

MINERALS

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SOC143	<p>New development will be expected to safeguard the use of natural resources by:</p> <p>(a) Protecting mineral resources from permanent development, without first assessing the scope for extraction before development (which would lead to the sterilisation of the deposit) takes place.</p> <p>(b) Reducing the need for use of primary materials by reducing, reusing and recycling waste on-site, including use of substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste within development, consistent with the transition to a low carbon economy</p> <p><u>Reasoned Justification</u></p> <p>Minerals extraction is an important part of South Worcestershire’s economy and an adequate supply of minerals is necessary to provide for new housing, built development and infrastructure.</p> <p>The broad extent of mineral resources that occur in South Worcestershire are shown on the proposed Minerals Consultation Areas Map [available at http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=52]</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority for Worcestershire. It is responsible for minerals planning for the whole of Worcestershire. At present, minerals policy and proposals for Worcestershire are set out in the policies of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan (2001) and the Minerals Local Plan (1997) that were “saved” by the Secretary of State on 7th September 2007. The “saved” minerals policies (and anticipated Minerals Local Plan on which work is due to commence in 2012) form part of the Development Plan.</p> <p>The County Council has a duty to determine planning applications for new minerals development in accordance with all parts of the Development Plan, unless there are material planning considerations that would indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that local planning authorities should define Minerals Consultation Areas (based on Minerals Safeguarding Areas) and should take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials can make to the supply of materials.</p>	<p>To ensure the SWDP is in accordance with NPPF, justified and effective, it needs to be amended.</p> <p>NPPF requires local planning authorities to define Minerals Consultation Areas based on Minerals Safeguarding Areas.</p> <p>NPPF also states that local planning authorities should, as far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials.</p> <p>There is a need to recognise the role of the County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority and that the Minerals Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan.</p>

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	<p>Minerals Safeguarding</p> <p>Minerals are a finite, natural resource and can only be worked where they are found. It is important to make best use of them to secure their long-term conservation.</p> <p>Minerals are a cross boundary issue which involves the Duty to Cooperate.</p> <p>SWDP policies and proposals for non-mineral development should facilitate the sustainable use of minerals. The aim is to avoid accidental, unnecessary sterilisation of known deposits of minerals which are to be safeguarded. Consideration needs to be given to these principles within Mineral Consultation Areas (MCA's), which are based on information provided by the County Council as Minerals Planning authority.</p> <p>Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSA's) are areas designated by the Minerals Planning Authority which cover known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development. MCA's, based on MSA's, are where consultation is required with the County Council as Minerals Planning Authority on development proposals which have the potential to sterilise the minerals interests of the site.</p> <p>The proposed Minerals Consultation Areas Map shows the boundaries of the existing MSAs, based on the adopted Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan. These boundaries may be changed by the anticipated Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan.</p> <p>When allocating sites, South Worcestershire Authorities need to:</p> <p>(a) Direct significant new development sites away from MCAs unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) circumstances (in accordance with NPPF) can be applied (ii) extraction takes place where practicable before the proposed development sterilises the minerals interest of the site. <p>(b) Identify the County (minerals) planning policies that apply to development in and around these areas.</p> <p>The identification of a MCA does not imply that permission for extraction will be given, only that the presence of minerals is a material consideration which must be addressed when considering future development.</p> <p>Current best practice on safeguarding is provided by the document "Mineral Safeguarding in</p>	

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	<p>England: Good Practice Advice” (BGS). (2011) see: http://www.bgs.ac.uk/mineralsuk/whatsnew.html#safeguarding. Fig 4, page 33 of the Good Practice Advice shows the safeguarding processes.</p> <p>Borrow pits are a common example of how the prior extraction of minerals can be done. There is an example in the Powick Flood Alleviation scheme.</p> <p>The adopted Minerals Local Plan identifies Preferred Areas for sand and gravel extraction. Sites allocated at Aston Mill, Grimley, and Strensham remain unworked.</p> <p>There are no sources of building stone in Worcestershire at present. However, it is possible that the proposed Minerals Local Plan will encourage such production in future. This may be at or close to relic quarries, or possibly new small sites. Such development is likely to be small scale, intermittent and low level. Locally sourced building or roofing stone may be needed for example for the repair of heritage assets.</p> <p>Alternative, Secondary and Recycled Aggregates</p> <p>To sustain economic growth without increasing the use of land won aggregates it is vital that the contribution of alternative, secondary and recycled materials used in construction projects is increased.</p> <p>Developers will therefore be encouraged to recycle and reuse materials on site in construction projects, having regard to the environmental implications of any proposed operations and their overall acceptability.</p> <p>Legacy of Minerals Extraction</p> <p>In the Malvern Hills there is a mining legacy from the surface extraction/ quarrying for building stone. The management of stability issues of the long abandoned quarries is not a matter for the SWDP. There is no realistic prospect of hard rock extraction resuming in the Malvern Hills.</p> <p>There is an area of known carboniferous formations to the north and west of Abberley. Historically there were some small scale coal extraction sites in the area. Planning permission to deep mine coal at Clows Top was refused in 1989. The resumption of coal extraction on a commercial scale is very unlikely in the plan period of the SWDP and would require a change of national planning policy as well as a new planning application, which would be determined</p>

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	<p>by the County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority.</p> <p>It is possible that on individual sites some evidence of historic, small scale surface extraction remains.</p> <p>The adopted Minerals Local Plan identifies an area at Abberley Hills for the purposes of an Abberley Hills Quarrying Policy. SWDP Sites Allocations SWDP23/1 and 23/2 are just outside the boundary of that policy area.</p> <p>Elsewhere there are land stability issues in some parts of the SWDP area for example as a legacy of salt working in Droitwich. National policy set out in NPPF makes clear that to prevent unacceptable risks from land stability, planning policies should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. Where a site is affected by land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or land owner</p> <p>Where development is proposed in areas with a known legacy of minerals extraction the developer will be expected to assess the site for ground contamination, ground stability and mining hazards and submit appropriate mitigation reports in support of their planning application.</p> <p>Alternative Options Considered</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining the absence of reference to Minerals matters in the SWDP would not be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and would be an error of omission as the Minerals Local Plan is part of the Development Plan taken as a whole. 2. Permitting non-minerals development on safeguarded area without allowing for the desirability of prior extraction would be inconsistent with NPPF, as this could lead to unnecessarily sterilising the use of natural resources. 3. The alternative of preventing non-minerals development on safeguarded area even if prior extraction could occur is inconsistent with NPPF as this could unnecessarily preclude development that would support delivery of strategic opportunities. 4. In relation to addressing mining legacy, leaving this matter entirely at the discretion of the would-be developer would not be consistent with the NPPF. 	