

Technical Paper - Minerals

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1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this technical paper is to show how the Council has prepared policies in the Local Plan consistent with its role as a mineral planning authority. It assesses the national and regional context for plan making, considers the existing mineral resource and then articulates the suite of policies that arise from local considerations. The technical paper analyses the representations received and explains why it was necessary to prepare some minor modifications.

1.2 This technical paper should be read alongside additional background documents. These have been referred to and quoted where relevant. It does not intend to repeat what is contained in these other documents.

1.3 For assistance in reading this paper it is helpful to clarify what the following terms mean:

- **Reserves or mineral reserves/permitted reserves** refer to a resource which has a valid planning permission for working that mineral. Without a valid planning permission no mineral working can legally take place and the inherent value of a resource cannot be released. These **reserve/permitted** areas have undergone appropriate assessments by the operators to demonstrate that the quality and quantity of the mineral can be estimated to a level of confidence which could reasonably justify planning permission being granted.
- A **landbank** is a stock of planning permissions and is commonly quoted for aggregates. It is composed of the sum of all permitted reserves at active and inactive sites at a given point in time.

2 Review of national, regional and local factors that have informed planning policy

Review of national policy

2.1 There is a comprehensive set of national guidance that informs how mineral resources are to be planned for. This has and will continue to evolve over time. There are two main planning policy documents at the national level that inform how local authorities should plan for minerals, these are the:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (the PPG)

2.2 The Managed Aggregates Supply System that was once relevant policy has been superseded by the PPG.

National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF)

2.3 The NPPF provides the framework which local authorities must use when planning for minerals. It states that in preparing Local Plans Local Authorities should:

- identify and include policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance in their area;

- take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials;
- define Minerals Safeguarding Areas;
- safeguard existing, planned and potential transport for minerals;
- safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for concrete batching, the manufacture of coated materials, other concrete products and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material.
- set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practicable and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place;
- set out environmental criteria, to ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health,
- when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction; and
- put in place policies to ensure worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity,

Planning Practice Guidance (the PPG)

2.4 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance adds further context to the NPPF and brings together extensive technical guidance for mineral extraction in plan making and the application process to support the Council's plan making functions. The thrust of its guidance is as follows:

- planning for minerals has a number of special circumstances not present in other development - minerals can only be extracted where they naturally occur; working is a temporary use of land though often over a long period; working can have environmental effects some of which can be mitigated; and minerals operations need to be monitored;
- Councils should adopt a systematic approach for safeguarding minerals resources to ensure that non-minerals development does not needlessly prevent future extraction of resources of local and national importance;
- safeguarding should be defined in designated areas and urban areas where necessary to do so;
- planning authorities should plan to safeguard existing, planned and potential storage, handling and transport sites too; and
- Councils must take a comprehensive range of environmental issues into account in planning for minerals. Separation distances/buffer zones may be appropriate in specific circumstances too where it is clear that a certain distance is required between the boundary of the minerals extraction area and occupied residential property.

Other key components of the regional position to inform the policy direction locally

2.5 In addition to the foregoing national advice, local policy needs to be informed by:

- National and regional guidelines for aggregates provision in England 2005-2020, (CLG 2009);
- Entec UK Ltd (2010) Assessing sand and gravel sites for allocation in Shropshire sub region;
- Entec UK Ltd (2010) Assessing sand and gravel sites for allocation in the Shropshire sub region – Addendum to the site assessment report;

- Minerals Safeguarding Areas for Shropshire including Telford and Wrekin BGS Study (BGS 2008);
- British Geological Survey (1998) Mineral Resource Information for Development Plans: Phase 1: Shropshire Resources and Constraints (including Telford & Wrekin);
- The West Midland Regional Aggregate Working Party (WMRAWP) annual reports (2008 and 2010);
- The West Midlands Aggregate Working Party (WMAWP) annual reports (2011 and 2012); and
- Local Aggregate Assessment 2014 (LAA), conducted with Shropshire Council.

2.6 At present, the Council relies on relevant national policy and regional data, saved policies of the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Joint Structure Plan, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Minerals Local Plan, the Wrekin Local Plan and other pertinent guidance for the assessment of minerals proposals.

