This is supported by Government guidance in Regional Planning Guidance 11 and Planning Policy Guidance 13.¹³ Within Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin the growth centres along with any major construction projects are likely to be the areas where there will be the greatest demand for certain minerals (particularly aggregates used in the construction industry). At the same time, it is necessary to consider the effects of the cumulative impact of past, present and future mineral working. Locating sites close to the demand could result in an over concentration of sites which could amongst other concerns, put pressure on the highway network.
- 5.61 Policy M11 sets out the considerations that will be taken into account in respect of the transport of minerals.

M11 TRANSPORT OF MINERALS

In determining all applications relating to mineral development, consideration will be given to the impact of heavy lorry traffic on the transport network and to the alternative opportunities to transport minerals by rail.

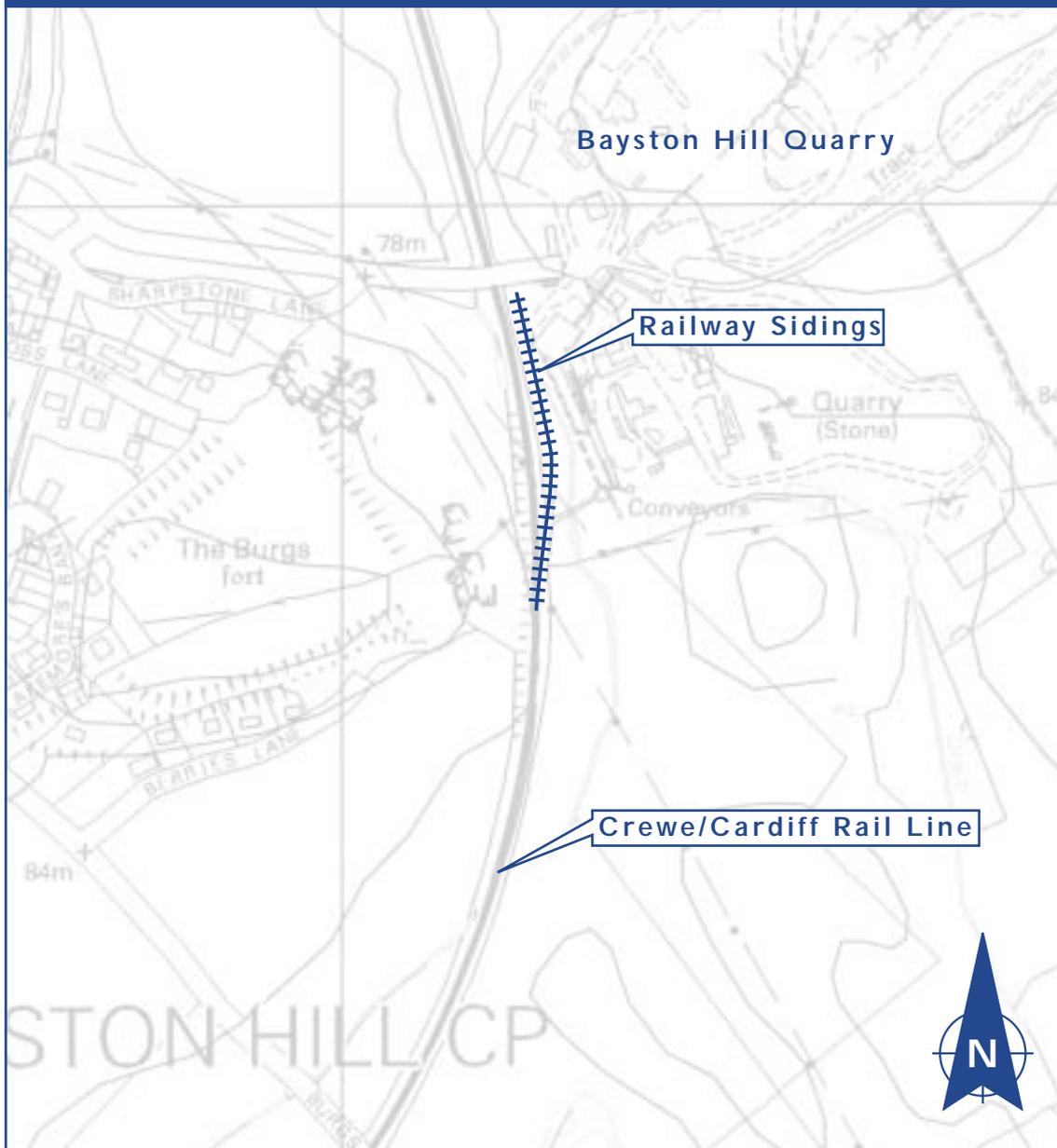
Projects should include measures that will satisfactorily protect people and the environment from any unacceptably adverse effects of transporting minerals in terms of highway safety, disruption, noise, dust, dirt and vibration.

Where opportunities to transport minerals by rail exist, the development of new rail heads or connection to existing rail facilities will be encouraged. Where this is not feasible there will be a preference for new mineral sites to be located where they can obtain satisfactory access to the Primary Route Network.

The Gobowen to Blodwel branch line and the Bayston Hill Quarry sidings will be safeguarded and the operators will be encouraged to maintain the existing rail facilities. The branch line is indicated on the Proposals Map and sidings are shown on Inset Map 1.

As far as possible a reasonable distribution of sites will be sought, relative to the major sources of demand and supply in order to minimise the length of journeys involved and to help reduce the impact of transporting minerals.

Inset Map 1 - Bayston Hill Quarry Railway Sidings



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

*Inset Map 1 -
Bayston Hill Quarry
Railway Sidings*

Policy M11 Transport of Minerals

Scale 1:5,000

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*chapter 6.***POLICIES FOR INDIVIDUAL MINERALS**

- 6.1 Whilst there are many general planning issues associated with the development of mineral resources, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin has a range of minerals and the impact on the environment resulting from their exploitation can vary according to the scale, nature, location and extent of the operations. This section provides policies for individual minerals in order to deal with the issues that can arise.
- 6.2 The policies refer to aggregates (sand and gravel, and crushed rock), building stone, coal and fire clay, brick clay, peat, oil and gas, and metalliferous mineral workings.

AGGREGATES

- 6.3 'Aggregates' is the term used to describe minerals used in the construction industry. In the Plan area, aggregate production is the most significant mineral activity in terms of land use and production levels with between 3 and 5 million tonnes of aggregate produced per annum.
- 6.4 There are three sources of aggregate:
- i. Sand and gravel deposits
(producing about 1 million tonnes per annum)
 - ii. Crushed rock from limestone, igneous rock and gritstone quarries
(producing about 3 million tonnes per annum)
 - iii. Secondary sources, such as power station ash
(producing about 0.3 million tonnes per annum)
- 6.5 Being closely linked to the construction industry, demand for aggregates tends to reflect overall economic activity. The quarrying industry also has an important economic role in the Plan area, both in providing essential raw materials and as an employer either directly or in related industries.
- 6.6 Mineral resources can of course only be worked where they naturally occur. Ideally there should be a good distribution of workings, both in terms of material and quality, in relation to the main markets. This is particularly the case with sand and gravel and with secondary aggregates which do not travel far at an economic price.
- 6.7 However, a balance must be reached between market needs and the environmental impact of quarrying activity. Whilst too restrictive an approach to planning policy for aggregates could affect construction costs, too liberal an allocation of sites can lead to unnecessary disturbance to communities, or damage to the environment.
- 6.8 A further effect of supply exceeding local demand and local need is the mothballing of quarries, with all the uncertainty then implied for local people as to the timing of further working and reclamation.
- 6.9 The aim of the Minerals Local Plan is to attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources. This section of the Plan considers how this will be achieved for aggregates in the Plan period. The following reasoned justification explains the context in terms of the existing permitted reserves, recent production levels and the national and regional policy guidance. The environmental implications are then examined.

SAND AND GRAVEL

Source and Purpose

- 6.10 The three principal sand and gravel resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are glacial sand and gravel, river terrace deposits and the Kidderminster Conglomerate. Generally speaking, the material is worked in the north, centre and east of the Plan area. Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of the resources and location of the operational and non-operational sites.
- 6.11 Most sand and gravel is used mainly in the construction industry to make concrete, mortar or asphalt. The mineral is for the most part low value and tends to be consumed within about 50 kilometres of its point of origin. Hence the distribution of workings tends to reflect the local market conditions, as well as geology and planning constraints.

Past Production and Consumption

- 6.12 Over the period 1973 to 1997 the annual output from the Plan area has consistently been 7-10% of the West Midlands Region's production. Sales rose during the late 1980's to a peak of 1.3 million tonnes in 1989, but then fell. More recent figures indicate sales of under 1 million tonnes (Table 1).

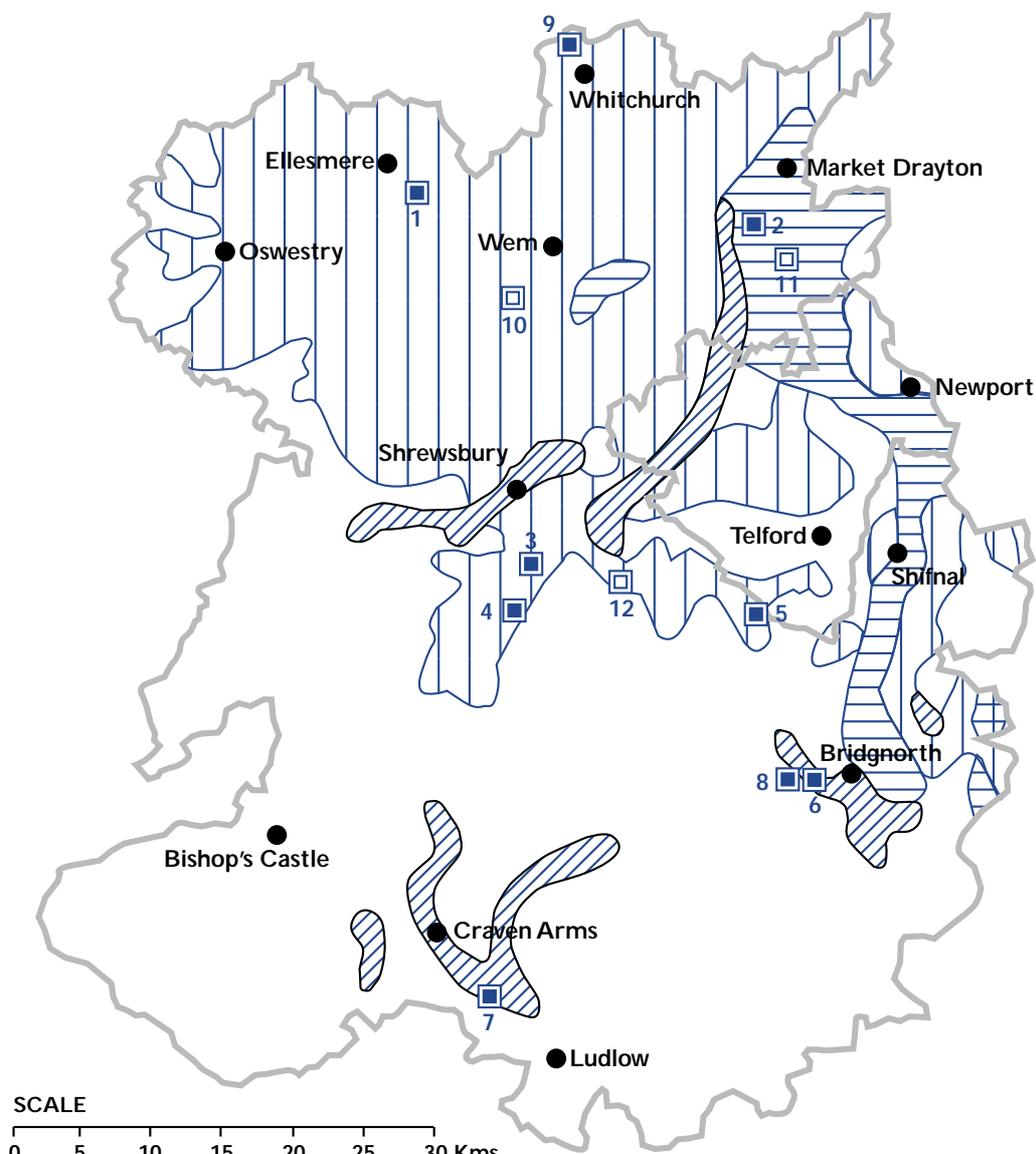
Table1 Annual Production of Sand and Gravel, 1973-1997 (million tonnes)

Year	Production	As a % of the West Midland Regional Production
1973	1.2	9.0
1977	1.0	10.0
1981	0.7	9.0
1985	0.9	8.0
1989	1.3	9.0
1990	1.1	9.0
1991	1.1	10.1
1992	0.9	9.4
1993	0.9	8.3
1994	1.0	7.6
1995	0.8	7.0
1996	0.7	7.2
1997	0.8	7.9

Source: West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party (WMRAWP) Annual Reports

- 6.13 With regard to the market for sand and gravel, approximately 72% of production was consumed within the Plan area in 1993 (Table 2). The remainder was consumed within the West Midlands Region, Cheshire or Wales.
- 6.14 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin imported 0.4 million tonnes of sand and gravel from elsewhere in the region in 1993. Most came from Staffordshire (0.35 million tonnes). The net import figure was 0.15 million tonnes, implying 85% self sufficiency in production/consumption. These figures however do not allow for imports from outside the region, which are assumed to be a small quantity.

Figure 4 - Sand and Gravel Resources



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

NOTATION

-  Glacial Sand and Gravel deposits
-  River Terrace deposits
-  Kidderminster Conglomerates

-  Operational Site (April, 2000)
 -  Non-operational Site (April, 2000)
- 1 Wood Lane
 - 2 Tern Hill
 - 3 Norton Farm and Extension (Condover)
 - 4 Gonsal and Extension
 - 5 Buildwas
 - 6 Morville
 - 7 Bromfield and Extension
 - 8 Morbrook
 - 9 Hill Valley
 - 10 Sleep Airfield
 - 11 Conyburg Wood
 - 12 Coundarbour

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Table 2 Destination of Sand and Gravel Sales, 1993 (million tonnes)

	Sales	As a % of total sales
Total sales of Shropshire Sand and Gravel	0.905	-
Consumed within Shropshire	0.656	72
Exported to other Counties in the West Midland Region	0.102	11
Exported to other Regions	0.147 *	16
Total consumed in Shropshire of West Midland production	1.060	-

Source: WMRAWP Aggregates Monitoring Survey - AM93

Note: *Principally to Wales (0.102 million tonnes or 11%)

Permitted Reserves

- 6.15 'Permitted reserves' mean saleable material in the ground with planning permission or material stockpiled on site. As at 1 January 1998, the reported permitted reserves were 16.3 million tonnes. However, allowing for sites where resolutions to grant planning permissions have been made subject to the completion of legal agreements, at June 1999, reserves are estimated to be about 21.6 million tonnes (Table 3).
- 6.16 One permitted site contains about 7 million tonnes of reserves. To date the operator has chosen not to bring the site into production, but as reserves are used up in other active units, there will be an incentive to bring this site into use.

Table 3 Sand and Gravel Reserves, 1991-1999 (million tonnes)

Date	Reserves	As a % of the West Midlands Region Reserves	Notes
1.1.91	17.210	10.0	(a)
1.1.92	16.660	11.0	(a)
1.1.93	15.087	10.0	(a)
1.1.94	14.304	9.5	(a)
1.1.95	14.048	10.0	(a)
1.1.96	13.869	9.5	(a)
1.1.97	13.170	8.7	(a)
1.1.98	16.280	10.3	(a)
1.6.99	21.579	n/a	(b)

Notes: (a) From the WMRAWP Annual Reports and Aggregates Monitoring Surveys

(b) This figure includes a further 5.299 million tonnes which takes account of recently permitted sites, or sites where there has been a resolution to grant planning permission, subject to the completion of legal agreements. The sites are at Bromfield, Gonsal, Morbrook, Norton Farm and Hill Valley Golf Club (see Figure 4).

CRUSHED ROCK

Source and Purpose

- 6.17 The three principal crushed rock resources worked in the Plan area are gritstones near Shrewsbury; limestones, near Oswestry and at Wenlock Edge; and igneous rocks, near Oswestry, between Telford and Shrewsbury, at Clee Hill east of Ludlow, Callow Hill south west of Shrewsbury and at More Quarry, north of Bishop's Castle. Figure 5 illustrates the distribution of the resources and location of the operational and non-operational sites.
- 6.18 According to industry surveys, two thirds of sales go for roadstone, the remainder is used for fill or other construction uses. Bayston Hill and Callow Hill have in recent years produced a high specification aggregate particularly suited to road surfacing, construction and maintenance. This material has the ability to provide a highly durable road surface with particular skid resistance.

Past Production and Consumption

- 6.19 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin is a leading producer of crushed rock in the West Midlands Region, producing about one third of the Region's total. Production peaked at 4.45 million tonnes in 1991 and has since fallen to around 2.5 million tonnes (Table 4). The peak in 1990-1991 may be related to the unusually high level of road construction activity occurring in the Plan area and other parts of the West Midlands at that time.

Table 4 Annual Production of Crushed Rock, 1973-1997 (million tonnes)

Year	Production	As a % of the West Midland Regional Production
1973	3.5	33
1977	2.9	36
1981	2.5	37
1985	2.9	35
1989	4.0	31
1990	4.1	37
1991	4.45	40.4
1992	3.14	32.4
1993	2.95	31.6
1994	3.32	38.8
1995	2.69	39.0
1996	2.31	35.1
1997	2.53	39.2

Source: West Midland Regional Aggregates Working Party Annual Reports

- 6.20 The market for crushed rock is geographically much wider than sand and gravel. In 1989, about 47% of production was exported from the Plan area, 36% to within the West Midlands Region and 11% of went outside the Region (Table 5).
- 6.21 In 1989 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin's consumption of crushed rock (2.2 million tonnes) produced in the West Midlands Region was closely matched by its consumption of crushed rock actually produced in the Plan area (2.13 million tonnes). The Plan area thus appeared to be self sufficient in crushed rock, but this did not take imports from other regions into account.

- 6.22 Unfortunately, no figures are available for 1993 because of commercial confidentiality, but the AM93 Survey did indicate destinations throughout Britain for unspecified, but probably small, amounts of crushed rock produced in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Table 5 Destination of Crushed Rock Sales, 1989 and 1993 (million tonnes)

	Sales (1989)	Sales (1993)	As a % of 1989 Sales
Total sales of local Crushed Rock	4.0	2.95	-
Consumed within the Plan area	2.13	*	53
Exported to other Counties in the West Midland Region	1.45	*	36
Exported to other Regions	0.42	*	11
Total local consumption of West Midland production	2.2	*	-

Source: Aggregates Monitoring Surveys AM89 and AM93

Note: *Figures not available due to commercial confidentiality.

Permitted Reserves

- 6.23 Crushed rock reserves are generally much more extensive than is the case with sand and gravel, since deposits are usually deeper and more consistent.
- 6.24 Several planning permissions to work large reserves were granted many years ago and in some cases, the permissions have been extended to allow long term working. At January 1998, permitted reserves stood at some 96 million tonnes. Some 15 million tonnes were recorded in 1993 as being in non-operational sites (Table 6).
- 6.25 As reserves are used up on active sites, there should be an incentive to bring the non-operational quarries into use.

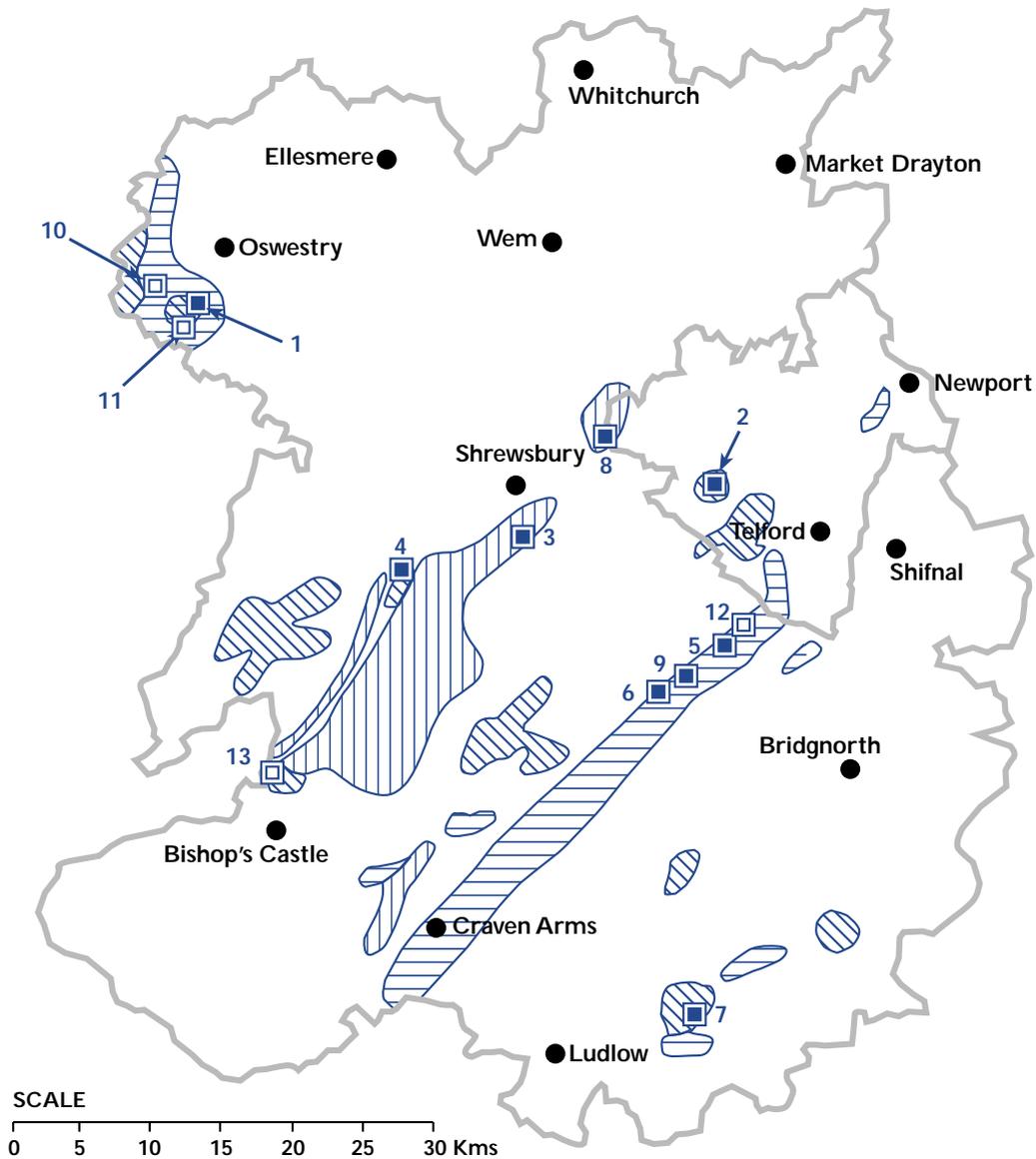
Table 6 Crushed Rock Reserves, 1991-1999 (million tonnes)

Date	Reserves	As a % of the West Midlands Region Reserves	Notes
1.1.91	86.236	38	(a)
1.1.92	94.750	39	(a)
1.1.93	91.050	39	(a)
1.1.94	77.548(71.965*)	36	(a)
1.1.95	72.907(67.658*)	37	(a)
1.1.96	87.834	42	(a)
1.1.97	93.853	37	(a)
1.1.98	96.200	31	(a)

Notes: (a) From the WMRAWP Annual Reports and Aggregates Monitoring Surveys

* 7.2% was reported in AM93 to be for non-aggregate use (e.g. agricultural, cement manufacture or other purposes). The total reserve for aggregate purposes could therefore be reduced by this amount. However, there is no control over the market destination of sales and the material could in fact be used as an aggregate.

Figure 5 - Crushed Rock Resources



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

■ Operational Site (April, 2000)

NOTATION

-  Gritstone
-  Limestone
-  Igneous Rock

- 1 Llynclys
- 2 Leaton
- 3 Bayston Hill
- 4 Callow Hill
- 5 Shadwell
- 6 Lea
- 7 Clee Hill
- 8 Haughmond Hill
- 9 Coates

□ Non-operational Site (April, 2000)

- 10 Nantmawr
- 11 Blodwell
- 12 Farley
- 13 More

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SECONDARY SOURCES

Sources and Purpose

- 6.26 Waste materials can in certain circumstances be used as a replacement for primary aggregates, for example, demolition waste and ash produced by coal-fired power stations can be used. Although such secondary sources are unlikely to replace the need for extracting primary aggregates, they can make an important contribution. Benefits include reducing the amount of land required to dispose of such waste and avoiding the disturbance of land for primary aggregate production.
- 6.27 There are difficulties with secondary materials, such as the lack of consistency in the material, the environmental effects of processing and transportation, and above all, the cost comparison with primary aggregates. However, it is Government policy and the policy of the MPAs to encourage an increase in the contribution of secondary aggregates, consistent with the aim of the Minerals Local Plan, to attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources.
- 6.28 Potential secondary aggregate sources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin include industrial by-products such as power station ash (Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA) and Furnace Bottom Ash (FBA)), and mineral wastes such as colliery spoil, vein discard materials and quarry overburden material. Other sources include demolition rubble, construction overburdens, recycled road material and planings from road maintenance.
- 6.29 Whilst most of these sources have been and continue to be used as a secondary aggregate in the Region, recorded sales in the Plan area have been restricted to ash from the coal burning power station at Ironbridge. The ash is deposited at a nearby landfill site managed specifically for the storage of this material. Power station ash, although not an inert material, has been used for grouting and general fill and in the production of lightweight concrete blocks.
- 6.30 Historically, calcite from the former metalliferous mineral mining areas of South Shropshire have been used as a fill and an additive to other crushed rock. Further removal/extraction of calcite is unlikely because of environmental, health and amenity concerns.
- 6.31 There are areas of colliery spoil, particularly around Telford which could provide secondary aggregate material. However, most of these areas are reclaimed or revegetated sites where further extraction is unlikely to be an economic or environmentally acceptable proposition.
- 6.32 Quarry overburden material may be saleable as general fill. However, most is retained on site where it can fulfil a useful purpose by providing material used for screening during site operations and later assist in the reclamation of the site once extraction is complete.
- 6.33 It is possible that in the future a greater contribution to the overall supply of aggregates for construction and general fill purposes could originate from the recycling of waste materials from road excavation/reconstruction, building demolition and waste bricks. About 5% of the present Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin highway maintenance programme involves recycled materials.
- 6.34 Outside the Plan area, potential sources include colliery spoil and power station ash. However with recent colliery closures, power station ash is likely to be the dominant source, albeit from fairly distant locations such as Rugeley (Staffordshire).

- 6.35 There are reported to be 350 million tonnes of slate waste in tips in North Wales. Slate waste has been used successfully as a Type 1 road construction aggregate.¹⁴ Transport costs to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin may prevent this source being a serious competitor with local aggregate but rail links with North Wales exist and could possibly be utilised if there was investment in handling facilities.

Production

- 6.36 The production of secondary materials in the West Midlands Region has been in steady decline, although recorded data is sketchy (Table 7). It was estimated that 0.78 million tonnes were produced in 1989, the majority of which were utilised for aggregate purposes. The 1993 AM Survey Report is not helpful as it excludes major sources in Staffordshire and Warwickshire.
- 6.37 Sales of ash from Ironbridge for use as secondary aggregate material have ranged in recent years between 0.2 and 0.312 million tonnes per annum. In 1993 Ironbridge ash constituted about 7% of total aggregate production in the Plan area.

Table 7 Recorded Sales of Secondary Aggregates in the West Midlands Region, 1974-1993 (million tonnes)

Year(s)	Annual Sales	Use as Secondary Aggregate
1974/75	5.3	2.2
1977/78	4.2	1.45
1985 *	1.0	0.67
1989	0.78	0.69
1993	0.312+	0.312+

Source: *Aggregates Monitoring Surveys AM 85; 1977 Re-survey Stage 1 Report; AM 89; AM 93*

Notes: *Excludes the West Midlands County Area

+ This is the figure for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (power station ash). In 1993 figures are not available for Staffordshire or Warwickshire and there is no known production from Hereford & Worcester and the West Midlands County

- 6.38 According to figures in the Shropshire County Council Waste Disposal (Management) Plan 1995, between 0.5 and 0.6 million tonnes of building and demolition waste was recorded at landfill sites in the Plan area in 1993/4. However it is not known what proportion of this waste was used as secondary aggregate, nor what amount of similar waste went directly for use as secondary aggregate. A high proportion is likely to be used on site as fill on or near to the point of origin.
- 6.39 A study for the Department of Environment concluded that only 4% of building and demolition waste nationally is subjected to high level processing to meet the standard required for primary aggregates.¹⁵
- 6.40 Approximately 0.13 million tonnes of mineral waste is produced in the Plan area annually. 98.4% of such waste is disposed of on site.¹⁶

Reserves

- 6.41 Reserves tend to be very short term and obviously dependent on production from the source activity. It is considered that over the Plan period only power station ash will make a significant contribution to the overall need for aggregates. Other sources such as building and demolition waste, and recycled road planings are likely to make a limited contribution. Much is therefore dependent on the continued operation and production of residual ash from electricity generation at Ironbridge Power Station.

DEMAND FORECASTS: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR AGGREGATE WORKING

- 6.42 Government guidance on provision for aggregate extraction in planning policy is contained in Mineral Planning Guidance Note 6 (MPG6). The most recent MPG6, April 1994, covers the period to 2006.
- 6.43 The Government have based their guidance on 1992 data projections of aggregate demand. These forecasts showed a reduction of about 10% from 1989 estimates. The Guidelines also make a commitment to the reduction in the use of primary aggregates, greater efficiency in their use, and propose an increase in the use of secondary materials.
- 6.44 MPG6 advises that, for sand and gravel, MPAs should achieve a 'landbank' sufficient for at least seven years extraction - unless exceptional circumstances prevail. A landbank is a stock of planning permissions. This landbank period is reduced from the ten years stated in previous Government guidance. MPG6 also states that a longer landbank period may be appropriate for crushed rock.
- 6.45 The period of the landbank reflects the lead times that may be involved in bringing a site into full production. MPAs are expected to have identified sufficient resources to ensure that the landbank can be maintained throughout the Plan period.
- 6.46 MPG6 requires MPAs in the West Midlands Region to make provision in their development plans in the period 1992-2006 to meet approximately 180 million tonnes of land won sand and gravel and 150 million tonnes of crushed rock (Table 8). The Government anticipates production of 55 million tonnes of secondary aggregates during the same period.

Table 8 Government Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in the West Midlands Region, 1992-2006 (million tonnes)

Anticipated demand for aggregate materials from within the Region for the period 1992-2006:	490
Anticipated demand from other regions:	30
Total demand	520
Anticipated production from within the Region for the period 1992-2006:	
Sand and Gravel	180
Crushed Rock	150
Secondary/Recycled	55
Imports from other regions/Wales:	135
Marine dredged imports:	nil
Total supply	520

Source: Department of the Environment Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England, Revision of MPG6, April 1994.

- 6.47 The provision in the Minerals Local Plan should reflect the 'sub-regional apportionment' figure determined by the West Midlands Forum of Local Authorities, based on technical advice derived from the West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party (WMRAWP). Taking the advice contained in MPG6, the WMRAWP have recommended annual apportionments for each County, based on the average production for the previous three years. The implications are considered further below.
- 6.48 According to MPG6, the annual sub-regional apportionment should remain at a constant level to 2006. However, there should be a decline in the proportion of aggregate supply to the West Midlands to be met from primary land sources.

