

Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document

Location of development: screening and site selection methodology

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1. Background

Introduction

- 1.1. This document is intended to set out how the approach to the location of mineral development and the methods used in site selection have evolved in response to comments received on the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan.

The story so far: methods used up to and including Third Stage Consultation

First stage consultation

- 1.2. The First Stage Consultation was primarily an awareness raising and evidence gathering exercise but it gave a broad overview of the approach to directing the location of development, which at that time was based on areas of search and criteria policies and did not include specific sites.
- 1.3. The document set out Worcestershire County Council's intended approach to determining where minerals extraction should take place "based on working viable resources in areas where there is the greatest ability to achieve restoration priorities". Development would be directed to "broad areas where extraction is preferred", and restoration priorities would be set out for each of these areas. Criteria-based location policies to assess proposals, and minerals safeguarding areas were also proposed, but no detail was provided of what these would look like. At this stage, the MLP had ruled out identifying specific sites.

Second stage consultation

- 1.4. The Second Stage Consultation retained the focus on areas of search making it clear that the Mineral Planning Authority did not intend to allocate specific sites. The Second Stage Consultation proposed 19 areas of search for sand and gravel and crushed rock, and an "opportunity area" for clay, as well as site-specific locational criteria policies. The locational criteria would apply to all proposals, including proposals within areas of search, but the Second Stage Consultation stated that planning permission would not usually be granted for the working of aggregates outside the areas of search. This approach was considered to be in line with national policy at the time, was supported by consultation comments and was not considered to have a significant negative effect when assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.
- 1.5. To support the preparation of the Minerals Local Plan, Worcestershire County Council had analysed the available geological information about the mineral deposits in the county in the *Analysis of Mineral Resources in Worcestershire*

(August 2016)¹. This estimated the volume of aggregate resources in the county in order to evaluate the likelihood of resource areas being commercially attractive during the lifetime of the plan, and classified each resource area as either "Key", "Significant", "Not Significant" or "Compromised".

- 1.6. This informed the development of the Second Stage Consultation. Clusters of more than 200ha of aggregate resources were identified by analysing where "key" resources and those "significant" resources within 500m of a "key" resource could be found, and a 250m buffer was applied around those clusters. These clusters were proposed as areas of search in the Second Stage Consultation.
- 1.7. In the responses received to the Second Stage Consultation, concern was expressed by local residents, the minerals industry and other Local Authorities that the size of the areas of search might create unacceptable levels of uncertainty over where minerals development would take place. They ranged from 770 ha to 3224 ha in coverage.
- 1.8. Government guidance was also strengthened following the publication of the Second Stage Consultation through the issuing of the Planning Practice Guidance² (PPG). The "minerals" section of the PPG provides a more detailed definition of the terms "specific site", "preferred area", and "area of search" than had previously been provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) alone. The PPG states that the steady and adequate supply of minerals should be planned for in one or more of the following ways, and specifies that these should be considered in the following order of priority:
 - designating **Specific Sites** – where viable resources are known to exist, landowners are supportive of minerals development and the proposal is likely to be acceptable in planning terms. Such sites may also include essential operations associated with mineral extraction;
 - designating **Preferred Areas** - which are areas of known resources where planning permission might reasonably be anticipated. Such areas may also include essential operations associated with mineral extraction; and/or
 - designating **Areas of Search** – areas where knowledge of mineral resources may be less certain but within which planning permission may be granted, particularly if there is a potential shortfall in supply.
- 1.9. Based on the publication of this guidance and the consultation responses it was clearly necessary for the approach in the Minerals Local Plan to be revised and for consideration to be given to allocating specific sites and/or preferred areas.

¹ Worcestershire County Council (August 2016) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: Analysis of Mineral Resources in Worcestershire*, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Calls for sites

- 1.10. Although the Second Stage Consultation had only requested broad information on mineral resources and did not request site proposals, some suggestions for specific sites or preferred areas were made by stakeholders.
- 1.11. In summer 2014 a "call for information about preferred locations for aggregate extraction in Worcestershire" (call for sites) consultation was issued. This was undertaken to ensure that fair opportunity had been given for parties to propose sites, rather than basing allocations on only those sites received in the response to the Second Stage Consultation. In addition it enabled the Council to request adequate and consistent information on which to base further assessment, rather than using the adhoc information provided in response to the Second Stage Consultation.
- 1.12. Although 21 sites were proposed in response to the Second Stage Consultation and the 1st call for sites, estimates of resources at these sites indicated that they were unlikely to be sufficient to fully meet the amount of mineral the Minerals Local Plan would need to deliver and therefore a 2nd "call for sites" was conducted in summer 2015, resulting in a further 9 sites being proposed.

Third stage consultation

- 1.13. A deliverability assessment³ was undertaken of the 30 sites submitted to assess the likelihood of each site coming forward for working within the lifetime of the plan based upon the submitted information. Consideration against the criteria set out in the deliverability assessment led to 3 sites being taken forward as specific sites and 2 sites as preferred areas in the Third Stage Consultation document.
- 1.14. The Third Stage Consultation also proposed five "strategic corridors" with the status of areas of search. These strategic corridors were defined through professional judgement based upon where clusters of "key" and "significant" resources were located within coherent landscape types.
- 1.15. The Third Stage Consultation document set out that Specific Sites would be used as a tool to promote mineral development to help meet the provision requirement but that there would be no policy preference for the development on Specific Sites over other locations within the identified Strategic Corridors, provided all other policy requirements could be met. All sites would be subject to the normal planning application process.
- 1.16. During the preparation of the Third Stage Consultation significant discussion was undertaken with the West Midlands and surrounding Aggregate Working Parties about the recognised constraints on Worcestershire's crushed rock resources. Due to the impact of these constraints on the county's crushed rock supply the Malvern Hills Strategic Corridor and the Bredon Hill Strategic Corridor were not included in the Spatial Strategy in the Third Stage Consultation, although they were

³ Worcestershire County Council (Winter 2016) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: Deliverability Assessment*, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

included in the statutory assessments of the document, and exception tests were included within the proposed policies to enable mineral development outside the strategic corridors in certain circumstances.

- 1.17. A 3rd call for sites was also included as part of the Third Stage Consultation.