2.7 There are now only two active mines and quarries in the borough. These are:

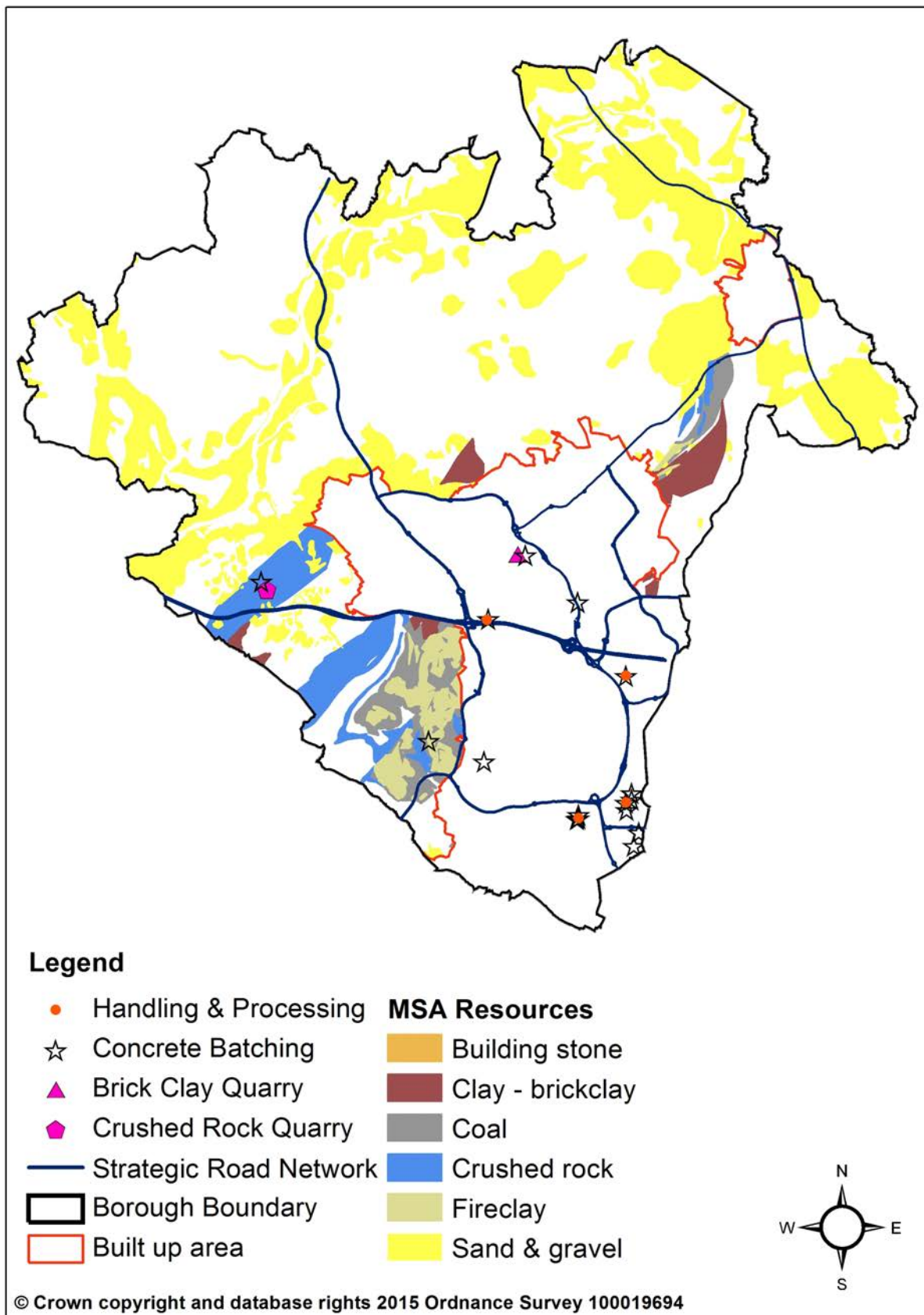
- Blockleys Brick Limited – New Hadley Brickpit – Clay and Shale
- Breedon Aggregates England Limited – Leaton Quarry – Igneous and Metamorphic rock

2.8 The last fireclay and coal mine in the borough at Huntington Lane, New Works, west of Wellington closed in 2013.

3 Review of mineral resources in Telford & Wrekin

3.1 Map 1 below (based on the British Geological Survey) provides an assessment of the geology of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin and the location of the borough's existing quarries and aggregates related facilities. It can be seen that the geology is predominantly sand and gravel to the north with the south and west areas made up of crushed rock, coal and clay.