POLICIES FOR FUTURE AGGREGATE WORKING

Landbanks

- 6.49 The 1993 Shropshire Structure Plan (Policy 2/84) states that the MPA will seek to ensure that there is a sufficient stock of aggregates to meet demand by maintaining an overall landbank of permitted reserves for both sand and gravel and crushed rock. Provision was made for reserves of sand and gravel for at least 10 years, and 20 years for crushed rock.
- 6.50 In view of the more recent advice contained in MPG6 (1994), the Minerals Local Plan will give a commitment to enabling a landbank to be maintained sufficient for 7 years for extraction of sand and gravel. It will be necessary to demonstrate that sufficient sand and gravel resources can be brought forward which could maintain the 7 year landbank during the Plan period. The Plan period being 1996-2006, resources need to be demonstrated up to 2013 (i.e. 2006 + 7 years). When determining the landbank, the MPAs will have regard to the balance of real need and real supply, in accordance with MPG6 para 80.
- 6.51 In respect of crushed rock, it is necessary to balance the longer lead-in period required for planning and development of a working site, against the likely impact on the environment and on local communities. The 20 year Structure Plan period is now considered too long because aggregate demand forecasts and regional guidelines can change significantly within such a period. Too long a lead-in can result in the unnecessary release of new land, much of which is likely to be in areas of environmental importance. A 10 year landbank is therefore to be adopted and the forecast period is to 2016 (2006 + 10). This period should be adequate to allow the industry to bring a new crushed rock quarry, or extension or deepening of an existing quarry, into production while enabling environmental impact to be controlled through the planning process.
- 6.52 This revised approach to the landbanks is consistent with the aim of the Minerals Local Plan, to attain a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources. It may also provide more of an incentive to use secondary aggregates.

M12 LANDBANKS FOR AGGREGATES

Landbanks will be maintained throughout the Plan period sufficient for:-

- (i) at least seven years extraction of sand and gravel; and,**
- (ii) ten years extraction of crushed rock.**

In considering applications for further development of primary aggregates, the extent of the landbank will be taken into account.

Production Guidelines

- 6.53 Shropshire County Council's Planning Committee resolved in September 1994 to accept the advice on sub-regional apportionment of future aggregates production, prepared by the WMRAWP, provided that the biannual monitoring recommended by the Working Party also takes place. The WMRAWP's latest Sub-Regional Apportionment document was issued in July 1995 and this provides the basis for the forecasts (Table 10).
- 6.54 The WMRAWP's calculation of proportional share is based on the average production in the Plan area for the previous three years (in this case 1991-3). Expressed as a proportion of regional production, the 1995 figures for Shropshire are 9.3% of the share for sand and gravel and 35.1% of the share for crushed rock.
- 6.55 The annual apportionment for the Plan area is derived by multiplying the regional production guideline figure (Table 8) by the proportional share. The result can be divided by 15 (1992 to 2006) to produce an annual figure (Table 9).

Table 9 Application of West Midlands Regional Aggregates Production Guidelines to Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin 1992-2006 (million tonnes)

	Apportionment 1992-2006	Annual Production (/15 years)
Sand and gravel	$180 \times 9.3\% = 16.74$	1.116
Crushed rock	$150 \times 35.1\% = 52.65$	3.510

Source: WMRAWP: July 1995 Report on Sub Regional Apportionment.

- 6.56 There is no agreed apportionment in respect of secondary aggregates. The regional guideline of 55 million tonnes (1992-2006) (Table 8) should be compared with a potential output of 4.5 million tonnes from Ironbridge Power Station over that period (assuming 0.3 million tonnes per year and the continuing operation of the power station). Other producers in the Region are unlikely to make a significant contribution, there being reduced levels of colliery spoil which has until recently been one of the main sources.
- 6.57 The implications for the Minerals Local Plan in respect of production guidelines for sand and gravel and crushed rock, and calculations of shortfall or surplus against reserves, are summarised in Table 10. The assumption made is that provision remains at a constant level throughout the landbank period.

Table 10 Production Guideline v Reserves of Aggregates, 1996-2006 (million tonnes)

	(i) Forecast period (1996-2006) + landbank	(ii) RAWP annual production apportionment (Table 9)	(iii) MLP production guideline: (i) x (ii)	(iv) Production potential from permitted reserves (Tables 3 & 6)	(v) Shortfall (-) or Surplus (+) (iv) - (iii)
Sand & Gravel	1996-2013 =17 yrs	1.116	18.972	17.579 (a)	-1.393
Crushed Rock	1995-2016 =20 yrs	3.510	70.200	98.934 (91.811 (b))	+ 28.734 (+ 21.611 (b))

Notes: (a) Permitted sand and gravel reserves at 1.6.99 = 21.579 million tonnes (Table 3). An output limitation of 0.25 million tonnes p.a. at one major permitted site restricts production to 3.00 million tonnes by 2013, out of a total reserve of 7.0 million tonnes, assuming this site will be operational in 2001. Thus production potential from reserves to 2013 is effectively reduced by 4 million tonnes to 17.579 million tonnes.

(b) See note * on Table 6, bracketed figure assumes exclusion of reserves for non-aggregate use.

- 6.58 Policy M13 sets out the MPAs' intention to adopt the guidance of the Regional Aggregates Working Party on sub-regional apportionments.

M13 DETERMINING THE LANDBANK FOR PRIMARY AGGREGATES

The annual sub-regional apportionment agreed with the West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party will be considered as guidance in calculating the landbank and in determining the need to consider future development of primary aggregate resources.

- 6.59 The land use implications of the shortfall or surplus in respect of each aggregate source is considered in the following sections.

Future Working of Sand and Gravel

- 6.60 Whilst there are permitted reserves in the Plan area to meet immediate needs, in order to maintain the landbank, it is concluded that the MPAs will need to demonstrate that additional resources can be brought forward to provide for about 1.393 million tonnes of sand and gravel during the later stages of the Plan period.
- 6.61 Policy M14 lists 3 new allocated sites and one new preferred area for the future working of sand and gravel. Section 9 explains the process of selection and provides details about the areas and the considerations which will need to be addressed when an applicant is preparing to submit a detailed planning application. The Inset Maps in section 9 define the areas and illustrate some of the site constraints that will need to be taken into account.
- 6.62 On the basis of preliminary information available, the new areas are expected to contain workable reserves of sand and gravel totalling some 3.725 million tonnes. This will be sufficient to ensure certainty in the maintenance of the landbank for the plan period. It is considered that the choice of areas allows for a degree of flexibility when detailed site information becomes available.

- 6.63 The areas have been phased as a control mechanism to avoid over supply. There is a preference for extensions to existing sites (Phase 1 allocated sites) over new sites (Phase 2 allocated site and Phase 3 preferred area). Extensions generally tend to have less environmental impact than new sites. The areas are identified on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps (section 9).
- 6.63A In accordance with a more sustainable approach to mineral development, there may be exceptional circumstances where an operator may submit a planning application for a first phase extension site at an earlier stage than would have been anticipated from a landbank point of view. In such circumstances, the applicant would have to satisfy the MPAs that there would be significant environmental benefits arising from concurrent working and restoration of the existing site and the proposed extension area.
- 6.63B When the Plan is reviewed, the opportunity will be taken to assess the need to revise any of the identified sites and areas in the light of information available at that time. The formal review process will take into account the level of permitted reserves, production levels, the latest agreed sub-regional apportionment, Government guidelines and environmental issues.

M14 THE FUTURE WORKING OF SAND AND GRAVEL

The supply of sand and gravel during the Plan period should be provided in the first instance from existing permitted resources and then from the development of new workings within the following allocated sites and preferred areas:-

The First Phase Allocated Sites:

- i) Wood Lane Deepening, near Ellesmere**
- ii) Tern Hill Extension, near Market Drayton**

The Second Phase Allocated Site:

- iii) Barnsley Lane, near Bridgnorth**

The Third Phase Preferred Area:

- iv) Woodcote Wood, near Sherrifhales**

Applications involving the above areas will need to address a number of environmental issues which will be considered against the policies in the Minerals Local Plan.

Applications for earlier working of first phase extension sites in conjunction with already consented areas may be considered where it can be demonstrated that a more sustainable approach to mineral development can be achieved (Policy M1).

In the event that difficulties arise with the production from sites either with planning permission or in the first phase, the Mineral Planning Authorities will consider an application for earlier development of the second phase on its merits. It is unlikely that the third phase site will be required during the Plan period. However, should circumstances arise which prevent the required production rate being achieved from existing sites with planning permission, or those in the first and second phases, the Mineral Planning Authorities will consider a proposal to develop the third phase site on its merits.

6.64 Outside these areas, it is unlikely that any further reserves will need to be permitted before the review stage. However, there may be exceptional circumstances which need to be considered. For example, there may be applications for 'borrow pits' associated with a major development (see Policy M19). A developer may propose a new site or an extension to an existing site not listed in Policy M14. Exceptional circumstances could involve a site which would provide specialised materials which cannot be supplied from existing permitted reserves or the allocated sites (Policy M2).



At Tern Hill sand has been worked below the water table.

Extending a site may have less impact on the environment overall relative to the impact of developing a new site with all the implications for new plant and ancillary development. Working could avoid the sterilisation of a resource (Policy M29). There may also be an opportunity to exchange or surrender older planning permissions for a new permission with modern conditions attached. In all such cases, the proposed mineral development would have to be acceptable when considered against the development control criteria set out in the Minerals Local Plan. It may also be the case that, on the basis of new information becoming available, a new site might be significantly more acceptable overall than a preferred area. In practice this should be rare.¹⁷

6.65 Policy M15 makes provision for certain exceptional circumstances which may need to be considered, if applications are received for sand and gravel working from sites not referred to in Policy M14.

M15 SAND AND GRAVEL WORKING OUTSIDE THE ALLOCATED SITES AND PREFERRED AREA

The supply of sand and gravel during the Plan period should be provided from existing permitted reserves and the areas referred to in Policy M14. Proposals for sand and gravel working outside these areas will therefore only be granted planning permission if one or more of the following exceptional circumstances apply:

- i. where the need for the mineral outweighs the material planning objections (Policy M2);**
- ii. working would prevent the sterilisation of the resource (Policy M29);**
- iii. significant environmental benefits would be obtained as a result of the exchange or surrender of existing permissions; and / or,**
- iv. the site might be significantly more acceptable overall than the allocated sites or the preferred area, and would offer significant environmental benefits.**

Future Working of Crushed Rock

6.67 Comparing the permitted reserves with the target allocation confirms that a ten year landbank can be maintained throughout the Plan period (Table 11).

- 6.68 Account needs to be taken of non-aggregate use of crushed rock, particularly as an agricultural lime. The Aggregates Monitoring Survey 1993 recorded the operators' view that 7.2% of permitted reserves in the Plan area were considered to be for non-aggregate use; however this trend will not necessarily continue. Allowing for this reduction for non-aggregate use still leaves a 'surplus' in the reserve.
- 6.69 Taking the landbank information into account, it is concluded that no additional areas need to be allocated during the Plan period for crushed rock extraction.
- 6.70 Sites currently non-operational may be brought into production to maintain the guideline production levels for the Plan area in the longer term. There will be a need to re-consider whether the non-operational sites should contribute to the maintenance of production levels at the review stage of the Minerals Local Plan. There will also be scope for considering further allocations where these are linked to giving up rights to work certain sites of environmental concern.
- 6.71 This approach is justified in the light of Government policy for long term aggregate provision. The Government concluded that a gradual change from the present supply approach is called for, so that over time less reliance is placed on traditional land won sources (MPG6). Taking into account possible future supply from alternative sources, and allowing scope for revisions in forecasts, future options should not be foreclosed by long term land won provision.
- 6.72 A further consideration is whether a site contains high specification aggregate resources. Such resources are recognised by the Government as being of national importance and should be protected from sterilisation.¹⁸ If there is a need for the mineral, there may be a case for the release of additional resources, even though an adequate landbank of crushed rock already exists generally in the Plan area.
- 6.73 In the light of the extent of existing permitted reserves, it is not envisaged that there will be a need for additional allocations in the Plan period, except in exceptional circumstances. Should there be a need to consider making additional allocations, an extension to a site may have less impact on the environment overall by comparison with the development of a new greenfield site. Exceptional circumstances could involve a site which would provide specialised materials which cannot be supplied from existing permitted reserves (Policy M2). Working a site may avoid the sterilisation of a resource (Policy M29). There may also be an opportunity to exchange or surrender older planning permissions. In all such cases, the proposed mineral development would have to be acceptable when considered against the development control criteria set out in the Minerals Local Plan.
- 6.74 Policy M16 makes provision for such exceptional circumstances.

M16 THE FUTURE WORKING OF CRUSHED ROCK

The supply of crushed rock during the Plan period should be provided from existing permitted reserves. Proposals for further crushed rock working will only be granted planning permission if one or more of the following exceptional circumstances apply:

- i. where the need for the mineral outweighs the material planning objections (Policy M2);**
- ii. working would prevent the sterilisation of the resource (Policy M29); and / or,**
- iii. significant environmental benefits would be obtained as a result of the exchange or surrender of existing permissions.**

Secondary Aggregates

- 6.75 Opportunities for production and use of secondary sources within Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin seem limited, taking knowledge of current source material and technology into account. The Minerals Local Plan can facilitate recycling by including a policy for the provision of suitable sites for the reception, treatment and distribution of waste aggregates. There may be opportunities to locate such facilities at existing active, or disused mineral sites, at waste disposal sites or on industrial estates. The Shropshire Waste Local Plan and the Telford & Wrekin Waste Local Plan will contain further guidance on the location of a wide range of waste management facilities including recycling facilities. Similar environmental considerations to those which apply to the development of primary aggregate resources would need to be taken into account.
- 6.76 Setting a target for the consumption of secondary aggregates is another useful way of raising the profile of the need to reduce the contribution of primary aggregates. This could be implemented through planning decisions and through public sector contracts.
- 6.77 While the main foreseeable sources of secondary aggregate are ash from Ironbridge Power Station, demolition material and road planings, it is considered that an annual target of production/consumption within the Plan area for secondary aggregate purposes of 0.5 million tonnes is a realistic one. The target needs to be compared with a possible pro-rata annual apportionment of 0.7 million tonnes if the MPG6 production guidelines were applied to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. There is however no agreed apportionment or method of calculating it.
- 6.78 It is considered that every effort should be made to maximise the use of secondary aggregates wherever this can be justified and considered to be environmentally acceptable.
- 6.79 Local authorities and other bodies can include statements in contracts which give favourable treatment to proposals for materials reuse and recycling. Where an employer is confident that materials recycling is economic, it can specify this in contracts.
- 6.80 In time for the next review of the Plan, land owners and operators of mineral and other potentially suitable sites will be encouraged to submit provisional proposals to identify sites which may be suitable for the reception, treatment and distribution of secondary aggregates or waste materials. These sites will be assessed against the policies in the Plan and if a need proves to exist, sites may be allocated in the revised Plan.

M17 SECONDARY AGGREGATES

- A) The increased supply and use of secondary aggregate material will be encouraged by:**
- i. adopting an average annual target figure of 0.5 million tonnes of secondary aggregate material production or use in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin over the Plan period; and,**
 - ii. considering favourably suitable sites for the reception, treatment and distribution of such materials.**
- B) In determining applications relating to secondary aggregate materials consideration will be given to the relevant policies in the Minerals Local Plan and in particular whether or not the proposal would provide an opportunity to:**
- i. conserve primary aggregate resources;**
 - ii. reduce the requirement for the disposal of waste materials; and,**
 - iii. reclaim derelict or despoiled land, bringing it into beneficial use.**

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF AGGREGATE WORKING**Sand and Gravel Extraction**

- 6.81 Sand and gravel deposits in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin typically give rise to low undulating countryside. The land may be of considerable agricultural value (grades 2 and 3a), or support forestry. Existing extraction sites do not affect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, although a few sites are within Areas of Special Landscape Character.
- 6.82 The associated processing plant is usually fairly unobtrusive, certainly less complex than that related to crushed rock quarrying. There is nevertheless a need for satisfactory landscaping and protection measures. Sites are often visible from adjoining roads and operations can have a locally disturbing effect, e.g. from noise, dust and from traffic generation. In some cases, the operations may continue for many years.
- 6.83 Sand and gravel deposits form aquifers of either regional or local importance. Working may have an adverse effect on the hydrological or hydrogeological regime. There may also be conflicts with wildlife interests and archaeological remains or features.
- 6.84 Many existing sand and gravel sites are being progressively restored to some beneficial after-use. In most cases, conditions are attached to planning permissions which require landscape works and screening of areas to be worked to reduce their visual impact. Most operators follow the CBI's Minerals Industry Environmental Charter in respect of site management and reclamation.

Crushed Rock Extraction

- 6.85 Crushed rock extraction tends to take place in areas which offer some of the most attractive scenery in the Plan area, such as Wenlock Edge. The majority of the existing quarries are located adjoining the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Areas of Special Landscape Character.

- 6.86 Crushed rock quarries can have a significant and usually permanent effect on the environment. Because of the nature of the materials, the height and steep angle of the quarry faces and the lack of soil or soil making materials, effective reclamation is difficult. However, sparse soils may help to promote the regeneration of former mineral workings, creating new habitats and increasing biodiversity.
- 6.87 The plant and ancillary development is also of greater prominence than is the case with sand and gravel working. The quarry operation can have locally disturbing effects, including the effects of blasting, plant noise, dust and traffic generation.
- 6.88 Quarries may operate under early planning permissions granted at a time when there was less awareness of environmental issues, and less support for detailed control of operations through planning conditions. Such permissions do not always provide for effective landscaping or after treatment. These sites are the subject of a Review in accordance with the provisions of the Environment Act 1995. This will provide the opportunity to update planning conditions to modern standards (see section 7).

Secondary Aggregates

- 6.89 Although the use of secondary aggregates can lessen landscape impact from primary aggregate extraction, many of the environmental concerns applicable to the winning and working of primary aggregates are still relevant, such as noise, dust and traffic issues.

WENLOCK EDGE

- 6.90 Wenlock Edge is a landscape of local and national importance, and the scarp slope is within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A number of operational and dormant quarries are located on the boundary of the AONB and as such can have a potentially detrimental effect on the character of both the local landscape and the AONB.
- 6.91 In 1983, Shropshire County Council adopted a Subject Plan for Mineral Extraction on Wenlock Edge to seek to resolve the land use conflicts in this area. The Plan established that Wenlock Edge needed special protection and the main policy aim was for the eventual cessation of all mineral working in the Subject Plan area, albeit over a long term.
- 6.92 This approach is supported by Policy 2/90 in the Shropshire Structure Plan (Appendix 3).
- 6.93 The Subject Plan contained exceptions to the policy. The first related to the consideration of:
- i. the availability of alternative employment opportunities as quarrying in the area comes to an end; and,
 - ii. the availability of alternative suitable supplies of materials as production on Wenlock Edge approaches cessation.
- 6.94 Secondly, provision was made to exchange or surrender older permissions.
- 6.95 As far as alternative employment opportunities are concerned, some progress has been made with the provision of small factory units in Much Wenlock, with the allocation of employment sites in Bridgnorth Local Plan and with the continuing strong growth of employment in Telford.

6.96 As regards alternative supplies of materials, it has already been shown that sufficient reserves of crushed rock exist to cater for estimated demand. In these circumstances, there is no need for any exception to be made in relation to alternative supplies of materials.



6.97 The 'exchange and surrender' provision related to two areas of land with the object of encouraging the operator to work an area with less environmental impact. The operator has since decided to quarry a reduced part of the defined "Surrender Area".

Limestone working on the dip slope of Wenlock Edge.

6.98 Wenlock Edge will continue to be safeguarded through a specific policy in the Minerals Local Plan. Although the policy is intended to lead to a run-down in quarrying from Wenlock Edge, it will take time to have effect because there are sufficient reserves to last for at least 20 years.

M18 LIMESTONE QUARRYING ON WENLOCK EDGE

Proposals for the further development of limestone quarrying in the Wenlock Edge area will only be granted planning permission if there are planning benefits which outweigh any unacceptably adverse environmental, social or economic impacts of mineral working on the area and help to achieve the aim of eventual cessation of mineral working in the area. The Wenlock Edge area is identified on the Proposals Map.

BORROW PITS

6.99 Mineral working sites which provide some of the mineral requirements of construction projects are known as borrow pits. Road construction is a common example. Often surplus unsuitable materials from these construction works can be returned to the borrow pit as part of an approved reclamation scheme.

6.100 It is generally only possible to consider the suitability of areas for borrow pits once the nature, scale and timing of a construction project is known. Permissions granted for borrow pits and associated tips close to the line of a new road project can ensure that materials meet the specific needs of the scheme and enable permitted reserves and mineral resources in other parts of the Plan area to be conserved. Another advantage is that the borrow pit can often be located close to a scheme thus avoiding the adverse effects of large quantities of minerals being transported over long distances along public roads.

6.101 Whilst there are advantages, it is necessary to ensure that borrow pits are satisfactorily controlled and subject to the same environmental considerations as longer term mineral working sites. Permissions should be obtained before the commencement of any development and full reclamation and aftercare of the borrow pit site should be linked to

the period of the construction project. The general development control considerations in the Plan will therefore also apply to borrow pits. Applicants should have regard to best practice advice found in the Code of Practice, issued jointly by the County Planning Officers Society and the County Surveyors Society, 'The Use of Borrow Pits and the Disposal of Waste from Highway Construction and Structural Maintenance Schemes.'

M19 BORROW PITS

In determining applications for borrow pits, consideration will be given to the relevant policies in the Minerals Local Plan and planning permission will only be granted if one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- i. the borrow pit would help to conserve permitted reserves;**
- ii. the borrow pit would minimise the impact of haulage of materials on the highway network ; and / or,**
- iii. the borrow pit would be worked and reclaimed as part of the construction project.**

BUILDING STONE

6.102 Building stone, including dimension stone, has specialist use in architectural conservation work. The presence of local supplies can be important to enable the character of historic buildings to be maintained. Such quarries tend to be located in areas of environmental importance.

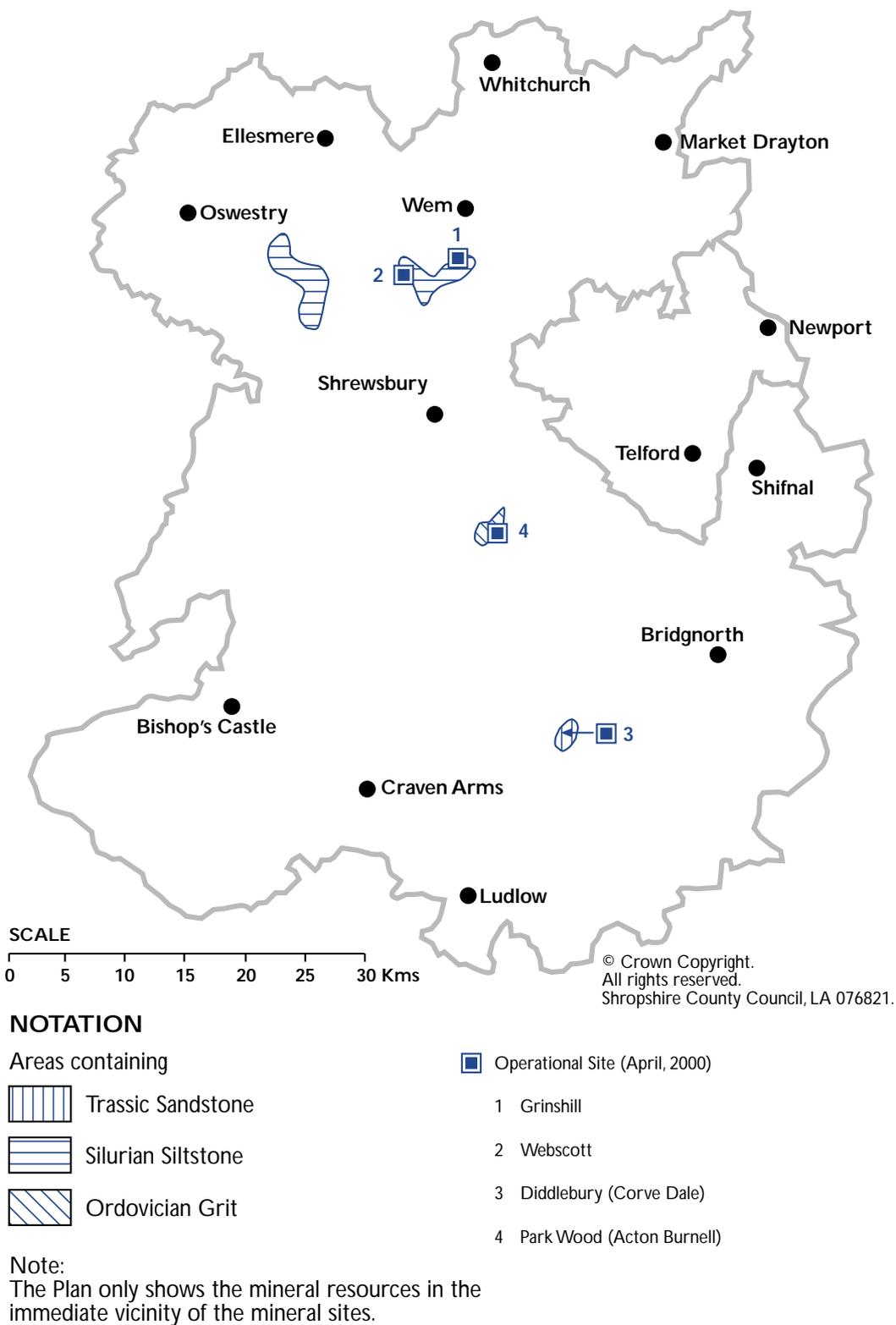
6.103 Figure 6 indicates the three small quarries in the Plan area: at Grinshill, Webscott and Diddlebury in Corve Dale. The Grinshill Quarry produces the distinctive Triassic Grinshill Sandstone which is used as dimension stone in building restoration projects. Webscott quarry stone has a distinctive colour and the Diddlebury quarry stone is used locally in building and wall repairs.

6.104 The market for building stone is limited: production from Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin is less than 2,000 tonnes per annum. Current permitted reserves contain approximately 1 million tonnes. The most important supplier is the Grinshill Quarry.



At Diddlebury Church the footway retaining wall is being reconstructed using local stone.

Figure 6 - Building Stone Resources



- 6.105 Given the low rates of usage of this product, it is considered there is no need for additional allocations in the Minerals Local Plan, except under exceptional circumstances as set out in Policy M20.

M20 Building Stone

The supply of building stone during the Plan period should be provided from existing permitted reserves. Proposals for the further working will therefore only be granted planning permission if one or more of the following exceptional circumstances apply:

- i. there is a requirement to meet a local need in the preservation of the character of historic settlements and buildings of historic, archaeological or architectural interest; and,**
- ii. the proposed mineral development is small scale and of a short term nature.**

COAL AND FIRE CLAY

PREVIOUS PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT

Coal

- 6.106 There are a number of small coalfields in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (Figure 7). The last deep mine, Granville Colliery, Telford, closed in 1979. It is most unlikely that any new deep mine activity will be experienced in the Plan period, bearing in mind Government guidance in MPG3, the lack of current interest and the time required to develop new proposals.
- 6.107 By contrast, there was a significant resurgence in opencast coal working in the mid 1980s, the majority of the interest being in the Coalbrookdale coalfield west of Telford and west of Broseley. There were three operators active in the area at that time, who worked a sequence of sites. The coal primarily supplies the electricity generating companies and to a lesser extent general and domestic markets. The main local customer is the Ironbridge Power Station.
- 6.108 Recent coal production figures are shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Production of Opencast Coal, 1988-1996 (million tonnes)

Year	Shropshire	England & Wales
1988/89	0.387	13.85
1990/91	0.297	13.89
1991/92	0.269	14.00
1992/93	0.368	12.45
1993/94	0.160	11.25
1994/95	0.236	10.61
1995/96	0.238	10.98

Source: *Opencast Coal Mining Statistics published by the County Planning Officers Society.*

6.109 The tendency for opencast sites to be worked relatively quickly after the grant of planning permission and the relatively small production capacities involved, means that reserves with planning permission at any time are quite limited. Coal reserves remaining at March 1995 stood at 175,000 tonnes.

Fire Clay

6.110 Fire clays were used in the refractory industry but are now used more frequently in the production of engineering bricks, building bricks, paviers, to achieve colour blends, and in the manufacture of paper and cattle-feed. The majority of fire clays occur in association with coal seams and the two are frequently mined together. In recent years, only the Coalbrookdale Coalfield has been significant in fire clay production, with the best clays occurring in the Little Wenlock and Broseley parts of the coalfield.

6.111 As the clays are often mined in conjunction with coal (which can usually be marketed more quickly) suitably located stocking areas are often required if all known marketable clay is not to be wasted when coal extraction has ceased.

6.112 Production of fire clay is variable, in the range of 49,000 to 158,000 tonnes per annum. Over three quarters of the Region's fire clay sales are from Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, as shown in Table 12 .

Table 12 Sales of Fire Clay, 1984-1994 (million tonnes)

Year	Shropshire	West Midlands Region	England
1984	0.090	0.120	0.594
1987	0.157	0.207	0.705
1990	0.049	0.056	0.689
1992	*	*	0.483
1994	*	*	0.597

Source: Central Statistical Office, Business Monitors

Note: * Information withheld to avoid disclosure of commercially confidential information.

6.113 A steady increase in production in the 1980's may be attributable to increased output in association with rising opencast coal production as well as being a reflection of increased building construction activity. Recently, sales have declined. The market for fire clays extends outside the West Midlands Region. Statistics are, however, not available for sales outside the Plan area.

6.114 In 1986 the permitted reserves of fire clay were estimated to be more than 1 million tonnes. These reserves have been supplemented in more recent years by the production of fire clay from opencast coal sites. There remains an interest in fire clay production which may lead to further proposals for fire clay working either from sites where coal is the primary mineral, or from sites where fire clay is the predominant mineral being produced.

