

OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS & WASTE CORE STRATEGY
PROPOSED PREFERRED MINERALS PLANNING STRATEGY

Vision and Objectives for Minerals Core Strategy

- 1 This vision for Oxfordshire's minerals planning strategy is informed by the character of and growth and development aspirations for the county, the policy context and the issues for waste planning in Oxfordshire that have been identified. It addresses the need to support Oxfordshire's economy but also to protect its environment.
- 2 **Vision for Minerals**
 - a) In the period to 2030, the supply of aggregate materials to meet the development needs of Oxfordshire and help sustain its world class economy will be met by an increased use of secondary and recycled aggregate materials; a reduced proportion of locally produced sand and gravel, soft sand, limestone and ironstone; and the continued import of materials such as hard crushed rock that are not available locally.
 - b) Mineral working will be located and managed to minimise the distance that aggregates are transported by road, the use of unsuitable roads through settlements and other harmful impacts of mineral extraction and transportation on Oxfordshire's environment and communities.
 - c) The restoration of mineral workings will enhance the quality of Oxfordshire's natural environment, particularly the Conservation Target Areas, and the quality of life for Oxfordshire residents by contributing to the creation of habitats and protection of biodiversity and the provision of access to the countryside and opportunities for recreation.

Objectives for Minerals

3. The Oxfordshire Minerals Vision Statement is supported by the following nine objectives.
 - i. Enable Oxfordshire to meet the locally determined requirements for supply of sand and gravel, soft sand, crushed rock and secondary and recycled aggregates over the plan period to meet planned economic growth and social needs.
 - ii. Enable a continued supply of limestone and ironstone for building and walling stone from small scale quarries for the maintenance,

repair and construction of locally distinctive buildings and structures.

- iii. Provide a framework for investment and development by mineral operators and landowners through a clear and deliverable spatial strategy which is sufficiently flexible to meet future needs and which is based on existing and planned infrastructure provision.
- iv. Facilitate the economically and environmentally efficient supply of minerals in Oxfordshire and encourage the maximum practical recovery of aggregate resources from secondary and recycled aggregate materials for use in place of primary aggregates.
- v. Minimise the impact of mineral development on climate change by identifying areas for mineral extraction which reduce the need to transport minerals and which minimise the impact of mineral working on areas vulnerable to flooding.
- vi. Minimise the distance minerals need to be transported by road and encourage where possible the movement of aggregates by conveyor, rail and on the River Thames in order to reduce adverse impacts of mineral transportation on local communities and the environment.
- vii. Protect Oxfordshire's important landscapes and ecological, geological and heritage sites, and archaeological and heritage assets from harmful impacts of mineral development and transportation.
- viii. Provide benefits to Oxfordshire's natural environment and local communities through the restoration of mineral workings by contributing to nature conservation, enhancing the quality and extent of Conservation Target Areas, contributing to landscape character, improving access to the countryside, safeguarding local amenity and providing opportunities for local recreation.
- ix. Safeguard resources of sand and gravel, crushed rock, building stone and Fuller's Earth to ensure that these resources are potentially available for future use and are considered in future development decisions; and safeguard permanent facilities for producing secondary and recycled aggregate and for importing aggregates into Oxfordshire by rail.

Preferred Strategy for Minerals

4. Policy M1: Provision for Secondary and Recycled Aggregates

Priority will be given to the production and supply of secondary and recycled aggregates in preference to land won aggregates; and provision will be made for facilities sufficient for the production of at least 0.9 million tonnes of secondary and recycled aggregates a year, comprising:

- Permanent facilities; and
- Temporary recycling facilities at aggregate quarries and inert waste landfill sites.

This provision will be made primarily through recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste but also through recovery of ash from combustion processes.