Map 1 British Geological Survey of Telford & Wrekin and existing minerals related infrastructure



3.2 Although various types of minerals are present these are not all mined and there is no presumption that they will be mined in the future. However, in the interests of good planning it is necessary to identify those that exist. Therefore minerals reviewed in this section are:

- Aggregate minerals
- Industrial minerals
- Energy minerals
- Secondary aggregate minerals

3.1 Aggregate minerals

Crushed Rock

3.3 Crushed rock is one of the main types of aggregate (the other being sand and gravel). It is generally used for road surfacing products. Crushed rock involves the principal remaining igneous rocks and sandstones resources in Telford & Wrekin. Limestone resources are considered to be exhausted and industry has shown no interest.

3.4 Crushed rock production has been concentrated at Leaton (igneous rocks) following the end of quarrying at the Ercall quarries (Wrekin Quartzite) and Maddocks Hill quarry (Camptonite). There are no extant permissions for minerals extraction in the Wrekin Hills (within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Strategic Landscape within the Local Plan where Policy NE7 applies). Mineral resources are not exhausted although working them in this location is considered environmentally unacceptable.

Policy and local activity

3.5 Minerals planning authorities are advised to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by making provision for the maintenance of landbanks of at least 10 years for crushed rock whilst ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is not compromised.

3.6 Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire is a leading producer of crushed rock in the West Midlands, producing about one third of the region's total. Telford & Wrekin contribution to the current subregional apportionment guideline is met by the working site at Leaton quarry. The current guideline for crushed rock production in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire is 2.95 million tonnes per year. The latest available data indicates a 10 year annual trend for crushed rock sales in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire of 2.36 million tonnes and the three year trend of 2.81 million tonnes. The landbank of permissions for crushed rock working has remained consistently above the minimum target level of 10 years. The permitted landbank of permissions was equivalent to about 46 years' production in 2014. Therefore, there are already sufficient permitted crushed rock resources to maintain a 10 year landbank at the end of the plan period (2031).

3.7 It should be noted that for blending purposes sand is imported from Saredon quarry in Staffordshire which is approximately 1200 tonnes per month. Staffordshire County Council is aware of this and have not raised any concerns. The market area for crushed rock is predominantly local.

Sand and Gravel

3.8 Sand and gravel is used mainly in the construction industry including the making of concrete, mortar, asphalt and as a bulk fill. Sand and gravel are defined by their size – sand being a fine aggregate and gravel being a coarse aggregate.

3.9 Deposits of sand and gravel exist predominantly within the northern half of the borough. The three principal sand and gravel resources in Telford & Wrekin are glacial sand and gravel, river terrace deposits, and Kidderminster Conglomerate.

3.10 Geological resources of sand and gravel in Telford & Wrekin have not been exhausted. Workable deposits of Kidderminster Conglomerate (Bunter) exist in the Pave Lane/Woodcote Wood area, near Newport and River Terrace Gravel deposits in the Isombridge/Waters Upton area. In December 2009 Entec UK Limited undertook an assessment of existing sand and gravel areas which could be potentially be allocated as sites to deliver future mineral needs. A call for sites was undertaken and one site in Telford & Wrekin was considered as a least preferred site – Pave Lane. This site has some development constraints, yet that being said the site – a northern extension to Woodcote Wood - was listed as a reserve site in the Entec report should an increase in supply be required.

Policy and activity

3.11 The NPPF requires the Council to identify a landbank for seven years for sand and gravel. Although there are sand and gravel resources in the area, there are no active sand and gravel sites. Since there are no permitted reserves the current landbank for the sub region of Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire is entirely met by sites within Shropshire. In 2014 there were 11 permitted sites for sand and gravel workings in Shropshire, six of which were operational. There are also two sites where resolution has been made to grant planning permission but where consent has yet to be issued. Sand and gravel reserves are contained in three site commitments at Sleaf, Woodcote Wood and Barnsley Lane which have remained unworked for over five years. The current sub-regional apportionment guideline for sand and gravel production in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire is currently 0.82 million tonnes per year. Whilst national policy guidance only requires the maintenance of a landbank of seven years for sand and gravel, Shropshire have allocated additional resources to maintain existing levels of production for about 17 years. The latest available data indicates that the 10 year trend for sand gravel sales in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire is 0.70 million tonnes and the three year trend is 0.64 million tonnes. On this basis, there are already sufficient permitted reserves in the sub region to provide supply until 2031. This is sufficient to maintain the seven year landbank at the start of the plan period (2011), but to ensure future supplies, permitted reserves will have to be re-assessed when the Local Plan is reviewed.

