

Protection of Mineral Resources

- 2.11 The County Council wishes to avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of important mineral resources. Mineral extraction, however, may be just one of various competing claims for the use of land. To achieve a balanced assessment between such claims, it is essential to establish the particular importance of the mineral resource and the implications of its potential extraction or sterilisation. Therefore mineral exploration initiatives will normally be supported, subject to satisfactory environmental safeguards, (see Chapter 5).
- 2.12 The degree of importance will be influenced by a number of factors: relative scarcity, including the geological extent of the deposit, permitted reserve levels, need, quality, 'special' qualities and suitability for extraction.
- 2.13 In Nottinghamshire relative scarcity and/ or high demand levels apply to sand and gravel, gypsum and opencast coal. For these minerals sterilisation is likely to be an issue across most of the known resource, except where absolute planning and other constraints apply. In contrast, for Sherwood Sandstone and clay, where the geological resource is vast, sterilisation is only likely to be a justifiable constraint adjacent to existing permitted or allocated areas where further extensions are possible.
- 2.14 Where sterilisation is an issue, the feasibility of extracting the mineral in advance of other development should be explored.

POLICY M2.2 MINERALS STERILISATION

Development which would result in the sterilisation of mineral resources will not be permitted except where one or more of the following criteria are met:

- (a) the mineral deposit appears to have no existing or future potential commercial value or;
 - (b) it is unlikely that the mineral will be worked due to environmental constraints or;
 - (c) the deposit comprises Sherwood Sandstone or clay and is unlikely to form an extension or replacement to an existing quarry or;
 - (d) the development cannot be reasonably located elsewhere and it is not practicable to extract the mineral in advance.
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Mineral Consultation Areas

- 2.15 The district councils have a duty to consult County Planning Authorities over any proposal for the development of land, in any area where notification has been given that it may affect, or be affected by, the winning and working of minerals (other than coal). Consultation with the Coal Authority for non-mineral development within coalfield areas is covered by separate legislation.
- 2.16 The County Council endorses the concept of such Mineral Consultation Areas and draft plans have been issued to the district councils. Mineral Consultation Areas do not in themselves constitute a land use policy; there is no presumption for or against development in the notified areas.

Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund

- 2.17 The Aggregates Levy was introduced under the Finance Act 2001 in order to address the environmental costs associated with aggregate extraction, such as noise, dust, visual intrusion, loss of amenity and damage to biodiversity. It is also hoped that the levy will reduce the use of freshly won aggregates and encourage a greater use of recycled aggregates. The levy presently charges a tax of £1.60 on every tonne of aggregate quarried in the UK.
- 2.18 Part of the money raised has been directed to the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, some of which is available for projects which deliver landscape, community, ecological, biodiversity and heritage benefits in areas affected by aggregate extraction. This allocation is to be distributed by English Nature, English Heritage and the Countryside Agency in consultation with local authorities, interest groups and the aggregates industry so that a benefit can be returned to the local community.

Minerals Consultations Areas - Gedling



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