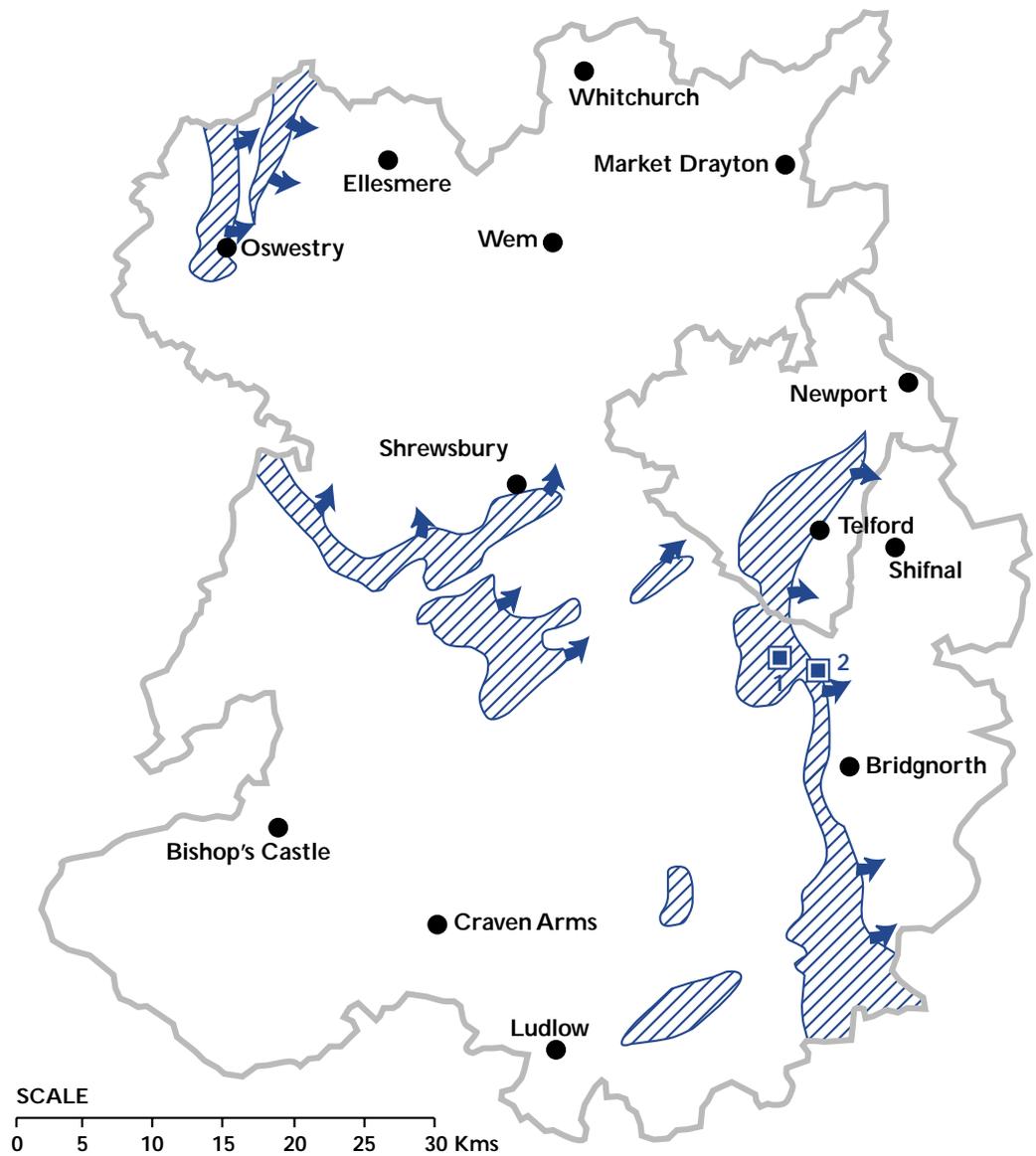
NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.115 The Government's current planning guidelines for opencast coal are set out in Minerals Planning Guidance 3 'Coal Mining and Colliery Spoil Disposal' (MPG3) published in March 1999. There is no equivalent guidance for fire clay, except in so far as it is used in brick manufacture and there is some limited guidance on brick clay in MPG1, which may be relevant.¹⁹ MPG1 refers to the demand for products with particular physical and aesthetic qualities. MPA's are advised to consider these special needs and the social and environmental implications of clay extraction. The guidance also suggests that brick clay extraction tends to involve small scale operations. However, this is unlikely to be the case where the proposals involve the production of fire clay in association with opencast coal due to the overall scale and intensity of operations.
- 6.116 As no new deep mines are likely to be developed in the Plan area in the foreseeable future and the nearest deep mine activity is confined to Warwickshire, there is no continuing colliery spoil disposal in the Plan area, so it is the advice on opencast coal mining in MPG3 that is relevant to the Minerals Local Plan.
- 6.117 MPG3 gives guidance on the formulation of policies and proposals in Minerals Local Plans. The Government's aim is to ensure that the extraction of coal and disposal of colliery spoil only takes place at the best balance of community, social, environmental and economic interests, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.²⁰

FUTURE DEMAND AND AREAS OF INTEREST

- 6.118 Government guidance on planning policy for coal working is that the demand for coal should be left to market forces. MPG3 states that it is not for the planning system to set national limits or targets, rather it should respond to individual proposals taking into account the likely environmental impact of the development. This advice on targets contrasts with the national planning framework for aggregates described earlier.
- 6.119 Areas of potential interest to the industry could include:
- i. additional areas in the Coalbrookdale Coalfield north of the River Severn and West of Telford;
 - ii. the Coalbrookdale Coalfield south of the Severn (the Broseley - Benthall Area);
 - iii. the Oswestry Coalfield, south west of Oswestry; and,
 - iv. the Clee Hills, between Ludlow and Bridgnorth, and the Muxton area, north-east of Telford.
- 6.120 The extent of the coal resource is shown on Figure 7.
- 6.121 Permitted reserves of fire clay are likely to be supplemented during the Plan period in response to market demand. However, because fire clay tends to be worked in association with opencast coal, it is possible that future fire clay production will be affected by the level of opencast coal working.

Figure 7 - Coal and Fire Clay Resources



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

NOTATION

 Exposed Coalfield (containing Fire Clay)

 Direction of Dip toward the Buried Coalfield

 Operational Site (April, 2000)

1 Windmill Lane

2 Caughley

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.122 Structure Plan Policy 2/91 states that the Mineral Planning Authorities will not normally permit the opencast mining of coal or fire clay where such a proposal would be likely to cause significant demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance, as set out in policies 2/78 and 2/79 (Appendix 3). These interests of international, national and regional / local importance are referred to in Policy M5. The Structure Plan policy goes on to consider exceptions where the applicant can show that environmental effects can be overcome or the need for the mineral and any other benefits of the development put forward outweigh the objections.
- 6.123 Proposals for opencast coal and fire clay working can give rise to considerable concerns about the potential impacts on the local environment and the quality of life for local residents. This can be due to the nature, scale, extent and location of the workings and despite controls on factors such as traffic, noise and dust. Where the proposed development is part of a chain of local sites, the cumulative impact on communities can be significant.
- 6.124 Opencast coal and fire clay sites in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have tended to be relatively small in comparison with other parts of the country. Nevertheless, the impact of small, short term sites can be just as significant due to the proximity of the workings to local communities, the presence of other environmental constraints, such as nature conservation, archaeological and historic interest and the lack of mitigating or other planning benefits. Sometimes however, planning benefits can be achieved by removing dereliction and bringing land into beneficial use. There are recent examples in the Little Wenlock area. A balance has therefore to be found between the benefits of the proposals and possible adverse effects on local communities and the local environment.
- 6.125 As the programme of permitted sites in these previously mined areas has now ceased, there may be increasing pressure to work agricultural land, possible conflicts with areas of environmental importance or concerns about the cumulative impact caused by prolonged working in an area. It is therefore possible that new proposals could give rise to material planning objections which are not outweighed by the planning benefits. In these circumstances, or when an Environmental Statement is required, it will be important to consider whether or not the combination of material planning benefits, mitigation measures and need for the proposed development outweigh the planning objections. An applicant will also need to provide information about the extent of the coal resource in the area and whether or not there are any plans for further working.²¹
- 6.126 As parts of the shallow coalfield in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin contain high quality fire clays, it is important not to waste this valuable resource. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have taken account of the presence of any other minerals of economic importance. Section 8 explains the policy on comprehensive working of mineral resources. This consideration has to be weighed against the planning benefits and objections that may result from the comprehensive working of the mineral resource (Policy M30).
- 6.127 Working of fire clay in conjunction with coal can have adverse impacts due to the additional raw material being removed from the site. This may present additional difficulties in reclaiming the land to satisfactory levels and contours without the importation of fill material. Fire clay may also need to be stockpiled until demand for the particular grade of

clay arises. In these circumstances stocks of clay may remain after coal working has ceased and the site can only be partially reclaimed until the stockpiles have been removed. In such circumstances there is often a need to give consideration to the location and design of the clay stockpiles.

- 6.128 Policy M21 provides the considerations which will be taken into account when determining planning applications for opencast working of coal and fire clay. In addition Policy M21 refers to certain specific considerations which applicants will need to take into account if they are intending to submit proposals in the South Western Telford area or in the coalfield area in the vicinity of Broseley and Shirlett.

SOUTH WESTERN TELFORD

- 6.129 Structure Plan Policy 2/92 recognises the special problems caused by cumulative impact of workings and a concentration of opencast working of coal and fire clay in the "Little Wenlock" area, south west of Telford, where the landscape has been affected, due in part to the failure by operators to restore worked out sites. The policy seeks to ensure that future applications for opencast working be examined, having regard to the possible cumulative impact of the proposals on local communities.
- 6.130 Much of the landscape of this area, referred to as South Western Telford in the Minerals Local Plan, has been affected by opencast mining which has taken place since the 1940s (see Inset Map 2). In the mid 1980s there was considerable renewed interest in opencast coal extraction in the western Telford area in the vicinity of Little Wenlock, towards the Wrekin Hills both by British Coal and the private sector. This was prompted by the development plans of the then Telford Development Corporation and the need to remove dereliction, unstable ground caused by mine workings, prepare land for re-development and avoid the possibility of sterilising coal and fire clay reserves.
- 6.131 In response to this renewed interest in opencast coal mining, Shropshire County Council produced a set of guidelines to reaffirm the Structure Plan policies and to establish the principles for future opencasting. The "Guidelines for Opencast Coal Extraction in Western Telford" were approved by the County Council in April 1987. The guidelines have now been superseded by this Plan.
- 6.132 The Guidelines recognised the need for opencast mining in certain areas, but also highlighted other areas and circumstances where there would be no support for opencast mining, specifically:
- i. in the area west of Wellington/Dawley Road where no major new development was envisaged and where existing land uses were expected to remain for the foreseeable future; and,
 - ii. in the areas where opencasting operations were not required to ensure safe and stable ground conditions for future land uses or where opencasting operations would have an unacceptable effect upon existing development.
- 6.133 Opencast operators have since worked a number of sites in a phased programme in accordance with these Guidelines. In total 1.8 million tonnes of coal and approximately 600,000 tonnes of fire clay have been permitted, with the sites being restored to a variety of after-uses.

- 6.134 However, proposals for further working in this general area have raised wider concerns about the possible cumulative impact of continued working on local communities and the local environment. Permission for further coal and/or fire clay working will only be permitted if exceptional circumstances apply. The circumstances are set out in Policy M21.

BROSELEY - SHIRLETT

- 6.135 Structure Plan Policy 2/94 states that planning permission will not normally be permitted to allow further fire clay and associated coal working in the area between Broseley and Shirlett unless this can clearly be justified in terms of a need for the mineral from a particular site.
- 6.136 This area has a particular character arising out of a combination of factors such as the Severn Valley corridor, historic parkland, areas of attractive landscape, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, sites of archaeological and historical importance and Conservation Areas (see Inset Map 3). There are also concerns about the suitability of the road network in the area and the potential impact on surrounding towns and villages.
- 6.137 As this area is likely to contain high quality reserves of fire clay in association with coal, applications from developers to work the mineral resources may be received. However, permission for further working will only be permitted if exceptional circumstances apply. The circumstances are set out in Policy M21.

CONCLUSIONS

- 6.138 The dependence of local communities in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin on the coal industry has gone. They are now much more concerned with the environmental impacts associated with such intensive operations rather than the small number of jobs that are created. Consequently, there can be considerable opposition to new proposals for opencast coal mining. However, coal is a valuable energy resource, it can be worked relatively quickly and restoration of the site can bring about benefits by reclaiming derelict land and providing facilities to improve the amenity value of an area.
- 6.139 Government guidance in MPG3 advises Mineral Planning Authorities to identify where coal extraction may be acceptable.²² MPG3 does however recognise that the ability to identify sites will be dependent upon local circumstances and the level of knowledge about the resource.
- 6.140 In Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin many of the formerly despoiled parts of the shallow coalfield have now been worked and the scope for further working is increasingly limited by environmental considerations. Privatisation of the coal industry in 1995 and the absence of production targets means that there is considerable uncertainty about the prospects of future interest in local coalfields. It is not therefore considered appropriate that the Plan should put forward further sites.
- 6.141 In these circumstances, it is considered more appropriate for the Minerals Local Plan to provide clear policy and development control guidance so that it will be possible to respond to individual planning applications. Applicants should consult the relevant Mineral Planning Authority at an early stage during the preparation of proposals to ensure that they are aware of any environmental issues associated with the site or the area.

M21 COAL AND FIRE CLAY WORKING

In determining applications for coal and fire clay working consideration will be given to the relevant policies in the Minerals Local Plan, in the context of any national government guidance.

A) The project should:

- i. protect people and the environment from any unacceptably adverse effects, including visual, noise, dust, or traffic impacts; effects on surface waters or groundwaters and from the risk of flooding (Policy M4);
- ii. preserve or enhance any sites of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural or geological importance (Policy M5, Policy M5(A), 5(B), and 5(C)); and,
- iii. protect the site and adjoining land from the risk of instability (Policy M3 (ix)).

B) Consideration will be given to the possible cumulative impact of the proposals, and permitted future working, on the general area (Policy M3 (vii)).

C) Where there are material planning objections which are not outweighed by other planning benefits or when an Environmental Statement is necessary, the applicant will be required to provide information to help determine whether or not the combination of material planning benefits, mitigation measures and need for the proposed development outweigh the planning objections.

D) In addition, applications for coal or fire clay working affecting the South Western Telford area and the Broseley - Shirlett area will only be granted planning permission if one or more of the following exceptional circumstances apply:-

- i. where the need for the mineral outweighs the material planning objections (Policy M2);
- ii. working would prevent the sterilisation of the resource (Policy M29); and /or,
- iii. significant benefits would be obtained as a result of the exchange or surrender of existing permissions.

E) The South Western Telford area and the Broseley - Shirlett area are indicated on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps 2 and 3 respectively.

SHROPSHIRE Minerals Local Plan 1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

Inset Map 2 -

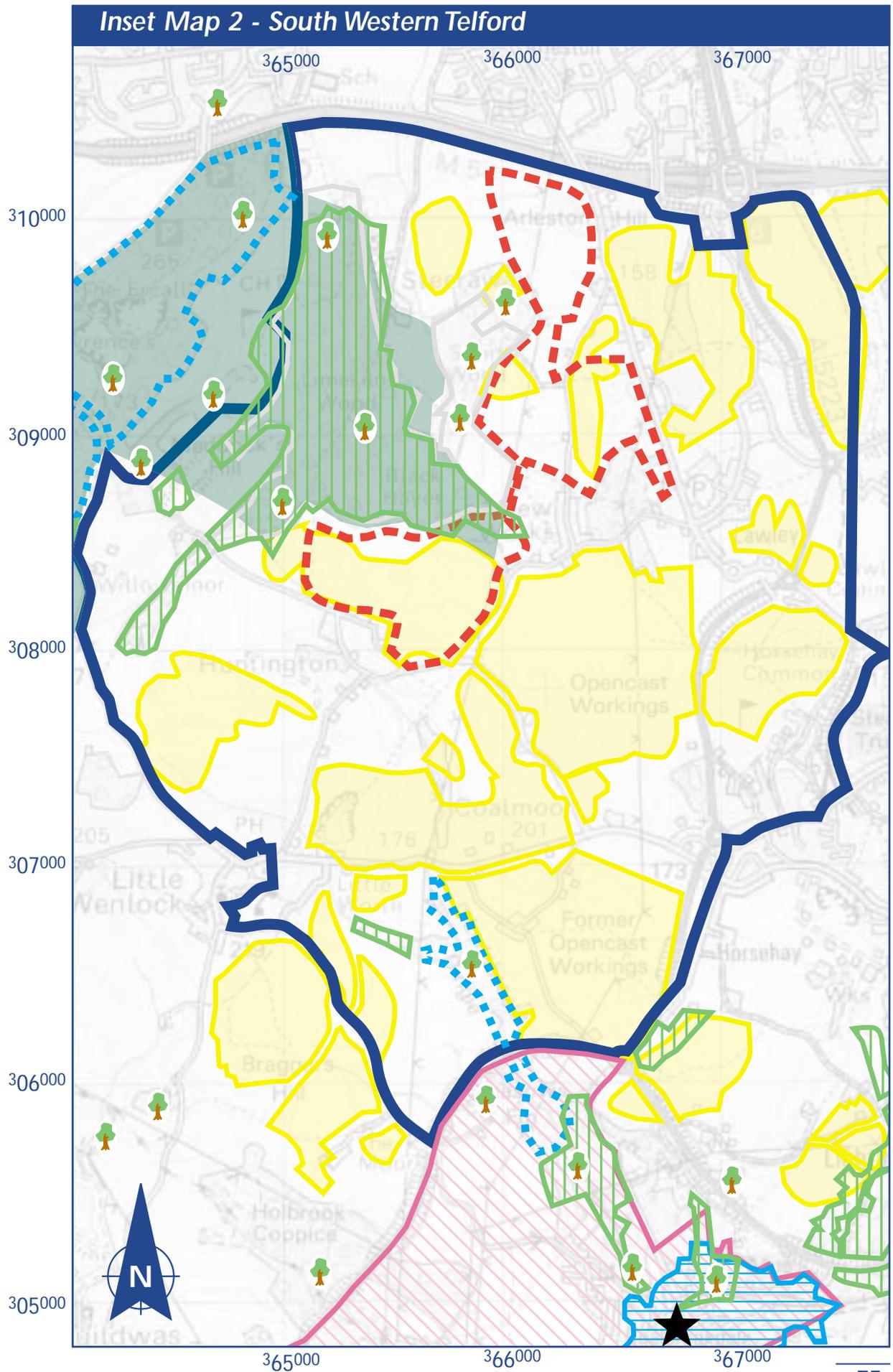
South Western Telford

Policy M21 Coal and Fire Clay Working

-  Policy Area
-  Worked Out Opencast Coal Site
-  Site Refused Planning Permission at Dec 1996 (Shortwood - W92/486)
-  Conservation Area
-  World Heritage Site - Ironbridge Gorge
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest
-  Area of Special Landscape Character
-  Wildlife Site
-  Ancient Wood

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SHROPSHIRE Minerals Local Plan 1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

Inset Map 3 -

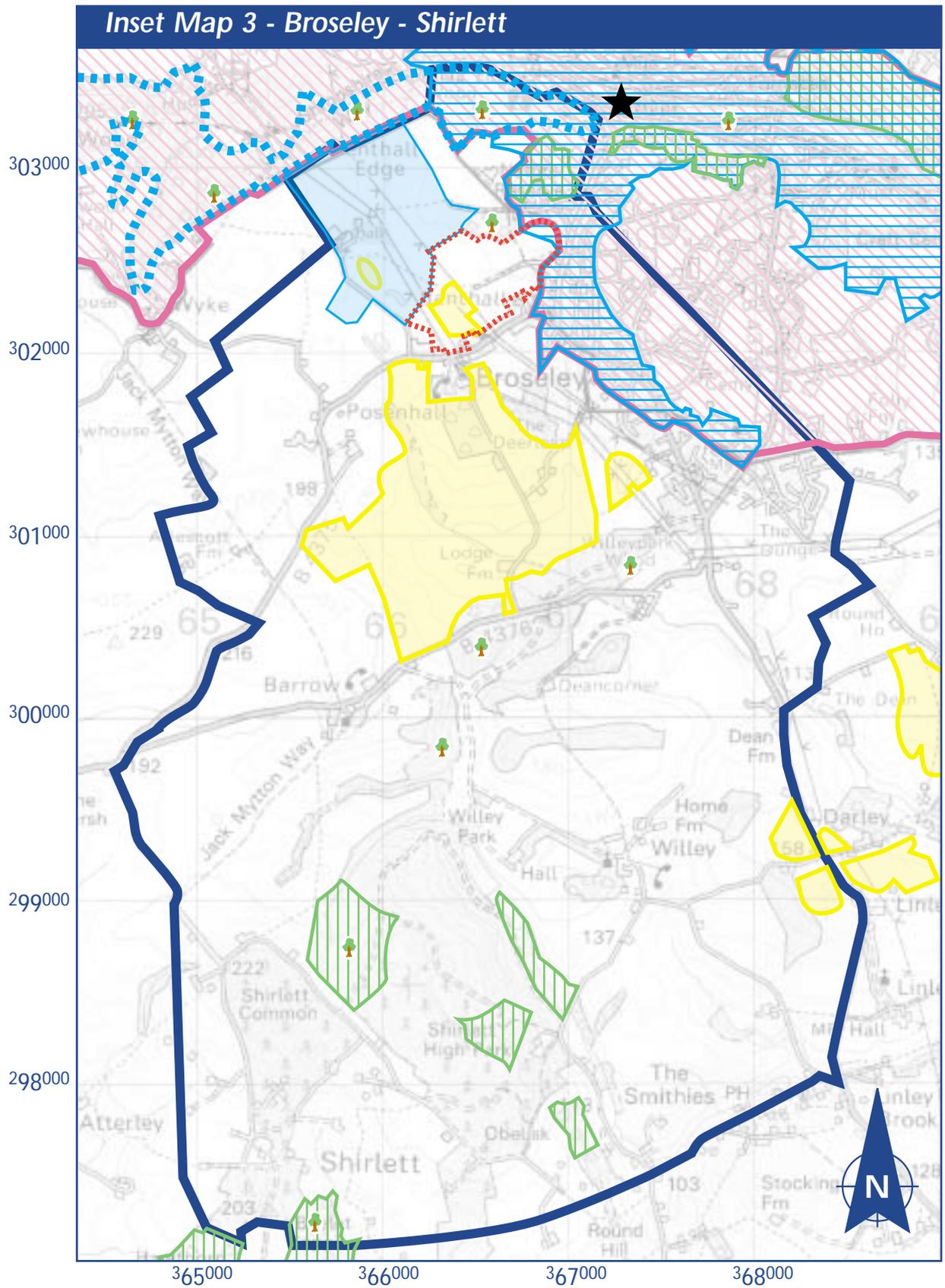
Broseley - Shirlett

Policy M21 Coal and Fire Clay Working

-  Policy Area
-  Worked Out Opencast Coal Site
-  Site Refused Planning Permission at Dec 1996 (Hill Top B85/307)
-  World Heritage Site - Ironbridge Gorge
-  Conservation Area
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest
-  Area of Special Landscape Character
-  Wildlife Site
-  Ancient Wood
-  National Trust

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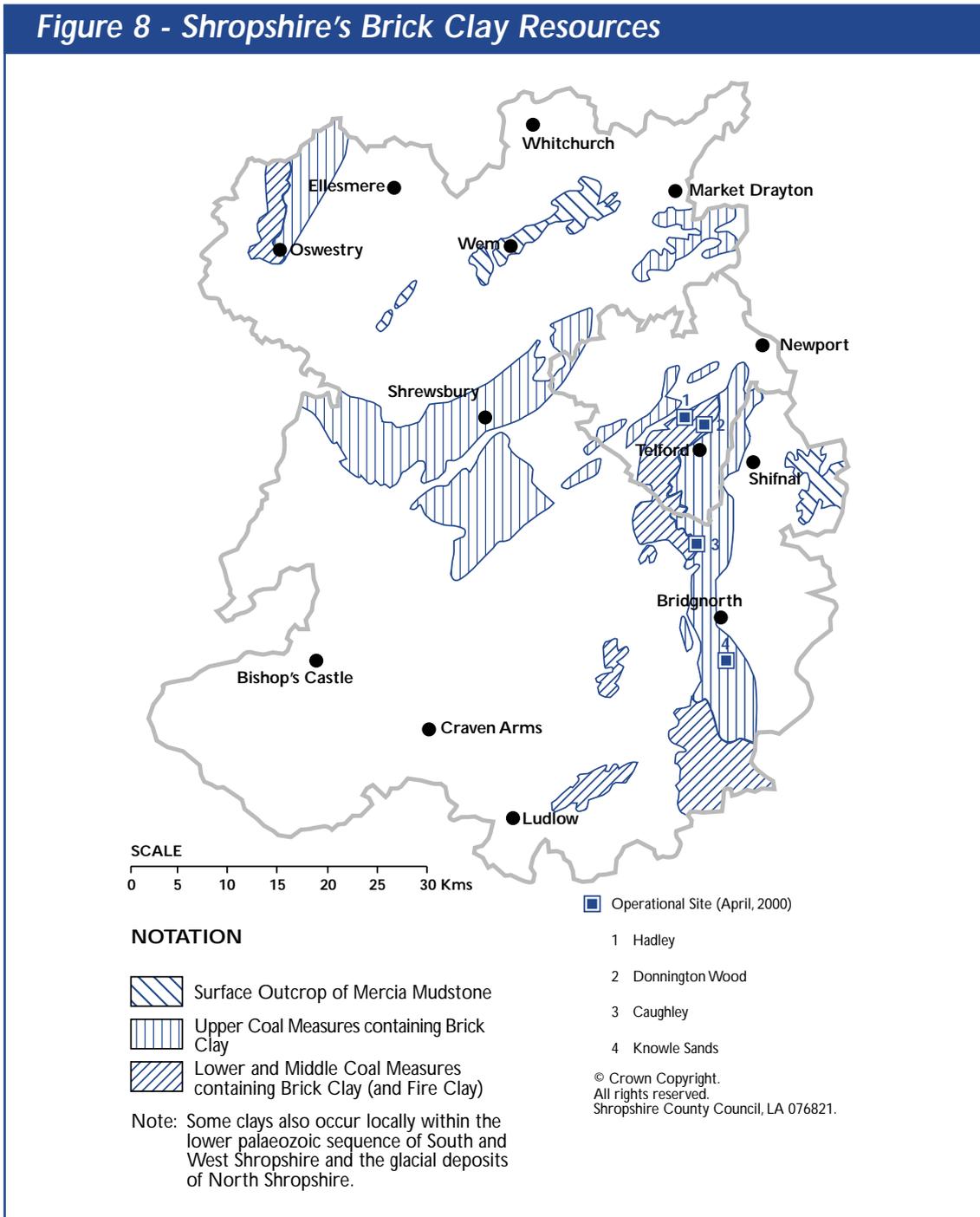
part B

BRICK CLAY

SOURCES AND SUPPLY

6.142 In Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, the geological formations which are now of importance as a source of raw material for brick and tile manufacture are the Upper Carboniferous (coal measures, fireclays, Hadley Formation and Keele Beds) associated with the Coalbrookdale Coalfield where there are three operational sites at Hadley, Donnington Wood and Caughley (Figure 8). The brick clays are used by one brick manufacturer at Hadley or exported outside the Plan area. A former clay site at Knowle Sands, south of Bridgnorth, has also recently been re-opened and supplies approximately 30,000 tonnes a year to a brickworks in Kidderminster.

Figure 8 - Shropshire's Brick Clay Resources



- 6.143 The clay pits produce a wide range of first class facing bricks which are marketed over a very wide area. The few published statistics available for the Plan area indicate sales of 214,000 tonnes in 1984, 267,000 tonnes in 1988 and 200,600 tonnes in 1995, approximately 10% of the Region's production in those years.²³
- 6.144 Permitted reserves are estimated to be in the region of 8 million tonnes (1996). However, due in part to recent rationalisation within the industry, this figure may require revision following a reassessment of the reserves.

FUTURE DEMAND

- 6.145 Assuming a continuation of the existing local output trend, supplying the local brick manufacturer and assuming no significant increase in construction industry demand above the 1980's situation, it would seem reasonable to assume demand of 250,000-300,000 tonnes per annum over the Plan period. Even allowing for production at the upper end of the scale, it can be concluded that in general, adequate permitted reserves exist to maintain supplies for 10 years beyond the Plan period. However, special needs can arise, such as the demand for raw materials with particular physical characteristics only available at restricted locations. In these exceptional circumstances, it would be reasonable to consider them in the context of the general policies in the Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.146 Clay working tends to take place over a long period of time and the rate of production tends to vary according to the level of activity in the construction industry. Consequently sites can remain disturbed for a long period of time and like sites producing fire clay, they can require imported fill material in order to restore satisfactory ground levels. Such instances of prolonged disturbance can give the impression of a degraded environment. At the same time, these sites can provide areas of nature conservation and geological interest which need to be taken into account.
- 6.147 An example are the clay workings at Hadley which are close to a residential area. Any proposals for further working will need to take account of the policies in the Minerals Local Plan and in the Wrekin Local Plan. The Wrekin Local Plan is seeking to achieve regeneration and environmental improvements in south east Hadley.

CONCLUSIONS

- 6.148 There is no requirement to ensure a specific landbank period for brick clay production. However, a 10 year landbank should be adequate to allow the industry to bring a new brick clay site or extension into production, while enabling the environmental impact to be controlled through the planning process. Having regard to available information, it would appear that the equivalent of a 10 year landbank of brick clay could be maintained during the Plan period. A longer period may be appropriate where significant investment in new brick manufacturing plant is proposed.
- 6.149 Whilst no new sites are required, extensions could be considered acceptable in exceptional circumstances. An extension to a site may have less impact on the environment overall rather than by developing a new greenfield site. Exceptional circumstances could involve a site which would provide specialised materials which cannot be supplied from existing permitted reserves (Policy M2). Working a site may avoid the sterilisation of a resource

(Policy M29). There may also be an opportunity to exchange or surrender older planning permissions under a new permission with modern conditions attached. In all such cases, the proposed mineral development would have to be acceptable when considered against the development control criteria set out in the Minerals Local Plan.

6.150 Policy M22 makes provision for certain exceptional circumstances.

M22 BRICK CLAY WORKING

Landbanks will be maintained throughout the Plan period sufficient for ten years extraction of brick clay. A longer period may be appropriate where significant investment in a new brick manufacturing plant is proposed.

The supply of brick clay during the Plan period should be provided from existing permitted reserves. Proposals for further brick clay working will only be granted planning permission if one or more of the following exceptional circumstances apply:

- i. the need for the mineral outweighs the material planning objections (Policy M2);**
- ii. working would prevent the sterilisation of the resource (Policy M29); and / or,**
- iii. significant environmental benefits would be obtained as a result of the exchange or surrender of existing permissions.**

Subject to the above, there will usually be a preference for extensions to existing sites rather than greenfield sites.

PEAT

SOURCES AND SUPPLY

6.151 Just over 1 million cubic metres of peat were extracted from peat bogs for sale in England in 1993 (MPG13).²⁴ The peat is mainly used for horticultural purposes. Very little, if any, was produced in the West Midlands Region.

6.152 Peat deposits of the type known as "raised mires" occur extensively in the northern part of the Plan area (Figure 9). In their natural or near-natural condition, raised mires provide distinctive and rare habitats, with the vegetation dominated by communities of Sphagnum mosses. A number of the mires in the Plan area are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are of international or national importance (see table 1 earlier): Whixall, Bettisfield, Wem and Cadney Mosses, Brown Moss, Clarepool Moss, Lin Can Moss. Peat areas are also of major archaeological importance. The Weald Moors to the north of Telford is designated an Area of Special Landscape Character (Proposals Map).

Figure 9 - Peat Resources



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

NOTATION

 Peat Resource Area

1 North Shropshire Plan

2 Weald Moors

3 Whixall Moss

Source: Soils of Midland and Western England.
Sheet 3 by Soil Survey of England and
Wales 1983

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- 6.153 Peat has only been worked commercially at Whixall Moss north of Wem, but there may be other areas of economic significance.

WHIXALL MOSS

- 6.154 An area of Whixall Moss, extending to 71 hectares, was granted planning permission for peat extraction in 1949 (see Inset Map 4). The permission allowed the continuation of the then existing workings and, in common with the permissions of that period, imposed only limited controls. The area's value for nature conservation interest was subsequently recognised in 1953 when 684 hectares incorporating Whixall Moss and the neighbouring Bettisfield and Fenns Mosses in Clwyd (now the Wrexham Unitary Authority) area were designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The site was renotified in 1983 by the Nature Conservancy Council (now English Nature). This designation did not, however, restrict the rights of the operators to work the peat under earlier planning permissions.
- 6.155 Following a campaign by wildlife groups and concerns expressed by local authorities, in 1990 the Nature Conservancy Council (English Nature) purchased Whixall Moss and part of Bettisfield Moss, supported by a grant from Shropshire County Council. English Nature's aim is to protect the area from further commercial extraction and to secure effective restoration of worked areas. The site has now been designated as a Ramsar Site. In 1993, English Nature published a Management Plan for the peatland, with the aim of enhancing the value of the site in terms of both its flora and fauna and preventing further damage to palaeological records.

POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.156 Structure Plan policy 2/89 states that, where a proposal for the extraction of peat would be likely to cause significant harm to interests of acknowledged importance, planning permission will be refused.
- 6.157 Consistent with its own Environmental Charter, Shropshire County Council is taking a lead by reducing its use of peat and has a policy to phase out the use of peat as alternatives become available. This approach is supported by the Government's 1996 White Paper 'Making Waste Work' which also encourages the use of alternatives to peat.²⁵
- 6.158 In July 1995, the Department of the Environment issued Mineral Planning Guidance for peat (MPG13) which acknowledges the importance of conserving important peat habitats and archaeological sites.²⁶
- 6.159 MPG13 also refers to the review of mineral planning permissions which includes existing permissions for peat working. Provisions in the Environment Act 1995 require a regular review of mineral planning permissions to be carried out by Mineral Planning Authorities. The review will require holders of peat planning permissions to submit new conditions for working and restoration to reflect modern standards (see section 7).

CONCLUSIONS

- 6.160 The peat areas in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are environmentally and archaeologically sensitive. The Government and the MPAs are committed to reducing the use of peat. There are currently no commercially active peat cutting areas in the Plan area. It is therefore considered unlikely that developers will be seeking to undertake peat extraction in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Nevertheless, it is necessary to set out the policy considerations that would be taken into account in the event that proposals do come forward.

- 6.161 Policy M23 sets out the considerations, with particular regard to Whixall Moss (Inset Map 4).

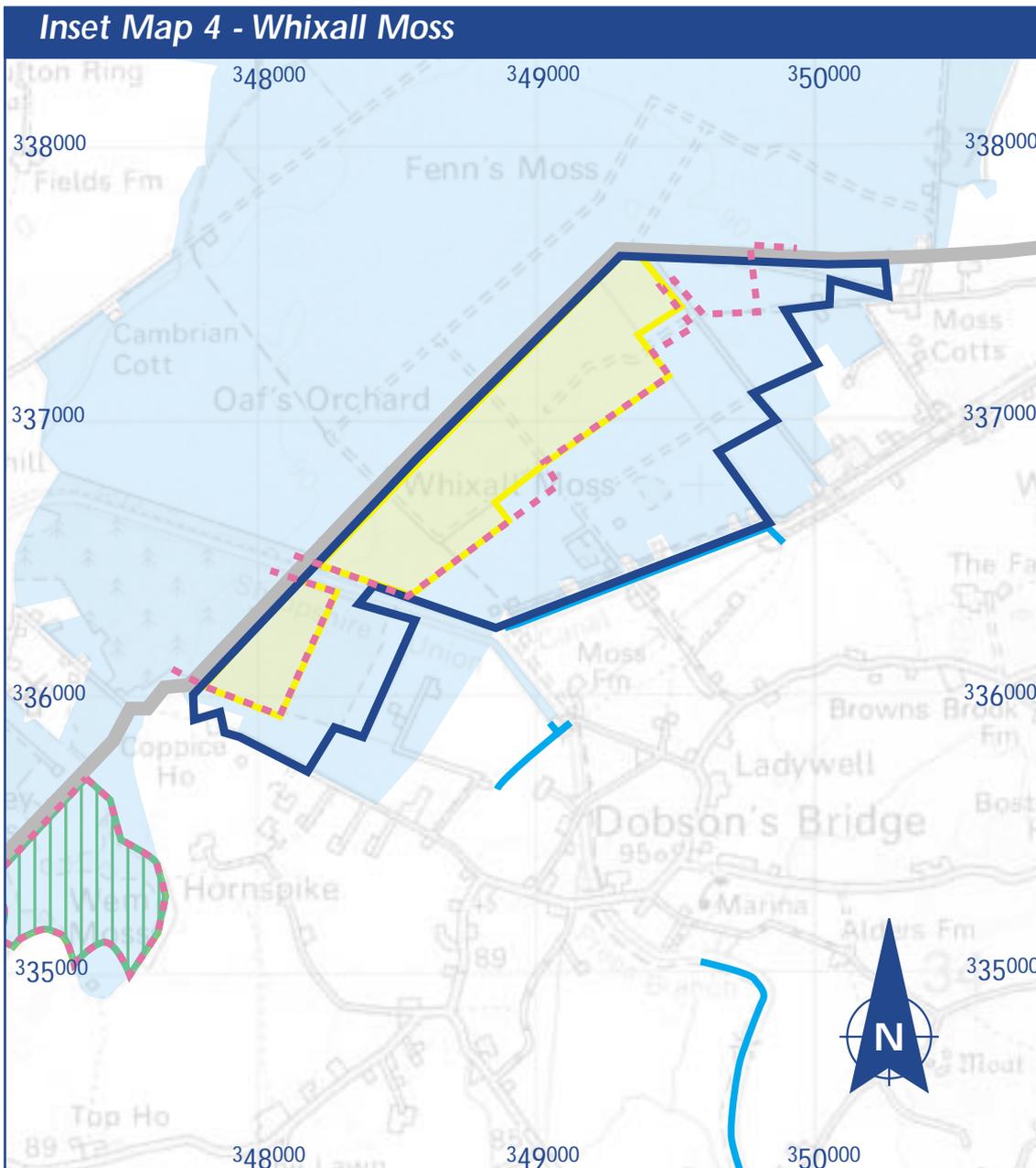
M23 PEAT WORKING

Peat areas in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin contain important nature conservation, landscape and archaeological interest which must be conserved.

In determining applications for peat working consideration will be given to the relevant policies in the Minerals Local Plan, in the context of any national government guidance.

Applicants will have to conclusively demonstrate that there will be no adverse affect upon nature conservation, archaeological interests, habitat, species, or deposits being safeguarded.

At Whixall Moss, indicated on the Proposals Map and Inset Map 4, Shropshire County Council, as the relevant Mineral Planning Authority, will support the efforts of English Nature to conserve the nature conservation interest of the area and with this aim in mind, will use available powers to control further peat cutting.



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006
 Adopted Plan April 2000

Inset Map 4 -
Whixall Moss
Policy M23 Peat Working

	Plan Boundary		Sites of Special Scientific
	Policy Area		Sites of Special Scientific
	Planning Permission Area (within Shropshire - 49/1808)		Wildlife Site
	National Nature Reserve		

Scale 1:25,000

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ONSHORE OIL & GAS

- 6.162 Oil Exploration Licences have in the past been granted in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and there has been seismic exploration in North Shropshire. However, this has not led to further interest in oil and gas development.
- 6.163 Policies in the Structure Plan (2/87 and 2/88) dealt with the issues related to exploration and development of oil and gas. These matters are now covered by Policies M24 and M25.

- 6.164 Policy M24 sets out the considerations that are important to ensure that the full extent of an oil or gas field is known irrespective of licence block boundaries or individual company interests before proposals are made to further explore or exploit the resource. The site of the initial successful borehole may not be the most suitable for conversion to a production well when environmental considerations are taken into account. It is therefore essential to establish the extent of the resource in order to allow the proper consideration of alternative locations for a production site.



Exploratory drilling for minerals.

- 6.165 Interest in coalbed methane has not so far reached Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. If interest does develop, Policy M24 will apply along with Policy M9 and the other development control policies in the Plan.

M24 OIL AND GAS: FURTHER EVALUATION OF THE FIELD

Where developers wish to carry out further evaluation of the oil or gas field, a provisional plan should be submitted at the earliest possible stage. The plan will be accepted on the understanding that it may be subject to changes as appraisal improves the knowledge of the structure of the field.

Applications for further exploration or evaluation of the oil or gas field will be considered against the policies of the Minerals Local Plan, in the context of any national government guidance.

Planning permission will only be granted where:-

- i. the work is necessary to confirm the geological structure and characteristics of the field; and,**
- ii. the proposed location for development is the most suitable having regard to geological, technical and environmental considerations.**

- 6.166 The scale of oil and gas development can vary considerably depending on the size of the field discovered and its rate of production. It is therefore possible that very little disturbance may occur over and above that involved in drilling, although it must be recognised that the potential exists for larger scale disruption to the environment.

- 6.167 In the event that proposals come forward to develop an oil or gas field, they will be assessed against the general policy considerations set out in the Plan. In particular, full consideration will be given to the local effects of traffic generation by any proposal. Developers will be expected to include, as part of their development proposals, measures to avoid substantial road transportation of oil or gas from the site, consistent with Policy M11.

M25 OIL AND GAS: DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD

In determining applications relating to the development of an oil or gas field consideration will be given to the relevant policies in the Minerals Local Plan, in the context of any national government guidance.

Projects should include satisfactory measures to :-

- i. protect people and the environment from any unacceptably adverse effects, including air pollution, ground contamination and visual, noise, dust, or traffic impacts; effects on surface waters or groundwaters and from the risk of flooding (Policy M4);**
- ii. preserve or enhance any sites of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural and geological importance (Policies M5, M5A, 5B and 5C); and,**
- iii. protect the site and adjoining land from the risk of instability (Policy M3 (ix)).**

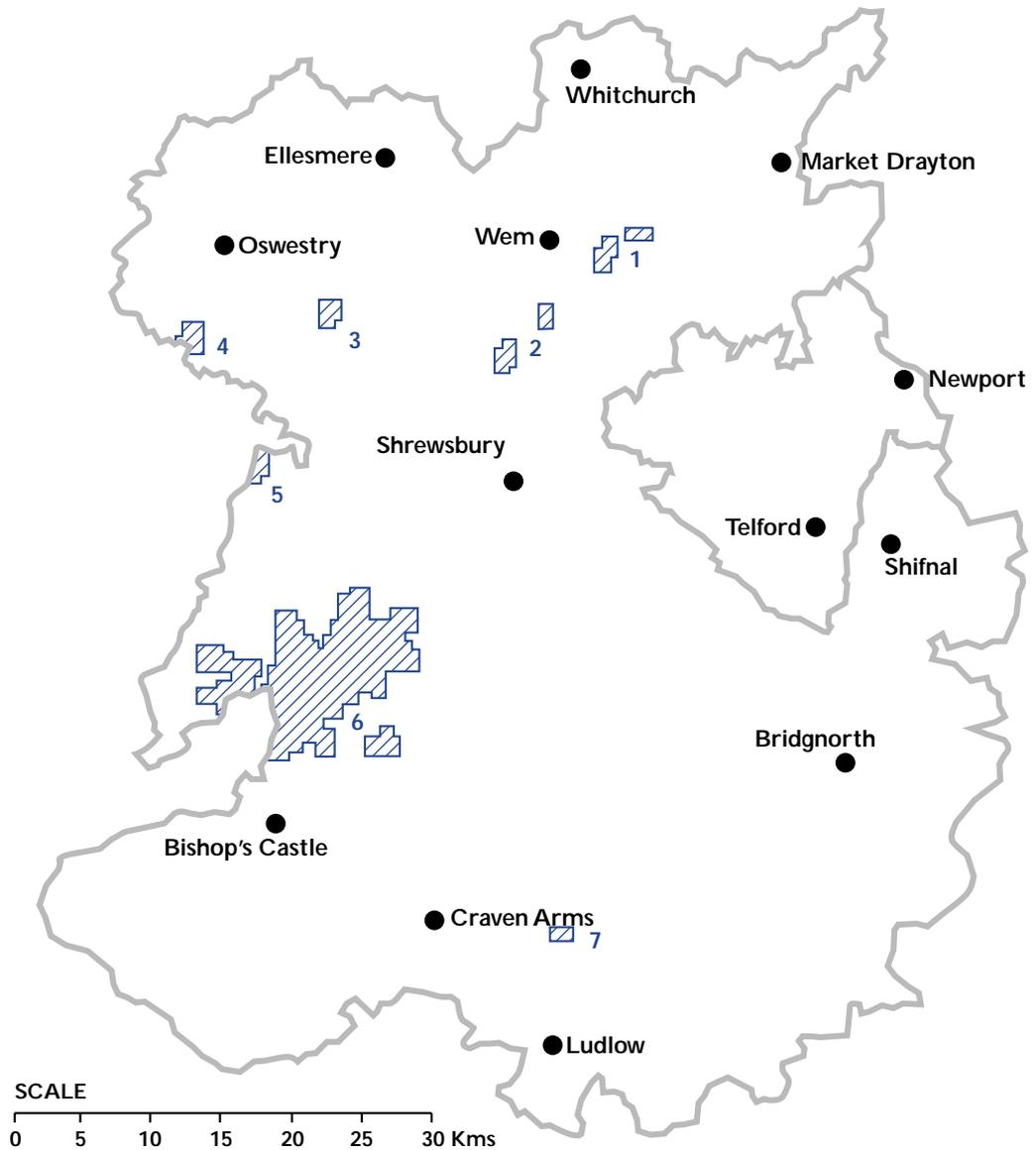
and to ensure that:-

- iv. the development forms part of a planned programme for the whole oil/gas field;**
- v. adequate arrangements are included to transport people, goods, equipment and products to and from individual sites;**
- vi. there are satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of waste materials and the avoidance of pollution; and,**
- vii. there is a satisfactory scheme for landscaping and reclamation.**

METALLIFEROUS MINERAL WORKINGS

- 6.168 There has been a long history of metalliferous mineral working in the Plan area and as a consequence, there are many areas of recorded and unrecorded mine workings. Occasionally there is renewed interest in these areas, either in terms of reworking the deposits and waste heaps, or as part of reclamation proposals.
- 6.169 Metalliferous mineral working in the Plan area has notably involved extraction of lead and associated barytes (Shelve area South-West of Shrewsbury), and copper (scattered sites in North Shropshire) (Figure 10). This has now ceased, leaving in some cases, a legacy of abandoned workings, shafts and waste tips. There has been a recent small scale exploration for barytes working near Pulverbatch. Generally, however, there have been few proposals to carry out exploration work or to resume metalliferous mineral working.

Figure 10 - Areas Previously Worked for Metalliferous Minerals



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NOTATION



Mined Area

Period

Mineral

1	Whixhill and Hawkstone	18th - 19th Century	Copper
2	Pim Hill and Clive	18th - 19th Century	Copper
3	Eardiston Mine	18th - 19th Century	Copper
4	Llanymynech	Roman - 1970	Copper
5	Bulthy Mine	1879 - 1918	Barytes
6	Shelve/West Shropshire	Roman - 1955	Lead, Zinc, Barytes
7	Upper Hayton Mine	19th Century	Copper (east only)

Source: Review of Mining Instability in Great Britain for the Department of the Environment Regional Report West Midlands, Volume 1/iv, July 1990 (Arup Geotechnics).

- 6.170 Any interest in the development of metalliferous mineral mines for the purpose of re-working or reclamation of existing sites or the development of new sites could be constrained for a number of reasons and would need to be examined against the policies in the Minerals Local Plan. Many of these locations are now particularly sensitive. The sites will often have nature conservation, archaeological and historic interest. For example the Shelve lead mines area falls within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 6.171 There may also be issues of public safety, either due to the effects of pollution or unstable land caused by the old mine workings. Mining sites can be contaminated and reworking or reclamation can cause renewed, or exacerbate existing, problems of pollution of watercourses and groundwater if not properly controlled. There could also be a risk of instability. Applicants would need to discuss their proposals with the Environment Agency at an early stage to ensure the impact on water resources are considered and similarly with the Mines and Quarries Inspectorate. Applicants should also consider the guidance in Appendix 4 when preparing proposals.

M26 METALLIFEROUS MINERAL WORKINGS

Proposals for working, reworking or reclamation of metalliferous minerals will be considered against the policies in the Minerals Local Plan, in the context of any national government guidance.

Projects should include satisfactory measures to:-

- i. protect people and the environment from any unacceptably adverse effects, including ground contamination and visual, noise, dust, or traffic impacts; effects on surface waters or groundwaters and from the risk of flooding (Policy M4);**
- ii. preserve or enhance any sites of wildlife, landscape, historical, archaeological, architectural and geological importance (Policies M5, M5A, 5B and 5C); and,**
- iii. protect the site and adjoining land from the risk of instability (Policy M3 (ix)).**

chapter 7. RECLAMATION AND REVIEW

- 7.1 This section acknowledges the possible benefits that can arise following mineral development, the essential elements of a successful reclamation scheme and the after-use considerations which need to be taken into account to ensure the protection and enhancement of the environment once extraction has ceased. These are important considerations if mineral resources are to be developed in a more sustainable way.
- 7.2 This section also refers to the important task for the Mineral Planning Authorities to review existing permissions for mineral workings. The Environment Act 1995 introduced new requirements for an initial review and an updating of old permissions and the periodic review of all mineral planning permissions thereafter. The requirements are intended to ensure that sites operate in accordance with modern environmental standards and that these standards are regularly reviewed. This is important where sites are to be worked over many years.

RECLAMATION

- 7.3 Mineral working is regarded as a temporary use of land. However, its impact can leave a permanent scar unless the site is properly reclaimed to its former use or to a new beneficial use as soon as possible.
- 7.4 As a result of the increasing value placed on the protection and enhancement of the environment by the public, standards of reclamation expected at mineral sites have continued to rise. As an example, the Government has provided advice and encouragement to operators about environmental management systems which are intended to raise environmental performance.²⁷
- 7.5 If a new proposal is to be acceptable, developers must be able to demonstrate that their proposals preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment once extraction has ceased. An important objective of the Minerals Local Plan is to encourage developers to adopt best practices and this includes practices associated with the reclamation and after-use of mineral sites. Further advice about the information which applicants are required to consider is contained in Appendix 4.
- 7.6 Where there is a legacy of existing sites with reclamation requirements below current standards, these will be examined in the context of the Review of Sites referred to later.

POTENTIAL FOR RECLAMATION TO BRING WIDER BENEFITS

- 7.7 The reclamation of mineral working is an opportunity to incorporate uses with positive benefits to the environment and wider community (Policy M7).
- 7.8 Positive planning objectives can be promoted by encouraging operators to include such uses in their reclamation schemes. While benefits are taken into account when consideration is given to proposals, it should be recognised that every application is considered on its merits. The adverse impact of individual proposals could outweigh any benefits.

RECLAMATION SCHEMES

- 7.9 Successful reclamation results from building in a strategy at the planning stage, taking full account of survey information of the site and surrounding area. All applications for mineral development should be accompanied by satisfactory schemes of reclamation (Policy M27). Detailed matters recommended for inclusion in such schemes are referred to in Appendix 4.



The coal tips at Aleveley have been stabilised and landscaped by Shropshire County Council and are now part of the Severn Valley Country Park.

PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION

- 7.10 An important element in any reclamation scheme is the need to reduce the impact of the working by minimising the area disturbed at any one time. This is normally achieved by a rolling programme of reclamation, referred to as progressive reclamation. Proposals should provide for progressive reclamation. Where no such provision has been made, the applicant will need to justify this as an exceptional case and demonstrate why the resulting impact is considered to be acceptable.

RECLAMATION WITH IMPORTED MATERIALS

- 7.11 There may be opportunities to provide a better final landform with the use of imported material than would otherwise be possible, and at the same time meet a demand for waste disposal. The Structure Plan and the emerging Waste Local Plan will provide the policy framework to deal with the relevant considerations. For example, it will be important to consider the suitability of the site and surrounding area for the type of material proposed and the risk and impact of potential pollution from the development insofar as this might have an effect on the use of other land. The importation of material may bring disadvantages, such as additional traffic movements, visual intrusion, the loss of opportunities for natural regeneration or risk of contamination of water resources. The benefits of any such proposals would be weighed against the disadvantages before the planning application is determined. An applicant would also have to obtain a Waste Management Licence from the Environment Agency.

REMOVAL OF PLANT

- 7.12 Often it is necessary to permit ancillary development to be located at the site. Where this is the case, the activity should normally be located within the site area to ensure the impact of the proposals does not encroach on to adjoining land. On cessation of mineral working the plant would be removed as part of the reclamation of the site (Policy M10).

AFTERCARE AND MANAGEMENT

- 7.13 If high quality reclamation is to be achieved, it is vital that the land is managed after initial reclamation to ensure the intended after-use becomes satisfactorily established. Current legislation allows the imposition of planning conditions to provide for a 5 year period of aftercare and management on land affected by mineral working.
- 7.14 In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to extend site management beyond the 5 year maximum statutory aftercare period. This can arise, for example, where it is proposed

to establish woodland, amenity (including nature conservation) or other uses, and guarantees are necessary to ensure that the proposed after-use is implemented or maintained in the longer term. Where appropriate the relevant parties will be encouraged to agree to enter into a planning obligation to secure the long term after-use, management and maintenance of the site.

- 7.15 It is essential that an applicant can demonstrate at the outset that the proposed after-use is suitable for the location and the reclamation proposals are practical and achievable. Proposals for the reclamation of the site to amenity uses (including nature conservation) should not be seen as an easier option than reclamation to agriculture or commercial forestry. The future viability of amenity uses, especially nature conservation uses, can depend to a large degree on ensuring that the management requirements of the land use or uses are reflected in the design and implementation of the reclamation scheme. The best way to achieve this is to prepare a management plan at the outset, based on an investigation of the site and adjacent land. This should be integrated with the working, landscaping, reclamation and aftercare schemes. Accordingly, it is considered appropriate where an amenity use is proposed for all or part of the site, to ask the applicant to submit a management plan with the reclamation plan.
- 7.16 The management plan should provide a context for decision making throughout the life of the site, identifying long-term objectives to be reached through site management and how these will be achieved, including resources and those responsible. The management plan should be concerned with 3 distinct timescales: the working phase; the reclamation and aftercare phase; and the longer term after-use of the site. Further guidance is contained in Appendix 4.

AFTER-USES

- 7.17 Applications for mineral development should be accompanied by after-use proposals which are able to offer positive planning benefits by protecting or enhancing the countryside or the local economy (Policy M7).
- 7.18 In determining the acceptability of proposed after-uses, account needs to be taken of the individual circumstances of the site and its surroundings and the broader policy context, such as the policies in the Structure Plan and the District Local Plans. Where development other than agriculture, woodland, nature conservation and informal recreation are proposed, the local planning authority (where different) is likely to be responsible for determining any planning application required to implement the subsequent after-use of the reclaimed site.

Agriculture

- 7.19 Agriculture on its own or in combination with other uses has been the most common after-use sought in the past. In view of changes taking place in agriculture and national moves to promote the diversification of the local economy, more proposals for other after-uses, such as woodland or amenity (including nature conservation) can be expected. However, where the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land would be affected by a proposal, i.e., land classified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food as grades 1, 2, and 3a, regard needs to be paid to the likely effects on the land. In particular, account needs to be taken as to whether the result of working would cause a permanent loss of the land quality. It is also necessary to consider the ability of the applicant to demonstrate that the physical characteristics of the land could be restored.

Forestry

- 7.20 Forestry is a possible after-use for mineral working and trees as a cash crop can make a useful contribution to the local economy. New tree planting on whatever scale must respect its surroundings. In Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, therefore, broad-leaved species are to be preferred. In some locations however, tree planting may be inappropriate.
- 7.21 The Structure Plan encourages the planting of woodland, where appropriate, and to establish a forest belt following the Severn Valley south of Telford and around Telford itself to establish a new community forest (Policy 2/21). The concept of these new woodland areas is, amongst other matters, to establish a range of uses by increasing recreational potential, enhancing wildlife diversity and value and to encourage timber production. Applicants should note guidance given in the Forestry Commission's 'England Forestry Strategy', published in 1999, which encourages consideration of forestry as an appropriate after-use for mineral workings.

Amenity (including nature conservation)

- 7.22 Amenity as an end use is a broad category which can include woodland, nature conservation uses and recreation. Where formal sports facilities are proposed, the basic preparations for this use can be included as an after-use but a separate planning permission for the development of the formal use is likely to be required. Problems can be experienced in assuring the viability of amenity uses in the long term and in avoiding potential conflict between different uses such as recreation and nature conservation. Where wildlife habitats are to be created, this will require skilled reclamation and must take account of the biological potential of the site as well as the desirability of replacing habitats suited to the locality. The habitats proposed must be capable of appropriate management to ensure successful establishment. These potential problems can be addressed by putting increased emphasis on site management at an early stage and encouraging the relevant parties to agree to enter into a planning obligation to secure the long term after-use, management and maintenance of the site (Policy M8).

CONCLUSIONS

- 7.23 In the context of a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources, it is important to ensure that everything possible is done to minimise the impact of mineral workings. The ability of the operator to undertake the proper reclamation of the site may well be a relevant consideration, particularly when viewed in the light of past performance. Particular importance needs to be placed on the aftercare requirements to ensure that reclaimed sites are properly managed for a reasonable period in order to maximise the potential of the rehabilitated land.
- 7.24 Policy M27 provides the specific policy considerations that would apply to the consideration of reclamation and aftercare proposals associated with mineral development.

M27 RECLAMATION AND AFTER-USE

Planning permission for mineral development will only be granted where the application incorporates a satisfactory scheme for the reclamation of the site, progressively wherever possible, to an agreed after-use or to a state capable of beneficial after-use.

Where the proposed after-use includes agriculture, woodland, amenity (including nature conservation) or other uses, a satisfactory scheme will need to include the following:

- i. provision for a 5 year period of aftercare;**
- ii. a Reclamation Plan;**
- iii. a Management Plan which should address the management requirements during each phase of the proposed development and where appropriate a planning obligation will be sought in order to secure the after-use, long term management and maintenance of the site;**
- iv. proposals which take account of the site, its surroundings, and any development plan policies relevant to the area; and,**
- v. evidence to show that the scheme incorporates best practice advice and is practical and achievable.**

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

- 7.25 Many old planning permissions for mineral working are still valid today but contain few, if any, of the modern environmental controls that would be required for any new mineral planning permission.
- 7.26 The Town and Country Planning (Minerals Act) Act 1981 established a duty for Mineral Planning Authorities to review operational mineral sites and this requirement was incorporated in the 1989 Structure Plan (Structure Plan Policy 2/86). The Planning and Compensation Act 1991 introduced powers to deal with the oldest mineral consents (Interim Development Orders or "IDO's"), dating between 1943 and 1948. The IDO sites have been registered and submissions received relating to operating and restoration conditions so that sites can be brought up to modern standards. More recently the Environment Act 1995 introduced powers to carry out an initial review, update old permissions granted before 22 February 1982, and to permit the periodic review of all mineral sites. Detailed advice is contained in MPG14.
- 7.27 Shropshire County Council started the initial review process toward the end of 1995 in order to identify all "dormant" sites and "active" sites in the Plan area. The Government has set down a timetable for completion of the initial review process, to be carried out in two phases. A list of sites has been produced and its existence has been advertised in the press. Holders of the planning permissions on the list are required to submit new schemes of conditions or the planning permission will be suspended. Government expects the new conditions to provide for sensitive working and reclamation schemes, but MPAs should not impose conditions which would adversely affect the economic viability of sites or their asset value. Provisions to allow for compensation claims will limit the ability of the MPAs to make

significant changes to the working or reclamation of a site. Operators and land owners will be encouraged to consider changes on a voluntary basis, consistent with the spirit of the Government guidance.

- 7.28 Shropshire County Council has over recent years encouraged operators to carry out regular monitoring and to review their environmental performance, including compliance with conditions and planning obligations, on an annual basis. This process has been carried out either informally through liaison committees or on a formal basis in accordance with planning conditions or planning obligations. Monitoring and review is now accepted as 'best practice' in the minerals industry's own Codes of Practice, e.g. 'Coal - A Code of Practice' published in September 1996 (page 11) and can demonstrate an operator's commitment to sensitive working practices. The MPAs now wish to formalise this process. The review of environmental performance should form part of a company's normal environmental management system and allow controls to be updated where necessary. Any improvements to environmental performance sought following the annual review will normally take place within the context of existing planning conditions or through agreement with the operator. This approach provides an important opportunity to incorporate lessons learnt, measures to deal with complaints received and latest best practice advice. In some circumstances it also provides flexibility for the MPAs and the operator by allowing the effects of the proposals to be monitored and reviewed as the workings progress.
- 7.29 Holders of planning permissions relating to mineral developments should have regard to the policies in the Minerals Local Plan when reviewing the conditions for operating and reclamation of sites. The Minerals Local Plan provides the development control criteria against which the MPAs will determine whether or not the submitted conditions are acceptable.

M28 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

The MPAs will review existing mineral planning permissions and their conditions on a regular basis.

Holders of the mineral planning permissions under review will be expected to demonstrate that they have had regard to the policies in the Minerals Local Plan.

The Minerals Local Plan, together with any national government guidance, will be used to determine whether or not the revised scheme of conditions minimise the impact of the workings on the surrounding area and improve the standard of reclamation.

Proposals for new mineral development should provide for the regular environmental monitoring and reporting of environmental performance to the MPAs on an annual basis. Applicants should agree the form and content of the reports with the relevant MPA at the planning application stage.

*chapter 8.***SAFEGUARDING MINERAL RESOURCES**

- 8.1. Minerals are a finite resource and so conservation and waste minimisation are important planning considerations. In these circumstances, every effort has to be made to ensure that, where practicable, mineral bearing land is not sterilised by development. Also, before a planning permission is granted to allow mineral extraction, the implications of working the mineral resource needs to be properly assessed to ensure that the resource is, as far as possible, developed in a comprehensive and efficient manner, whilst recognising at the same time any environmental and economic constraints.

MINERAL CONSULTATION AREAS

- 8.2. To assist in the safeguarding of mineral resources, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 makes provision for the designation of areas known to contain potential mineral resources other than coal. The 'Mineral Consultation Areas', defined following discussions with the minerals industry and the District Planning Authorities, will need to be reviewed and kept up to date from time to time (Figure 11).
- 8.3. Within a Minerals Consultation Area, planning applications for development which could sterilise potential mineral resources are referred to the relevant MPA for comment, in accordance with the procedure agreed with the District Councils. It is the MPAs' responsibility to safeguard working quarries and potential mineral resources, for which sufficient geological information is available, from conflicting forms of development.
- 8.4. For similar reasons, the Coal Authority define Coal Consultation Areas within which any planning applications for buildings or pipe-lines should be notified to them (Figure 12).
- 8.5. Policy M29 sets out the purpose of the Consultation Areas to assist in the process of safeguarding mineral resources.

M29 SAFEGUARDING MINERAL RESOURCES

Applications for development which fall within Mineral Consultation Areas and which could have the effect of sterilising mineral resources should be referred to the relevant MPA for comment. For similar reasons, applications for development which fall within the Coal Consultation Areas should be referred to the Coal Authority for comment.

The recognition of these areas does not imply that any application for the working of minerals within them will be granted planning permission.

Unless there are overriding factors which in the national, regional or local interest must be satisfied, known mineral resources will be prevented, where possible, from being sterilised or unduly restricted by other forms of development occurring on or close to the resource.

Where appropriate, having regard to the policies in the Minerals Local Plan, the working of minerals in advance of development will be required to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of the resource.