Why the methodology is changing: following the Third Stage Consultation

- 1.18. Many of responses to the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan highlighted concern about the ability for the plan to supply adequate sand and gravel resources. These concerns were primarily due to:
- The small number of specific sites and preferred areas proposed in the consultation document;
 - The robustness of the site selection process, in light of the preference it would create for development on allocated sites; and
 - some of the strategic corridors, which had the status of Areas of Search, being too broad to provide certainty about where minerals development will take place and encompassing some areas where there is no known resource.
- 1.19. In response to this, the County Council committed to undertake a 4th call for sites, to review the role of strategic corridors and their boundaries, and to reconsider the approach to site allocations.
- 1.20. The 4th call for sites was undertaken from September 2017 to January 2018, with support from Worcestershire County Council's Content and Communications team to specifically target the minerals industry and landowners. The call for sites was open for a period of 18 weeks to provide as much opportunity as possible for landowners and operators to gather the necessary information. An additional 5 sites have been submitted in response to the 4th call for sites, and further information provided in relation to 6 of the earlier site proposals.
- 1.21. As the first step in reconsidering strategic corridors and the approach to site allocations, the Analysis of Minerals Resources has been refreshed to take account of environmental and amenity screening criteria (as set out in Chapter 2 below). The revised Analysis of Mineral Resources document can be seen at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/minerals.
- 1.22. The role of the strategic corridors has also been reviewed, and it is proposed that rather than having the status of areas of search in themselves, these should now provide policy direction (as set out in Chapter 3 below), with areas of search based on resource areas being identified within them (as set out in Chapter 4 below).
- 1.23. The draft method for identifying specific site and preferred area allocations in a separate Mineral Site Allocations Development Plan Document (as set out in Chapter 5 below) has been developed alongside considering the approach to strategic corridors and areas of search, so that screening criteria can be applied consistently across all aspects.

2. Analysis of resources

Introduction

- 2.1. The Analysis of Mineral Resources (August 2016), which informed the development of the Third Stage Consultation, considered the available information about the mineral resources which are present in the county in order to evaluate the likelihood of them being suitable and commercially attractive for exploitation during the lifetime of the plan. This updated the assessment which informed the Second Stage Consultation.
- 2.2. For non-aggregate minerals, the information available is much less detailed than the information relating to aggregate mineral resources.
- 2.3. To analyse aggregate minerals, digital data provided by the British Geological Survey (1:50,000 scale) were utilised. This dataset was split into three component mineral types: terrace and glacial sand and gravel, solid sand, and crushed rock.
- 2.4. Firstly, the deposits were filtered based upon size, only deposits equal to or greater than 10ha in size and equal to or greater than 200m wide were taken forward for further analysis.
- 2.5. Wherever some evidence of the depth of the deposit was available, an estimated resource volume was calculated. This volume was then converted to an estimated tonnage for each resource.⁴
- 2.6. The significance of each resource area was classified using the categories set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Classification of significance of aggregate resource areas⁵

Estimated resource: <600,000 tonnes	Estimated resource: 600,000-2,000,000 tonnes	Estimated resource: >2,000,000 tonnes
Classified as: Not significant	Classified as: Significant	Classified as: Key resource

- 2.7. Where no depth information was available for the deposit, deposits equal to or greater than 50ha in area were classified as "Significant", while deposits with an area less than 50ha were classified as "Not significant".

⁴ The full methodology for how estimated resource tonnages were calculated is set out in Worcestershire County Council (August 2016) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: Analysis of Mineral Resources in Worcestershire*, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

⁵ Justification of these thresholds is set out in Worcestershire County Council (August 2016) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: Analysis of Mineral Resources in Worcestershire*, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground

New process following the Third Stage Consultation

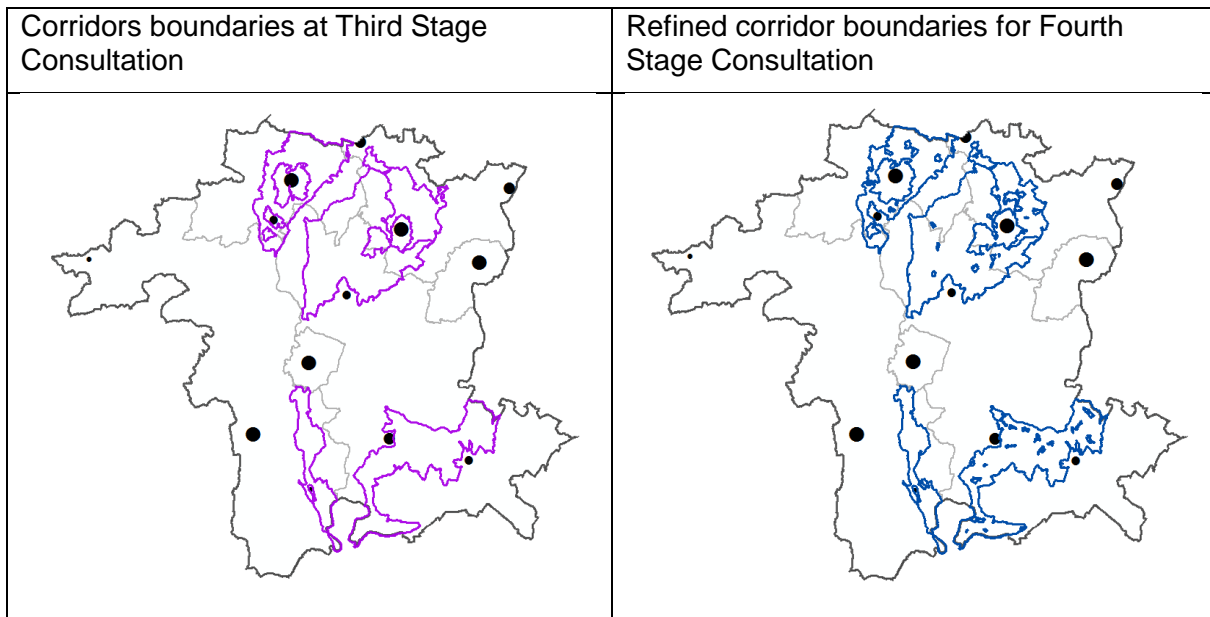
- 2.8. The resources classified as key and significant in the *Analysis of Mineral Resources* (August 2016) have been re-assessed against the screening criteria in Appendix A to identify key and significant resources that have the potential to be suitable in planning terms.
- 2.9. The criteria set out in Appendix A represent the land with national or international designations which should be afforded the highest level of protection.
- 2.10. Where there is an overlap between a key or significant resource area identified in *Analysis of Mineral Resources* (August 2016) and any of the screening criteria set out in Appendix A, the resource area has been split into the parcel(s) which overlap the screening criterion and the parcel(s) which do not overlap. The overlapping parcels have been re-classified as "compromised" and have not been taken forward. The remaining resource areas have then been re-assessed to determine whether they now should now be classified as key, significant or not significant resources against the established size and tonnage thresholds.
- 2.11. The key and significant resources resulting at the end of this re-assessment have been taken forward to the next stage as resources which have the potential to be suitable in planning terms (see Chapter 4).
- 2.12. This process has resulted in changes to the area and estimated tonnages of many resource areas. Although the classification of significance of many resource areas has been altered, only a handful of resource areas are no longer considered significant. However, the majority of Worcestershire's crushed rock resources are now classified as "compromised".
- 2.13. The results of this reassessment are set out in the *Analysis of Mineral Resources* (August 2018), available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground.

