



Worcestershire
Minerals Local Plan

First Stage Consultation



Fish Hill, crushed rock quarry near Broadway

What are minerals and why do we need them?

Minerals are an essential raw material in our daily lives. Without minerals, we would not be able to build our houses, schools, hospitals, roads and railway lines, and this is only part of what minerals are used for.

Different types of minerals are used for different things:

- **Aggregate minerals** are used without much treatment for building things like roads and houses. These are sand, gravel and crushed rock
- **Industrial minerals** are used to manufacture products, such as special types of sand for making glass, clay for making bricks and ores for metals.
- **Energy minerals** like coal, oil and gas which are used for fuel.

Many of these types of minerals are found in Worcestershire, but minerals are natural materials that are unevenly distributed and some of the minerals that we need are not found here in the County and will need to be imported. The map opposite shows the type of minerals found in Worcestershire and what sort of things they can be used for.

Why should you get involved?

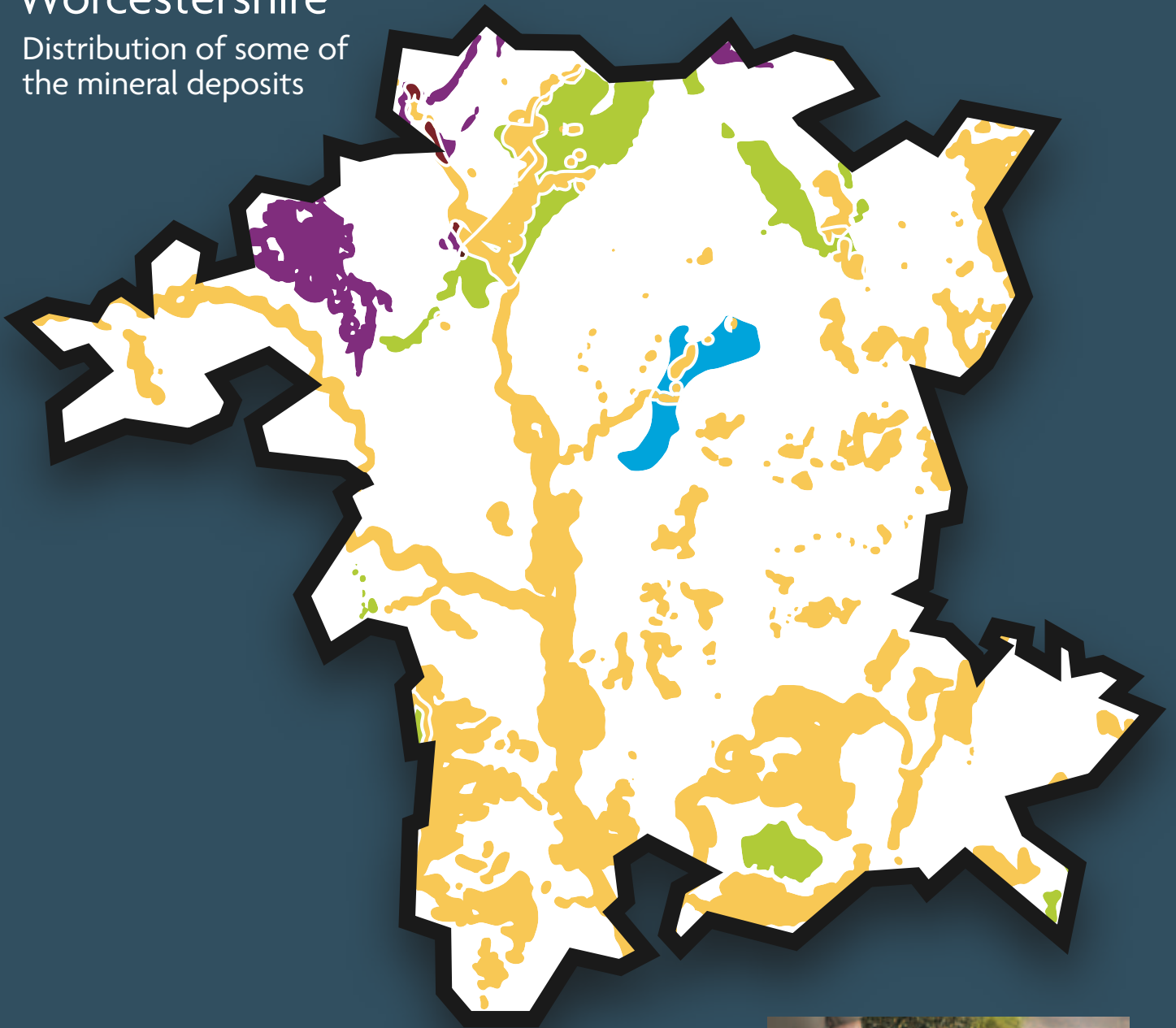
Worcestershire County Council has to prepare planning policy for minerals in the County but we can't do this alone. We need your help to make sure we have the correct evidence to base our decisions on and, importantly, to make sure we know what matters most to you, your business and your community.