3.2 Industrial minerals

3.12 In preparing the Local Plan the Council has taken account of advice at paragraph 146 of the NPPF which states the mineral planning authority should plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals by - providing a stock of permitted reserves to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment, as follows:

- at least 10 years for individual silica sand sites;

- at least 15 years for cement primary (chalk and limestone); and secondary (clay and shale) materials to maintain an existing plant; and for silica sand sites where significant new capital is required; and
- at least 25 years for brick clay, and for cement primary and secondary materials to support a new kiln.

Silica Sand

3.13 There are no silica sand sites within Telford & Wrekin.

Cement primary (chalk and limestone)

3.14 There are no chalk resources within the borough. In terms of limestone it is considered that the resources of Lilleshall, Lincoln Hill, Steeraway and Little Wenlock village are virtually exhausted and/or permanently sterilised, although some limestone reserves exist at Benthall Edge and the area around Little Wenlock. The remaining limestone resources are considered to be environmentally unacceptable to work.

Cement secondary (clay and shale)

3.15 There are no reserves in the borough. The borough relies on supply from Staffordshire to meet demand.

Brick clay and fireclay

3.16 Brick clay is the term used to describe clay and shale used in the manufacture of structural clay products, such as facing and engineering bricks, pavers and clay tiles.

3.17 The major use of facing brick is the domestic housing market. These are bricks produced to high technical standards so they are resistant to the weather and also have an attractive external appearance. The introduction of new and more demanding EU standards for bricks in terms of durability is placing greater constraints on the type of clays that can be used. Most bricks are red firing but there is a demand for buff cream coloured bricks for which fireclays are used for blending purposes. Fireclay is also used in the manufacture of these products.

Policy and activity

3.18 The NPPF states the mineral planning authority should plan for at least 25 years for brick clay for each brickworks.

3.19 Production of brick clay in the Borough is dominated by Hadley Quarry which supplies the adjoining brick works. In 2005 planning permission was granted to extend this quarry, increasing the permitted reserves by some 2.8 million tonnes, planning permission expires in 2032. Therefore brick clay production can continue well beyond the Plan period. For blending purposes fireclay (when necessary) is imported from a surface coal and fireclay site in Caughley quarry, near Broseley in Shropshire. The site has the potential to be worked for more than 25 years. When the site becomes inactive it will be restored with inert materials only.

3.20 Fireclays of economic interest occur within the Lower and Middle Coal Measures directly beneath coal seams and these have been widely worked in the shallow coalfield over the centuries, as shown on the above geological map. The principal use is in brick and pavior manufacturing. Surface mined coal and fireclay extraction ceased in the borough in 2013. Therefore extensive areas have been worked out and the remaining fireclay resources are coincident with areas of surface coal resources.

Coal

3.21 Surface coal resources occur in the shallow coalfield which predominantly outcrops in the western part of the coalfield (south western Telford and the area around Little Wenlock), while deep mined coal resources mainly occur beneath younger rocks to the east (eastern Telford area and the rural area to immediate north east).

Policy and activity

3.22 Coal extraction did take place historically. Deep coal mining ended with the closure of Granville Colliery in 1979 and surface coal mining at Huntington Lane in 2013. Surface coal resources are virtually exhausted or sterilised by built development and other infrastructure.

3.23 The only remaining surface coal resources exist at: Muxton, where planning permission was refused by the then Shropshire County Council in the 1990s, when it was the mineral planning authority for the Borough; and a small area between Dawley Road (west of the new Lawley development) and New Works Lane (east of the former Huntington Lane site), which did not form part of the appeal planning permission to work the latter site). Both sites are close to residential development and other infrastructure and are considered environmentally unacceptable to work. In the event that any proposals are submitted they would be considered in regard to the Local Plan policies and the NPPF.