Figure 11 - Mineral Consultation Areas



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

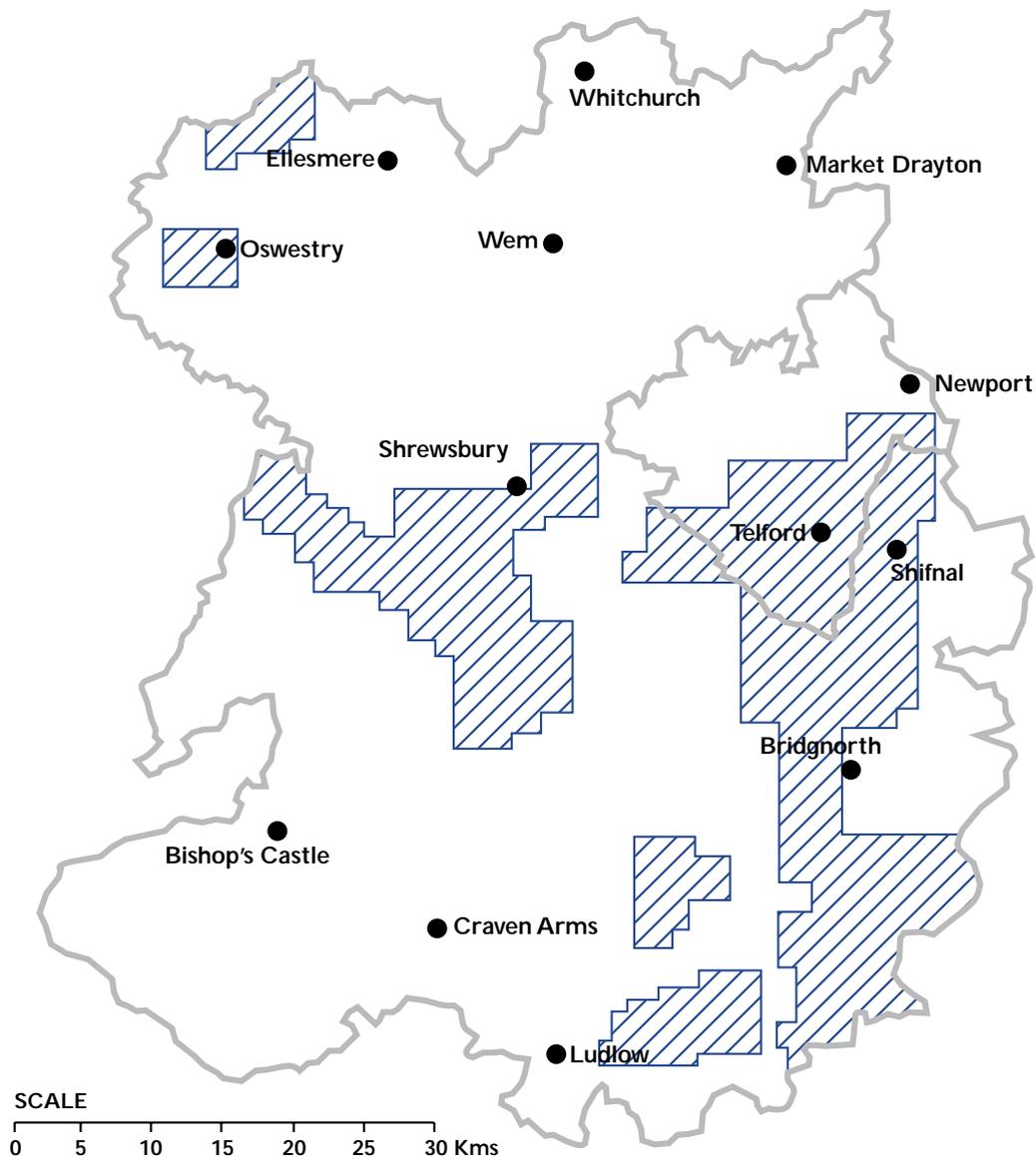
NOTATION

 Mineral Consultation Area

Note: Minerals-sand and gravel, crushed rock

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Figure 12 - Coal Consultation Areas



SCALE
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Kms

NOTATION

 Coal Consultation Area

Note: Notified by the Coal Authority
September, 1995, in accordance with
the Town & Country Planning Order
1995, Article 10 (1) (i)

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COMPREHENSIVE WORKING

- 8.6 The MPAs act in a stewardship role with responsibility for the conservation of local mineral resources whilst at the same time making sure that there is an adequate supply to meet the needs of society, consistent with Government guidance. Hence the implications of proposals for working the mineral resource must be assessed to ensure that the resource is to be developed in a comprehensive and efficient manner, subject to any relevant environmental and economic constraints.
- 8.7 Fire clay is one example of a mineral worked in association with the primary mineral. If valuable clays are not recovered as part of a larger opencast coal operation and are lost, there may be pressure to permit extraction elsewhere to the overall detriment of the environment. In this case operators will be encouraged to avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of clays when drawing up proposals for opencast coal working. However there may be other considerations to be taken into account, for example, the coal tends to be removed from the site well before the clay stocks are sold. This causes the situation where stockpiles of clay have to remain long after the remainder of the site has been reclaimed. Nevertheless, this arrangement ensures that valuable clays are not wasted and it may also mean that sites elsewhere do not need to be disturbed whilst the stocks remain.

M30 COMPREHENSIVE WORKING OF MINERAL RESOURCES

Planning permission will only be granted where an applicant can demonstrate that the proposed development has taken account of the opportunity to work or to safeguard any economic minerals present within the site, provided that such working is consistent with the policies in the Minerals Local Plan.

*chapter 9.***THE PROPOSED AREAS FOR
FUTURE SAND AND GRAVEL
WORKING**

9.1 Policy M14 identifies three allocated sites and one preferred area for the future working of sand and gravel. By way of introduction, this section first explains the process which led to the selection of the allocated sites and the preferred area. Then the allocated sites and the preferred area are described along with the considerations that will need to be addressed if a detailed planning application is submitted.

9.2 No other areas for mineral working have been identified in the Minerals Local Plan.

SITE SELECTION

9.3 The site selection process is required to take account of environmental, economic and land ownership considerations.

9.4 The usual method adopted by mineral planning authorities for the identification of land for future working is based on the 'sieve map' technique whereby environmental constraints are overlain on maps of economic mineral resources. Some early work in respect of sand and gravel was carried out by the MPAs on this basis. However, it became clear that an extensive mineral resource exists and this would lead to a major exercise for which staff resources could not be justified and in circumstances where geological knowledge was not comprehensive and in a situation where only limited areas for further working were required. Furthermore, there is little point in allocating land which might not be implemented because of ownership constraints.

9.5 MPG6 advises mineral planning authorities to ensure, as far as possible, that areas identified in the development plan can be translated into workable reserves. They should make reasonable efforts to satisfy themselves that the land is:

- i. underlain by economically workable deposits of mineral; and
- ii. likely to become available to the minerals industry within the Plan period.

9.6 This guidance supports the approach adopted in the preparation of the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Minerals Local Plan which has been to involve the minerals industry and landowners in providing technical information about the location of potentially economic mineral resources.

9.7 In November 1991, a circular letter and questionnaire was sent to a mailing list of mineral operators and landowners. Since the need to supplement existing reserves had at this time not been established, responses were invited in respect of all mineral resources. The consultees were invited to submit proposals by the end of January 1992, although any subsequent planning applications, permissions and later submissions have also been taken into account. The questionnaire information was provided on a confidential basis.

- 9.8 In many cases the resources identified during the consultation process have been proven by borehole information. Information was obtained on the aggregate types, where available. Analysis of these submissions was then used to supplement interpretation of available published geological information. The sites were subsequently evaluated against a checklist of environmental criteria based on established Structure Plan mineral policies and the planning history of the site and surroundings. Once a more manageable shortlist of sites had been identified, further consultations were carried out. The consultees included the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, English Nature, the National Rivers Authority (Environment Agency) and the Highways Authority. The landowners and developers involved were also contacted to confirm their continued interest and to ascertain additional information about working, reclamation and issues that had emerged during consultations.
- 9.9 This process of evaluation led to the identification of the sites with the least constraints, according to available information. It has also had the advantage of involving the industry and landowners in the production of the Plan, enabling the MPAs to benefit from detailed geological data and to be assured of the availability of any defined areas.

ALLOCATED SITES AND PREFERRED AREAS

- 9.10 An Inset Map defines each of the allocated sand and gravel sites and the preferred area. The accompanying description includes reference to important issues that will need to be addressed by the applicant, when detailed proposals are drawn up.
- 9.11 The sites allocated in the Plan are generally well defined, and comprise deepening and/or extensions of existing operational sites. The allocation of sites in the Plan implies a presumption in favour of their being developed during the Plan period. By contrast, preferred areas are those areas of known resource, proven by survey information, where planning permission might reasonably be anticipated, subject to all other considerations being met. The identification of a preferred area indicates that, should it be necessary to develop a new site, then the first area of search should be within the preferred area. Whilst the anticipated site boundary has been defined on the Inset Map, this may require some refinement when detailed proposals are drawn up. The areas have been phased as a control mechanism to avoid over supply. There is a preference for extensions to existing sites (Phase 1 allocated sites) over new sites (Phase 2 allocated site and Phase 3 preferred area).

WOOD LANE DEEPENING: FIRST PHASE ALLOCATED SITE

Location

- 9.12 Wood Lane is an existing sand and gravel quarry to the west of Colemere and about 3.5 km south-east of Ellesmere. The proposal involves the deepening of the existing permitted workings in Zone III.

Surroundings

- 9.13 The nearest dwellings are to the east, with 2 properties within 100 metres and thirteen properties within 250 metres. The village of Colemere is adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. The potential impact on surrounding properties will need to be addressed at the planning application stage. Variable topography and existing hedgerows mean that the site can be effectively screened. Increased depth of working would not result in a further loss of landscape features. Zone III would be worked in a progressive manner and so the

undisturbed ground would help to screen the operations. Nevertheless, the applicant will need to give consideration to the potential impact on surrounding properties (Policy M3(i) and M4(i)).

Mineral Resource

- 9.14 The potential mineral reserve of the deepening is estimated to be 1.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel. Taking into account the current production rates of the permitted reserve, the deepening would yield approximately 0.85mt by 2013.

Access

- 9.15 The proposal assumes that the established access along a minor road to the A528 would be used. The applicant will need to pay attention to the effect of traffic on local roads to ensure the impacts are minimised (Policy M11).

Natural Environment

- 9.16 The site is within the consultation area (SCA) of the Whitemere and Colemere SSSI's. Whitemere is also a Ramsar site and Colemere is proposed as a Ramsar site. Whilst no wildlife sites are directly affected, English Nature have expressed concern about potential changes to groundwater levels which could arise from the proposed deepening operation. These concerns mean that the deepening proposals will need to be examined as part of the planning application process to assess any potential risk associated with the proximity of the adjacent designated wildlife sites. Whilst the proposals contain hydrogeological information which suggests that the workings could take place without any likelihood of impact upon the local hydrogeological regime, consideration will need to be given to the effect on existing water resources and local abstractors (Policy M3(v) and M8).
- 9.17 The proposal will also extend the duration of working within an Area of Special Landscape Character. However, since the proposal involves the deepening of the existing permitted workings, no unacceptably adverse effects on local residents or the local landscape are anticipated.

Agricultural Land Quality

- 9.18 The permitted site contains 11.4 ha of land of Grade 2 and 3a, and 12.3 ha of land of Grade 3b. The applicant should discuss the proposals for deepening with MAFF at an early stage.

Archaeological Considerations

- 9.19 No additional impact on features of archaeological value is anticipated from the proposed deepening of the existing permitted workings.

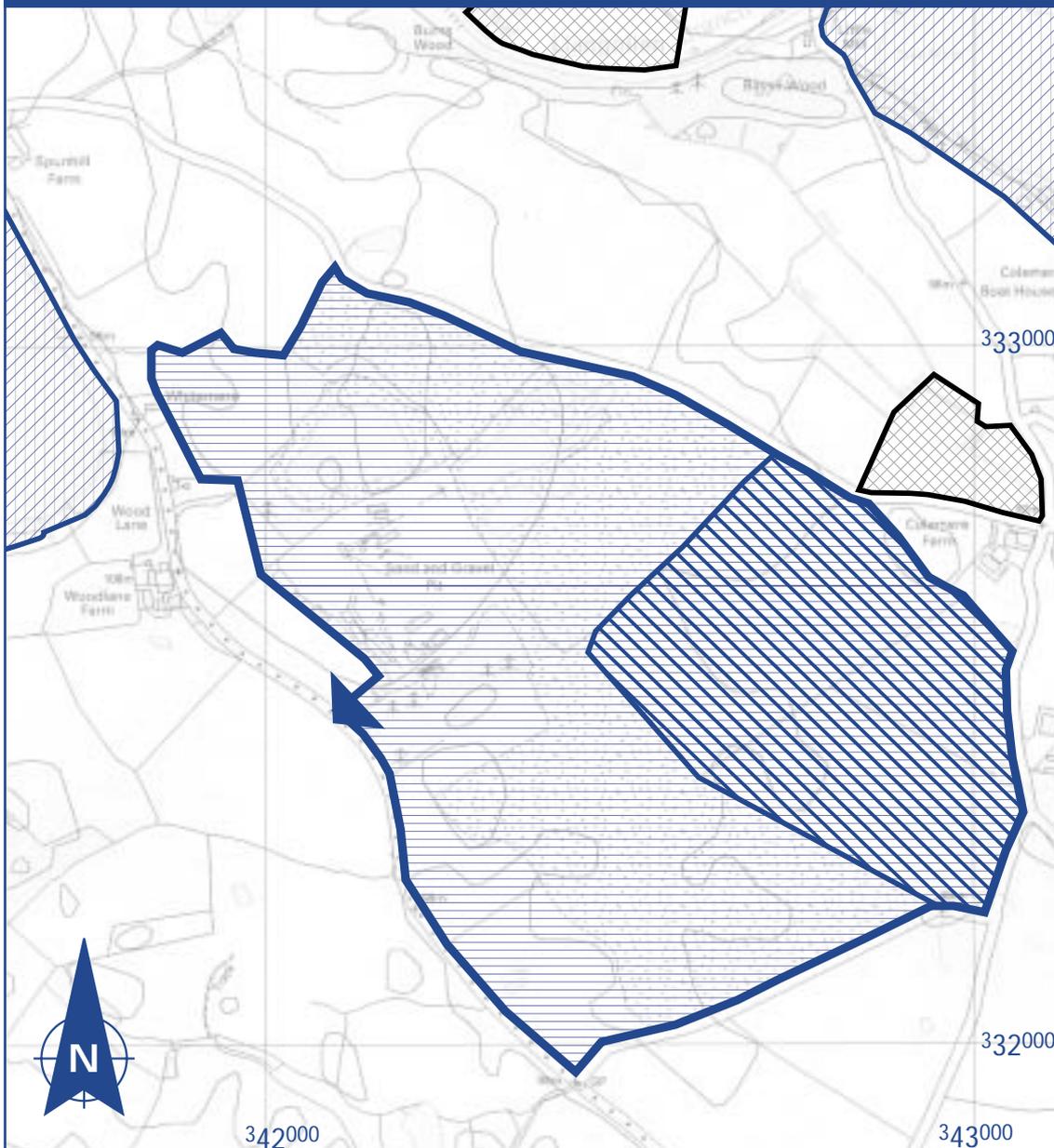
Rights of Way

- 9.20 No public rights of way will be affected by the proposed deepening of the existing permitted workings.

After Use

- 9.21 The after use proposals are unchanged from those of the existing permitted working in Zone III. As part of the area is classified as 'best and most versatile agricultural land' it will be appropriate that the reclamation proposals should include the reinstatement of the agricultural land (Policy M3(vi)). The applicant will therefore need to consider how, in practical terms, the land will be reclaimed to a condition where the physical characteristics are restored, to the satisfaction of MAFF. Any loss of agricultural land would have to be balanced against any positive benefits of the proposals and the need for the mineral. The restoration of the site may allow opportunities to enhance the nature conservation or landscape interest of the area.

Inset Map 5 - Wood Lane Deepening



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

Inset Map 5 -

Wood Lane Deepening

**Policy M14 The Future Working of
Sand and Gravel**



Allocated Site



Site of Special Scientific Interest



Permitted Site



RAMSAR Site



Permitted Access



Wildlife Site

Scale 1:10,000

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***TERN HILL EXTENSION:
FIRST PHASE ALLOCATED SITE*****Location**

- 9.22 This is an area of about 2 hectares of flat pasture land adjoining the existing Tern Hill sand quarry to the south, about 4.5 km south west of Market Drayton, adjacent to the A41(T). The proposal would involve a small extension to the working of the existing quarry.

Surroundings

- 9.23 The site will need to be screened from a small number of surrounding properties and from the A41 road in order to minimise the impact (Policy M3(i) and M4(i)).

Mineral Resource

- 9.24 The mineral has been proven by a prospective operator by shell and auger drilling. The potential reserve contains an estimated 295,000 tonnes of predominantly sand. There is an output restriction of 60,000 tonnes per annum on the existing quarry. If applied to the extension, this would give the site an additional 5 year life.

Access

- 9.25 Access to the A41 trunk road is established. An output limit is imposed to minimise the impact on surrounding properties. This limit would be a condition of a permission to work the extension area.

Natural Environment

- 9.26 An applicant will need to consider the effect on existing water resources and local abstractors (Policy M3(v) and M8). In particular the implications for the Wildlife Site, the Tree Preservation Order area and adjoining land generally due the effects of any changes in surface or groundwater likely to be caused by either the working or reclamation scheme (Policy M3(ii)). An existing Section 106 Legal Agreement includes provision for monitoring and amelioration. The existing operator has expressed a willingness to extend this commitment to the allocated site.

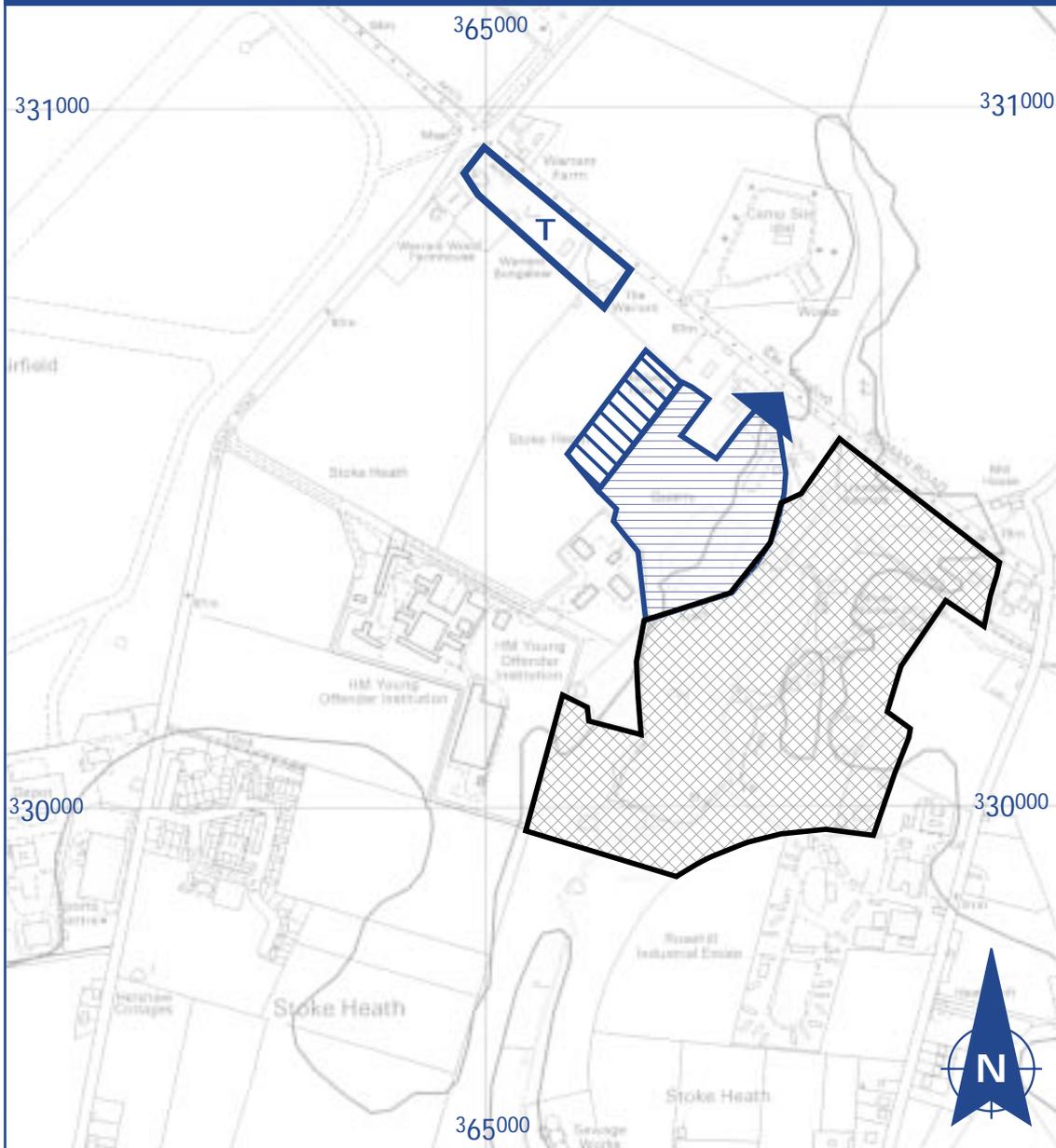
Agricultural Land Quality.

- 9.27 The site contains about 2 hectares of Grade 3a land, consequently an applicant will need to pay attention to the effect of the proposals on the quality of the agricultural land (Policy M3(vi)). The applicant should discuss the proposals with the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) at an early stage.

Archaeological Considerations

- 9.28 No finds have been recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record, however the A41 is a Roman road and so a potential archaeological interest exists. A watching brief was carried out when the previous extension was permitted and the findings of this work will need to be taken into account as part of an archaeological assessment of the area (Policy M6). The applicant should agree the requirements for the archaeological assessment with the relevant MPA at an early stage.

Inset Map 6 - Tern Hill Extension



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006
Adopted Plan April 2000

Inset Map 6 -
Tern Hill Extension
Policy M14 The Future Working of
Sand and Gravel

	Allocated Site		Wildlife Site
	Permitted Site		Tree Preservation Order
	Permitted Access		

Scale 1:10,000

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Rights of Way

- 9.29 No public right of way cross the area. Nevertheless, the applicant will need to consider ways in which public access and general amenity might be protected or enhanced by the proposals (Policy M7).

After Use

- 9.30 The after use proposals should protect and, where possible, enhance the local environment (Policy M1). An applicant will need to provide a satisfactory reclamation scheme at the application stage and must be able to demonstrate that long term management objectives have been considered (Policy M27).
- 9.31 As the existing quarry is to be reclaimed to create a water feature, it would be appropriate to extend the proposed water feature to the benefit of wildlife and recreational interests. The viability of any water feature will therefore need to be assessed at an early stage, in discussion with the Environment Agency. The effects of public access should be considered when preparing the management plan. An applicant should also discuss the wildlife implications with local wildlife groups. The creation of a larger water feature would result in the loss a small amount of high quality agricultural land. This negative effect would have to be balanced against any positive benefits of the proposals.

***BARNESLEY LANE:
SECOND PHASE ALLOCATED SITE***

Location

- 9.32 This is an area of about 20 hectares of land, including a dry valley, adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the Barnsley Lane Waste Disposal Site, off Barnsley Lane, about 4.5 km east of Bridgnorth.

Surroundings

- 9.33 The location of the site in a dry valley would help to screen it from much of the surrounding area. However, one property is situated close to the northern boundary of the site. The site is also adjacent to a landfill site. In determining an application, consideration will be given to the potentially significant effects of the proposals on surrounding properties, sensitive sites and the general area (Policy M3(i), (ii) and (vii)).

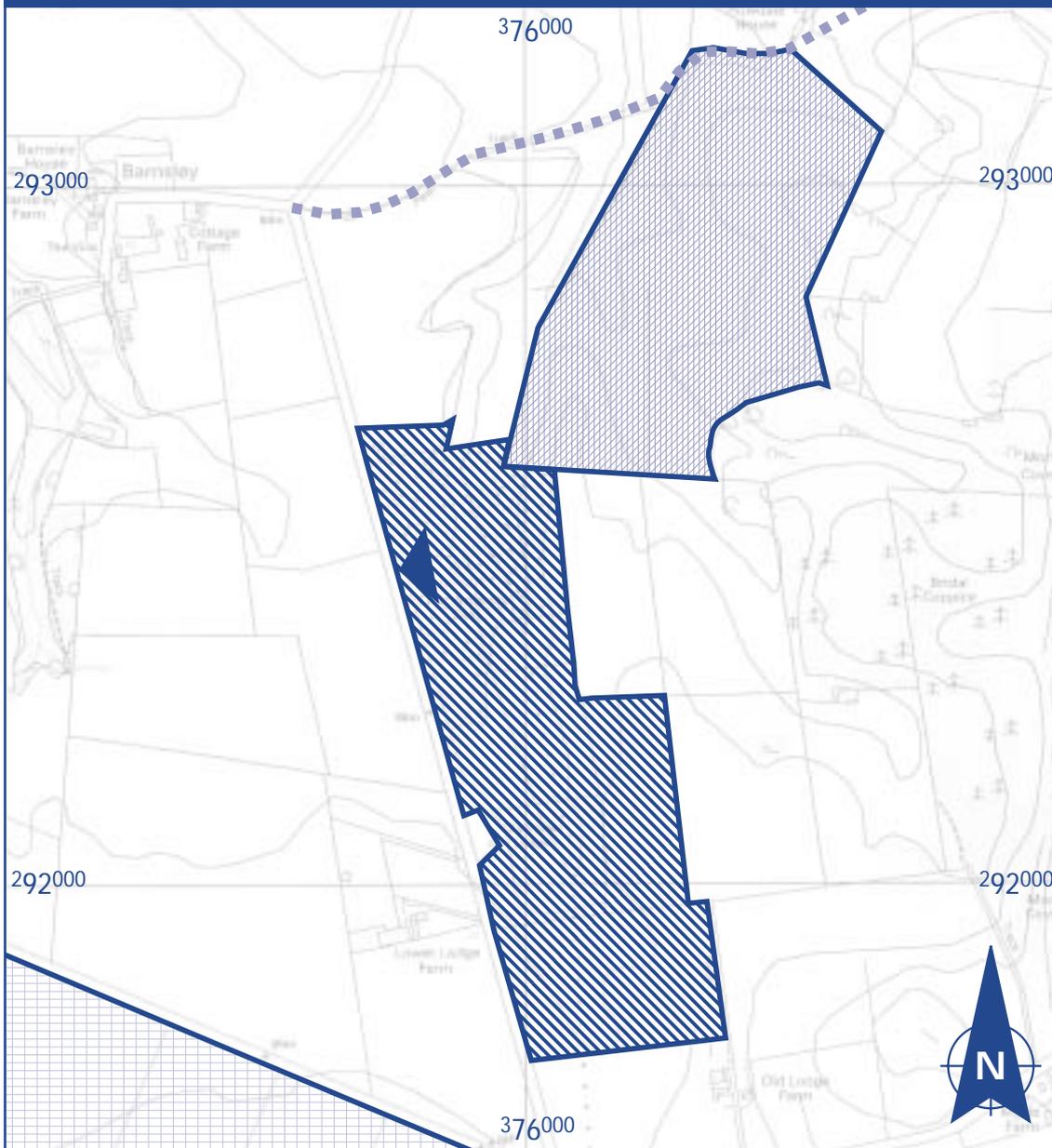
Mineral Resource

- 9.34 Initial drilling has proven the extent of the resource. The potential reserve is estimated to be in excess of 1 million tonnes of sand and gravel.

Access

- 9.35 Access to the site could be gained via the existing access to the Barnsley Lane Waste Disposal Site, off Barnsley Lane, leading to the A458 road. An applicant will need to pay attention to any access arrangements submitted with proposals to work the mineral resource to ensure that any adverse effects of lorry traffic are minimised (Policy M11). An applicant should consult the Highway Authority at an early stage in order to ensure that satisfactory provisions for access are included with the detailed proposals when they are submitted.

Inset Map 7 - Barnsley Lane



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

**Inset Map 7 -
Barnsley Lane**

**Policy M14 The Future Working of
Sand and Gravel**

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Permitted Waste Disposal Site |  National Trust Land |
|  Allocated Site |  Footpath |
|  Permitted Access | |

Scale 1:10,000

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Natural Environment

- 9.36 The site falls within the Roughton Public Water Supply aquifer and lies adjacent to a landfill site. An applicant will need to consider the potential effects on water resources and local abstractors, and the implications of working and reclamation close to the landfill site (Policy M3(v) and M8).

Agricultural Land Quality.

- 9.37 The agricultural land quality is mainly Grades 3a and 3b with limitations to agricultural use being soil droughtiness and gradient. An applicant will need to pay attention to the effect of the proposals on the quality of the agricultural land (Policy M3(vi)). The applicant should discuss the proposals with the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) at an early stage. A physical characteristics report will need to be prepared to record the state of the land prior to working if the agricultural potential of the land is to be maintained following working (see 'After Use' below).

Archaeological Considerations

- 9.38 The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) indicates the presence of stray finds, prehistoric material and cropmarks in the vicinity of the site. An archaeological assessment will therefore need to be carried out before a planning application can be determined (Policy M6). The applicant should agree the requirements for the archaeological assessment with the relevant MPA at an early stage.

Rights of Way

- 9.39 Whilst no public rights of way cross the site, one footpath follows the northern boundary of the area. An applicant should consider the potential effects on the amenity of the right of way (Policy M3(x)) and consider ways in which public access and general amenity would be protected and enhanced by the proposals (Policy M7(v)).

After Use

- 9.40 The after use proposals should protect and, where possible, enhance the local environment (Policy M1). An applicant will need to provide a satisfactory reclamation scheme at the application stage and must be able to demonstrate that long term management objectives have been considered (Policy M27).
- 9.41 In this case, it would be appropriate for the land to be reclaimed to a combination of forestry and agriculture. The applicant will therefore need to consider the standard of reclamation likely to be required by the Forestry Authority and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food prior to drawing up detailed proposals and will need to demonstrate, in practical terms, how this would be achieved. An applicant should also discuss the wildlife implications with local wildlife groups.
- 9.42 The allocation of the site is based upon the requirement that the site will be satisfactorily restored without the importation of material of any kind. As the area adjoins an existing waste disposal site, it is possible that an applicant may propose to import material to the site to raise restored levels. If this proves to be the case, the applicant would need to provide details about the nature, quantities, source, origin, and availability of the material, the timing of these activities, the traffic to be generated and routes to be taken. The applicant would be expected to demonstrate that the site is suitable for the type of material proposed. This would include a hydrogeological assessment and an assessment of

surrounding land within at least a 250 metre radius of the site including details of dwellings, other development and underground services. The application would be required to provide estimates of the future production of leachate and landfill gas and any proposals for their monitoring, treatment and control (Appendix 4). The applicant should consult the Environment Agency concerning the potential effects on the Roughton Public Water Supply and would also need a separate Waste Management Licence issued by the Environment Agency.

WOODCOTE WOOD: THIRD PHASE PREFERRED AREA

Location

- 9.43 An area of about 40 ha of mainly coniferous woodland (commercial timber), close to the A41(T) and more than 2 km to the north of Sherrifhales.

Surroundings

- 9.44 There are 3 properties to the south west of the site and one within the eastern edge of the wood. Heath Hill is about 350m to the south and there are also residential dwellings within Woodcote Hall, about 350m to the north of the site. The Hall is also the Woodcote Hall Retirement / Nursing Home and as such represents a particularly sensitive location. The implications for surrounding properties will therefore need to be carefully examined (Policy M3(i)). The established woodland should ensure that the working site could be effectively screened by retaining peripheral screening belts. At the application stage, the MPAs would need to be satisfied that the proposed extent of the retained screening belts, along with any other measures put forward to minimise the impact on the surrounding properties and countryside, would be effective (Policy M3(i) and M4(i)).

