

PART 1 - GENERAL

Chapter 1

Introduction



Minerals extracted in Nottinghamshire provide essential raw materials for both local and national industries. Starting from top left and moving clockwise. Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station fuelled by coal; Gypsum processing at Jericho Works; new housing development at Lowdham and duelling of the A46 between Newark and Lincoln.

Need for the Plan

- 1.1 The exploitation of minerals is essential to the nation's social and economic progress, providing materials for the construction and building industry, for fuels, for manufacturing and for other industries. Extraction can be beneficial to an area in bringing employment, clearing areas of dereliction, dealing with instability and allowing redevelopment to proceed. However mineral workings can have a severe environmental impact destroying landscapes and wildlife habitats, disrupting agriculture and causing disturbance such as noise, dust and traffic.
- 1.2 Minerals can only be worked where they are found, and a satisfactory balance must be sought between the need for minerals, safeguarding resources and protecting the environment. Policies in the Minerals Local Plan provide the detailed framework to control and direct mineral exploitation and take account of national, regional and other relevant local planning guidance. In addition the Plan identifies areas for future exploitation and working of reserves so that the minerals industry is able to plan operations and invest in new plant and machinery confident that their investment will be justified. The Plan process also provides an opportunity for public consultation for mineral extraction in the county as a whole.
- 1.3 The Minerals Local Plan represents the primary guidance, and the starting point for the assessment and determination of minerals planning applications. All mineral development proposals must be determined in accordance with this Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations may, for example, include future changes in Government guidance, or exceptional circumstances which individual policies in the Plan could not reasonably have allowed for. This approach is in accordance with the Government's Planning Policy Statement 1: Sustainable Development (PPS1) and current legislation.

Plan's Aims

- 1.4 The County Council's Strategic Plan 2001-05, sets out the future strategy for the next four years. Our vision is:

We want Nottinghamshire to be safe, healthy, prosperous and attractive. Nottinghamshire should be somewhere in which everyone can succeed, with fair access to opportunities and support to live a full and enjoyable life. We want Nottinghamshire people to be proud of their community and their County. We want Nottinghamshire County Council to be one of the top 20 councils in the UK, providing top quality, democratically accountable services have a crucial role in realising this vision.
- 1.5 The Strategic Plan has six priorities, the Minerals Local Plan will contribute to four of these through its policies and provide a sustainable approach to minerals development, as follows:

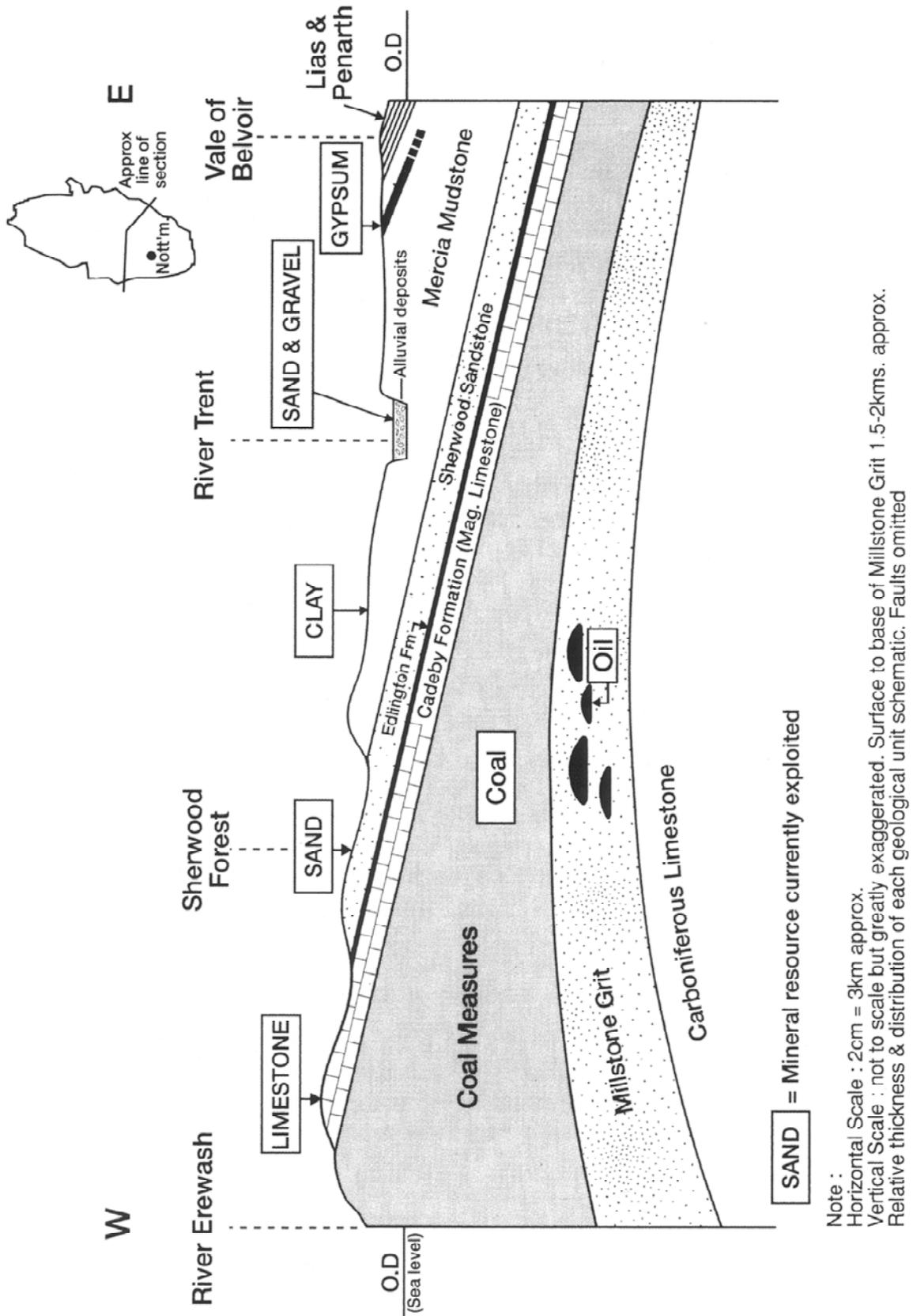
- (a) **Culture** – which seeks to ensure that everyone has the chance to enjoy our libraries and archives, the arts, sport, parks, countryside recreation, the natural environment and our historic towns and buildings. Here, the Minerals Local Plan will contribute to the Strategic Plan by protecting and enhancing local amenity; by appropriate restoration and after-use; and by recognising the importance of the historic environment.
- (b) **Regeneration** – by recognising the benefit generated by minerals development to the local, regional and national economy in addition to the contribution it can make to regeneration.
- (c) **Environment** – this is the main contribution the Minerals Local Plan can make to this Strategic Plan priority. This will be by:
 - Aiming to achieve no net loss to the environment by minimising impacts, mitigating those which are unavoidable and compensating for any remaining effects;
 - Minimising the disturbance and impact on local communities;
 - Encouraging waste minimisation, and the reuse and recycling of other materials;
 - Promoting sustainable modes of transport;
 - Protecting and enhancing areas of landscape and cultural heritage, including countryside character and local distinctiveness;
 - Promoting biodiversity;
 - Protecting the water environment;
 - Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land;
 - Ensuring that mineral sites are progressively restored to a beneficial after use.
- (d) **Community** – in seeking to keep the local community informed and engaged, the Plan will go through wide ranging consultative processes. The County Council will continue to encourage the process of setting up local liaison groups whereby site operators meet with representatives of the local community to discuss operational matters and opportunities to take advantage of the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.

Other aims of the Minerals Local Plan are:

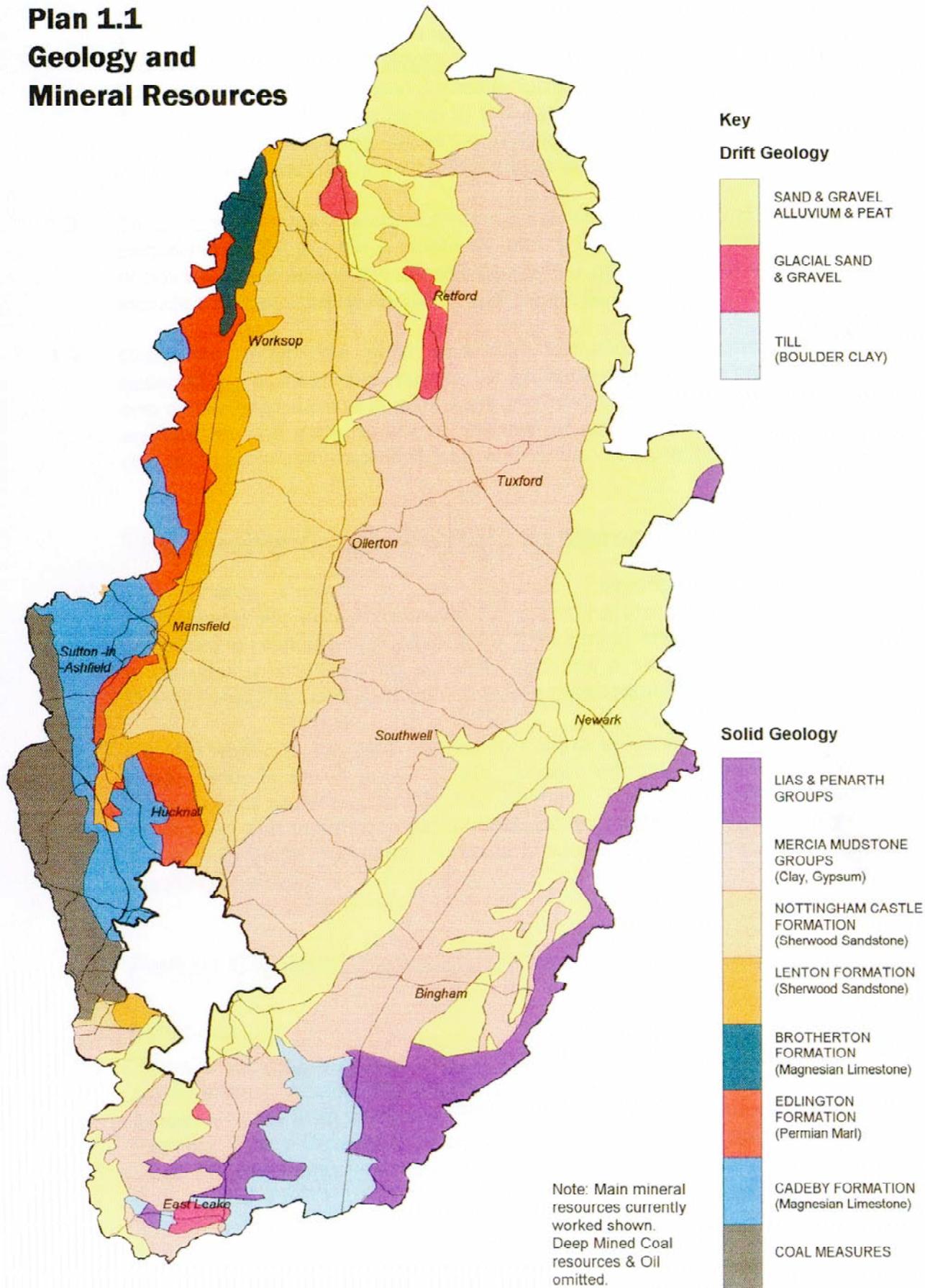
- (e) **Minerals Provision** – securing the provision of sufficient minerals to meet reasonable needs.
- (f) **Optimum use of Minerals** – encouraging the optimum use of minerals from primary and secondary sources.
- (g) **Minerals Sterilisation** – preventing mineral resources from being sterilised by development.

1.6 These aims have been developed using current national, regional and local guidance.

Fig 1.1 – A Representative Geological Section through Nottinghamshire



Plan 1.1 Geology and Mineral Resources



Nottinghamshire – Its Geology and Mineral Resources

- 1.7 Nottinghamshire lies within a broad belt of sedimentary rocks, which dip gently eastwards, from the Pennine axis of Derbyshire towards Lincolnshire and the North Sea basin. Rocks ranging in age from the Upper Carboniferous Coal Measures to the Lower Jurassic, form a series of north-south belts with the youngest rocks being found in the east. Outcrops of the Permo-Triassic rocks are by far the most widespread extending across three-quarters of the county. Clays, sandstones and limestones are the predominant rock types.
- 1.8 These ancient rocks, which comprise the ‘solid’ geology of the county are partially buried beneath a relatively thin veneer of unconsolidated or ‘drift’ deposits, laid down in the recent geological past by ice and rivers. These include sand and gravel, alluvium and glacial till.
- 1.9 Contained within the solid and drift formations is a rich and diverse assemblage of mineral resources, which have enabled the county to become one of the largest mineral producers in Great Britain. Deposits of coal, sand and gravel, and gypsum are of national importance. Deposits of limestone, clay and oil are also exploited (see Plan 1.1 and Figure 1.1).

The County Council’s Role in Minerals Planning

- 1.10 The County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) for Nottinghamshire and responsible for preparing the Minerals Local Plan and determining planning applications for the winning and working of minerals. It is also the waste planning authority and has a similar role in preparing the Waste Local Plan and determining waste management proposals.
- 1.11 Mineral workings are also subject to control by other agencies such as the Mines and Quarries Inspectorate, Local Authority Environmental Health Departments and the Environment Agency. These agencies are principally concerned with health and safety and pollution controls. The County Council liaises with these agencies, particularly where these matters have land-use planning implications.

Recent Changes to the Planning System

- 1.12 Major reforms to the planning system were introduced on 28th September 2004 under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. All existing minerals and waste local plans will be gradually phased out and replaced by a ‘Minerals and Waste Development Framework’ which will comprise a range of new Development Plan and other documents. Structure plans will similarly disappear to be replaced by Regional Spatial Strategies. In parallel with these reforms, the Government is also revising its current system of national planning and minerals planning policy guidance.