3. Reassessment of strategic corridor boundaries

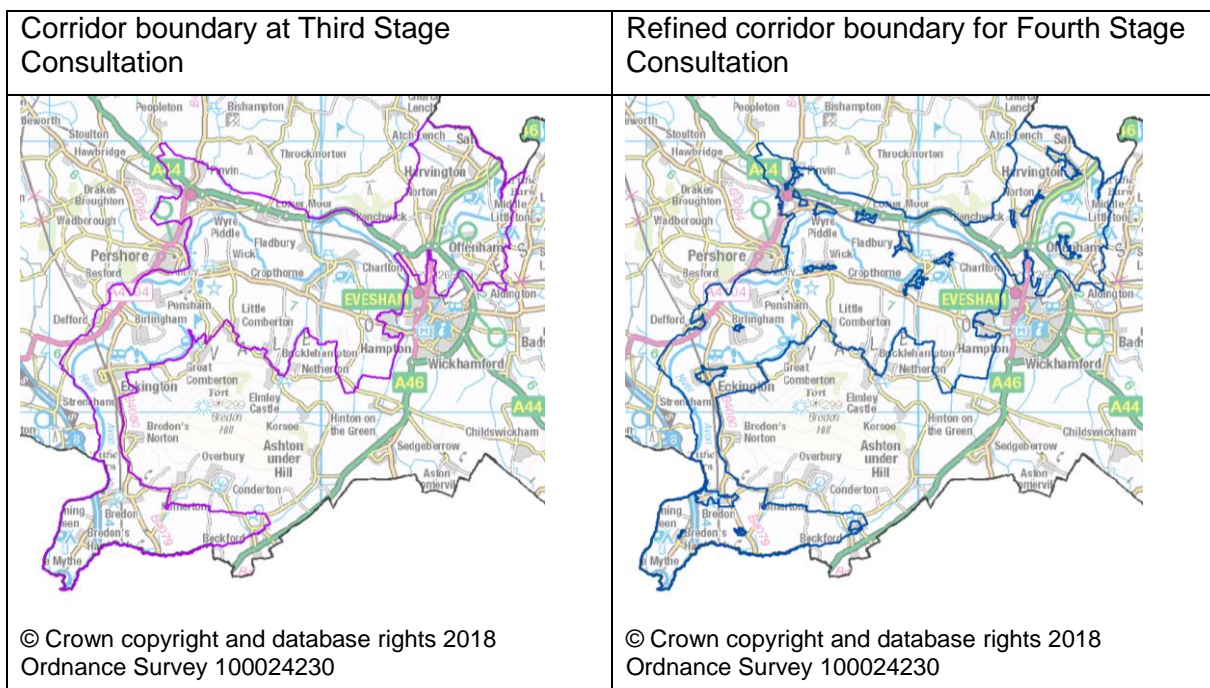
- 3.1. The strategic corridors in the Third Stage Consultation were based around coherent landscapes which contained clusters of key and significant sand and gravel resources or Mercia Mudstone clay resources. The precise boundaries were influenced by the components of green infrastructure, but primarily landscape character types.
- 3.2. The strategic corridors have now been reviewed to take account of the updated key and significant aggregate resources and the Mercia Mudstone clay deposits which have the potential to be suitable in planning terms, as identified through the updated *Analysis of Mineral Resources* (August 2018), to ensure that they continue to represent significant clusters of mineral resources within coherent landscapes.
- 3.3. In response to comments received on the Third Stage Consultation, to ensure no conflict between the Minerals Local Plan and other parts of the Development Plan for the county, the strategic corridor boundaries have also been trimmed to remove settlement boundaries and site allocations from:
 - South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016)
 - Wyre Forest Core Strategy (2010)
 - Wyre Forest Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2013)
 - Bromsgrove District Plan (2017)
 - Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2017).

This will also help to increase certainty over where mineral development is likely to take place and minimise conflict with other forms of development.

Changes to strategic corridor boundaries



Avon and Carrant Brook Strategic Corridor



3.4. The Avon and Carrant Brook Strategic Corridor boundary has reduced in size due to being trimmed using settlement boundaries and site allocations from the **South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016)**. This has led to a number of parcels of land being taken out of the corridor. As part of this, the following settlements have also been removed from the corridor:

- Beckford
- Birlingham

- Bredon
- Bredon's Hardwick
- Charlton
- Crophorne
- Defford
- Eckington
- Evesham (previously partially removed)
- Fladbury
- Harvington Cross
- Kinsham
- Lenchwick
- Lower Moor
- Norton
- Offenham
- Pershore (previously partially removed)
- Pinvin
- Wick

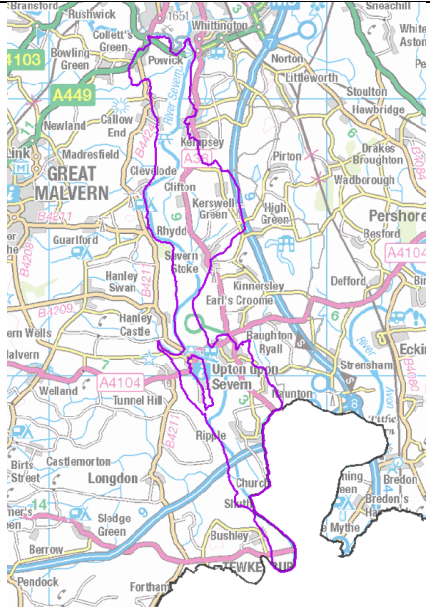
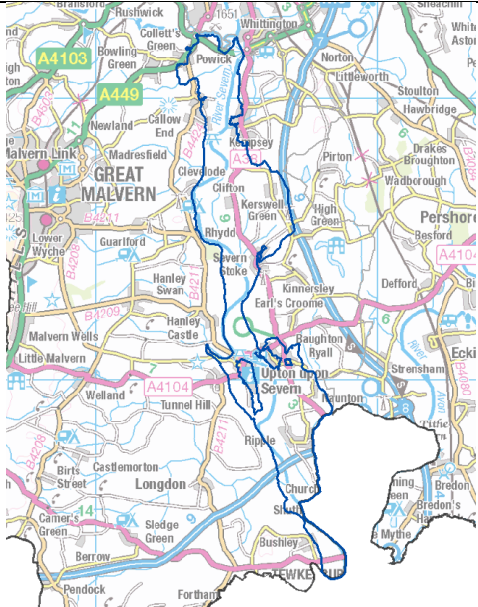
3.5. In addition, the following adopted site allocations have also been removed from the corridor:

- SWDP3/2
- SWDP47/2
- SWDP59/24
- SWDP59/X
- SWDP60/13
- SWDP60/17
- SWDP60/19
- SWDP60/22

3.6. Finally, two parcels of land have been additionally included in the corridor, this is where the corridor boundary was incorrectly mapped and failed to accurately follow the landscape type boundary. These are an area of land to the south east of Eckington, adjacent to the Bredon Hill AONB, and a small area north of Great Comberton.