3.3 Energy minerals

Oil and Gas (Hydrocarbons)

3.24 Oil and gas are hydrocarbons that are found in liquid and gaseous form respectively. They occur underground in reservoirs or trapped within geological structures and are used predominantly as sources of energy. Conventional oil and gas extraction involves extraction from the ground by drilling. Gas can also be extracted from coalbeds and through methane capture from abandoned coal mines. Oil and gas has been exploited in the past from coalfields, e.g. natural bitumen from the tar tunnel in Coalport in the 18th and 19th centuries and degasification from the coal seams at Granville Colliery until the mid 1970s. Oil seeps have also been recorded from the Tarry Pit and Woodhouse Colliery, both in Priorslee; at Oil House Coppice quarry, near Woodside; Lincoln Hill; Heath Hill Colliery, Dawley; and the former Madeley Wood Colliery.

3.25 Historically, energy was derived from the coalfields but recent interest in energy minerals relates to developing hydrocarbon resources and, in particular, gas. The potential sources in Telford and Wrekin are Coal Bed Methane (CBM). There is a greater probability of developing commercial CBM supplies in the deep underground extension to the Coalbrookdale coalfield where this can be pumped from the coal seams between 200 metres to 1,500 metres below ground level. The Lilleshall/Sheriffhales area theoretically offers some but limited potential too. However, the shallow coalfield upon which the majority of south western Telford is built on is

unlikely to offer much CBM potential since the coal seams either outcrop at the surface or occur at shallow depth. Therefore significant quantities of gas are likely to have escaped into the atmosphere. Also, large areas of south western Telford have been previously surface mined for coal and fireclay, so these areas would no longer be of economic interest for CBM exploration. Furthermore, it would be environmentally unacceptable to develop coalbed methane resources within or in close proximity to urban settlements.

Policy and activity

3.26 The NPPG states that mineral planning authorities should plan for hydrocarbon extraction where the Department of Energy and Climate Change (now OGA – Oil and Gas Authority) have issued a licence under the Petroleum Act 1998. The OGA produce a regularly updated wall map displaying current fields and licences – this was updated in March 2016. Whilst there has been recent interest in CBM at a site across Telford and Wrekin and Staffordshire the OGA map clearly shows no current licences in the Telford & Wrekin Borough ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

3.27 There is a site to the very north of Shropshire where a license exists. The coal measures are potentially underlain by gas. However, there is insufficient information to determine whether these minerals are present in commercially viable quantities or dispositions. Prospecting for oil and gas has taken place but no licences have been issued.

3.28 National planning policy for oil and gas is contained in paragraphs 147 to 149 of the NPPF states that mineral planning authorities should clearly distinguish between the three phases of exploration, appraisal and production and address constraints on production and processing areas that are licensed. The above clarifies there are no licences in Telford & Wrekin.

3.29 In September 2012 the Coal Authority granted Terrawatt Energy Ltd (TEL) an agreement area for Mine Heat Recovery (extracting heat from mine water), on a five year term. This Blanket Agreement requires TEL to apply for a Supplemental Agreement should they decide on a specific location for any boreholes to be drilled. None have been applied for yet. The five year term has provision to extend for a further 20 years if boreholes are drilled.

3.4 Secondary and recycled aggregate minerals

3.30 Secondary minerals are those which are produced as a by-product of other secondary processes. Recycled (or reused) minerals are those which have been used previously. This is often referred to as Construction, Demolition and Excavation waste which can either be re-used as building stone or crushed or re-used as aggregate.

3.31 Most recent information indicates that 4.37 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste was generated in Shropshire, Staffordshire and Telford & Wrekin in 2005 (Survey of Arisings and Use of Alternatives to Primary Aggregates in England [CLG 2007])⁽³⁾

1 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457662/Landfields_Lics.pdf

2 <https://decc-edu.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=29c31fa4b00248418e545d222e57ddaa>

3 Further information can be found at
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/surveyconstruction2005>

3.32 Of the material generated (1.58 million tonnes):

- 36% is recycled as aggregate
- 3% is recycled as soil
- 53% is used as engineering material
- 8% is landfilled as waste

3.5 Cross boundary engagement

3.33 The Council regularly attends the West Midlands Aggregates Working Party (WMAWP) meetings. (WMAWPs). This party was established in the early 1970s as technical groups to advise the Government on aggregates demand and supply issues. The WMAWPs are composed of representatives from local planning authorities, the aggregates industry, The Environment Agency and Non Government Organisations (NGO's). This group jointly survey sales and reserves within their authority area whereby the results are published annually.