This booklet aims to give you background information on Minerals in Worcestershire and the reasons why having a Minerals Local Plan is so important.

As you read through you'll see a number of questions. If you feel you can answer all of them then great, but please don't worry if you can't. It might be the case that you only feel you can answer one or two. Again, that's fine. If you can assist us we'd be really grateful. The last couple of pages in this document set out all of the ways you can get involved now and what opportunities there will be for you to get involved in the future.

Worcestershire

Distribution of some of the mineral deposits

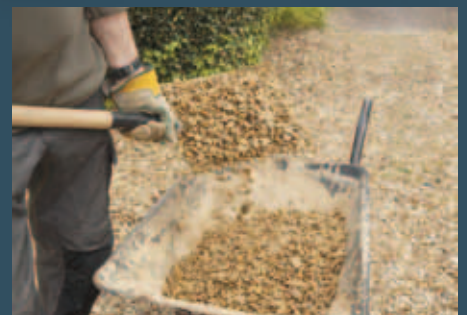


 Sand and Gravel

 Crushed Rock

 Coal

 Salt



Sand and gravel



Coal



Crushed rock



Salt

What is a Minerals Local Plan and why do we need one?

Minerals need to be ‘won’ for us to be able to use them. They can come from the land or sea (primary sources), can be a by-product of other industrial processes (secondary sources) or they can be recycled.

The planning system needs to make sure that there are enough minerals for our current needs and that enough minerals are safeguarded for use in the future. It is the role of the Minerals Local Plan to set out guidelines for the amount of minerals which should come from Worcestershire over the next 30 years.

It is also the role of the Minerals Local Plan to balance the need for minerals and benefits sites can bring against any impacts they might have. To do this, the Minerals Local Plan should make the most of the positives and minimise any negatives from minerals sites by including policies to make sure that development happens in the right places, and by getting the right policies in place to control impacts from development.

A “mineral working” or site is always temporary because once all of the mineral has been won the site will no longer be useful for mineral extraction and an after-use will have to be established. This is often referred to as “restoration”, even though sites are not always returned to their original use. For example, it may be more appropriate for low-grade agricultural land to be restored to a lake or nature reserve. The Minerals Local Plan will need to include policies about this restoration.

It is a national requirement for County Councils to have planning policies for the winning of minerals. The Council’s current policies are set out in the 1997 Minerals Local Plan and Worcestershire County Structure Plan, these policies are dated and need replacing.

Once completed, the Minerals Local Plan will be used by the County Council to make decisions about planning applications for mineral extraction and processing in the county.

Processing at Ryall sand and gravel working



What's the Council going to do about it?

Over the next few years, we will prepare a Minerals Local Plan that sets out:

What minerals we have in Worcestershire

Minerals naturally occur due to variations in geology which mean that minerals are not evenly distributed. In Worcestershire we have sand and gravel, crushed rock, brick clay, silica sand, coal deposits and salt.

We will consider each of these types of minerals and identify what the main issues are before considering how to address them. So far, background documents on coal, clay and salt are available for comment on www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

Question 1:

We have used 1:50,000 scale British Geological Survey Digital Data (bedrock geology and superficial deposits). Do you have any additional information on mineral resources including additional locations, or the quality or quantity of resources?