3.7. Overall, the corridor has decreased in area by 3.6%, from 9857ha to 9499ha.

Lower Severn Strategic Corridor

Corridor boundary at Third Stage consultation	Refined corridor boundary for Fourth Stage Consultation
 <p>© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>	 <p>© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>

3.8. The Lower Severn Strategic Corridor boundary has reduced in size due to being trimmed using settlement boundaries and site allocations from the **South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016)**. This has led to a number of parcels of land being taken out of the corridor. As part of this, the following settlements have also been removed from the corridor:

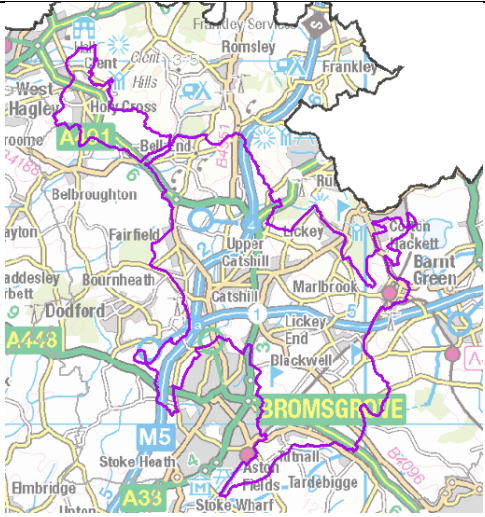
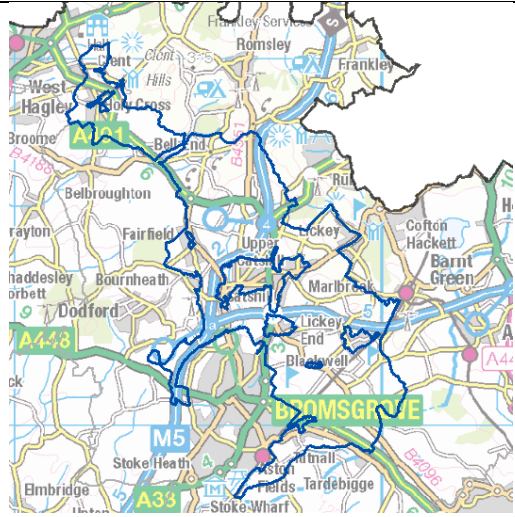
- Callow End
- Kempsey (previously partially excluded)
- Powick
- Ryall
- Severn Stoke
- The Grove

3.9. In addition, the following adopted site allocations have also been removed from the corridor:

- SWDP45/1
- SWDP59/8
- SWDP59/8a

3.10. Overall, the corridor has decreased in area by 2.1%, from 3350ha to 3281ha.

North East Worcestershire Strategic Corridor

Corridor boundary at Third Stage consultation	Refined corridor boundary for Fourth Stage Consultation
 <p data-bbox="172 925 660 981">© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>	 <p data-bbox="778 925 1267 981">© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>

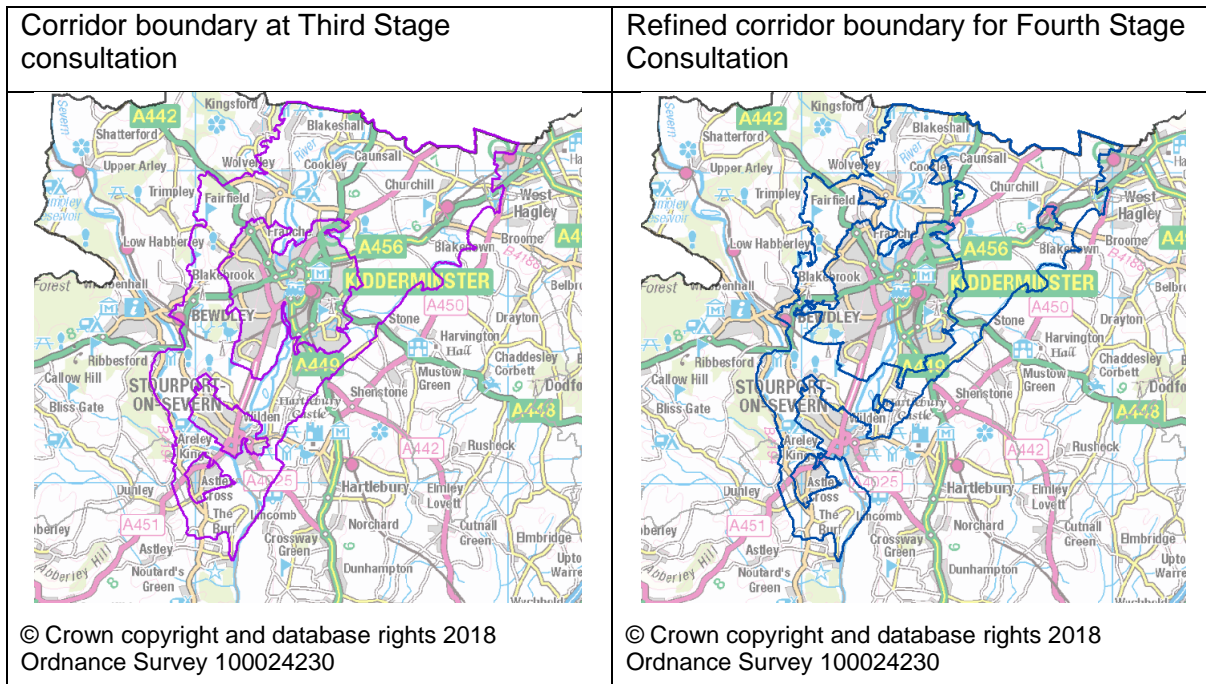
3.11. The North East Worcestershire Strategic Corridor has reduced in size due to being trimmed using settlement boundaries and site allocations from the [Bromsgrove District Plan \(2017\)](#). This has led to a number of parcels of land being removed from the corridor around the urban area of Bromsgrove, especially to the north west of the town. In addition, the corridor boundary has been adjusted to remove the following settlements:

- Barnt Green
- Blackwell
- Bournheath
- Catshill
- Clent
- Fairfield
- Holy Cross
- Lickey End
- Upper Catshill

3.12. The removal of Barnt Green has also led to the removal of a parcel of land to the north of the town from the corridor, due to this area not containing any resources significant enough to retain this area as a separate part of the corridor.