- 1.13 This Plan has been prepared under the previous planning system with transitional arrangements applying since the new reforms came into effect. Where practical, the Plan has been updated to refer to the new planning system and guidance but a complete update will only be possible when the Plan is replaced by new mineral development plan documents prepared under the new Minerals and Waste Development Framework arrangements.

Policy Context

National

- 1.14 There is no comprehensive national plan setting out policies to govern mineral exploitation. Advice on statutory provisions and Government policy is available in the form of Mineral Planning Guidance Notes (MPGs) and general Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). This advice provides an important basis in formulating policies and in making planning decisions. The current MPG's and PPG's used in preparing this Plan are listed in Appendix 2, although these are in the process of being replaced by Mineral Policy Statements and Planning Policy Statements.

Regional

- 1.15 Replacement Regional Planning Guidance Note 8 (RPG8) for the East Midlands was published by the Government in 2002. The primary purpose of RPG8 was to provide the framework for the preparation of structure plans. These in turn set the context for the preparation of local plans, and it is within the policy context provided by these plans that day to day development control decisions are made.
- 1.16 In March 2005, RPG8 was replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8).

Local

- 1.17 Proposals must conform with the Nottinghamshire Structure Plan Review, (1996). A review of the Structure Plan is at an advanced stage with adoption of a Structure Plan Review (Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Joint Structure Plan) expected by late 2005. Once adopted, the Joint Structure Plan is expected to remain in force for three years or until replaced by the next Regional Spatial Strategy. The Nottinghamshire Waste Local Plan (2002), as well as a number of non-statutory plans that the County Council contributes to, will also have a significant bearing on framing policies for future minerals development.
- 1.18 District wide local plans, which are the responsibility of the seven district councils in Nottinghamshire, have either been adopted or are in the course of preparation. All contain policies about their local environment and some have addressed local mineral issues. Where appropriate, these will be taken into account in determining mineral planning applications.

- 1.19 This Deposit Draft does not include the City of Nottingham which became a unitary authority in 1998. There are no active or proposed mineral workings within the city, although mineral development is addressed within the deposit draft of their development plan.

Content, Format and Timescale of the Plan

- 1.20 The Plan comprises a Written Statement and a Proposals Map with Insets and is divided into two parts.
- 1.21 Part 1 sets out general principles and policies applicable to all mineral development within the county. Part 2 considers each mineral on a chapter by chapter basis. The location and occurrence of each mineral is described together with the rate and scale of extraction, markets, uses and the planning issues raised.
- 1.22 The replacement Plan period extends to 31 December 2014. Normally only those developments which realistically are expected to commence during the plan period, should be formulated as proposals. However, in view of the special circumstances of mineral working, particularly where heavy capital investment is needed, the Plan will, where appropriate, look beyond this timescale.

Monitoring and Review

- 1.23 The Minerals Local Plan has been prepared on the basis of the best information available at the present time. Some of this information is imprecise. For example, there is often little knowledge of the exact location, quality and quantity of workable minerals. One of the biggest problems of planning ahead is future uncertainty. It is difficult to forecast with any precision when certain developments will take place or when schemes will be completed. Changing economic conditions and Government guidance will have an important bearing on rates of mineral extraction.
- 1.24 Planning Policy Guidance Note 12 (PPG 12) 'Development Plans' recommends that development plans should be regularly monitored and reviewed in order to ascertain whether policies are being implemented as envisaged and to assess future needs. The first monitoring and review of the adopted plan was completed in December 2000 which established the need for a replacement Minerals Local Plan. Monitoring is now required to be carried out annually with a full review expected well before the end of the plan period, probably by around 2009. The key issues that would require monitoring include:
- Landbank provision;
 - assessing provision policies, in particular the take up of allocations and assumptions made on future demand;
 - assessing whether mineral production/demand is in line with the Plan's forecasts;

- new Government legislation/guidance affecting the Plan's objectives and policies;
- ensuring that environmental protection and enhancement policies are adequate and realistic and that reclamation schemes provide long term environmental benefits;
- for coal proposals, that the policies limit proposals to environmentally acceptable schemes and, where appropriate, promote local and community benefits; and
- ensuring that mineral resources are not unnecessarily sterilised.

1.25 This approach should help ensure that the Plan is kept up to date in terms of making adequate provision of minerals, taking account of new Government and other guidance and changes to the industry. The monitoring report will also provide a summary of recent planning decisions, the latest statistics on minerals production and any significant changes to the industry in Nottinghamshire. Under the new planning system, the monitoring of this Plan by the County Council will form part of an overall annual monitoring of all new planning documents prepared under the emerging new Local Development Framework arrangements.