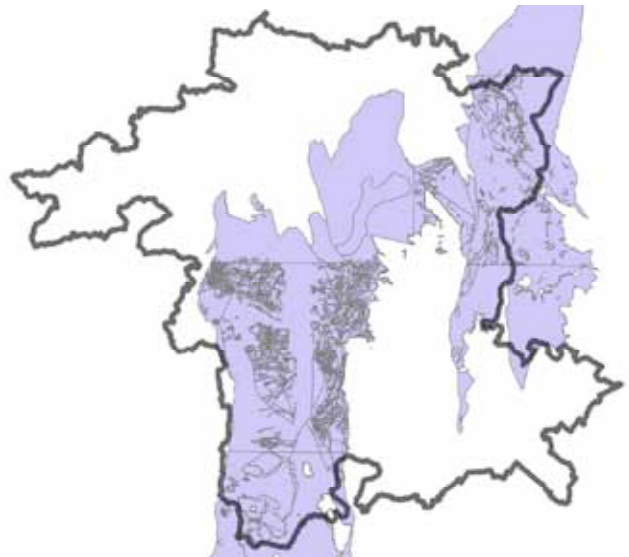
Question 2:

Do you have any information about what might be economically viable to work, including site size, minimum amounts of material, depth, overburden?

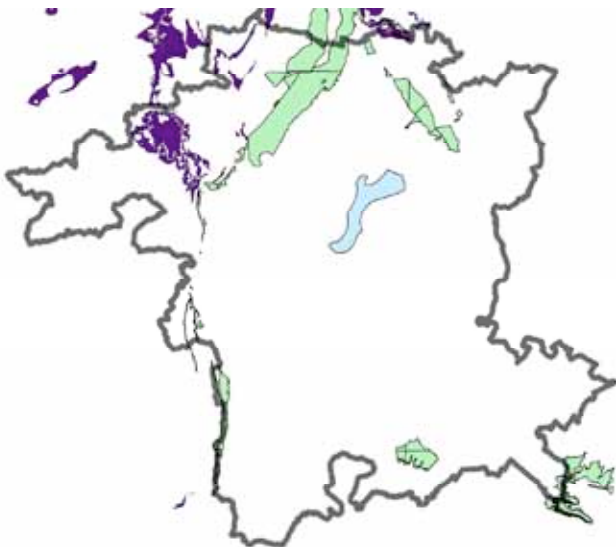
Sand and Gravel



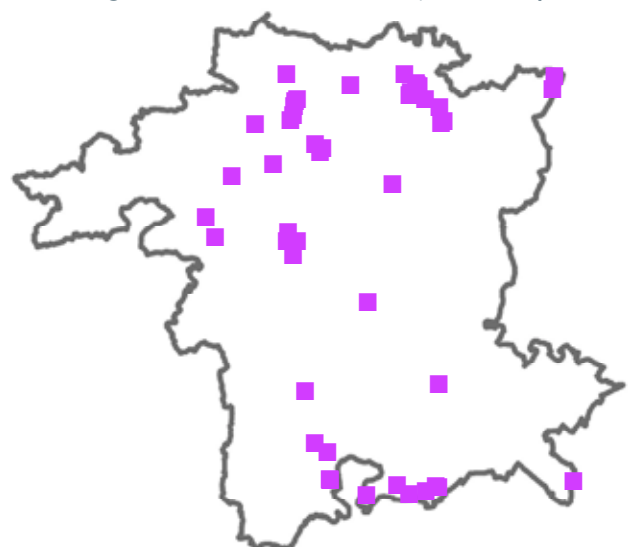
Clay



Crushed Rock, Coal and Salt



Workings in Worcestershire (1954 to present)



For larger copies of these maps see www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

Derived from 1:50,000 scale BGS Digital Data under Licence 2001/125 Amended British Geological Survey © NERC.

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How much we need and when we need it

We have worked out how much of each type of minerals we think will need to be produced in Worcestershire between now and 2030 (the period that will be covered by the Minerals Local Plan) and we think that we will need to ‘win’ minerals weighing the same as between 4,500 and 9,250 fully loaded jumbo jets each year .

Aggregates

Sand and gravel	18-35 million tonnes
Hard (crushed) rock	4-7 million tonnes
Secondary and recycled aggregates	5-7 million tonnes

Industrial Minerals

Silica sand	We’ve probably got permission for enough already
Clay	
Salt	We don’t think resources are viable

Energy Minerals

Coal	We don’t think resources are viable
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No other minerals found in Worcestershire are thought to have any economic value.

The details about how we have worked this out are set out in two background documents called the “Local Aggregates Assessment for Worcestershire” and “Ensuring Adequate and Steady Supply of Industrial and Energy Minerals”. These reports are available on www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground and we would welcome any comments you have.

