



**Nottinghamshire  
County Council**

# **Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

January 2016

# Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan - Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Is there a requirement to produce a Minerals Local Plan?

Yes. The County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority has a statutory duty to produce a Minerals Local Plan for Nottinghamshire that future minerals development will be assessed against.

## 2. Why is an up to date minerals local Plan required?

If the County Council does not have an up to date plan in place it could result in planning applications for minerals development being submitted and decided on an ad-hoc / 'first come first served' basis. This would result in a lack of certainty for local communities and the minerals industry as to where development could take place. A consequence of this could be that mineral extraction may be permitted at those sites that have greater impacts on the surroundings.

## 3. What is the area covered by the plan?

The Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan covers the Nottinghamshire County Council boundary excluding the City of Nottingham.

## 4. What is the timescale of the plan?

The Plan covers the period to 2030.

## 5. What are minerals used for?

Minerals underpin every aspect of our daily life including the food we eat, the homes we live in, the power we use and how we travel and communicate with each other.

In the UK each person uses an average of 10 tonnes of minerals every year ranging from salt, sand and gravel, coal and iron ore.

## 6. What minerals are found in Nottinghamshire?

A wide range of minerals are present in Nottinghamshire (set out below) including some of regional and national importance.

- Sand and gravel
- Sherwood Sandstone
- Limestone – including industrial dolomite
- Brick clay
- Silica Sand
- Building stone
- Coal
- Gypsum
- Hydrocarbons – oil/gas

## **7. Can minerals be worked anywhere?**

No. Minerals can only be worked where they are found.

## **8. Is consultation undertaken as part of the plan preparation?**

Yes. The development of the emerging minerals plan is focused around a number of key public consultation stages. This is to ensure that all the relevant issues raised by the public, stakeholders and the minerals industry have been taken into account as the mineral plan has been developed.

To date the following stages have been completed:

- Issues and Options consultation document (January 2012)
- Preferred Approach consultation document (October 2013)
- Additional consultation of sand and gravel provision (May 2014)
- Additional consultation on sand and gravel provision – Shelford West (October 2014)

If approval is granted by Full Council, the next stage of the plan will be consultation on the Submission Draft consultation document. This is expected in February 2016.

Following the Submission Draft consultation, the document will be submitted to government who will appoint an independent inspector to undertake an Examination in Public to assess the soundness of the plan. This is expected to take place in late 2016.

## **9. Who is consulted on the Minerals Local Plan?**

The County Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement and this sets out how consultation will be undertaken and who will be consulted. The following have been included in the consultation stages set out above.

General public  
Near neighbours  
Statutory bodies  
District/Borough Councils  
Interest groups  
Adjoining Minerals Planning Authorities  
Minerals industry

All those who have previously commented on the minerals plan will be informed prior to the start of the next consultation stage.

## **10. How can I comment on the next stage of consultation?**

As the Submission Draft Consultation document is a formal stage of consultation, a specific response form needs to be completed. This can be filled out online through the County Councils consultation database or downloaded and filled out by hand. The main consultation document and response form will be available once the consultation opens and can be found at [Nottinghamshire.gov.uk/minerals](http://Nottinghamshire.gov.uk/minerals).

### **11. What evidence is used in the development of the Minerals Local Plan?**

The emerging minerals plan is based on a comprehensive evidence base and range of assessment documents (set out below) along with information supplied by the minerals industry relating to potential new quarries.

Sustainability Appraisal – see point 11.

Strategic Transport Assessment – see point 20.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – see point 21.

Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) – see point 12.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – see point 8.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Equality Impact assessment (EIA)

Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

### **12. What is a Sustainability Appraisal?**

A Sustainability Appraisal is required to be undertaken as part of the development of the Minerals Local Plan and is an iterative process undertaken over the development of the plan. The Sustainability Appraisal assesses the likely social, environmental and economic impacts of the policies contained within the emerging plan as well as the proposed site specific allocations. Although the Sustainability Appraisal provides the proposed allocations with a 'score' this should be read alongside the commentary on each site and policy within the Assessment document itself. The Sustainability Appraisal should also be considered along with the wider evidence base.

### **13. What is a Local Aggregates Assessment?**

A Local Aggregates Assessment is required to set out the rolling average of 10 years sales data taking into account other relevant local information, such as major infrastructure projects e.g. A453 widening / NET line 2. A rolling average of 3 years sales data should also be included. The role of the 3 year average is to identify upward trends at an early stage which could trigger a review of the plan to identify further reserves.

A Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham has been produced annually since 2013. The first LAA was based on the period 2002-2011.