Mineral Resource

- 9.45 The mineral has been proven by boreholes and trial pits. The potential reserve is about 1.58 million tonnes of sand and gravel.

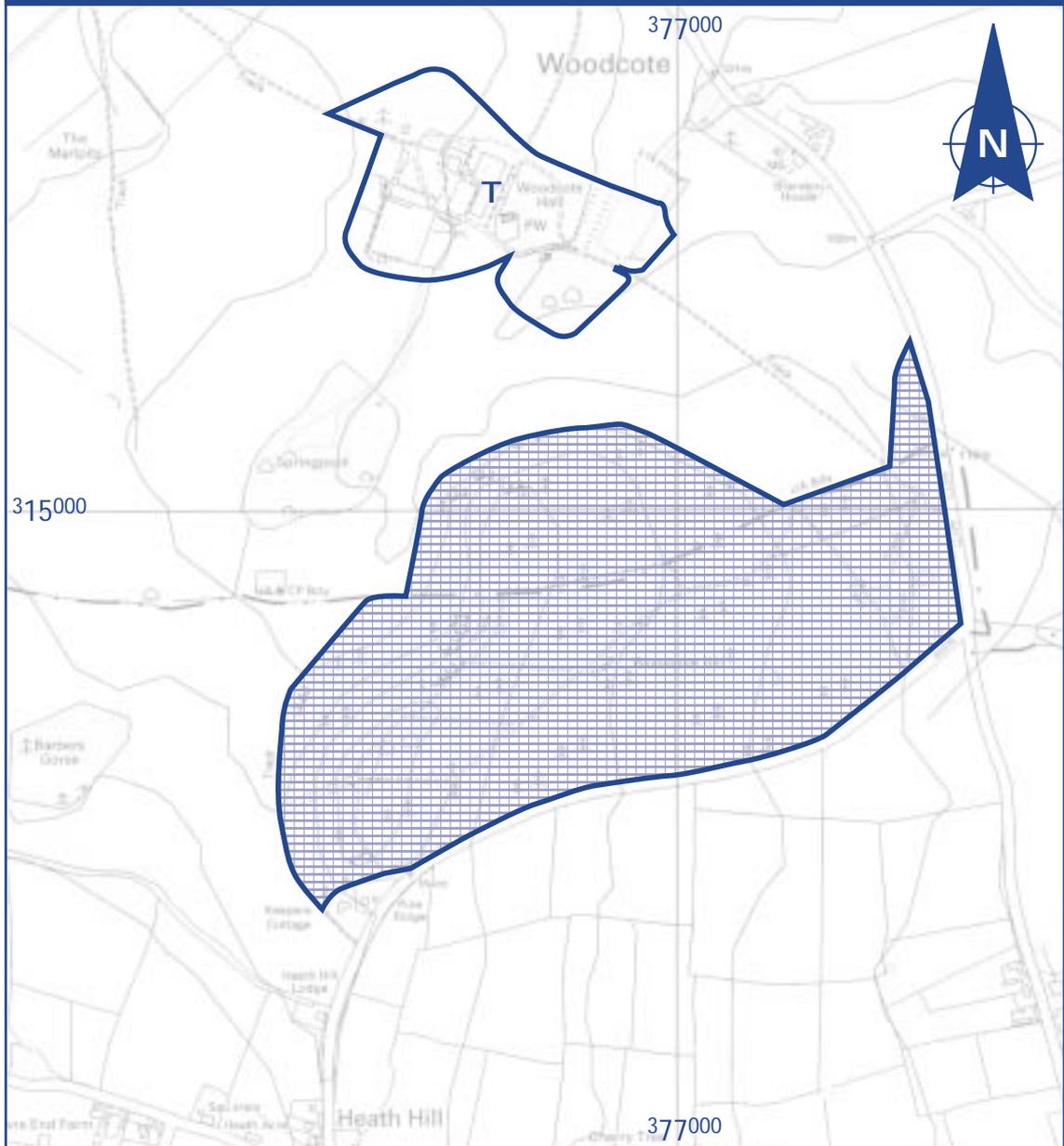
Access

- 9.46 Access to the area could be obtained either directly from the A41(T) via the existing driveway or via the B4379. An applicant will need to pay particular attention to any access arrangements submitted with proposals to work the mineral resource (Policy M11). The existing junction of the B4379 to the A41(T) is not suitable for heavy lorry traffic in its present form and direct access to the A41(T) would have to be approved by the Highways Agency. An applicant should consult the Highways Agency at an early stage in order to ensure that satisfactory provisions for access are included with the detailed proposals when they are submitted.

Natural Environment

- 9.47 The site is close to the headwaters of Bolams Brook. An applicant will need to ensure that there are no adverse effects on water resources and local abstractors due to site working or following reclamation (Policy M3(v) and M8).

Inset Map 8 - Woodcote Wood



SHROPSHIRE
Minerals Local Plan
1996 to 2006

Adopted Plan April 2000

*Inset Map 8 -
Woodcote Wood
Policy M14 The Future Working of
Sand and Gravel*



Preferred Area



Tree Preservation Order

Scale 1:10,000

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Agricultural Land Quality / Forestry

- 9.48 The land is not in agricultural use. The Forestry Authority have been consulted and have recommended that the site should be reclaimed to forestry in accordance with Forestry Commission Guidelines²⁸ (see 'After Use' below).

Archaeological Considerations

- 9.49 The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) indicates the presence of a "burnt mound" immediately to the west of the site. The site also lies within the "Woodcote Hall Historic Park and Garden". A prior archaeological assessment evaluation will need to be carried out before an application can be determined (Policy M6). The applicant should agree the requirements for the archaeological assessment prior evaluation with the MPAs at an early stage.

Rights of Way

- 9.50 Whilst no public rights of way cross the site, it will be important for an applicant to consider ways in which public access and general amenity might be enhanced by the proposals (Policy M7(v)).

After Use

- 9.51 The after use proposals should preserve or enhance the local environment (Policy M1). An applicant will need to provide a satisfactory reclamation scheme at the application stage and must be able to demonstrate that long term management objectives have been carefully considered (Policy M27).
- 9.52 In this case, it would be appropriate to reinstate the woodland following mineral extraction. The applicant will therefore need to consider the standard of reclamation likely to be required by the Forestry Authority prior to drawing up detailed proposals and should consider the practical requirements specified in the Forestry Commission Guidelines²⁸. An applicant should also discuss the wildlife implications with local wildlife groups.

REFERENCES - PART B:

1. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG9), October 1994: 'Nature Conservation' - para. 15.
2. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG16), November 1990: 'Archaeology and Planning' - para. 15.
3. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG7), February 1997: 'The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development'.
4. PPG7 - Annex B, para. B7 to B12
5. Department of the Environment - Minerals Planning Guidance (MPG7), November 1996: 'The Reclamation of Mineral Workings' - para. B8.
6. Department of the Environment - Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG3), July 1994: 'Coal Mining and Colliery Spoil Disposal' - para. 14.
7. Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG14), 1990: 'Development on Unstable Land' - para. 16.
8. MPG7 - para. 32.
9. PPG9 - para. 18.
10. Shropshire County Council - 'Biodiversity an agenda for conservation in the UK - the Shropshire response' (June 1996)
11. MPG7 - para 10.
12. Department of the Environment - Circular 1/97, 28 January 1997, Planning Obligations - Annex B, para. B2 and B3.
13. Government Office for the West Midlands - 'Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands' (RPG11), September 1995, and Department of the Environment - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13), March 1994, 'Transport'.
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18. MPG1 - Annex B, para. B6.
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22. *MPG3 - para. 38.*
23. *Central Statistical Office 'UK Primary Production - Mineral Extraction in Great Britain', Business Monitors.*
24. *Department of the Environment - Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG13), July 1995: 'Guidelines for Peat Provision in England including the place of alternative materials' - table 3, page 4.*
25. *'Making Waste Work - A strategy for sustainable waste management in England and Wales', HMSO, December 1995 - page 50, para. 2.118.*
26. *MPG13 - para. 42.*
27. *MPG1 - paras. 77 to 79.*
28. *Moffat, A & McNeill, J - 'Reclaiming Disturbed Land for Forestry', Forestry Commission Bulletin 110, HMSO 1994.*

part C

appendices

appendix 1.**SUMMARY OF THE GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES OF SHROPSHIRE**

- 1.1 Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have a varied geology with some classic geological localities and rocks representing most of the major divisions of geological time (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The geology of the Plan area divides broadly into three zones. Younger rocks form lowlands and ridges in the north and east, whilst older rocks form uplands in the south and west. The margin between these two areas is commonly defined by a discontinuous outcrop of carboniferous rocks bisecting the Plan area.
- 1.3 A summary of the main mineral resources in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin is provided by Table 1. The three broad geological zones described above are characterised by distinct associations of mineral deposits:
- i. North and East Shropshire**
- 1.4 The main mineral resource occurring in north and east Shropshire is sand and gravel. This occurs within the Permo-Triassic sequence (i.e., Kidderminster Conglomerate) and also within extensive deposits of glacial drift which commonly mantle the North Shropshire Plain, providing the Plan area's most abundant occurrence of sand and gravel.
- 1.5 Triassic sandstones rise locally as a series of ridges from the glacial drift deposits of the North Shropshire Plain. Near Wem they provide building stone.
- 1.6 Peat has been extracted at Whixall Moss on the border of North Shropshire and Wrexham.
- ii. South and West Shropshire**
- 1.7 Geologically the south and west of the Plan area consists of a wide variety of older rocks mainly of Lower Palaeozoic age. This region is renowned for the interest of its geology. Local place names such as Wenlock and Ludlow are recognised internationally as divisions of geological time.
- 1.8 Several important horizons of roadstone occur, including gritstones and volcanic rocks in the Pre-Cambrian, volcanic rocks in the Ordovician and Silurian limestones which form the scarp of Wenlock Edge. Cambrian and Ordovician quartzites have also previously been worked for roadstone in the Plan area.
- 1.9 The West Shropshire mining district was an important source of vein minerals including lead, zinc and barytes in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

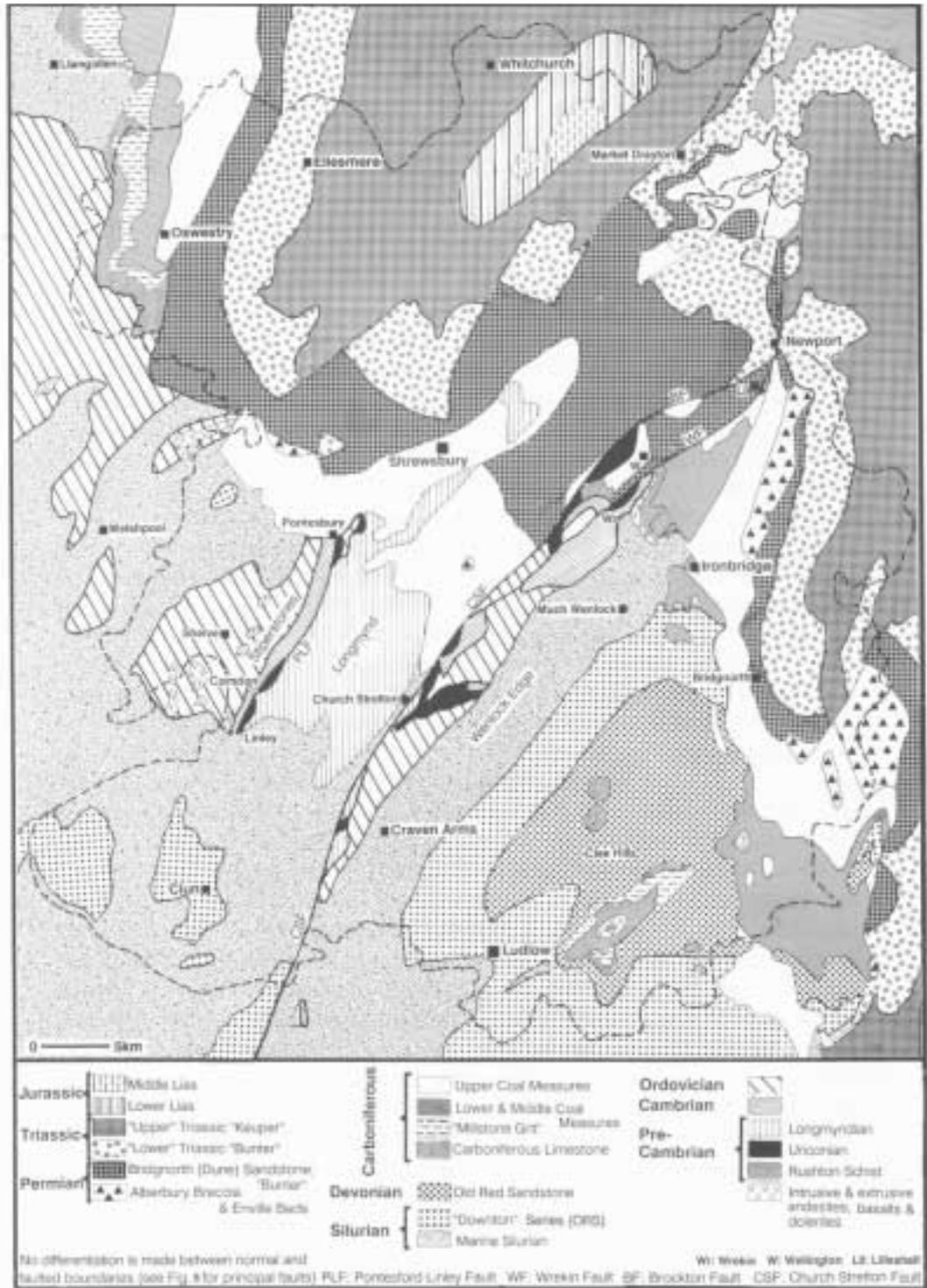
iii. The Carboniferous Belt

- 1.10 Carboniferous strata outcropping in a discontinuous band across the Plan area have given rise to a series of small coalfields. From north west to south east these are: the Oswestry Coalfield, the Shrewsbury Coalfield, the Leebotwood Coalfield, the Coalbrookdale/Broseley Coalfield and the Wyre Forest and Clee Hills Coalfields. The most productive strata are the Lower and Middle Coal Measures and in particular those of the Coalbrookdale/Broseley Coalfield. This is the only area where active working (opencast mining) is presently occurring in the Plan area (although opencast mining has also occurred recently at Clee Hill). Underground mining has occurred however in all the local coalfields during the 20th century.
- 1.11 In opencast sites, the coal seams are often worked with refractory clays (fire clays) with which they are commonly associated. Ironstone bands and brick clay have also previously been mined in the Coalbrookdale/Broseley Coalfield. Brick clay in the Upper Coal Measures is quarried at Telford and south of Bridgnorth.
- 1.12 Lower and Upper Carboniferous rocks occur locally in the Plan area beneath the Coal Measures sequence but are best developed in the Oswestry area where Lower Carboniferous Dolomitic Limestone is worked for roadstone. Limestones of this age were previously mined in the Telford area. Dolerite (an igneous rock) intruded locally into Carboniferous rocks also provides an important roadstone resource at Clee Hill.
- 1.13 The localised occurrence of coal, ironstone and limestone in the Ironbridge area was an important factor in the birth of the Industrial Revolution.

Table 1 Summary of the Main Mineral Deposits in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

GEOLOGICAL SYSTEM (AGE)	MINERAL RESOURCE	OCCURRENCE AND AREAS OF WORKING
RECENT (HOLOCENE)	Peat Alluvial Raised Terrace Deposits	Formerly worked commercially at Whixall Moss North Shropshire. Worked near Ludlow and formerly south of Bridgnorth.
PLEISTOCENE	Fluvioglacial flood Gravels (Sand and Gravel) Glacial Sand and Gravel (Important sand and gravel resource)	Formerly worked at Isombridge near Wellington. Occurs widely throughout the Plan area. Thickest and best developed in North Shropshire plain. Worked in Wem and Ellesmere and South of Shrewsbury.
TERTIARY	No economic mineral deposits	Some small scale igneous intrusions in North Shropshire are of probable Tertiary age.
CRETACEOUS	Absent in Shropshire	
JURASSIC	No known economic mineral resource	Limited outcrop around Prees in North Shropshire
PERMO-TRIASSIC	Mercia Mudstone (Brick clay) Rocksalt (not worked in the Plan area but worked by solution and mining in Cheshire) Grinshill/Myddle Stone (Building Stone) Sherwood Sandstone and Kidderminster Conglomerate (Sand and Gravel) - important aquifer	Outcrops south-west from Market Drayton and north east of Albrighton. Formerly worked locally for brick clay. Occurs beneath boulder clay in 2 separate layers at depth in Mercia Mudstone sequence of North Shropshire. Sandstone worked for building stone north of Shrewsbury. Main outcrop in east of county where previously worked for sand and gravel. Also present in North Shropshire, normally beneath thick glacial deposits. Worked at Tern Hill near Market Drayton.
CARBONIFEROUS	Dolerite (roadstone) Upper Coal Measures (Brick clay) Upper Coal Measures (Coal) Lower and Middle Coal Measures (Coal and Fire clay) Carboniferous Limestone (Roadstone and Lime)	An igneous rock intruded into Carboniferous strata. Worked at Clee Hill Quarry in South Shropshire and formerly in the Telford area. Worked for brick clay in Telford area and south of Bridgnorth. Formerly selectively mined for coal at surface outcrop within the Plan area. Worked for opencast coal and fire clay in Telford area. Formerly mined for coal in all areas of surface outcrop within the Plan area, previously also mined for clay and ironstone in the Telford area. Occurs in Oswestry and Telford areas and locally at Clee Hill, South Shropshire. Dolomite limestone worked at Lynclys near Oswestry. Limestone formerly mined in the Coalbrookdale coalfield.
DEVONIAN	Old Red Sandstone (Formerly used as building stone)	Extensive outcrop in south eastern part of the Plan area.
SILURIAN	Aymestry Group and Upper Ludlow Shales (used as building stone) Wenlock Limestone (Roadstone)	Quarried locally on a small scale for use as building stone i.e. in the Corve Dale area of South Shropshire. Occurs at Wenlock Edge. Worked near Much Wenlock.
ORDOVICIAN	Vein Minerals (Lead, Zinc, Barytes) Ordovician igneous rocks (Roadstone) Mytton and Tankerville beds (Roadstone) Stiperstones Quartzite (Roadstone)	Occurs and formerly widely worked in West Shropshire Mining District. Permitted reserves at Blodwel west of Oswestry. Formerly worked near Bishop's Castle (South Shropshire), and at Maddocks Hill Quarry (near the Wrekin). Also occurs locally in West Shropshire and Church Stretton Valley. Outcrops west of the Longmynd. Worked at Minsterley near Shrewsbury. Outcrops west of the Longmynd. Formerly worked at Pontesbury near Shrewsbury.
CAMBRIAN	Wrekin Quartzite (Roadstone)	Occurs and formerly worked at The Ercall near Telford.
PRE-CAMBRIAN	Gritstone - Longmyndian (Roadstone) Volcanics - Uriconian (Roadstone)	Occurs in between the Longmynd and Shrewsbury. Worked at Bayston Hill and Haughmond Quarries, Shrewsbury. Worked at Leaton west of Telford.

Figure 1 - Geological Map of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin



part C

*appendix 2.***SUMMARY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL****INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1991 require local authorities to take account of 'environmental considerations' when preparing their development plans as part of the means of ensuring that development and growth are sustainable.
- 1.2 Environmental appraisal is recommended by Government as an essential part of the plan preparation process because it allows the environmental effects of the policies to be systematically identified, quantified, weighed up and reported on.
- 1.3 Environmental considerations cover a wide range of issues which deal with global sustainability, management of the natural resources and the conservation of local environmental quality.
- 1.4 In April 1995, a Strategic Monitoring Report for the Shropshire Structure Plan 1989 to 2006 was published. The report included an environmental appraisal of the Structure Plan minerals policies. The approach taken in the Monitoring Report took account of the Department of the Environment's 'Environmental Appraisal of Development Plans: A good practice guide', published in 1993. A similar format has been adopted for the Minerals Local Plan to maintain a consistent approach.
- 1.5 This Appendix explains the basis of the policy appraisal and sets out a 'Summary Policy Impact Matrix'. The matrix summarises a series of policy impact commentaries - which explain the nature of the impacts of each policy. These commentaries are set out in a separate background document which is available on request: 'Shropshire Minerals Local Plan 1996 to 2006 (Deposit Draft - April 1996) Environmental Appraisal'.

APPRAISAL OF THE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- 1.6 The appraisal deals with each policy individually to provide clarity and simplicity, however, the policies do not operate as separate entities. The Minerals Local Plan must be read as a whole, and the weight attached to individual policies will vary according to the circumstances of the particular case. It could be that the application of one policy results in an overwhelming objection to a particular proposal, or it could be the combination of policy considerations that lead to a refusal or to a permission.
- 1.7 Planning is very much about balance, in particular maintaining a balance between the need for development and protecting the environment, although there is growing pressure to shift the balance in favour of environmental concerns to achieve sustainable development. There are also social and economic issues to be considered and weighed in the balance.
- 1.8 The matrix below summarises the environmental implications of all the policies in the Minerals Local Plan set against the criteria and comments in Table 1.

Table 1 The Criteria for the Environmental Appraisal of the Minerals Plan Policies / Proposals

IMPACT CRITERIA	COMMENT
Global Sustainability:	<i>Policies should seek to maintain a healthy biosphere; limit global warming and maintain biodiversity.</i>
Wildlife	Will the policy protect or enhance designated sites and wildlife generally?
Trees	Will the policy help to retain amenity trees and increase their number to improve landscape, habitats and assist in reducing CO ₂ ?
Trip generation	Will the policy reduce the need to transport minerals, trip lengths, road transport; congestion and limit CO ₂ and other emissions?
Natural Resources:	<i>Policies should seek to conserve natural resources</i>
Water	Will the policy maintain or improve water quantity and quality?
Air	Will the policy maintain or improve air quality?
Agricultural land	Will the policy maintain or improve 'best and most versatile land'?
Derelict land	Will the policy reduce the amount and avoid the creation of new areas of dereliction?
Minerals resources	Will the policy help to safeguard mineral resources?
Minerals demand	Will the policy help to reduce the demand for mineral resources?
Local Environmental Quality:	<i>Policies should seek to protect and enhance features of environmental importance which contribute to quality of life</i>
Flood plain	Will the policy maintain or improve flood plains in order to minimise the risk of flooding?
Geology	Will the policy maintain or improve the diversity of sites of importance for the earth sciences, e.g. SSSIs and RIGS's?
Historic environment	Will the policy protect or enhance the built and archaeological heritage?
Landscape	Will the policy protect or enhance the character and diversity of the countryside including safeguarding the countryside for its own sake?
Townscape	Will the policy protect or enhance the character of towns and villages including their setting?
Open space	Will the policy protect or enhance open space and public access?
Effect on people	Will the policy protect or enhance people's surroundings in terms of noise, pollution, danger, security, amenity of residential areas, convenience and accessibility?
Quality of design	Will the policy encourage the adoption of best practices in order to minimise the environmental impacts?

Table 2 - Summary Policy Impact Matrix - 1 of 3

Policy	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10
GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY										
wildlife	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+
trees	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+
trip generation	+		+	+				+	+	
NATURAL RESOURCES										
water	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+
air	+		+	+			+	+	+	+
agricultural land	+		+	+			+		+	+
derelict land	+		+				+	+		
mineral resources	+	+			+	+			+	
mineral demand	+	X								
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY										
flood plain	+		+	+			+		+	
geology	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	
historic environment	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
landscape	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+
townscape	+		+	+	+			+	+	
open space	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	
effects on people	+		+	+	+		+	+	+	+
design	+		+	+		+	+	+	+	

+ potential beneficial impact
 x potential adverse impact
 ? unpredictable impact
 (empty) no adverse impact / no relationship

Table 2 - Summary Policy Impact Matrix - 2 of 3

Policy	M11	M12 & M13	M14	M15 & M16	M17	M18	M19	M20
GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY								
wildlife		X	X	?	+	+	?	?
trees		X	X	?	+	+	?	?
trip generation	+	X	+	?	?	X	+	?
NATURAL RESOURCES								
water		X	X	?		+	?	?
air	+	X	X	?		+	?	?
agricultural land		X	X	?	+	+	?	?
derelict land					+			
mineral resources	X	+	+	?	+	+	?	?
mineral demand		X	X	X	+		X	X
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY								
flood plain		X	X	?		+	?	?
geology		X	X	?		+	?	?
historic environment		X	X	?	?	+	?	+
landscape		X	X	?	?	+	?	?
townscape	+	X	X	?		+	?	?
open space		X	X	?		+	?	?
effects on people	+	X	X	?	?	+	?	?
design			+		+			

- + potential beneficial impact
- X potential adverse impact
- ? unpredictable impact
- (empty) no adverse impact / no relationship

Table 2 - Summary Policy Impact Matrix - 3 of 3

Policy	M21	M22	M23	M24 & M25	M26	M27	M28	M29 & M30
GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY								
wildlife	?	?	+	?	?	+	+	?
trees	?	?	+	?	?	+	+	?
trip generation	?	?		+	?		+	
NATURAL RESOURCES								
water supply	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
air	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
agricultural land	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
derelict land	+	+			+			
mineral resources	?	?	+	?	?		+	+
mineral demand	X	X	+	X	X			
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY								
flood plain	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
geology	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
historic environment	?	?	+	?	?	+	+	?
landscape	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
townscape	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
open space	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
effects on people	?	?		?	?	+	+	?
design	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

+ potential beneficial impact

X potential adverse impact

? unpredictable impact

(empty) no adverse impact / no relationship

CONCLUSIONS

- 1.9 The Minerals Local Plan policies have sought to adopt a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources. This approach does not rule out mineral development, but it does ensure that environmental considerations are carefully considered so that future generations are not denied the best of today's environment.
- 1.10 In simple terms, the environmental appraisal indicates that out of 330 identified impacts, 182 are potentially beneficial and 37 could have adverse impacts on the environment; while 111 have an unpredictable impacts because the effects will only be known if proposals are submitted.
- 1.11 The adverse impacts reflect the recognition in the policies that meeting society's needs for minerals might override environmental interests. Maintaining supplies of minerals will inevitably have some adverse impact on the environment, not least through the depletion of a non-renewable resource, and this is reflected in the rather high number of adverse and unpredictable impacts. The Minerals Local Plan policies seek to ensure that when mineral development proposals are submitted, they are only permitted when there is a genuine need for the mineral which overrides any environmental considerations, and that the impact of mineral working is minimised as far as possible.
- 1.12 The potential beneficial impacts reflect the government's objectives for sustainable mineral development which highlight the protection of important environmental interests and the overall enhancement of the environment following working. The Plan makes clear that this requires applicants to pay careful attention to environmental interests and adopt sensitive working practices when preparing proposals, during working, reclamation and afterwards.
- 1.13 Overall the environmental appraisal reflects the fact that mineral development does cause significant adverse environmental impacts. However, due to the strategic importance of minerals and the continuing need for minerals, the Minerals Local Plan policies can only seek to control such development in order to protect important aspects of the environment, minimise the impacts of working and where possible take the opportunities created by mineral working to enhance the environment overall. Nevertheless, there may be instances where environmental interests are outweighed by other material considerations.

appendix 3.

SHROPSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN 1989 - 2006 MINERALS POLICIES

THE CONTROL OF MINERAL WORKINGS

2/78 IN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS RELATING TO MINERAL WORKING, ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR AND EVALUATION OF MINERALS, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL PAY PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE LIKELY EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL UPON:-

- 1) TOWNS, VILLAGES AND NEARBY HOUSES AND OCCUPIED PROPERTY CLOSE TO THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE AND PROPOSED HAUL ROUTES.
- 2) THE TRANSPORT NETWORK AND LOCAL ROADS.
- 3) WATER RESOURCES AND PATTERNS OF DRAINAGE.
- 4) THE RECLAMATION OF DERELICT AND DEGRADED LAND.
- 5) RIGHTS OF WAY AND PUBLIC ACCESS LAND, INCLUDING INFORMAL OPEN SPACE.
- 6) HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND WHERE THIS WILL CAUSE THE LOSS OF LAND DESIGNATED AS MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD GRADES 1, 2 AND 3A.
- 7) AREAS OF PARTICULAR ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE INCLUDING AREAS OF LANDSCAPE OR GEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AREAS OF WILDLIFE OR NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST AND SITES OR BUILDINGS OF HISTORICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST.
- 8) THE STABILITY OF THE LAND.
- 9) THE GENERAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE INCLUDING EXISTING TREES AND OTHER NATURAL FEATURES.

2/79 PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL WORKINGS AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING AREAS OF PARTICULAR ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE AS SET OUT BELOW WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

1) PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD AFFECT THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST, NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES, RAMSAR SITES, SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS UNDER THE EC BIRDS DIRECTIVE OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND REGISTERED PARKLANDS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND THEIR SETTING, WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE MOST RIGOROUS EXAMINATION AND THESE AREAS WILL NORMALLY BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT. PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND ANY OTHER BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND IS SHOWN TO BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST;

AND

2) AREAS OF SPECIAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, HISTORIC PARKLAND LANDSCAPES OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE, LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, SITES NOTIFIED TO BE OF PRIME IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION, WETLANDS, ANCIENT WOODLANDS, CONSERVATION AREAS, LISTED BUILDINGS, OTHER SITES OF KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORICAL INTEREST AND SITES OF POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE WILL NORMALLY BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND ANY OTHER BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE PROTECTED AREAS AND SITES.

PROTECTION OF MINERAL RESOURCES

2/80 APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH FALL WITHIN MINERAL CONSULTATION AREAS DEFINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL AND WHICH COULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF STERILISING POTENTIAL MINERAL RESOURCES SHALL BE REFERRED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL AS MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITY. THE RECOGNITION OF THESE AREAS DOES NOT IMPLY THAT ANY APPLICATION FOR THE WORKING OF MINERALS WITHIN THEM WILL BE GRANTED.

2/81 UNLESS THERE ARE OVERRIDING FACTORS WHICH IN THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL OR LOCAL INTEREST MUST BE SATISFIED, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PREVENT KNOWN POTENTIAL MINERAL RESOURCES BEING STERILISED OR UNDULY RESTRICTED BY OTHER FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT OCCURRING ON OR CLOSE TO THE RESOURCE. WHERE ANOTHER FORM OF DEVELOPMENT IS TO BE PERMITTED THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE WORKING OF USEFUL MINERALS IN ADVANCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO THE CONSIDERATIONS LISTED IN POLICY 2/78.

EVALUATION OF MINERAL BEARING LAND

2/82 APPLICATIONS FOR EXPLORATION BY BOREHOLE DRILLING INCLUDING OIL AND GAS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY:-

- COMPREHENSIVE DETAILS OF THE SITE'S LOCATION AND AREAS OF LAND TO BE DISTURBED;
- DETAILS OF ACCESS AND THE ROUTING OF LARGE LOADS;
- PROPOSED HOURS OF WORKING;
- MEASURES TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF THE OPERATIONS ON THE SITE AND ADJOINING LAND;
- THE DURATION OF OPERATIONS;
- DETAILS FOR THE FULL RESTORATION OF THE SITE WITHIN A REASONABLE TIMESCALE.

THE NEED FOR MINERALS

2/83 IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL WORKINGS, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PREVIOUS ANNUAL PRODUCTION LEVELS AND THE NEED, WHERE APPROPRIATE, FOR THE MINERAL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LATEST ESTIMATES OF DEMAND AND AVAILABLE RESERVES. WHERE APPROPRIATE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE NEED FOR, AND SUPPLY OF, THE MINERAL WILL BE CONSIDERED.