3.13. Overall, the corridor has decreased in area by 17.9%, from 4076ha to 3347ha.

North West Worcestershire Strategic Corridor



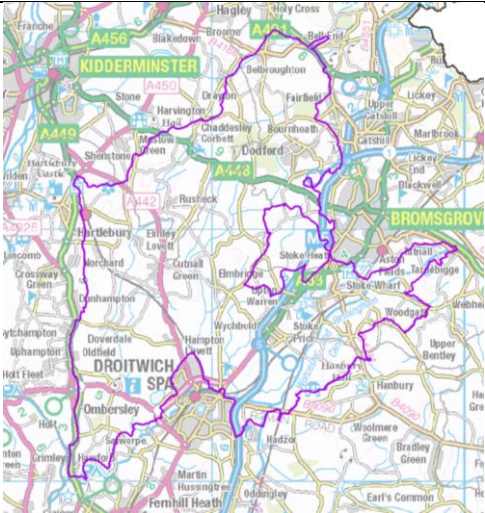
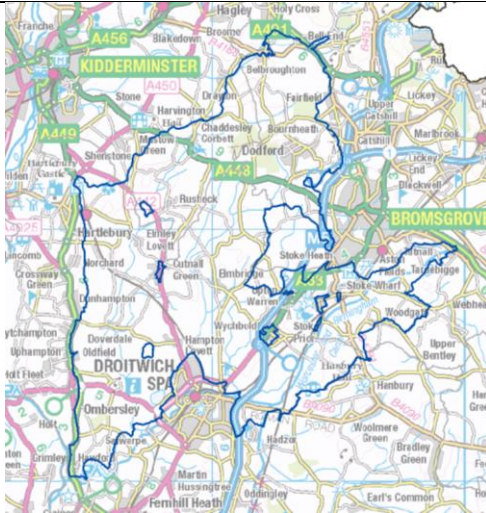
3.14. The North West Worcestershire Strategic Corridor has reduced in size due to being trimmed using settlement boundaries and site allocations from the **Wyre Forest Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2013)**. This has led to the following settlements being removed from the corridor:

- Blakedown
- Broadwaters
- Cookley
- Kidderminster (previously partially excluded)
- Stourport-on-Severn (previously partially excluded)
- Wolverley

3.15. In addition, the outcome of the update of the Analysis of Minerals Resources has led to the Enclosed Commons landscape types being removed from the corridor, due to lack of significant remaining resources once these resources were screened based on the criteria in Appendix A. This has altered the boundary of the corridor to the south-east of Bewdley, and west of Kidderminster.

3.16. Overall, the corridor has decreased in area by 11.1%, from 6061ha to 5391ha.

Salwarpe Tributaries Strategic Corridor

Corridor boundary at Third Stage consultation	Refined corridor boundary for Fourth Stage Consultation
 <p data-bbox="177 927 659 981">© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>	 <p data-bbox="783 927 1265 981">© Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100024230</p>

3.17. The Salwarpe Tributaries Strategic Corridor boundary has reduced in size due to being trimmed using settlement boundaries and site allocations from the [Bromsgrove District Plan \(2017\)](#), [South Worcestershire Development Plan \(2016\)](#) and the [Wyre Forest Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document \(2013\)](#). This has led to a number of parcels of land being removed from the corridor around the urban areas of Bromsgrove, to the south and west of the town, and to the north and west of Droitwich Spa. The following settlements have also been removed from the corridor:

- Belbroughton
- Cutnall Green
- Oldfield
- Stoke Prior
- Upton Warren
- Wychbold

3.18. Finally, the following adopted site allocations have also been removed from the corridor:

- South Worcestershire Development Plan (2017) - SWDP49/3
- Wyre Forest Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (2013) - PDS1

3.19. Overall, the corridor has decreased in area by 1.7%, from 12,523ha to 12,310ha.

4. Identifying areas of search

- 4.1. In the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan, the five strategic corridors were given the status of Areas of Search. However, many consultee comments suggested that these areas were too broad to give confidence in where minerals development is likely to take place.
- 4.2. The role of the strategic corridors has therefore been reviewed, and it is proposed that rather than having the status of areas of search in themselves, these should now provide the high-level direction for the location of development and the policy framework for the delivery of co-ordinated, landscape-scale green infrastructure benefits.
- 4.3. The individual resources that have been through the screening exercise (Chapter 2) which have the potential to be suitable in planning terms and which fall within the new strategic corridor boundaries (Chapter 3) will be identified as Areas of Search.⁶
- 4.4. This is considered to meet the definition of areas of search as set out in PPG⁷ of "areas where knowledge of mineral resources may be less certain but within which planning permission may be granted, particularly if there is a potential shortfall in supply".

⁶ Where resources overlap with new strategic corridor boundaries, but do not fit wholly within, these resources will be cut and the portion within the strategic corridor boundary will be identified as an Area of Search except where the remaining portion is considered too small to be viable as an Area of Search. To undertake this evaluation a minimum area of 1ha, or width of 200m, will be used to screen out isolated parcels of resource which are too small to warrant inclusion.

⁷ PPG Minerals: Paragraph 8

5. Proposed method for the assessment of submitted sites

Introduction

- 5.1 To inform the Third Stage Consultation on the emerging Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan, a *Deliverability Assessment* (November 2016) was produced.⁸ This assessed all sites that had been submitted as part of the Second Stage Consultation, 2014 Call for Sites, and the 2015 Call for Sites. This document included criteria designed to assess the sites against the national policy tests of "viable resources are known to exist", "landowners are supportive of minerals development" and "proposal is likely to be acceptable in planning terms" and was designed to assess the likelihood of each site being able to be delivered during the plan period. To do this it looked at the level of information submitted for each site relating to the amount of resource the site contains, operator and landowner interest, as well as whether the site was inside a strategic corridor, and comments from consultees relating to transport and utilities on whether the site was likely to be acceptable in planning terms.
- 5.2 Of the 30 sites that were assessed in that document, very few met the proposed criteria for allocation, with only 3 Specific Sites, and 2 Preferred Areas taken forward as proposed allocations in the Third Stage Consultation.
- 5.3 As previously discussed, many of the responses to the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan highlighted concern about the ability of the plan to deliver a steady and adequate supply of minerals, particularly sand and gravel, due to the small number of allocated sites. There was also some concern about the robustness of the site selection process if there was a presumption in favour of developing allocated sites if they had not been subject to robust environmental and amenity screening.

Separate Site Allocations Development Plan Document

- 5.4 Although site allocations were proposed as an integral part of the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan, a revised Local Development Scheme was approved by Cabinet in July 2018. This revision introduced a timetable for the preparation of a separate Mineral Site Allocations Development Plan document.
- 5.5 Separating the site allocations from the main Minerals Local Plan will ensure that the strategic elements of the plan can be progressed as quickly as possible to provide certainty over the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and development management policies, whilst also building in flexibility for Mineral

⁸ Worcestershire County Council (November 2016) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: Call for Sites – Deliverability Assessment* available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground.

Site Allocations to be reviewed and revised if necessary without affecting the strategic policies set out in the Minerals Local Plan.