3.34 Recent discussions with this group revealed that Worcestershire Council can no longer produce crushed rock; existing supplies are poor quality, and others are constrained by the AONB.

3.35 Having regard to its Duty to Cooperate, the Council has undertaken extensive engagement with a range of bodies to help inform Local Plan policy. The Duty to Cooperate paper ⁽⁴⁾ sets out in detail how the Council has discharged this duty. From the perspective of minerals planning, the Council has been in discussions with Shropshire Council, Staffordshire Council and Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council (as part of the Association of Black Country Authorities) in respect of mineral supply and demand. Discussion, email exchanges and meetings have also taken place with both the Coal Authority and the minerals industry operators too.

4 Local Plan Minerals Policies

4.1 Arising out of the foregoing analysis of local factors, the Council has drafted a suite of objectives, aims and policies in the Local Plan consistent with its obligations as a mineral planning authority.

4.2 Minerals policy evolved chiefly as a result of two aims in the Local Plan: **Aim 3: Harness the borough's natural environment** and **Aim 7: Reduce the environmental impact of new development**. Objectives 13 to 15 are pertinent to the consideration of minerals in the open countryside. Objective 29 which supports Aim 7 seeks to "safeguard the borough's limited resources for future generations" .

4.3 The review of the minerals resources in the borough shows that:

- There are over 40 years' supply of crushed rock at Leaton;
- Sand and gravel to serve the sub region will continue to be supplied from quarries in Shropshire (Sleap, Woodcote Wood and Barnsley Lane);

- There are no silica sand sites, chalk or cement reserves in the borough;
- Brick production at Hadley is likely to run to 2032, well beyond the Local Plan period;
- The only remaining surface coal and fireclay resources at Muxton has been sterilised and there are no other economically viable mines in the borough with the Huntington Lane site having closed in 2013;
- The scope to exploit the borough's hydrocarbon resource is highly restrained by locational factors;
- All local authorities, including Telford & Wrekin, should use the plan making process to increase the supply of recycled aggregate minerals.

4.4 On this basis, the Council has drafted its Local Plan without the need to set a strategic statement of commitments in relation to the supply of new minerals or site allocations. Instead, the Council has proposed policies to manage its existing limited stock. These are as follows:

- Policy ER2 Mineral safeguarding - which sets out the Council's approach to safeguarding mineral resources for future generations;
- Policy ER3 Maintaining supplies of crushed rock - which acknowledges the role of Leaton in continuing to supply this resource;
- Policy ER4 Sand and gravel resources - which confirms that new sites will only be supported if there is a need for the extra resource;
- Policy ER5 Maintaining supplies of brick clay - which acknowledges the role of Hadley Quarry in continuing to supply this resource; and
- Policy ER6 Mineral development - which applies a locally distinctive set of criteria for all mineral development proposals.

4.5 Acknowledging the borough's historic mining legacy, Policy BE9 Land stability sets out the Council's approach to managing new development within former coal and limestone mining areas.

4.6 Other policies in the Local Plan directly support the aims of the Local Plan with regard to managing mineral resources. These include: Policy HO10 Residential development in the rural area which serves to restrict where new housing will be directed as a means, in part, to safeguard the borough's rural minerals resource; Policy ER8 Waste planning for residential development; and Policy ER9 Waste planning for commercial, industrial and retail developments which seek to promote recycling and re-using existing materials to reduce the demand for minerals.

5 Review of Regulation 18 (Consultation Version) and Regulation 19 (Publication Version) representations

5.1 During the Regulation 18 (Consultation Version) stage, the Council received a very small number of representations which are summarised below.

5.2 Policy ER2 Mineral Safeguarding: the representations raised issues over the wording and the effectiveness of the policy to safeguard mineral resources. Alternative methods (other than prior extraction) of protecting mineral resources were suggested. The comments also suggested additional policy wording and for individual infrastructure sites to be designated on the policies map. The identification of the mineral safeguarding area and the proposed policy was supported in other respects.