2/84 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS A SUFFICIENT STOCK OF AGGREGATES TO MEET DEMAND BY MAINTAINING AN OVERALL LAND BANK OF PERMITTED RESERVES FOR BOTH SAND AND GRAVEL AND CRUSHED ROCK. DEMAND WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORD WITH POLICY 2/83 AND WITHIN THE COUNTY PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR RESERVES OF SAND AND GRAVEL FOR AT LEAST 10 YEARS, AND FOR CRUSHED ROCK FOR 20 YEARS, TO BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD UP TO 2006. IN ESTIMATING DEMAND AND NECESSARY LANDBANKS ACCOUNT WILL BE TAKEN OF NATIONAL ADVICE SET OUT IN MINERALS PLANNING GUIDANCE AND GUIDELINES PROVIDED BY THE WEST MIDLANDS AGGREGATES WORKING PARTY.

ANCILLARY USES

2/85 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR USES ANCILLARY TO THE WINNING AND WORKING OF MINERALS OUTSIDE THE AREA WITH PLANNING PERMISSION FOR MINERAL WORKING UNLESS THERE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. WHERE ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT OR USES ARE PERMITTED, THEIR LIFE WILL BE LINKED TO THE LIFE OF THE MINERAL WORKING TO WHICH THEY ARE PRIMARILY RELATED.

REVIEW

2/86 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL REVIEW EXISTING MINERAL PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND THEIR CONDITIONS AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, WILL SEEK TO AMEND THEM IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF THE WORKINGS ON THE SURROUNDING AREA AND TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE. WHEREVER POSSIBLE THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS BY VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT.

OIL AND GAS

2/87 FOLLOWING THE INITIAL DISCOVERY OF OIL OR GAS BEARING FORMATIONS DEVELOPERS SHOULD SUBMIT, AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE STAGE, A PROVISIONAL PLAN FOR THE APPRAISAL OF THE FIELD. SUCH A PLAN, BASED ON CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE FIELD, WILL BE SUBMITTED ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGES AS APPRAISAL IMPROVES KNOWLEDGE OF THE STRUCTURE. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION OR EVALUATION WILL BE DETERMINED IN THE LIGHT OF THIS PLAN AND THE CONSIDERATIONS LISTED IN POLICY 2/78 AND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- 1) NECESSARY TO CONFIRM THE GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIELD.
- 2) THE PROPOSED LOCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IS THE MOST SUITABLE HAVING REGARD TO GEOLOGICAL, TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.

2/88 DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXTRACTION OF OIL AND GAS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF CONSIDERATIONS LISTED IN POLICY 2/78 AND WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IF:-

- 1) THE DEVELOPMENT FORMS PART OF A PLANNED PROGRAMME FOR THE WHOLE OIL/GAS FIELD.
- 2) THE PROPOSAL INDICATES HOW PEOPLE, GOODS, EQUIPMENT AND PRODUCTS ARE TO BE TRANSPORTED TO AND FROM INDIVIDUAL SITES.
- 3) SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTE MATERIALS AND THE AVOIDANCE OF POLLUTION.
- 4) PROPOSALS FOR LANDSCAPING AND RESTORATION ARE SATISFACTORY.

PEAT

2/89 WHERE A PROPOSAL FOR THE EXTRACTION OF PEAT WOULD BE LIKELY TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT HARM TO INTERESTS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE AS SET OUT IN POLICIES 2/78 AND 2/79 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE REFUSED.

LIMESTONE ON WENLOCK EDGE

2/90 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL OPPOSE APPLICATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL RESERVES OF LIMESTONE ON WENLOCK EDGE EXCEPT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A SIMULTANEOUS SURRENDER AND EXCHANGE OF PLANNING PERMISSION AGREED BY THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY OR IN OTHER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY 2/79(1).

COAL AND FIRECLAY

- 2/91 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL NOT NORMALLY PERMIT THE OPENCAST MINING OF COAL OR FIRECLAY WHERE SUCH A PROPOSAL WOULD BE LIKELY TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO INTERESTS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE, AS SET OUT IN POLICIES 2/78 and 2/79, UNLESS THE APPLICANT CAN SHOW HOW THE DETRIMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS CAN BE OVERCOME OR SATISFACTORILY MITIGATED OR THAT THE NEED FOR THE MINERAL AND ANY OTHER BENEFITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PUT FORWARD OUTWEIGH THE OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSAL. IN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE MARKET COULD BE SUPPLIED FROM OTHER LESS DAMAGING ALTERNATIVE SITES OR SECURE SOURCES OF SUPPLY.
- 2/92 WHEN CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR THE OPENCAST MINING OF COAL OR FIRECLAY THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON A LOCALITY OF PAST AND CURRENT WORKINGS. APPLICATIONS FOR THE WORKING OF COAL AND FIRECLAY IN THE LITTLE WENLOCK AREA, I.E. THE AREA GENERALLY BETWEEN LITTLE WENLOCK, HUNTINGTON, NEW WORKS, HORSEHAY AND STONEY HILL BUT EXCLUDING THE LAWLEY AREA WILL BE EXAMINED PARTICULARLY CAREFULLY IN THE LIGHT OF POLICY 2/91.
- 2/93 IN AREAS WHERE HIGH QUALITY FIRECLAYS ARE KNOWN TO BE OF ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THAT PROPOSALS TO WIN COAL MAKE ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THESE CLAYS.
- 2/94 THE AREA SOUTH OF THE RIVER SEVERN (I.E. THE AREA GENERALLY BETWEEN MUCH WENLOCK, THE RIVER SEVERN/ IRONBRIDGE GORGE, BENTHALL/BROSELEY AND THE PARKLAND LANDSCAPE OF SHIRLETT) WILL NORMALLY BE PROTECTED FROM FURTHER FIRECLAY AND ASSOCIATED COAL WORKING UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE NEED FOR THE HIGH QUALITY FIRECLAYS FROM THIS AREA AND ANY OTHER BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE PROTECTED AREAS AND SITES.

USE OF WASTE MATERIALS

- 2/95 THE USE OF INERT WASTE MATERIALS AS ALTERNATIVES TO NATURALLY OCCURRING AGGREGATES OR OTHER MINERALS WILL BE ENCOURAGED.

MINERALS AND WASTE DISPOSAL

LANDSCAPING AND REHABILITATION

- 2/96 PROPOSALS FOR MINERAL WORKING AND PROCESSING AND FOR WASTE DISPOSAL WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE APPLICATIONS:-
- 1) INCORPORATE SATISFACTORY SCHEMES FOR THE LANDSCAPING AND REHABILITATION OF THE SITE, PROGRESSIVELY WHEREVER POSSIBLE, TO AN AGREED AFTER-USE OR TO A STATE CAPABLE OF BENEFICIAL AFTER-USE. WHERE THE PROPOSED AFTER-USE IS FOR AGRICULTURE, WOODLAND, OR AMENITY, INCLUDING NATURE CONSERVATION AND THE CREATION OF RECREATIONAL WATER SPACE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ENSURE THE PROPER ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFTER-USE BY REQUIRING A FIVE YEAR PERIOD OF AFTER-CARE AND MANAGEMENT.
 - 2) IN THE CASE OF WASTE DISPOSAL, MAKE PROVISION FOR THE MONITORING AND TREATMENT OF LEACHATE AND LANDFILL GAS FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF TIPPING FOR FIVE YEARS OR OTHER PERIOD AS APPROPRIATE.
- 2/97 THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE OPERATORS TO INCLUDE IN SUBMITTED REHABILITATION SCHEMES MEASURES TO PROMOTE NATURE CONSERVATION INCLUDING THE INCORPORATION OF A VARIETY OF APPROPRIATE HABITATS OF VALUE TO A WIDE RANGE OF FLORA AND FAUNA PROVIDED WHERE NECESSARY THESE CAN BE SATISFACTORILY MANAGED AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY ANY LEACHATE/LANDFILL GAS MANAGEMENT SCHEMES.

PLANNING AGREEMENTS

- 2/98 WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE COUNTY COUNCIL WILL NEGOTIATE PLANNING AGREEMENTS TO AMELIORATE THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT WHERE THESE MATTERS CANNOT BE COVERED BY PLANNING CONDITIONS INCLUDING OFF-SITE HIGHWAY WORKS, THE ROUTING OF TRAFFIC, OFF-SITE RESTORATION, THE SURRENDER OF PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND THE MONITORING AND CONTROL OF LEACHATE AND LANDFILL GAS.

appendix 4.**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL GUIDELINES****1. GENERAL**

- 1.1 The Minerals Local Plan specifies the policies against which individual planning applications for mineral development will be determined. These guidelines supplement the policies in the Plan and are provided to assist applicants. While they will be taken into account in deciding planning applications, they do not have the same status as policies and they will be applied flexibly according to the circumstances of each case. The guidelines highlight the importance of early consultation to identify relevant issues that applicants will need to give attention to, sometimes as part of an environmental assessment. The guidelines also provide a pointer to the conditions that may be attached to a planning permission to control mineral development.
- 1.2 The aim of the Plan is to achieve a more sustainable approach to the development of mineral resources. This can partly be achieved by encouraging sensitive working practices during minerals extraction in order to preserve or enhance the overall quality of the environment once extraction has ceased. The MPAs will therefore encourage developers to adopt best practices during the preparation of proposals, subsequent working and reclamation of mineral workings.
- 1.3 Trade Associations within the minerals industry have produced Codes of Practice for operators, such as OPA's Environmental Code of Practice. Also, organisations such as the Environment Agency and English Nature are producing guidance about best practice. Such initiatives are welcomed. These guidelines are not intended to supersede these voluntary codes and best practice advice, but to provide detailed guidance to mineral operators on the following matters:
 - i. Details to be considered when preparing to submit a planning application.
 - ii. The operation of the site in so far as it impacts on the local environment.
 - iii. The reclamation, aftercare and management of sites to as high a standard as possible.
- 1.4 It is recognised that the guidelines will not be appropriate to all sites or proposals and it will be necessary to adopt a flexible approach to reflect particular circumstances. Nevertheless, the MPAs will expect applicants to have considered the guidelines and to have discussed with them the relevant factors that are to be taken into account. The MPAs would also expect existing operators to take account of the guidelines when updating existing planning permissions and before submitting new conditions in accordance with the review of mineral planning permissions (Policy M28).

2. CONTENT OF APPLICATIONS

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION

- 2.1 Applicants are encouraged to discuss proposals for mineral workings with officers at the relevant MPA and other organisations before submitting a planning application or new planning conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 2.2 Where the proposed mineral development is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects by virtue of its nature, size or location, the applicant will be expected to undertake an environmental assessment and submit an environmental statement with the planning application. The detailed requirements about when an environmental statement should be prepared and what it should address are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations Circular 15/88. The preparation of environmental statements is an evolving subject and so applicants should aim to adopt best practices in the preparation of environmental statements. For example advice has been produced by the Department of the Environment (Preparation of Environmental Statements for Planning Projects that require Environmental Assessment - A Good Practice Guide), English Nature ('Environmental Assessment - English Nature's Role and a Guide to Best Practice', 1995) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (Practice Advice Note No. 13, September 1995).
- 2.3 Applicants are expected to identify the potential environmental impacts of the proposal and show how these can be satisfactorily avoided or mitigated. Assertions relating to the impact of the proposals should be supported by the evidence for these statements. Indicators should be identified to assess the impact of the proposals if implemented.

FORMS AND PLANS

- 2.4 Applications for mineral workings should comprise the application form supplied by the relevant MPA, a written statement and plans illustrating the matters described. Submitted plans should be up to date and normally include:
- i. a location plan (1:10,000 to 25,000) indicating the site;
 - ii. a site plan (1:1250 or 1:500) illustrating the matters referred to in the description of the site and surrounding area, including existing contours, access and rights of way, buildings and services, hedgerows, watercourses, sensitive sites and features to be protected during working, such as trees;
 - iii. a working plan or plans (1:1250 or 1:500) including the application site boundary, the limit of excavations, storage of topsoil, subsoil and overburden, phasing, drainage, screens, plant, access details, service and watercourse diversions, and other operational matters referred to in the written statement, including any screening and landscaping measures;
 - iv. a site reclamation plan (1:1250 or 1:500) showing the afteruse including planting, fences, hedgerows, watercourses and water features, final contours, access and rights of way, and how any protected features have been incorporated into the scheme;
 - v. cross-sections showing existing levels, final excavation levels and reclamation levels; and,
 - vi. other plans, including a plan to highlight the proposed haulage route(s), sight lines, drawings, photographs including photomontages as appropriate.

NEED

- 2.5 Policy M2 explains that the "need" for minerals will be considered where material planning objections are not outweighed by other planning benefits or when an environmental statement is required. In such cases, the applicant will be expected to set out the special case why the mineral is needed from a particular site. Local, regional or national markets should be identified, together with the latest estimates of available reserves. Sensitive sites will normally be protected from mineral workings and associated development in accordance with Policy M5, unless, amongst other matters, it can be demonstrated that the need for the development and any other benefits outweigh the adverse impacts.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED SITE

- 2.6 Applicants should provide supporting technical information, incorporating adequate detail and geographical coverage, to enable the potential impacts to be readily understood. This information should provide a baseline for the preparation of the working, reclamation and aftercare/management schemes for the site. The assessment should include details relating to the development control and operational considerations referred to in Policy M3 and M4. These matters are discussed in more detail below.

GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

- 2.7 Applications should provide information on the following:
- i. the nature of the mineral to be extracted and the market, supported by detailed borehole information and laboratory analysis of recovered samples;
 - ii. the known extent and depth of the mineral resource in its local geographical context, including information relating to previous workings;
 - iii. the depth, volume, tonnage and distribution of the overburden and mineral to be extracted and, where the site is an extension to an existing site, the volume, tonnage and life of remaining reserves with planning permission;
 - iv. the type, nature, volume and tonnage of any waste materials to be generated, e.g., silt;
 - v. the depth of the water table and any seasonal variations;
 - vi. where working will be close to or below the existing water table or where a water dependent afteruse is proposed, a full hydrological/hydrogeological assessment of the site shall be carried out by a competent person and include an assessment of the impact of the working and reclamation on the surrounding water resources and implications for local abstractors;
 - vii. any excavations and storage mounds should be designed, and their formation supervised, by a competent person in accordance with appropriate Codes of Practice; and,
 - viii. where working could cause instability, e.g. in areas where old mine workings are believed to exist, a stability report should be prepared by a competent person and submitted along with the planning application (further advice is contained in PPG14, MPG2 and MPG12).

SOIL HANDLING

- 2.8 Soils at a site are a vital resource which must be handled to preserve them in as good a condition as possible for future use. An application should include full details of a soil survey carried out at the site, identifying areas of different soil quality where these exist. The application should set out a soil handling strategy which should include:
- i. the area and depth of topsoil and subsoil stripping;
 - ii. the method of soil stripping, moving and replacement including the machinery to be used and measures to prevent the mixing of soils of different characteristics;
 - iii. the proposed timing of operations;
 - iv. the volumes of soils to be stripped in each phase;
 - v. the phasing of stripping, storage and replacement;
 - vi. the location and dimensions of soil storage mounds;
 - vii. the treatment of stored soils, e.g., grass seeding mounds;
 - viii. details of the design and construction of soil storage mounds, to be undertaken by a competent person in accordance with good engineering practice;
 - ix. the depth of topsoil and subsoil to be replaced;
 - x. the treatment of subsoil and topsoil to maintain fertility and prevent compaction, e.g. the application of lime prior to topsoil stripping and any ripping of the different soil layers etc.;
 - xi. the volume of any soil making material to be used if any and where this would be stored; and,
 - xii. the location of unstripped soils and how they will be protected.

LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

- 2.9 An application should demonstrate that the effect of the proposals on the landscape and ecology of the site and surrounding land has been considered when drawing up working and reclamation schemes. The assessment should include:
- i. a description of the site and its surroundings in order to understand the nature of the local environment;
 - ii. a landscape assessment of the site including a survey or contours, existing land uses, drainage within the site and its outfalls, landform features such as hedgerows, woodland etc. rights of way, services, boundary walls and fences and informal public access;
 - iii. an ecological assessment of the site, including the identification of any important habitats or species that are rare and threatened in their own right. The survey work should be carried out at the time of year most appropriate for the habitat or species in question. The assessment should address the implications for biodiversity and the 'Biodiversity Challenge' referred to in Part A, section 3 of the Minerals Local Plan;
 - iv. a record of buildings and structures and of occupied property in the vicinity; and,
 - v. an assessment of views available from residential property and other locations in the short, medium and long distance and where appropriate sight lines or photographic representation of the views.

- 2.10 The application should include the landscaping proposals setting out the main objectives and the management techniques to be employed to achieve these. Amongst other matters, the landscaping scheme should:
- i. identify features to be protected or enhanced such as trees and hedgerows;
 - ii. identify areas of new planting including details of the number, density, species, specification, method of planting and timing of operations; and,
 - iii. specify the location of screen mounds and details of the height of the mound, the gradients of the slopes and any seeding and weeding measures proposed.
- 2.11 The purpose of the measures should be stated explicitly; if measures are designed to screen operations sight lines illustrating their effectiveness should be provided. Landscaping works carried out in advance of, or during, working can provide an opportunity for the early establishment of vegetation and habitats to be incorporated into the reclaimed site. Account should be taken of landscaping and screening requirements when drawing up the application boundary.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

- 2.12 Applicants will need to consider the archaeological interest in the area when preparing planning applications. This will require an assessment of the impact of the proposals on any archaeological remains and their setting (Policy M6). Best practice advice may be found in the CBI Code of Practice for Mineral Operators and applicants should seek advice from the relevant MPA and other bodies such as English Heritage at an early stage. For example, the arrangements for the archaeological assessment should be agreed in writing with the relevant MPA before being carried out by a competent body. The assessment should include a documentary search of records. This may be followed by a field evaluation which could include a walkover and geophysical surveys, small scale excavations, followed by recording and analysis of the finds, before publication of the results and curation of the remains.
- 2.13 Where there is evidence of some archaeological interest, but it is not sufficiently important to refuse planning permission, the applicant will be expected to make appropriate provision for the assessment, including any excavation, recording, analysis, publication and curation of the remains in accordance with a 'project brief' agreed with the relevant MPA.
- 2.14 The MPA will impose planning conditions or seek a planning obligation to provide the necessary assurances that the requirements of the project brief would be met.

ASSESSMENT OF NOISE, DUST AND BLASTING

- 2.15 Noise can have a significant effect on the environment and the quality of life of communities. In accordance with MPG11, proposals for mineral development should include details of the noise predictions and measures to control noise emissions in order to demonstrate that noise emitted from the site would be acceptable. Such evidence should include:
- i. a record of noise sensitive properties or areas of quiet relaxation used by the public in the locality;
 - ii. a survey of background (L90) noise levels at these areas;
 - iii. an identification of noise sources at the site and their nature;
 - iv. measures to be taken to alleviate the transmission of noise from the site;
 - v. noise predictions for each phase of the development, prepared in accordance with BS 5228: 1994 (Noise Control on Construction and Open Sites), modified as appropriate to take account of the local circumstances, and in sufficient detail to show how the predictions were calculated; and,
 - vi. consideration of how noise emitted from audible reversing alarms can be mitigated or avoided.
- 2.16 Normally daytime working that would result in levels either exceeding 55 dB(A) Leq 1 hour or levels over 10 dB(A) above the background level at noise sensitive properties will not be acceptable. Where the applicant is seeking temporary exceptions, for example, during the raising of baffle mounds on the boundary the duration and predicted level of noise at each location should be stated. If the noise arising at the site has any special character, such as a particular quality or is intermittent, this should be stated. Readings must be taken in accordance with the recommendations set out in MPG 11.
- 2.17 Where appropriate, the applicant should include a survey of background dust levels prior to the determination of the planning application. The survey should record dust sensitive properties and be carried out in accordance with a recognised method, for example the 'Best Practice Guide: Dust Monitoring' in the DoE guidance "The Environmental Effects of Dust from Surface Mineral Workings" Vol. 1 1995. The applicant should not only detail the measures to reduce the emission of dust, but should demonstrate how the management of the site will ensure that they will be implemented in practice. This is particularly important with dust as many of the control measures rely on effective management. Where appropriate, the applicant should specify conditions when work will be temporarily suspended, for example during dry, windy weather. Details of weather stations should be included.
- 2.18 If blasting is proposed the application should include an estimate of ground vibration measured as maximum peak particle velocity (p.p.v.) in mm/sec and an estimate of the air over pressure measured in dB which is likely to result at any residential or other sensitive property outside the site boundary. The application should state how the estimates were calculated.
- 2.19 Applicants should submit details of the monitoring procedures at the application stage. The procedures should include the following; the frequency and type of monitoring to be employed; details of the monitoring equipment and how the monitoring equipment will be calibrated; and details of how and when the results will be passed to the relevant MPA and the local Environmental Health Officer.

SITE OPERATIONS

- 2.20 In addition to the information referred to in paragraph 2.4 earlier, applicants should provide the following detailed information about the proposed site operations, accompanied by plans where appropriate (at 1:1250 or 1:500 scale)
- i. details of the method of working, including the quantities of material to be excavated or moved, and phasing plans to indicate the direction and depth of working;
 - ii. a programme of the proposed operations, to explain the duration of each phase of the operations (pre-site preparation, site establishment, working, reclamation and aftercare);
 - iii. where workings are below the water table, whether the site will be pumped or worked wet;
 - iv. the access to the site from the public highway;
 - v. the means of transporting the mineral and overburden within the site identifying the location and gradients of internal haul roads;
 - vi. the machinery to be employed to excavate the mineral and overburden;
 - vii. the hours of operation, distinguishing as appropriate between extraction operations, processing, maintenance, and pumping operations;
 - viii. any lighting proposed;
 - ix. the drainage of the site including, the means of disposing of waste water, drainage courses and discharge points, lagoons, flood protection measures, compensation for any raising of levels within a flood plain, maintenance access to watercourses and works to existing drains/watercourses;
 - x. details of any processing or treatment of minerals to be carried out including the production capacity;
 - xi. the location and external appearance of plant, machinery and buildings, including the type, height, and method of cladding;
 - xii. the location, design, construction and treatment of storage mounds to be undertaken and supervised by a competent person in accordance with good engineering practice;
 - xiii. storage areas;
 - xiv. fuel oils or other polluting material to be stored and measures to prevent pollution;
 - xv. traffic circulation and parking areas;
 - xvi. details of waste produced on site including the nature and volume of waste and the means of disposal;
 - xvii. the location of silt beds;
 - xviii. the diversion of services, rights of way and drainage, the timing of the diversions and whether they are permanent or temporary;
 - xix. the visual impact of security arrangements, including fencing and lighting;
 - xx. number of jobs to be created; and,
 - xxi. any proposals to liaise with local residents.

TRAFFIC

- 2.21 The application should include the anticipated average and maximum number of vehicles visiting the site daily distinguishing between lorries carrying mineral and other vehicles. The application should also include:
- i. details of access onto the highway including sight lines, kerb radii, any vegetation such as hedgerows to be affected and wheel cleaning proposals including location and specification;
 - ii. details of the specification and surfacing of the access road;
 - iii. details of any off site works or improvements to the public highway;
 - iv. details of routes to be taken by traffic arriving at and leaving the site; and,
 - v. where routes of vehicles are to be restricted the application should indicate whether there is a willingness to provide a planning obligation (legal agreement) to that effect.

RECLAMATION

- 2.22 Consistent with Policy M27, the proposed afteruse and means of achieving this should be established at the outset and the reclamation requirements taken account of at every stage of the proposal. Accordingly any application for mineral working will not be permitted without a satisfactory reclamation scheme. Also during the review of existing permissions, there will be opportunities to update reclamation conditions (Policy M28).
- 2.23 An applicant will have to decide on the basic reclamation strategy taking into account the individual circumstances of the site and its surroundings established by the initial survey work. In some cases it will be appropriate to attempt to replicate the existing landform and uses and in others to create new landforms and uses. The applicant should consider what opportunities exist to incorporate features that will have a positive role to play by protecting or where possible enhancing the environment or benefiting the local economy (Policy M7). Schemes could improve public access, provide recreational facilities, protect or enhance landscape features and habitats, assist in the reclamation of derelict land and secure nature conservation, geological and historic interest.
- 2.24 Potential after-uses can include agriculture, woodland, amenity (including nature conservation) or other uses such as formal sports facilities. At the outset consideration should be given to the context of the broader area in which the site is situated and to guidance contained in the Development Plan. The Development Plan includes the County Structure Plan and any Local Plans prepared by the relevant Local Planning Authority. Where development other than agriculture, woodland, nature conservation and informal recreation are proposed, the Local Planning Authority would be responsible for determining any planning application required to implement the subsequent after-use of the reclaimed site. It is therefore advisable to consult with the relevant MPA and the Local Planning Authority (where different), as appropriate, on the suitability of and need for the proposed afteruse and on the possible involvement of the Local Authority in managing the reclaimed site.

- 2.25 The submitted reclamation scheme should where practicable provide for the progressive reclamation of the site and include the following matters:
- i. the proposed afteruse(s);
 - ii. the main objectives of the reclamation scheme;
 - iii. a timetable for implementation;
 - iv. existing features to be retained;
 - v. features created as part of the landscaping and to be incorporated into the reclamation proposals as mature features;
 - vi. phasing;
 - vii. final levels, identifying clearly final excavation levels and where these are to be modified by the grading of undisturbed material, of quarry waste, overburden, or imported material, any allowance for settlement, and, where water areas are proposed, underwater contours and bank profiles;
 - viii. the removal of all plant, stocks, areas of hard standing, roadways, access points etc.;
 - ix. the drainage of the site, including the provision of free draining surfaces before and after spreading with soils;
 - x. the method and machinery to be employed to handle and replace soils;
 - xi. the treatment of compaction by ripping the material to be covered with soils and the subsoil;
 - xii. any amendments to the boundary between the site and surrounding land to better integrate the proposed uses, such as incorporating land into adjacent fields;
 - xiii. the preparation of a seed bed, including stone picking, harrowing, ploughing, and the application of soil ameliorants;
 - xiv. details of seeding including species and the rate and method of application;
 - xv. details of shrub and tree planting including location, density, species, specification, method of planting, protection from pests and stock;
 - xvi. details of field boundaries, fences, hedgerows, gates, stiles, pathways and tracks, and the supply of water;
 - xvii. habitats to be created;
 - xviii. maintenance access to watercourses; and,
 - xix. monitoring and review procedures.
- 2.26 If it is proposed to import material to the site to raise restored levels, details of the nature, quantities, source, origin, availability of the material, timing of the activities, traffic to be generated and routes to be taken must be included in the application. The applicant will be expected to demonstrate that the site is suitable for the type of material proposed. This should include a hydrogeological assessment and an assessment of surrounding land within at least a 250 metre radius of the site including details of dwellings, other development and underground services. The application should include estimates of the future production of leachate and landfill gas and any proposals for their monitoring, treatment and control.

AFTERCARE

- 2.27 Where the proposed afteruse is agriculture, forestry, or an amenity use the MPAs will require a 5 year period of aftercare. Where the site or part of the site is to be restored within 2 years of working commencing the aftercare scheme should accompany the application. In other cases the application should set out the commitment to aftercare and set out the main aftercare strategy to be followed. Aftercare schemes should identify the steps to be carried out, the timing of operations, and who will be responsible for implementing the scheme. The scheme should allow for regular review of progress and for flexibility in responding to circumstances at the site. Further guidance is contained in MPG7.
- 2.28 Details of the aftercare of amenity uses will vary according to the intended use. Where planting is proposed the scheme should include the replacement of damaged stock, protection from pests and livestock, weeding, soil testing and the addition of soil ameliorants.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 2.29 A management plan is often essential to the satisfactory reclamation and the long term afteruse of a site (Policy M27). It is important that the management plan is prepared in consultation with the relevant parties and submitted at the application stage. This will avoid possible uncertainty and conflicts between different uses. The management plan will be a valuable tool to ensure that management objectives influence the design of the working, landscaping and reclamation proposals and will provide guidance for those implementing management objectives in the long term. Where appropriate, the relevant parties will be encouraged to agree to enter into a planning obligation to secure the long term after-use, management and maintenance of the site (Policies M8 and M27).

3. OPERATIONAL CONTROLS

- 3.1 Where planning permission is granted the MPAs will impose restrictions and controls on the development to ensure that the effect of the operations on adjacent areas is not unacceptable and the site is restored beneficially. Where an operator wishes to depart from the details set out in his application and in the conditions imposed this must be previously agreed in writing with the relevant MPA and advice will be given on whether formal approval or consent is required.

DURATION

- 3.2 The MPAs will normally impose a time limit on the duration of extraction at the site and specify the period within which reclamation must be carried out following the cessation of extraction. Where no specific limit is imposed, the life of the site is automatically limited to 60 years.

PROGRESSIVE WORKING AND RECLAMATION

- 3.3 Site operations should be designed to minimise the area of the site disturbed at any one time. Where possible working should take place in orderly phases and reclamation should take place progressively behind the extraction area. The area stripped of soils in advance of working should be kept to a minimum.

HOURS

- 3.4 Limits will be imposed on the hours of operation at the site. Potentially noisy operations such as soil stripping and the construction of baffle mounds on the boundary may be subject to special limits. Working on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and Bank and other National Holidays will not normally be permitted.

ARCHAEOLOGY

- 3.5 Where significant archaeological remains may exist on the site and the decision has been made to allow the development to proceed conditions will be imposed to preserve or record the remains (Policy M6). Amendments to the scheme may be required to exclude certain areas, to allow for further archaeological investigations in advance of working, or for a watching brief by an approved archaeologist. Where there is a watching brief, the operator must give sufficient advance notice of soil stripping to allow an archaeologist to be present and time for the recording and investigation of remains found. In these circumstances the working scheme should be flexible enough to allow for the notification procedures and temporary cessation of working in particular areas. In practice, a good working relationship between the archaeologist and staff at the quarry will help minimise inconvenience. The operator will be expected to fund the cost of investigations and subsequent work.

NOISE

- 3.6 Generally, modern planning conditions include limits on noise levels emanating from the site measured at noise sensitive properties in the vicinity and areas enjoyed by the public for quiet enjoyment. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that they are adopting the best practical means to minimise the emission of noise. For example these could include measures to avoid carrying out noisy operations for long periods, maintaining all plant, vehicles and machinery and providing them where appropriate with silencers and acoustic housing. Also, the potential for disturbance from noise can be minimised at the design stage by siting potentially intrusive operations away from noise sensitive areas or behind screening features, and avoiding excessive gradients on haul roads. Further advice is contained in MPG11.

DUST

- 3.7 The control of dust follows the same approach as for noise. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they are adopting the best practical means to minimise the emission of dust. For example, measures to minimise dust when transporting the mineral from the face to the processing plant, moving overburden and soils, processing, treatment, preparation and stocking of the mineral, and dust arising from all vehicle movements at the site. Consideration of all these aspects can make a difference in dust minimisation. Techniques to reduce the emission of dust may include the spraying of areas regularly used by vehicles, sweeping permanent surfaces regularly, fitting vehicles with exhausts pointing away from the ground, dust suppression on relevant plant, and in adverse weather conditions reducing the speed of vehicles, temporarily re-routing vehicles, and temporarily stopping dust producing activities. Further advice is currently contained in MPG3.