### **14. How is future demand for sand and gravel calculated?**

The data included in the Local Aggregates Assessment is used to identify expected demand over the plan period. The most recent data available at the time the minerals plan was prepared was the 10 year period 2002-2011 (inclusive). Table 1 sets out how future demand for sand and gravel is calculated.

More recent production data exists however this has not been used for two reasons:

1. The production data used incorporates 5 years of high production (pre-recession) and five years of very low production (recession period). It therefore provides a robust figure to forecast future demand as it provides flexibility for growth in the future. If a lower figure was used and growth increases, the minerals plan could underestimate demand resulting in an early review of the plan to identify further sand and gravel.

2. A fixed base-line figure is required at the start of the plan preparation process to enable expected demand over the plan period to be identified. If a different figure was used for the base line at this stage of the process, the minerals plan would need to be re-written and additional consultation undertaken to take account of the changes. This would result in a significant delay to the preparation of the plan, leaving the County Council open to determining planning applications on the basis of an out of date plan (see point 23).

	Million tonnes	Notes
Expected annual demand	2.58	Based on 10 year average established in the LAA
Total required over the plan period (2011-2030)	49.02	2.58 million tonnes x 19 years
Existing reserves with planning permission (Dec 2011)	19.31	49.02 – 19.31
Requirement over the plan period	<b>29.71</b>	

Table 1 – Calculating demand over the plan period.

Throughout the consultation stages the minerals industry made representations stating that additional mineral reserves (above those already identified) should be identified to meet expected growth, although members of the public and local action groups state that the amount identified should be reduced due to the recession and low levels of construction.

### **15. Who identifies and operates quarries?**

Individual minerals companies put forward areas of land that they have an interest in (agreement with the land owner and rights to work the mineral) and that could be worked within the plan period to 2030. The minerals industry operate the sites. The County Council does not operate quarries.

### **16. How far can sand and gravel be economically transported?**

On average sand and gravel is only transported between 30-40 miles. This is because the mineral is a low cost and bulky product and transporting it long distances can significantly add to its cost.

**17. Why is a geographical spread of sand and gravel quarries required?**

Sand and gravel extracted in Nottinghamshire serves a diverse range of markets including those in Doncaster, Nottinghamshire and the wider East Midlands. Given that minerals can only be worked where they are found and that the distance minerals can be economically worked, three main extraction areas have developed. These are the Idle Valley, near Newark and Near Nottingham.

**18. Are site specific allocations being made for industrial dolomite?**

No. A site at Holbeck was put forward by a mineral operator at the evidence gathering stage for the extraction of Industrial Dolomite. However, it is now unlikely that the reserves will be required over the plan period. The plan contains a policy that would allow a future quarry where a need can be demonstrated.

**19. Why have some potential quarries put forward by the industry not been proposed for allocation in the plan?**

There are a variety of reasons why sites put forward have not been allocated in the plan. This could include: No mineral operator in place to work the site, the site cannot be delivered within the plan period, the proposal is less sustainable than other sites proposed (based on assessment work undertaken) or the total tonnage put forward by the industry is more than required over the plan period.

**20. What does the plan say about hydrocarbons including shale?**

The emerging Minerals Local Plan contains a policy covering all types of hydrocarbon minerals including oil, gas, coal bed methane and shale gas. The policy is in line with national guidance and identifies the key stages of development; Exploration, Appraisal, Extraction and Restoration.

A separate policy for shale gas is not required as the planning process is the same for all types of hydrocarbons.

**21. Has the additional HGV traffic from proposed quarries been taken into account?**

Yes. As part of the evidence base, a Strategic Transport Assessment has been undertaken by consultants to assess the wider impact of the additional HGV traffic from the proposed quarries. This assessment concludes that none of the proposed quarries would generate any issues. As part of a detailed planning application, a site specific transport assessment would be required and would look in greater detail at highway issues.

**22. Has the potential for additional flooding from quarries located in the flood plain been taken into account?**

Yes. As part of the evidence base a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken by consultants. The aim of the assessment is to assess the risk of flooding from all sources, now and in the future, taking account of the impacts of climate change, and to assess the impact that minerals development will have on flood risk.

Minerals development is different in terms of flood risk and therefore as part of a detailed planning application, a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment would be required.

Well-designed restoration proposals for quarries close to rivers can also enable the flood plain to be reconnected to the river providing additional areas of flood storage and increased areas of habitat and biodiversity gain.

**23. Is planning permission required for the proposed site allocations included in the plan?**

Yes. The proposed allocations included in the minerals plan are those sites which are in principle suitable for future mineral extraction. A detailed planning application would still need to be submitted by the operator and approval granted before work could commence.