5. Policy M2: Provision to be made for Mineral Working

The mineral planning authority will maintain a landbank of reserves with planning permission of at least 7 years for soft sand and sharp sand and gravel; and 10 years for crushed rock, based on the following rates of extraction:

- Sharp sand and gravel at an average rate of 1.01 million tonnes a year;
- Soft sand at an average rate of 0.25 million tonnes a year; and
- Crushed rock at an average rate of 0.63mtpa million tonnes a year.

Provision will be made for extraction of building stone from extensions to existing or new quarries where a local need for the material has been demonstrated and provided that the quarrying is at a scale appropriate to the locality and will not harm the environment or local amenity.

6. Policy M3: Strategy for the Location of Mineral Working

The principal locations for sharp sand and gravel working will be:

- Lower Windrush Valley;
- Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton;
- Sutton Courtenay;
- Caversham; and
- Cholsey.

Provision will be made through extensions to existing quarries and new quarries to replace exhausted quarries at Lower Windrush Valley, Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton, Sutton Courtenay and Caversham; and through new working at Cholsey.

The principal locations for soft sand working will:

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- South east of Faringdon;
- Tubney/Marcham/Hinton Waldrist; and
- Duns Tew.

The principal locations for crushed rock working will be:

- North of Bicester to the east of the River Cherwell;
- South of the A40 near Burford; and
- South east of Faringdon.

For soft sand and crushed rock, preference will be given to extensions to existing quarries and new quarries will only be permitted if sufficient provision cannot be made through extensions.

Additional working of ironstone for aggregate use will only be permitted in exchange for an agreed revocation, without compensation, of an existing permission containing workable resources.

The working of clay will normally be permitted only from areas where sand and gravel is being worked in the following locations:

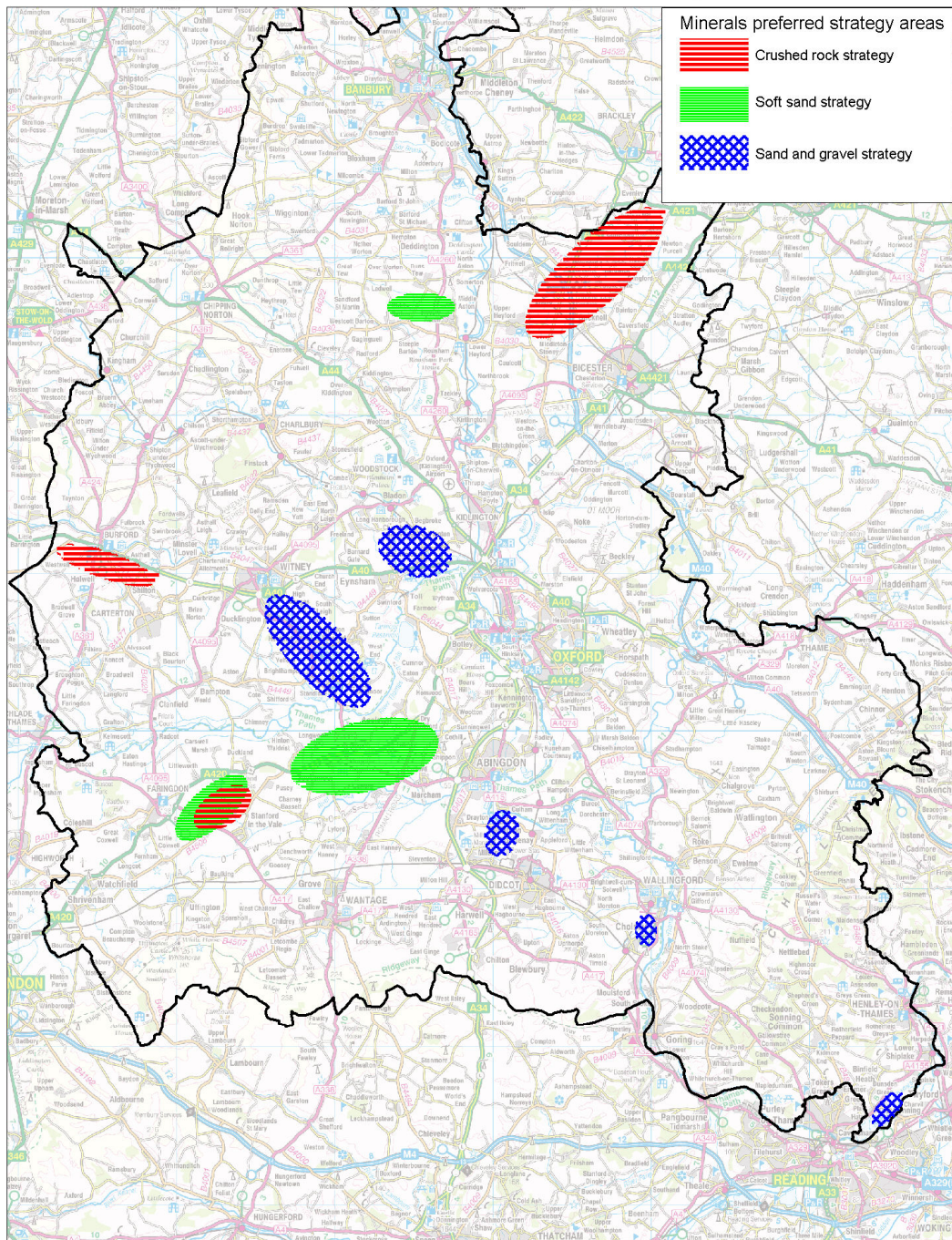
- Lower Windrush Valley;
- Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton; and
- Sutton Courtenay.