- 5.6 This change in approach is consistent with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) in relation to setting out strategic policies, and takes into account the new requirement that, from April 2018, under Regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), local planning authorities must review local plans at least once every five years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

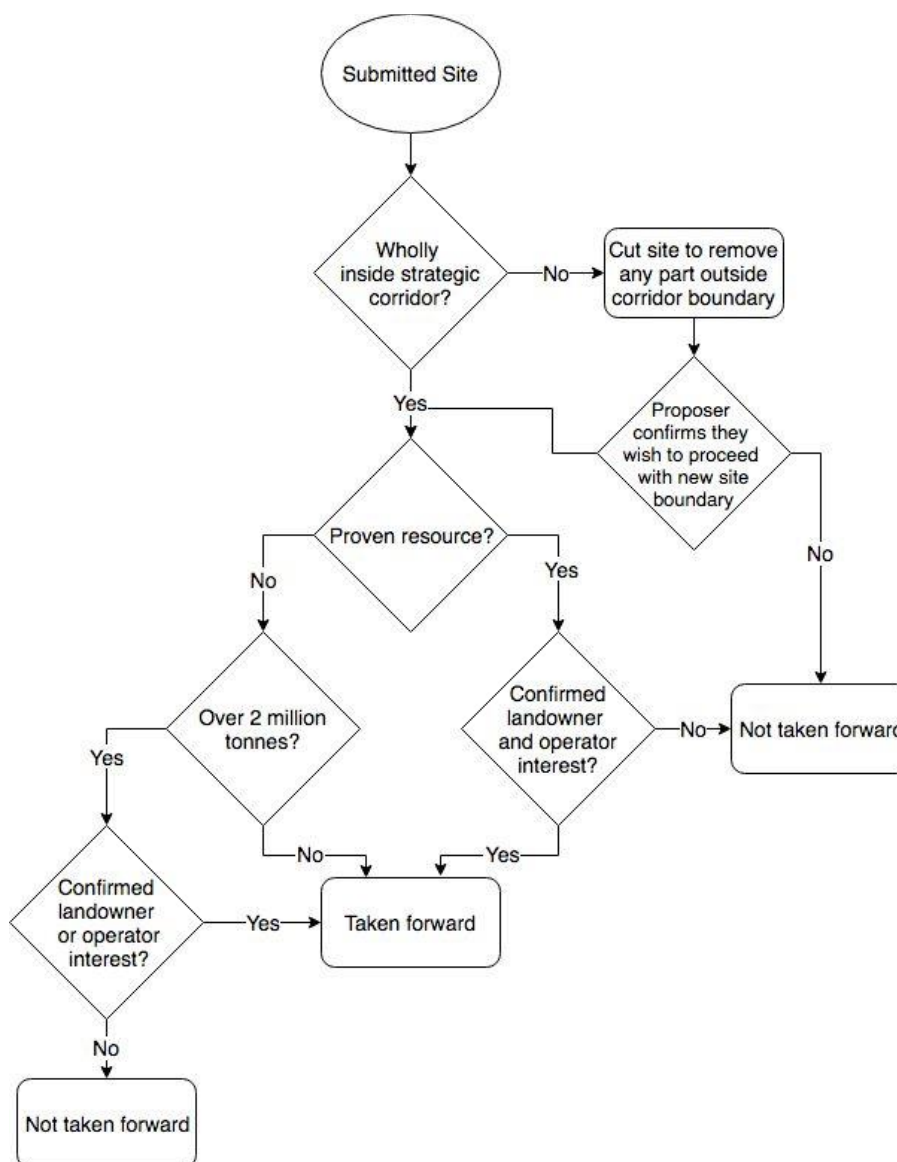
Revised methodology

- 5.7 The following assessment methodology is proposed to be applied to all sites which have been submitted in response to the Second Stage Consultation and the four subsequent calls for sites in order to determine which sites should be allocated in the separate Mineral Site Allocations Development Plan Document as either Specific Sites or Preferred Areas.

Site allocation assessment: step 1

- 5.8 Firstly each submitted site will be screened to establish whether it is likely to be deliverable. This assessment will include whether the site is within a Strategic Corridor as well as its deliverability in terms of the amount of mineral resource the site contains and whether there is support from the landowner and mineral operator. The criteria from the 2016 deliverability assessment have been reassessed and the revised criteria are set out in Figure 1.
- 5.9 Only sites that pass this deliverability screening will be taken forward to step 2.

Figure 1. Stage 1 process



Site allocation assessment: step 2

- 5.10 Secondly, those sites taken forward from step 1 will be screened using the criteria set out in Appendix A. The boundaries of sites which overlap with any criterion will be amended to remove the designated area if practical to do so (based on planning judgement and discussion with the relevant landowner and/or mineral operator), otherwise the site will not be taken forward and will not be allocated as a specific site or preferred area.

Site allocation assessment: step 3

- 5.11 Each site that passes the screening exercise in step 2, either wholly, or after an agreed change in the site boundary, will then be assessed against the criteria set out in Appendix B.

- 5.12 Those sites which do not overlap with any of the criteria in Appendix B will be allocated as Specific Sites, and those sites which overlap with one or more of the criteria in Appendix B will be allocated as Preferred Areas. In addition, these screening criteria will highlight issues that will need to be addressed at application stage.
- 5.13 This distinction between which sites will be allocated as Specific Sites and those which will be allocated as Preferred Areas reflects the level of certainty in these sites being able to be delivered and being acceptable in planning terms, with sites containing one or more of these criterion being allocated as Preferred Areas due to less certainty over their acceptability in comparison to those allocated as Specific Sites. This is considered to accord with the distinctions set out in PPG.⁹

Site allocation assessment: step 4

- 5.14 Whilst sites which meet the above criteria may be allocated as Preferred Areas and Specific Sites, planning permission will still be required, and planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.15 A number of additional criteria are listed in Appendix C. These are not considered to warrant inclusion as criteria in Appendix A or B, but will be referred to as informatives alongside the site allocation to highlight issues that will need to be addressed at application stage.

⁹ PPG Minerals: Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 27-008-20140306, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/minerals>

Appendix A

These criteria have been selected to reflect the National Planning Policy Framework's requirement that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value¹⁰, that distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites¹¹ and that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance¹².

The criteria set out in Appendix A represent the land with national or international designations which should be afforded the highest level of protection.

Screening criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix A	GIS data source
Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)	NPPF paragraph 175(c) states that "development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists".	Natural England (February 2018)
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	NPPF paragraph 205(a) states that as far as is practical local authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	Natural England (January 2014)
Conservation areas	NPPF paragraph 205(a) states that as far as is practical local authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside conservation areas. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a general duty as respects Conservation Areas in the exercise of planning function stating " <i>in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area</i> ".	Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils (December 2017)
European Sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) 	European sites are protected from development which would have a likely significant detrimental impact on the designated site under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (SACs), Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (December 2017)

¹⁰ National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) paragraph 171

¹¹ National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) paragraph 171

¹² National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) paragraph 184

Screening criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix A	GIS data source
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Protection Areas (SPA) • Ramsar Sites 	(SPAs), Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (Ramsar sites).	
Flood zone 3b (for all non-water compatible development)	<p>NPPF paragraph 155 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.</p> <p>PPG flood risk vulnerability classification identifies sand and gravel working as "water-compatible" development, and other minerals working and processing as "less vulnerable" development.</p>	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment data from Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils
Land owned / controlled by the Malvern Hills Trust ¹³	<p>There are five private acts of parliament relating to the Malvern Hills, three of which make specific reference to quarrying with the express intention of the Malvern Hills Act 1924 being to control quarrying. There are also Ministerial planning decisions and House of Lords Judgements relating to these acts.¹⁴</p> <p>The Malvern Hills Act 1924 and the 1953 decision of the Minister of Housing and Local Government which defined the physical and time limits of the existing quarries still in existence and secured their permanent closure.</p>	Worcestershire County Council corporate data
Listed buildings	<p>NPPF paragraph 194 states that substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional, and substantial harm to or loss of grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.</p> <p>Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a general duty as respects to listed buildings in the exercise of planning functions. Subsection (1) provides that <i>"in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its</i></p>	Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (November 2017)

¹³ The Malvern Hills Trust is the new working name of the Malvern Hills Conservators, a body that was first established by Act of Parliament in 1884 to protect and manage the Malvern Hills and the adjacent commons.