5.3 Policies and ER3 and ER5: No submissions were received in relation to either of these policies.

5.4 Policy ER4 Sand and gravel resources: Representations considered the approach adopted to be inconsistent with the NPPF and the NPPG. Comments were submitted questioning the supply of sand and gravel and said that Telford & Wrekin should be seen to be contributing to the sub regional apportionment and questioned the effectiveness and soundness of the policy. Some representations also suggested that the policy should allocate sites for sand and gravel and asked for the Pave Lane site to be included in the plan.

5.5 Policy ER6 Mineral Development: Historic England advised that they were supportive of mineral extraction for locally distinctive building material provided there was no harm to heritage assets or historic landscapes as a result.

5.6 Having reviewed the representations, the Council made a number of revisions to these policies including revisions to Policy ER2 Mineral safeguarding and Map 4. These are discussed and explained below.

Revisions to Policy ER2 Mineral Safeguarding

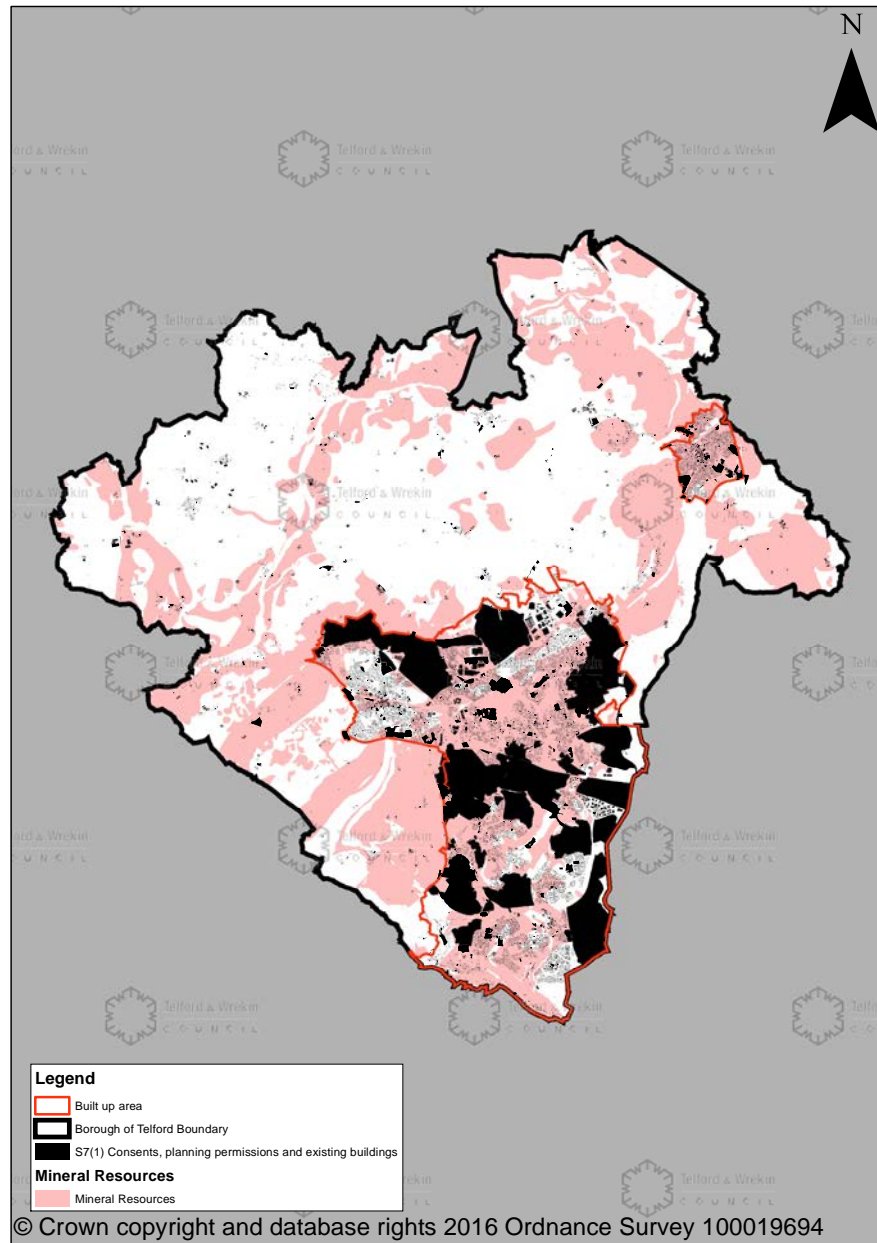
5.7 Text to Policy ER2 Mineral safeguarding was substantially redrafted and additional information shown on Map 4 indicating existing minerals related infrastructure. Such an approach is wholly consistent with that taken in Greater Manchester.