Question 3:

Do you have any initial comments on these figures? If you have any knowledge or expertise in relation to these matters it would be helpful if you could read the background documents and answer the questions posed in them

We also need to think about the minerals that we will need in the future. Minerals naturally occur due to variations in geology. We need to be careful with the resources we have because we can’t create more once they are gone. This means the Minerals Local Plan needs to encourage use of recycled minerals and include policies to “safeguard” mineral resources so that we can still get to them and use them when we need them in years to come.

How minerals sites should be worked and restored

A mineral “working” or site has different impacts through its life. These vary through the operational and restoration stages and need to be considered right from the start of designing the development all the way through to looking after the site once it has been restored.

We will develop the Minerals Local Plan to address:

- **The environment** – including habitats, species, landscape, archaeology, historic environment, surface and ground water

- **Transport** – including site access and methods for transporting materials including road, rail, water, conveyors and pipelines
- **Impacts on those nearby** – including noise, dust, vibrations, visual impacts.

Question 4:

Are there any other issues we should consider?

Question 5:

Is there any information you are aware of that would help us develop these policies?

Where minerals should be extracted

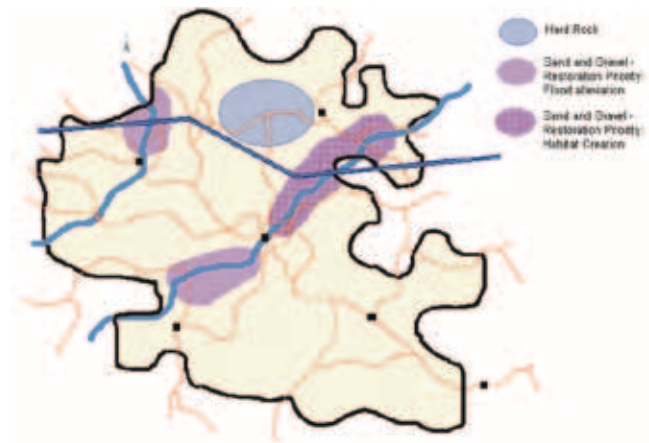
We can't control where minerals exist. What we can do is take a clear approach to the areas which are developed. The Minerals Local Plan will include a strategy to guide where minerals development should happen. We think this should be based on working viable resources in areas where there is the greatest ability to achieve restoration priorities.

These priorities will be informed by other strategies, including:

- **Economic policies** and background evidence including An Economic Strategy for Worcestershire
- **Environmental policies** and background evidence including the Worcestershire Partnership State of the Environment Report, The Water Framework Directive and Worcestershire's Biodiversity Action Plan priorities,
- **Community Strategies** including The Single Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire
- **Cross-cutting policies** and background evidence including the Local Transport Plan, City, Borough and District Local Plans and the Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Framework Documents

The Minerals Local Plan will not identify specific sites. It will include:

- a key diagram, directing development to broad areas where extraction is preferred, and identifying the restoration priorities in these areas. See the example below - this is purely to indicate style and does not represent Worcestershire in any way.



- Criteria-based location policies to assess the suitability of the site when proposals are brought forward.
- Minerals safeguarding areas identifying areas where mineral resources should not be sterilised by other development.

Question 6:
Are you aware of any other plans or programmes that we should consider?

Question 7:
Do you have any comments on this approach?

Machinery at Church Farm East sand and gravel working near Grimley





New House Farm clay quarry, near Kidderminster

How can you get involved?

Different people will be able to play a part in helping shape the plan in different ways. For example, we need **residents, parish councils** and **community groups** to help provide information about their local area to ensure future policies on working practices protect the things most valued to you. Your feedback will also help us to set policies on restoration of sites that can help produce schemes that are valued by future generations.

Mineral companies can help us understand where the best minerals are found, what type of workings are viable and where the policies in the plan will work in reality.

Similarly, **special interest groups** can also assist with the expertise to help us develop policies, which are not only effective on paper, but crucially, on the ground as well. In addition they can provide us with information on any special priorities that could be delivered through the Minerals Local Plan.