¹⁴ Worcestershire County Council (2012) *Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Background Document: The Malvern Hills Acts*, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mineralsbackground.

Screening criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix A	GIS data source
	<i>setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".</i>	
Nationally registered parks and gardens	NPPF paragraph 194 states that substantial harm to or loss of grade II registered parks and gardens should be exceptional and substantial harm to or loss of grade I and II* registered parks and gardens should be wholly exceptional.	Historic England (October 2017)
Registered Battlefields	NPPF paragraph 194 states that substantial harm to or loss of registered battlefields should be wholly exceptional.	Historic England (June 2016)
Scheduled monuments	NPPF paragraph 194 states that substantial harm to or loss of scheduled monuments should be wholly exceptional. NPPF paragraph 205(a) states that as far as is practical local authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside scheduled monuments.	Historic England (Sept 2017)
Source Protection Zones 1 & 2	The EU Water Framework Directive ¹⁵ applies to surface waters (including some coastal waters) and groundwater. It requires member states, among other things, to prevent deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and protect, enhance and restore water bodies to 'good' status. Planning Practice Guidance on Water supply, wastewater and water quality ¹⁶ states that plan making may need to consider steering "potentially polluting development away from the most sensitive areas, particularly those in the vicinity of potable water supplies (designated source protection zones or near surface water drinking water abstractions)".	Environment Agency (April 2017)
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ¹⁷	NPPF paragraph 175(b) states that "development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted".	Natural England (July 2018)
World Heritage Sites	NPPF paragraph 194 states that substantial harm to or loss of World Heritage Sites should	Historic England (February 2018)

¹⁵ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (2000) establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

¹⁶ PPG Water supply, wastewater and water quality: Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 34-006-20161116 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-supply-wastewater-and-water-quality>

¹⁷ Natural Nature Reserves (NNRs) do not appear as a separate screening criterion in this appendix as all NNR's in the county are additionally covered by SSSI designations.

Screening criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix A	GIS data source
	be wholly exceptional. NPPF paragraph 205(a) states that as far as is practical local authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside World Heritage Sites.	

Appendix B

These criteria have been selected to reflect the National Planning Policy Framework's requirement that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value¹⁸, and that distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites so that protection is commensurate with their status¹⁹.

The criteria set out in Appendix B represent the land with local designations which may impact upon the appropriate design or working method of a site.

Screening criteria	Reason for inclusion in Appendix B	GIS data source
Air Quality Management Area	NPPF paragraph 181 states that planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas.	Worcestershire Regulatory Services (to be obtained)
More than 20ha of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (Grade 1, 2 land and Grade 3a where known)	<p>NPPF Paragraph 170(b) states that Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. In addition footnote 53 states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.</p> <p>20 hectare threshold based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule 4, paragraph (y) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2013 (as amended) which requires Natural England to be consulted on planning applications which would involve the net loss of more than 20 hectares of grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land Appeal decision (Appeal Ref APP/G2435/W/16/3153781) which states "<i>The view of the Council, expressed in its Development Control</i> 	Natural England (July 2000) and Natural England (November 2013)

¹⁸ NPPF paragraph 110

¹⁹ NPPF paragraph 113

Screening criteria	Reason for inclusion in Appendix B	GIS data source
	<i>Report on the application, is that the development of less than 20 hectares of such land is a low amount of land. I agree with that position."</i>	
Within 50m of registered landfill	Mineral working could affect landfill or ground gas regime.	Worcestershire Regulatory Services (to be obtained)
Flood zone 3b (for all water compatible development)	NPPF paragraph 155 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. PPG flood risk vulnerability classification identifies sand and gravel working as "water-compatible" development, and other minerals working and processing as "less vulnerable" development. Processing areas, stockpiles and site buildings should be outside the functional floodplain.	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment data from Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils
Local Wildlife Sites	NPPF Paragraph 171 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites. NPPF Paragraph 174 (a) states that plans should safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation.	Corporate data (January 2016)
Local Geological Sites	NPPF Paragraph 170 states that planning policies should aim to protect sites of geological value. NPPF Paragraph 171 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites.	Corporate data (September 2014)
"Relevant exposures" within 200m of site	Section 5.92 of the Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance 2009 ²⁰ states that dust emissions from a range of fugitive and	OS basemap verified by site visits

²⁰ Available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69334/pb13081-tech-guidance-laqm-tg-09-090218.pdf

Screening criteria	Reason for inclusion in Appendix B	GIS data source
boundary	uncontrolled sources can give rise to elevated PM ₁₀ concentrations and suggests that an assessment of whether emissions may impact upon any "relevant exposure" (as defined in box 1.4 of the Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance 2009) should be required where such exposures are within 200m of possible sources of dust emissions. Depending on mitigation measures put in place at application stage, it may or may not be appropriate to work parts of a site within 200m of a "relevant exposure".	
Veteran trees	<p>NPPF Paragraph 175(c) states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.</p> <p>Natural England and Forestry Commission advice²¹ states that developments should avoid causing negative impacts to veteran trees.</p>	Worcestershire Biological Records Centre (March 2018)
Within 50m of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland	<p>NPPF Paragraph 175(c) states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.</p> <p>Forestry Commission guidance states that "Development must be kept as far as possible from ancient woodland, with a buffer area maintained between the ancient woodland and any development boundary. An appropriate buffer area will depend on the local circumstances and the type of development".</p> <p>Woodland Trust response to the Third Stage Consultation on the Minerals Local Plan states that a 50m buffer should be included.</p>	Natural England (February 2018)

²¹ Forestry Commission and Natural England standing advice, *Ancient woodland and veteran trees: protecting them from development*, available at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences?utm_source=Green+Infrastructure+Partnership&utm_campaign=c64b0cf6bc-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f4eb0dc7a3-c64b0cf6bc-103374137

Screening criteria	Reason for inclusion in Appendix B	GIS data source
Source Protection Zone 3	<p>The EU Water Framework Directive²² applies to surface waters (including some coastal waters) and groundwater. It requires member states, among other things, to prevent deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and protect, enhance and restore water bodies to 'good' status.</p> <p>Planning Practice Guidance on Water supply, wastewater and water quality²³ states that plan making may need to consider steering "potentially polluting development away from the most sensitive areas, particularly those in the vicinity of potable water supplies (designated source protection zones or near surface water drinking water abstractions)".</p>	Environment Agency (April 2017)
Impact Risk Zones (Natural England)	<p>The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.</p>	Natural England (February 2018)

²² Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (2000) Establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

²³ PPG Water supply, wastewater and water quality: Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 34-006-20161116 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-supply-wastewater-and-water-quality>

Appendix C

These criteria have been identified as important information which will need to be taken in to account at application stage, but are not considered to warrant inclusion as criteria in Appendix A or B.