5.8 It is important to set out why these changes were made.

5.9 The reasons for excluding the urban area are set out below:

- Applying the MSA based on the geological occurrence of minerals only would cover almost the entire urban area of Telford & Wrekin;
- The foregoing analysis of the borough's resources reveals that much of it has already been worked out/built on and the remaining brick clay resource has already been sterilised by urban development. With the exclusion of Hadley Quarry, mineral working in recent times within the urban area has been carried out as part of reclamation projects only;
- Identifying the full extent of resources available may place onerous requirements on developers and the Council to provide/assess data on mineral resources when applications for non-mineral development are made in the urban area when the housing and employment development is one of Telford and Wrekin's priorities. Excluding the urban area and allowing proposals to be considered as they happen removes this burden;
- A requirement for prior extraction across the borough would result in delay to delivering essential development in the urban area;
- Large areas of land within the urban area have already been sterilised by consents issued under section 6(1) and 7(1) of the New Towns Act 1981 (refer Map 2). These are effectively grants of planning permission which do not time expire.

Map 2 Plan showing Section 7(1) New Towns Act 1981 consents, planning permissions and existing buildings, against mineral resources



5.10 It is important to note that Policy ER2 does not mean that prior extraction of minerals is wholly unsuitable in urban areas of the borough. It allows the prior extraction of minerals to be considered outside the defined MSA (that is, the urban area) provided the proposal complies with Local Plan Policy ER6. Applications that come forward within the urban area which may be suitable for prior extraction of minerals will be considered on a case by case basis. Where prior extraction is proposed, applicants will still be required to provide details of tonnages of minerals extracted, once the scheme has been completed.

Map 4 Mineral safeguarding areas and mineral related infrastructure

5.11 Additional information was added to the map such as sites for concrete batching, the manufacturer of coated materials, other concrete products and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material consistent with paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

5.12 Information on these sites was collated having regard to information from the Environment Agency on sites with licences and the Council's own intelligence.

5.13 These sites identified on Map 4 were also listed on a new Appendix H in the Regulation 19 (Publication Version) Local Plan.

Policy ER 4 Sand and gravel resources

5.14 This policy was amended to identify land at Pave Lane as a reserve site for sand and gravel extraction if other sites in Shropshire do not come forward.

Other revisions

5.15 Minor editorial revisions were made to Policies ER5 and ER6 to improve their readability. A new Appendix G was prepared to show the Mining Considerations Area in and around the Telford urban area to which Policy BE9 Land stability applies.

Regulation 19 (Publication Version) representations

5.16 Policies ER2 to ER4 (Minerals): One submitter suggested the Local Plan's housing requirement would be best supported through the availability of locally sourced sand and gravel. The Coal Authority supported Policy ER2 Mineral Safeguarding but suggested that sites for potential hydrocarbon exploitation should be identified in a policy too. A minerals trade body opposes the Council's approach to minerals safeguarding and has also asked for a detailed strategic policy on minerals. One local provider of minerals has asked for the Pave Lane site to be identified as suitable for minerals development.

5.17 There were no representations received in connection with Policy ER5 Maintaining supplies of brick clay. The Coal Authority supported Policy ER6 Mineral development.

5.18 Based upon the representation received on the Regulation 19 (Publication Version) of the Local Plan, the Council will propose a number of minor modifications to the inspector in connection with Policy ER2. One critical change to criterion (i) is that the word "can" has been replaced with "cannot" as well as other minor wording modifications to the policy following constructive dialogue with the Minerals Products Association (MPA).

5.19 The Council has also committed to make a further modification to the mineral safeguarding area buffer areas. These will be set out in a Statement of Common Ground with the MPA before the Examination in Public.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The Council takes the view that its approach to planning for minerals is consistent with national policy and takes full account of regional, sub regional and local issues around supply and demand.

6.2 The Council has prepared an extensive evidence base and assessed its policies against government policy. Local factors show that it is not necessary to plan for new minerals allocations and, further, that the minerals safeguarding area should not be applied to the urban areas of the borough.