BLASTING

- 3.8 Ground vibration from blasting has the potential to cause damage to buildings. A more likely impact is nuisance caused to local residents from ground vibration or air overpressure. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they are adopting the best practical means to minimise the adverse environmental effects of blasting. Where practicable alternative techniques such as ripping and hydraulic fracturing should be considered. Where blasting is to take place, vibration levels experienced at adjacent property will be restricted. Blasting should be confined to specified hours and will not normally be acceptable before 9 a.m. or after 4.30 p.m. or at weekends. Blasts should be designed as far as practicable to minimise the adverse effects caused by ground vibrations and air overpressure. When entering a new area, a monitored test blast should be carried out. Secondary blasting will not normally be permitted. Good practice would include notifying local residents of the anticipated frequency and hours of blasting and of warning procedures such as sirens. Further advice and guidance is contained in MPG3 and MPG9.

MONITORING

- 3.9 An objective of the Minerals Local Plan is to encourage applicants to adopt sensitive working practices (Policy M1(ii)). Applicants should be prepared to demonstrate their commitment to effective environmental management by carrying out regular monitoring and reporting the results to the relevant MPA in accordance with an agreed environmental monitoring scheme. The scheme should contain the monitoring results, details of any non-compliance and complaints received and remedial action taken to improve environmental performance. These arrangements will be secured by planning condition or planning obligation.

SOIL HANDLING

- 3.10 Soils will be a vital resource in achieving high quality restoration. It will therefore be important that applicants can demonstrate that they will adopt the best practices when handling and storing soils. The measures to be adopted should be incorporated into a soil handling scheme agreed with the relevant MPA. For example, the scheme should include an up to date inventory which should be kept of all soils distinguishing between topsoil and subsoil and soils of different quality which must be handled and stored separately; details of the method of ensuring that soils are only stored in the agreed locations; sufficient provision for the storage of topsoil, subsoil and soil making material; details of the design of storage mounds (topsoil storage mounds should not normally exceed 3 metres in height and where located on the site periphery should be profiled to reduce their visual impact by not exceeding a slope of 1 in 3 on the outside face and varying their height; details about seeding (soil storage mounds should be seeded with low maintenance grass and kept weed free).
- 3.11 During handling soils may be damaged in three main ways: mixing and loss of soil; compaction caused by the passage of heavy machinery; and by smearing caused by wheel slippage and blades of the excavator. The soil handling scheme should therefore provide details about the technique to be adopted to minimise the amount of handling involved. Ideally stripped soils would be placed directly on to land being reclaimed to avoid double handling and long term storage. The movement of soils from one storage area to another will not normally be acceptable. Soils must only be handled when in dry and friable or compaction will result. It is good practice to review requirements for soil handling towards the end of the summer months to anticipate requirements for the winter and spring.

- 3.12 The soil handling scheme should also address the method of stripping and replacement and the machinery to be used in order to minimise vehicles running over soils. If earthscrapers are used to pick up and replace soils the single row method should be used; this involves running over reinstated soils but keeping to one set of wheel tracks when placing each layer. Decompaction by ripping will still be required. An alternative is to use a dump truck and loader; in this situation soil is stripped by a shovel or back actor and transported by dump truck avoiding unstripped areas and a similar method used when replacing soils. The success of the dump truck and loader method depends upon arranging the operations so that restored soils are not trafficked by the machines. Subsoiling or ripping will normally be required to relieve compaction. Details of the spacing and depth of the tines should be specified. Subsoil slits tend to gather water so it is important that they run downslope and issue into an effective drainage outlet to avoid water accumulating in them.

LANDSCAPING

- 3.13 The operator will carry out the agreed landscaping scheme. The operator will need to protect and manage trees, hedgerows, water areas and other features either retained or established during the life of the site. The successful management of these areas will make more effective any screening effects and provide for the reclaimed landform to contain more mature features than would otherwise have been the case.
- 3.14 Stockpiles and overburden mounds shall be located to minimise their environmental impact. Overburden mounds in place for more than 18 months should be appropriately landscaped as soon as possible after construction.

DRAINAGE AND WATER POLLUTION

- 3.15 A drainage scheme should accompany a planning application. During the life of the site drains and watercourses can suffer from erosion and silting and so the operators environmental management system will be important. Operators will need to demonstrate that they have made provision for regular inspection and maintenance so that the drainage of surrounding land is not adversely affected. It should be normal practice to incorporate silt traps before discharging water from the site. A discharge licence is likely to be required from the Environment Agency. In order to prevent pollution all fuels and oils stored at the site should be contained within impervious bunds with a capacity 10% greater than the largest tank contained and all tanks fitted with lockable valves which must be contained within the bund walls. Operators should be able to demonstrate that they are adopting best practice advice, in this respect, from the Environment Agency.

FENCING

- 3.16 Sites must be secured to prevent accidental access and to discourage unauthorised access. Dangerous areas such as water lagoons may require additional safeguards. Details of the appearance of such fencing, when visible from outside the site, should be agreed with the relevant MPA.

ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT

- 3.17 In accordance with Policy M10, which refers to ancillary development associated with mineral working, fixed plant, buildings, storage, stocking and parking areas should as far as possible be located within the mineral site where it should be well screened from the surrounding area. Details of the appearance and location of the plant area should form part of the application. Where appropriate the MPAs will require their prior approval for

additional plant or amendments to the agreed details. Fixed plant and buildings should be adequately maintained for the life of the site. As equipment is repaired or replaced the operator should incorporate the best practice advice to reduce the emission of noise and dust, notwithstanding compliance with restrictions placed on the planning permission. Consideration should also be given to the effect of traffic to and from the site.

HIGHWAY ISSUES

- 3.18 Policy M11 refers to the transport of minerals on the highway network. However problems can arise even before vehicles have left the site. Poorly designed and maintained site roads can cause problems in terms of noise disturbance, dust arising, and dust and mud being carried on to the public highway. The potential for these problems should be minimised by providing an even and durable surface such as concrete or tarmac which can be swept, the regular repair of the surface to avoid potholes, and the sweeping of the road as required. It is desirable that the entire length of the access road is so treated. In some circumstances, where the access road is long and remote from housing for instance, only some of the road may need this treatment but in any event the first 50 metres should be surfaced. Wheel cleaning facilities should normally be provided at the start of the access track. All lorries leaving the site carrying minerals, except dimension stone, should be sheeted. Finally access to the site must be limited to that specified in the planning application.
- 3.19 Where appropriate restrictions will be placed on the number of lorries leaving the site daily. In this event operators will be required to supply details of lorry movements.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

- 3.20 Where public rights of way are to be diverted or stopped up the relevant Orders should be obtained in good time and diversions provided should be adequately maintained. Where a public right of way crosses an access road, signs should be erected to warn both drivers and the public. Care should be taken to maintain all rights of way (Policy M3(x)).

4. RECLAMATION, AFTERCARE AND MANAGEMENT

GENERAL

- 4.1 Mineral working should only take place in the context of an approved reclamation scheme setting out afteruses and a programme of implementation (Policy M27). Taking account of the reclamation requirements during site operations will help ensure a high standard of reclamation and can avoid handling and other costs at a later stage. Those directly responsible for day to day site management should be aware of the objectives and programme of action arising from the various schemes approved for landscaping, soil management, reclamation, aftercare, and management and of their responsibility for carrying these out. It is good practice to keep a copy of the planning permission and all approved plans and documents for reference at the site.
- 4.2 The reclamation scheme where practicable should provide for the progressive working and reclamation of the site. Opportunities for retaining existing features such as hedgerows and woodland within the site should have been identified in the reclamation plan but as working progresses further opportunities to preserve existing features of value can arise and these should be incorporated into the reclamation scheme. The retention of such features could bring a number of benefits such as lending maturity to a newly restored landform, screening

operations, maintaining habitats of value to wildlife and as a source of seeds for the recolonisation of the site. The operator should be aware of the need to manage and where appropriate enhance such areas during the life of the site to produce as high a quality of reclamation as possible (Policy M7).

- 4.3 Monitoring and review of the reclamation and aftercare should form part of the process of reclaiming the site. Provision could be made for the establishment of trial plots to test the suitability of different techniques or species on the site; the results of such trials should be available before reclamation proper commences. In any event the aftercare scheme, whether for the whole site or for an individual phase should be submitted at least 6 months prior to the intended date of implementation.

AGRICULTURAL RECLAMATION

- 4.4 Policy M7 recognises that the moves to diversify the local economy are leading a gradual shift away from agriculture as the most likely afteruse for mineral workings towards other uses such as the amenity uses discussed below.
- 4.5 The MPAs will expect all land to be restored to agriculture to be left reasonably fit for that use but where the proposal involves the reclamation to agriculture of land that was previously high quality agricultural land, i.e., MAFF grades 1, 2, and 3a, reclamation should be to land of a similar high standard. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's advice will be sought at the outset and a statement of physical characteristics should be provided against which the success of the final reclamation will be judged.
- 4.6 Following the replacement of subsoils and topsoils to the agreed depth and in the correct sequence and measures to relieve compaction, the seedbed should be prepared with the removal of obstacles to cultivation, harrowing, stone picking, soil testing, and the application of fertilisers and lime as required. The initial reclamation of the site will also include the provision of field boundaries, water supplies, adequate drainage, and means of agricultural access and public rights of way including details of field gates, stiles and the width and surfacing of such routes. Mineral extraction should not be seen as an opportunity to create larger field units unless there is a special justification. Field boundaries should normally consist of hedgerows and hedgerow trees planted in the first available planting season. In accordance with Policy M7, the MPAs will encourage the incorporation of features to enhance the landscape and wildlife diversity where this is appropriate and can be satisfactorily managed.
- 4.7 The 5 year aftercare period will commence when reclamation is complete. The purpose of the aftercare period is to achieve a good state of cultivation and fertility to the agreed standard. The land will normally be seeded with a pioneer grass crop with a proportion of nitrogen fixing clover in the first year. Other crops may be planted by agreement. The introduction of stock must be controlled; the use of cattle or horses in the initial years will not normally be acceptable. It is recommended that the site is reviewed annually on site with MAFF and the relevant MPA. The soil should be tested annually and soil ameliorants added as required. Surface drains must be maintained and under drainage installed as required. All planting must be maintained annually with the replacement of losses and the maintenance of protection from pests and stock. Further advice is currently contained in MPG7, Annex 5.

FORESTRY

- 4.8 Proposals for new woodland planting must be compatible with the surrounding landform and landscape; in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin broadleaved species will often be preferable although in some locations, mixed planting containing conifers will be acceptable. Where new woodland is the proposed after-use emphasis should be given to establishing the correct ground conditions (especially drainage). Best practice advice should be established from relevant sources such as the MPAs' Countryside and Forestry Officers and the Forestry Commission. For example, current best practice advice indicates that slopes should normally not be slacker than 1 in 10 and not steeper than 1 in 5. To provide slopes of 1 in 10 on sites with gentler slopes the Forestry Commission recommends a system of ridges and furrows. Slopes between 1 in 5 to 1 in 2 should be benched at 20 metre intervals to reduce the risk of erosion. As waterlogging is one of the main causes of tree loss on restored sites it is important that the restored ground is not compacted. Best practice advice indicates that where practicable a system of loose tipping is preferable to loosening compacted ground by deep ripping. Details of service roads and tracks and access points should be provided. Consideration should be given to multiple uses such as nature conservation, the conservation of historic and archaeological sites, and informal recreation. Further guidance is currently contained in MPG7, Annex 6.

AMENITY USES

- 4.9 Amenity uses include recreation, nature conservation and enhancements to the landscape such as amenity tree planting; such uses can be established in combination with agriculture and forestry and with other amenity uses. The physical and management requirements of the intended afteruse must be established when the proposals are drawn up and have been built into the submitted working and reclamation schemes.
- 4.10 It is desirable for reclamation schemes to include where appropriate measures to increase the variety of habitats of value to wildlife and to create habitats now dwindling because of changing land use practices, ('Biodiversity Challenge - An Agenda for Conservation in the UK' highlights 13 habitats which can be found in the Plan area). The choice of habitats to be created should be guided by what is practical and feasible, using best practice advice. Some habitats, such as peatland and ancient woodland, are complex and have evolved over a long period and would be difficult or impossible to create or recreate once disturbed. The operator should demonstrate the feasibility of the intended afteruse and should not use new habitat creation to justify the destruction of remaining non-recreatable semi natural communities.
- 4.11 Where open water areas are proposed with a nature conservation afteruse including wildfowl, the details of the physical features to be created should include:
- i. schemes to provide a diversity of habitats, e.g. deep and shallow water, seasonal wetland areas, islands, grass and woodland;
 - ii. a clear indication of where the final topography is to be created by the final excavations and where regrading is required;
 - iii. the location of any extensive areas of shallow water where it is intended to provide feeding for wildfowl. The water areas should be between 5 cms and 1.5 metres deep. The shoreline has the greatest potential to create these shallows. Making a bank gradient as gentle as possible, e.g. 1 in 15, and continuing this below water level will allow a succession of wetland species. Where marginal vegetation needs to be

contained a sharp change in gradient to a depth greater than 2 metres may be desirable. Shallow scrapes on low lying land at the edge of the lake can also provide sites for food production;

- iv. the shorelines should be indented with a number of bays and peninsulars;
 - v. islands should be created to provide secure nesting places for birds. Such islands should have a low profile with gently sloping shores and a semi-circular shape with the mouth facing away from the prevailing wind;
 - vi. the variety of underwater habitats to be created during reclamation. This can be achieved by covering the bed of the water area with different materials such as gravel, sand, and large rocks. Where the site is worked dry soils can be spread over parts of the bed of the water area to provide a boost to biological productivity;
 - vii. the measures to prevent disturbance such as screening barriers for example, banks, ditches and planting. Approaches to observation points should also be screened; and,
 - viii. the measures to be taken to establish vegetation on the surrounding land and in the water. Islands, banks and surrounding areas should be spread with soils and sown with the appropriate grass and wild flower seed mixes as soon practicable. Schemes should include areas of open grass for grazing and tree and shrub planting. In nesting areas such as islands the priority should be the establishment of grasses and shrubs rather than trees. Consideration should be given to the method of establishing vegetation and the practicalities of any reliance on natural colonisation and transplanting.
- 4.12 Where the afteruse involves recreational uses different criteria will apply to the design and management of the reclaimed site according to the particular afteruse activity. For example sailing requires minimum water depths of 1.5 metres on a large water area with as few indentations as possible and earth mounding and planting should be designed to avoid wind shadow. The Sports Council can give advice on the requirements of particular sports.
- 4.13 There may be opportunities to provide more than one use at a site. Multiple use has the advantage of providing a wider base from which to generate income or attract grant aid, and of meeting a range of demands. There is a danger of conflict between different uses and multiple uses will only be acceptable if the uses can be satisfactorily integrated or segregated by careful design and management. Segregation can be achieved by spatially separating uses, e.g., by providing a series of lakes or by introducing seasonal restrictions. Amenity woodland frequently provides opportunities to integrate uses such as timber production, nature conservation, informal public access and even education.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

- 4.14 A management plan is required to accompany any reclamation scheme incorporating amenity uses because of possible conflicts with other uses and the need to ensure that the proposed use is sustainable in the long term (Policy M27). If the operator does not own the freehold of the site or where it is envisaged that another body be involved in the management of the site, the owner and other relevant parties should contribute to the design of the proposal.

- 4.15 A management plan should be produced in accordance with best practice advice available in relation to particular afteruses, but would normally include a number of steps:
- i. set out the main management objectives for the site, identifying separate objectives for each main component such as woodland and wetland;
 - ii. set out how and when these objectives will be achieved by setting out clear management programmes for each of the main components at the site including an outline description of maintenance operations envisaged during the years following the initial 5 years aftercare;
 - iii. identify criteria by which to assess performance;
 - iv. set out a timetable of operations, identify who will carry out the management, what resources are required at different stages, and how these resources will be provided;
 - v. Consider site management in 3 distinct timescales, i.e. during working, e.g., the protection and enhancement of existing woodland and landscape planting, during reclamation and the 5 year aftercare period, and a consideration of management objectives for the period following reclamation and aftercare.
 - vi. Consider the detailed management of areas reclaimed after working and all areas of landscaping including existing features to be retained.
 - vii. Provide for the monitoring and review of the reclamation and management, identifying critical review periods such as the reclamation of the site or a phase, or on change of ownership or control.

5. LOCAL LIAISON COMMITTEES

- 5.1 Because of the often controversial nature of mineral extraction activities and the need to ensure continued liaison between local residents, the relevant MPA and the operating company during the operational life of a site, the MPAs have sought where appropriate to establish Local Liaison Committees.
- 5.2 These committees are used as a basis for providing information to local residents on progress of site activities and reclamation, providing a means of feedback for local residents regarding problems that may be experienced in the locality and as a means of investigating general environmental improvements that may be implemented during the working life of a mineral site.
- 5.3 The MPAs see such Liaison Committees as being useful in fulfilling the above roles and will seek to ensure that such committees are established where appropriate.

Note: Compliance with these guidelines does not remove the obligation to comply with any requirements of other regulations, such as the Authorisation of Prescribed Processes under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, or the terms of planning conditions, or Legal Agreements/ Planning Obligations.

Account has been taken of advice on best practice available elsewhere in preparing these guidelines and acknowledgement is made to Dorset Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Further advice is available from Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG's) prepared by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), from trade organisations and interest groups.

GLOSSARY

After-use	The ultimate use after mineral working e.g. agriculture, forestry, amenity (including nature conservation), industrial or other development.
Aggregate	Material used in construction work or as fill consisting of rock crushed by nature (sands and gravels) or crushed by man (quarried rock which is then crushed on site).
Allocated	Site Sites which are generally well defined and where there is an implied presumption in favour of their being developed during the Plan period.
Best practice	Using the latest advice, taking account of recent experience and lessons learnt, should ensure that environmental impacts are minimised. The advice is continually changing and practitioners need to keep as up to date as possible. Government supports the adoption of the most advanced technical solutions that can be cost-effectively applied. In terms of pollution control the "BATNEEC" principle is applied (best available technique not entailing excessive cost). BATNEEC should also be used to determine the "best practical environmental option" (BPEO).
Biodiversity	Summarises the phrase biological diversity - the variety of life around us (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, plants, fungi, and other micro-organisms).
Biogeographical elements	Used to describe different vegetation characteristics, e.g. Mediterranean, Eurasian, Arctic and Alpine.
Borrow pit	Mineral working sites related solely to providing some of the mineral requirements of an adjacent construction project.
Cumulative Impact	Relates to the capacity of the environment to absorb the impact of mineral development. It includes consideration of past, present and permitted future mineral development.
Critical natural capital resource	Relates to sustainable development and the ability to live on the earth's income rather than eroding its capital. (Government White Paper - 'This Common Inheritance', para 4.4)
Development Plan	The Minerals Local Plan forms part of a series of Plans produced by the local planning authorities (the County Council, the five district councils and Telford & Wrekin Council) which together form the 'development plan' for Shropshire. Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that applications or appeals should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Deposit draft	A formal stage in the plan preparation process. The Plan is “placed on deposit”, i.e. advertised and made available for comments to be made during a 6 week objection period. A Local Plan Inquiry may be held and the Plan may be modified before it is “adopted” by the Planning Authority.
Dimension Stone	High quality building stone used in architectural work.
Environment Agency	A new organisation established on 1st April 1996, taking over responsibilities from the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and the Waste Regulation Authorities.
Environmental appraisal	A method of systematically evaluating the environmental implications of policies.
Environmental Management Systems	A systematic procedure recommended by the Government to the minerals industry. The procedures involve the establishment of a corporate environmental statement, environmental site assessment, regular environmental monitoring and auditing.
Fire Clay	Clay found in association with coal deposits used in the refractory industry and in brick making.
Green Belt	A statutory planning designation affecting land around large urban areas, designed to control urban sprawl and protect the countryside.
High Specification Aggregates (HSA's)	High Specification Aggregates are used for road surfacing, construction and maintenance. The materials provide high levels of road surface skidding resistance and durability and are regarded by the Government as of national importance.
Landbank	A stock of planning permissions in the Plan area for the winning and working of minerals. It is usually expressed in years - see Permitted Reserves.
Mitigation measures	Measures to reduce, avoid, or remedy any adverse environmental impacts caused by development proposals.
MPAs	Mineral Planning Authorities. The MPAs in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. MPGs Minerals Planning Guidance Notes - Government guidance for the planning control of mineral workings.
Non-operational quarry	A quarry with planning permission for minerals extraction but not currently in production.
Permitted development	Certain development, listed in the Town and Country Planning (General Development) Order 1995, is treated as though planning permission is granted without the need to submit an application for planning permission. Any permitted development is subject to limitations and conditions.
Permitted Reserves	Saleable minerals in the ground with planning permission for winning and working. Usually expressed in million tonnes. See Landbank.

PFA	Pulverised Fuel Ash: The main waste material produced by coalfired power stations. It is often deposited in stockpiles or lagoons.
Preferred Area	An area of known resource, proven by survey information, where planning permission might reasonably be anticipated, subject to all other considerations being met. The identification of a preferred area indicates that, should it be necessary to develop a new site, then the first area of search should be within the preferred area.
Primary minerals	Naturally occurring minerals, unlike secondary aggregates for example which are recycled materials (see secondary materials)
Primary Route Network	The principal roads identified in the Plan area (motorway, trunk roads and certain "A" class roads) referred to the County Council's or Telford & Wrekin's Transport Policies and Programmes (TPP)
PPG's	Planning Policy Guidance Notes - Government planning policy guidance
Ramsar Site	A wetland of international nature conservation importance. The UK is a signatory to the 1971 'Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially of waterfowl habitat'. This convention was agreed at Ramsar in Iran.
Reclamation	Reclamation is defined in MPG7 (para 7) as "operations which are associated with the winning and working of minerals and which are designed to return the area to an acceptable environmental condition, whether for resumption of the former use or for a new use. Reclamation includes both restoration and aftercare."
Scoping	An initial stage in determining the nature and potential scale of the environmental impacts arising from the proposed development. It is used to assess what further studies are required to establish the significance of the impacts.
Secondary materials / aggregates	The re-use of construction materials, e.g., from demolition or road maintenance or the use or reprocessing of waste materials from other industries, e.g., power station ash or colliery spoil.
Sensitive working practices	Best practices adopted by the mineral developer and also demonstrating a sensitivity to local issues and concerns related to the development activities. Being responsive to complaints and taking positive steps to avoid the possibility of complaints.
Sustainable development	Government guidance regards sustainable development as development which combines economic growth with the care for the environment.
WMRAWP	West Midlands Regional Aggregates Working Party consisting of representatives of the Department of the Environment, Minerals Industry and Mineral Planning Authorities.

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SUBJECT AREAS

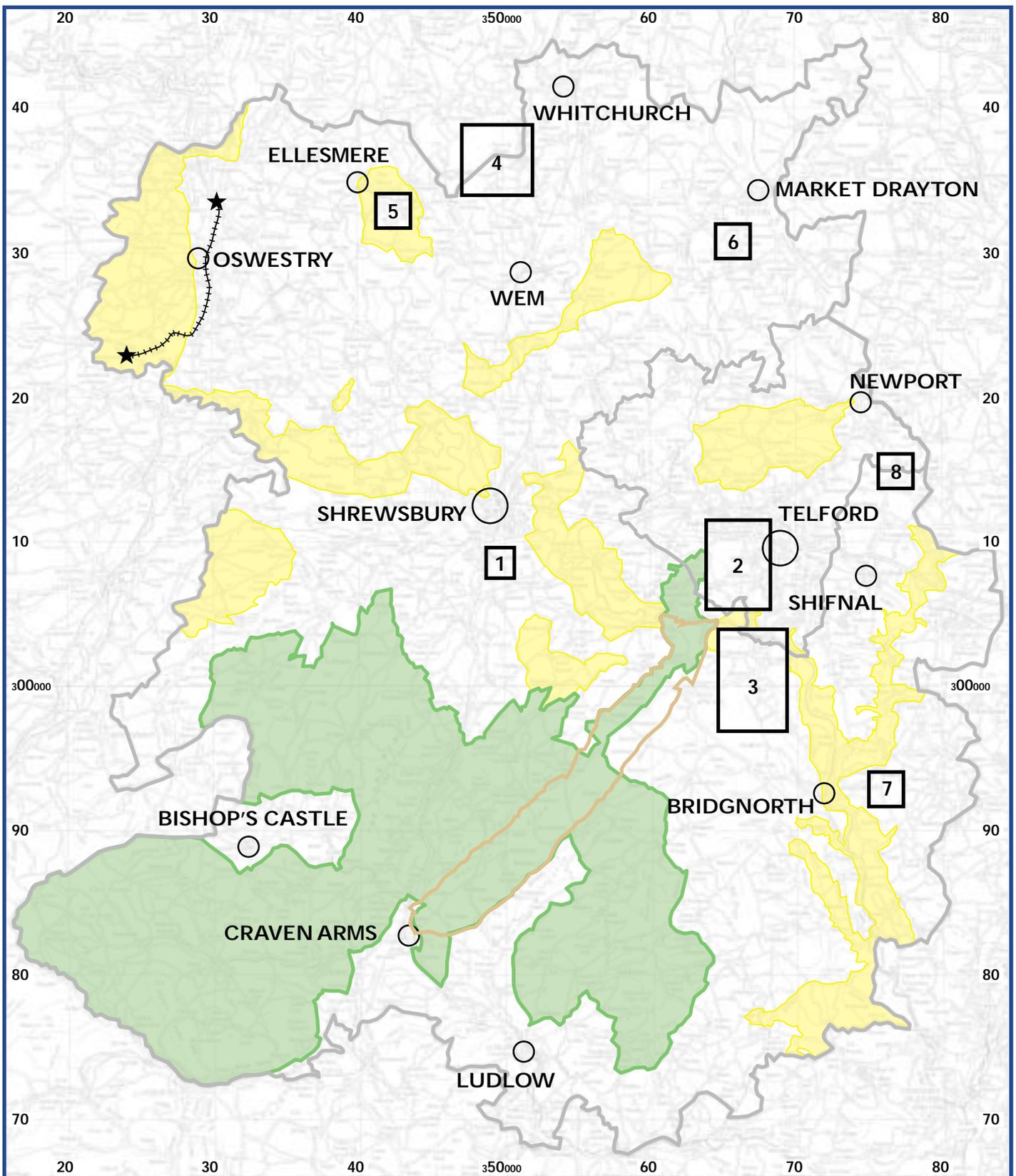
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SHROPSHIRE, TELFORD & WREKIN Minerals Local Plan 1996 to 2006 (Adopted Plan - April 2000)

NOTATION

Inset maps:

- 1 **Bayston Hill Railway Sidings**
Policy M11 Transport of Minerals
- 2 **South Western Telford**
Policy M21 Coal and Fire Clay Working
- 3 **Broseley - Shirlett**
Policy M21 Coal and Fire Clay Working
- 4 **Whixall Moss** Policy M23 Peat Working
- 5 **Wood Lane Deepening** (near Ellesmere)
Policy M14
- 6 **Tern Hill Extension** (near Market Drayton)
Policy M14
- 7 **Barnsley Lane** (near Bridgnorth) Policy M14
- 8 **Woodcote Wood** (near Newport) Policy M14

Plan Boundary
(the Shropshire administrative area)

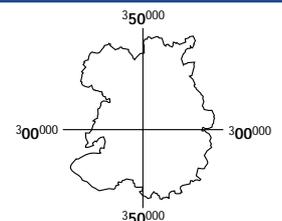
The policies in the Plan (M1 to M30, excluding policies M14, M18 and parts of policy M21 and M23) apply to the whole of the Plan area.

Gobowen to Blodwell branch line (near Oswestry)

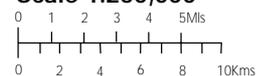
Wenlock Edge
Policy M18 Limestone Quarrying on Wenlock Edge

The Shropshire Hills
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Policy M5(B) Protecting Nationally Important Sites and Species

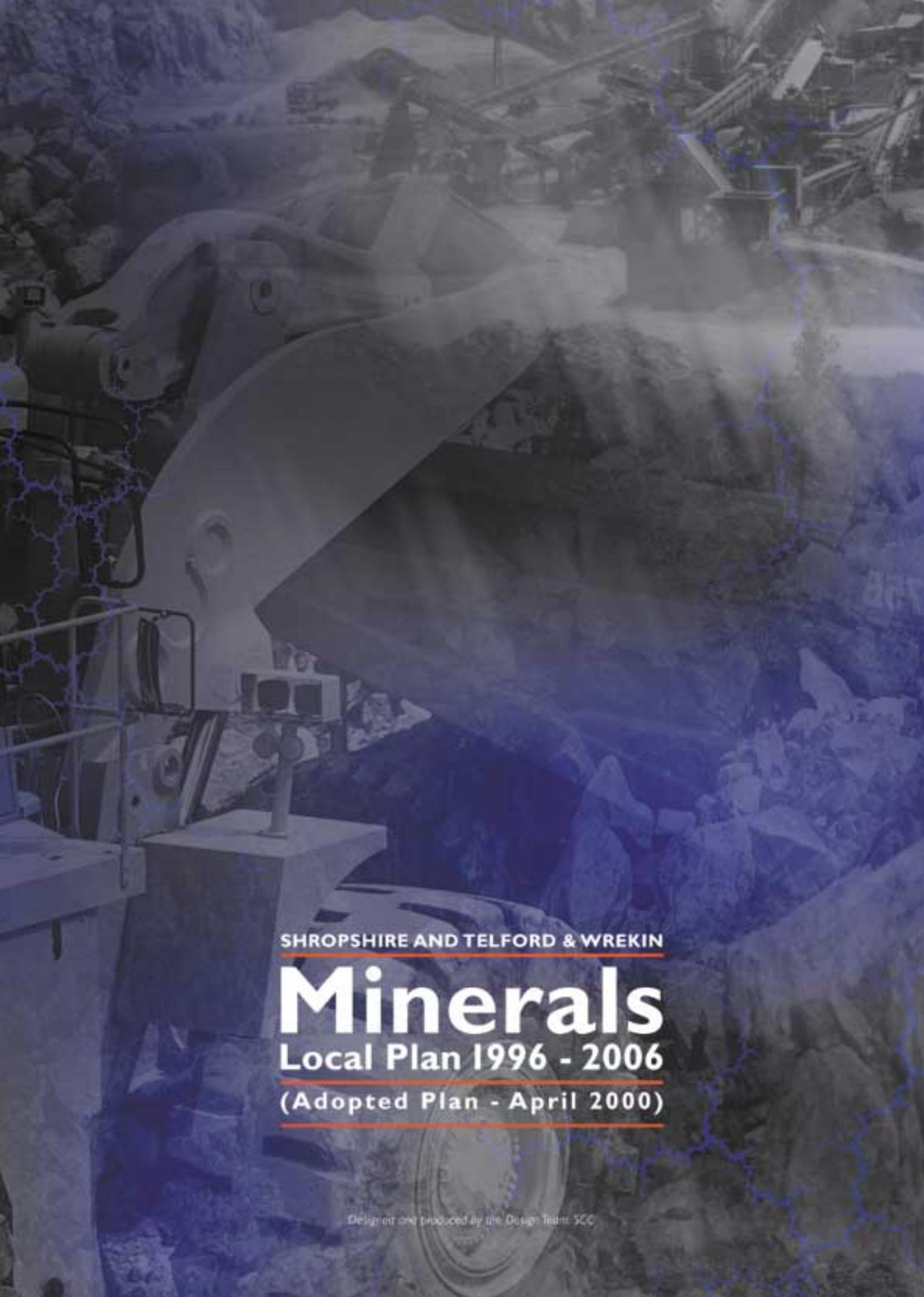
The Areas of Special Landscape Character
Policy M5(C) Protecting Regionally or Locally Important Sites and Species



Scale 1:250,000



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SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN

Minerals

Local Plan 1996 - 2006
(Adopted Plan - April 2000)

Designed and produced by the Design Team, SCC