It is useful if we can get as much information as possible as soon as possible, but this is only the first step in preparing the Minerals Local Plan, so if you feel that the questions are too technical or you don't have anything you'd like to contribute at the moment, don't worry. We will contact you again early next year about the next steps. We will also publish feedback on the consultation in the spring, showing how we intend to take your views into account in the next stages of developing the Minerals Local Plan.

There are plenty of ways for you to get involved:

Respond to this document

This document flags up some issues that we would like more information about and asks some questions. If you feel able to contribute towards answering any of these questions please:

- fill in our questionnaire online at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/minerals
- email your comments to minerals@worcestershire.gov.uk
- Post your questionnaire back to:

**FREEPOST SWC-1253
Minerals and Waste Planning Policy
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Worcester
WR5 2NP**

Please return any questionnaires to us by Friday 11th January 2013.



Restored sand and gravel working at Beckford Nature Reserve

Find out more

Pop along to our open morning to ask us questions. We will be at the Worcester Woods Country Park from 9.30-12.00 on **Saturday 10th November 2012.**

Start the debate

Take part in our workshop and help us get to grips with the big issues for minerals in Worcestershire. We will be holding the workshop on **Wednesday 21st November 2012** at County Hall 9.30 -12.00. Places must be booked. Phone us on 01905 766374 or email minerals@worcestershire.gov.uk to book your place.

Test your knowledge

Have a go at our interactive quiz on minerals at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/minerals – maybe even challenge your friends!

Dig deeper

We will be preparing a whole set of background documents which set out the evidence which the Minerals Local Plan will be based on and flag up some key issues. These documents will be quite detailed and will inevitably be more technical.

If you think you have the expertise to help us out please have a look at the background documents we have prepared so far. These are available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

Background Document: **Contributing towards Worcestershire's priorities**

Background Document: **The Malvern Hills Acts**

Background Document: **Coal in Worcestershire**

Background Document: **Salt and Brine in Worcestershire**

Background Document: **Clay in Worcestershire**

The Local Aggregates Assessment for Worcestershire

Background Document: **Ensuring adequate and steady supply of industrial and energy minerals**

The Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report

We expect to prepare more background documents over the coming months. We will be producing documents on sand and gravel and silica sand in the county. We will also write separate background documents on any important economic or environmental issues that we identify. When they are ready these documents will also be put on our website.

The main stages in the development of the Minerals Local Plan are outlined below. Consultation will be integral to this process.

At this stage...

You can help us:

- identify the issues: Questions 1 to 3 aim to identify the issues which are important in Worcestershire. This will be used to inform the development of:
 - Vision and Objectives to guide the Minerals Local Plan;
 - An overarching Spatial Strategy to direct future minerals development.
- start to build an evidence base: Questions 4 to 7 asks for information or evidence that you think should be considered in the development of the Minerals Local Plan.

At later stages...

Summer-Autumn 2013

You can help us:

- Establish the Vision and Objectives: based on the issues and priorities identified in this consultation. These will guide the development of the rest of the plan.
- Develop alternatives to address the main issues in Worcestershire: These will be identified through consideration of the background evidence, other plans and policies in the County and consultation comments received.
- Develop an overarching 'Spatial Strategy' to direct future minerals development: A broad approach will be developed through the consideration of the issues and priorities identified in this consultation and a consideration of alternatives.
- Further develop the evidence base: Background documents will be prepared. These will be working documents. You will be asked for your views on these documents and additional evidence will be requested throughout the process.

Spring-Summer 2014

You can help us by commenting on the draft policy framework. The wording will be set out for consultation and you will be able to comment on both the issues considered and the drafting of the policies.

Autumn-Winter 2014

You will have 6 weeks to tell us if you think the Minerals Local Plan complies with national requirements and all the right bits of legislation.

Winter 2014-Summer 2015

We will submit the Minerals Local Plan to the Secretary of State who will appoint an independent Inspector to look at whether they think the Minerals Local Plan complies with national requirements and legislation.

Autumn-Winter 2015

If the Inspector approves the Minerals Local Plan the Council will decide whether to adopt it and make it official planning policy. This is a decision made by all of the elected members of the Council.

After this decision has been made there is a six-week period where the decision can be legally challenged.



Please contact us if you need this document in another format, or if you have any questions.

Phone: 01905 766374

Email: minerals@worcestershire.gov.uk

Write to:
FREEPOST SWC-1253
Minerals and Waste Planning Policy
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Worcester
WR5 2NP