Informative criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix C	GIS data source
Adjacent to any Appendix A or B criteria	The criteria in Appendix B and C consider whether an area of resource or a site is within or overlaps with a designated area but do not apply any stand-off or buffer zones (other than Impact Risk Zones in Appendix B) as any appropriate mitigation measures or stand-off distances will depend on the site specific circumstances and in some case significant opportunities for betterment/net gain might be realised by working up to the boundary of protected sites, for example enabling habitats to be extended or the achievement of links to wider networks.	As listed above
Biodiversity Delivery Areas	Biodiversity Delivery Areas were developed by the Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership in 2011 as the focus for the delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). They were selected as the parts of the county with the greatest potential to deliver the BAP targets for both species and habitats. The documents were originally developed in 2011, but have been updated and refreshed in 2016. These should not prevent the allocation of a site, but should be taken into account at application stage.	Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership and Local Nature Partnership (2016)
Catchment flood risk	The Environment Agency and Worcestershire County Council (June 2018) <i>Catchment Based Management in Worcestershire Technical Background Document</i> guidelines recognise that catchment boundaries represent a whole system of interlinked watercourses and flow pathways. Interventions, such as new development proposals, in a part of a catchment can therefore have direct impacts in other parts of the catchment. It identifies the level of flood risk for the catchments which intersect with the Strategic Corridors to identify where there are particular clusterings of known flood incidents or future modelled risk.	Mapping to accompany <i>Catchment Based Management in Worcestershire Technical Background Document</i> (Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority data, 2018)
Catchment water quality	The Environment Agency and Worcestershire County Council (June 2018) <i>Catchment Based Management in Worcestershire Technical Background Document</i> guidelines recognise	Mapping to accompany <i>Catchment Based Management in</i>

Informative criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix C	GIS data source
	that catchment boundaries represent a whole system of interlinked watercourses and flow pathways. Interventions, such as new development proposals, in a part of a catchment can therefore have direct impacts in other parts of the catchment. In terms of water quality, consideration has been given to the WFD overall status, the risk of deterioration and the presence of EU Natura 2000 (N2K) designated sites or drinking water protected areas.	<i>Worcestershire Technical Background Document</i> (Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority data, 2018)
CLH pipeline system	Pipelines have the potential to alter the viability of the site to be worked. This may be through loss of area through the inclusion of a "standoff zone" around the pipeline, or the cost of redirecting the pipeline. Discussions will be required between the operator and pipeline owner at an early stage of any site design.	Maps provided by CLH (September 2017), digitised by WCC.
Flood zone 2 and 3a	<p>NPPF paragraph 155 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.</p> <p>PPG flood risk vulnerability classification identifies sand and gravel working as "water-compatible" development, and other minerals working and processing as "less vulnerable" development.</p>	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment data from Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils
Public Rights of Way	NPPF paragraph 98 requires planning policies to protect and enhance public rights of way and access, but it is considered that the presence of Public Rights of Way should not prevent the allocation of a site as impacts can be managed satisfactorily at application stage.	Worcestershire County Council's Rights of Way team (to be obtained)
Setting of Conservation Areas	<p>It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all Conservation Areas to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its setting.</p> <p>The setting of a Conservation Area will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the designated Conservation Area, or where impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.</p>	Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils (December 2017)
Setting of Listed Buildings	It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all Listed Buildings to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its	Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (November 2017)

Informative criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix C	GIS data source
	<p>setting.</p> <p>The setting of a Listed Building will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the Listed Building, or where impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.</p>	
Setting of Nationally Registered Parks and Gardens	<p>It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all Nationally Registered Parks and Gardens to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its setting.</p> <p>The setting of a Nationally Registered Park and Garden will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the designated Park and Garden, or where impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.</p>	Historic England (October 2017)
Setting of Registered Battlefields	<p>It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all Registered Battlefields to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its setting.</p> <p>The setting of a Registered Battlefield will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the designated Registered Battlefield, or where impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.</p>	Historic England (June 2016)
Setting of Scheduled Monuments	<p>It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all Scheduled Monuments to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its setting.</p> <p>The setting of a Scheduled Monument will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the designated Scheduled Monument, or where impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.</p>	Historic England (September 2017)
Setting of World Heritage Sites	<p>It is not considered possible to identify a distance threshold to apply to all World Heritage Sites to understand where proposed development may be in or impact upon its setting.</p> <p>The setting of a World Heritage Site will be included as an informative for a site allocation where the allocated site is directly adjacent to the designated World Heritage Site, or where</p>	Historic England (February 2018)

Informative criterion	Reason for inclusion in Appendix C	GIS data source
	impact on setting is raised by statutory consultees.	
Tree Preservation Orders	Tree Preservation Orders protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity, but it is considered that their presence should not prevent the allocation of a site as impacts can be managed satisfactorily at application stage.	Worcestershire's City, Borough and District Councils (to be obtained)
Habitats of principal importance (listed under S41 of NERC Act)	Many sites containing habitats of principal importance (listed under S41 of NERC Act), or Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, are designated as protected sites (both statutory and non-statutory). It is considered that any undesignated habitats should not prevent the allocation of a site, as impacts can be managed satisfactorily at application stage.	Worcestershire Habitat Inventory

Appendix D

A limited consultation on a working draft of this document was undertaken in February 2018. The following organisations were asked to state if any screening criteria were missing, and whether they considered the criteria were in the appropriate Appendix. Their comments have been taken into account in developing the criteria in Appendices A, B and C.

- Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Planning, conservation, and landscape officers of the City, Borough and District Councils in Worcestershire
- County and District Heritage Advisory Group (CADHAG)
- Members of the Minerals Green Infrastructure Steering Group:
 - Earth Heritage Trust
 - Environment Agency
 - Forestry Commission
 - Historic England
 - Lead Local Flood Authority
 - RSPB
 - Worcestershire County Council - Archive and Archaeology
 - Worcestershire County Council - Countryside Greenspace Manager
 - Worcestershire County Council - Ecology
 - Worcestershire County Council - Strategic Planning
 - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
- Adjoining Mineral Planning Authorities
- Worcestershire County Council's Development Management officers
- Worcestershire County Council's Planning Services Manager
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services