Planning permission will not be granted for mineral working outside the locations identified above unless the required provision cannot be met from within these areas.

Applications to work fullers earth, oil, gas, coal or any other minerals not currently worked in the county will be considered in the light of national and development plan policies.

Locations for mineral working are shown on Figure 1.

Preferred strategy for crushed rock, soft sand and sharp sand and gravel



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Figure 1 The preferred strategy for mineral working

7. Policy M4: Aggregates rail depots

Existing and permitted rail depots will be safeguarded for importing aggregates at:

- Banbury (Hennef Way);
- Kidlington;
- Sutton Courtenay (Appleford Sidings); and
- Shipton on Cherwell Quarry.

Where proposals for development would result in the loss of a rail depot site, a suitable alternative site should be provided.

The development of further aggregates rail depots will be encouraged at suitable locations outside the Green Belt.

8. Policy M5: Mineral safeguarding

Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be defined, and identified in detailed maps, and will include the following mineral resources:

- Sand and gravel in the main river valleys and in other areas where the resource is proven;
- Soft sand, limestone and ironstone in existing areas of working, including the areas included in the proposed strategy for mineral working;
- Fullers earth.

These mineral resources will be safeguarded for the future and development which could sterilise or otherwise hinder the possible future working of minerals will not be permitted.

Development which would prejudice the operation or establishment of existing or permitted aggregates rail depots identified in or subsequently permitted under policy 4, will not be permitted. Development that is sensitive to disturbance and could be adversely impacted by the operation of a rail depot will not be permitted in proximity to an existing or permitted rail depot.

Permanent secondary and recycled aggregate production facilities will be safeguarded.

9. Policy M6: Restoration of mineral workings

Minerals workings should be restored to a high quality in a phased manner as quickly as possible following extraction, to an after-use appropriate to the location and the capacity of the transport network and which is sympathetic to the character of the surrounding landscape and the amenity of local communities. Proposals for restoration, after-care and after-use should be submitted with applications for mineral working; and they should provide for long-term maintenance and enhancement of the environment after mineral working has ceased; and should accord

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with District LDF policies, including environmental protection, countryside and access enhancement and noise management. Planning permission will not be granted for mineral working unless satisfactory proposals have been made for the restoration, aftercare and after-use, including the means of securing them in the long term.

Where restoration could assist or achieve the creation of priority habitats and/or Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan targets, the relevant biodiversity after-use should be incorporated within the restoration scheme.

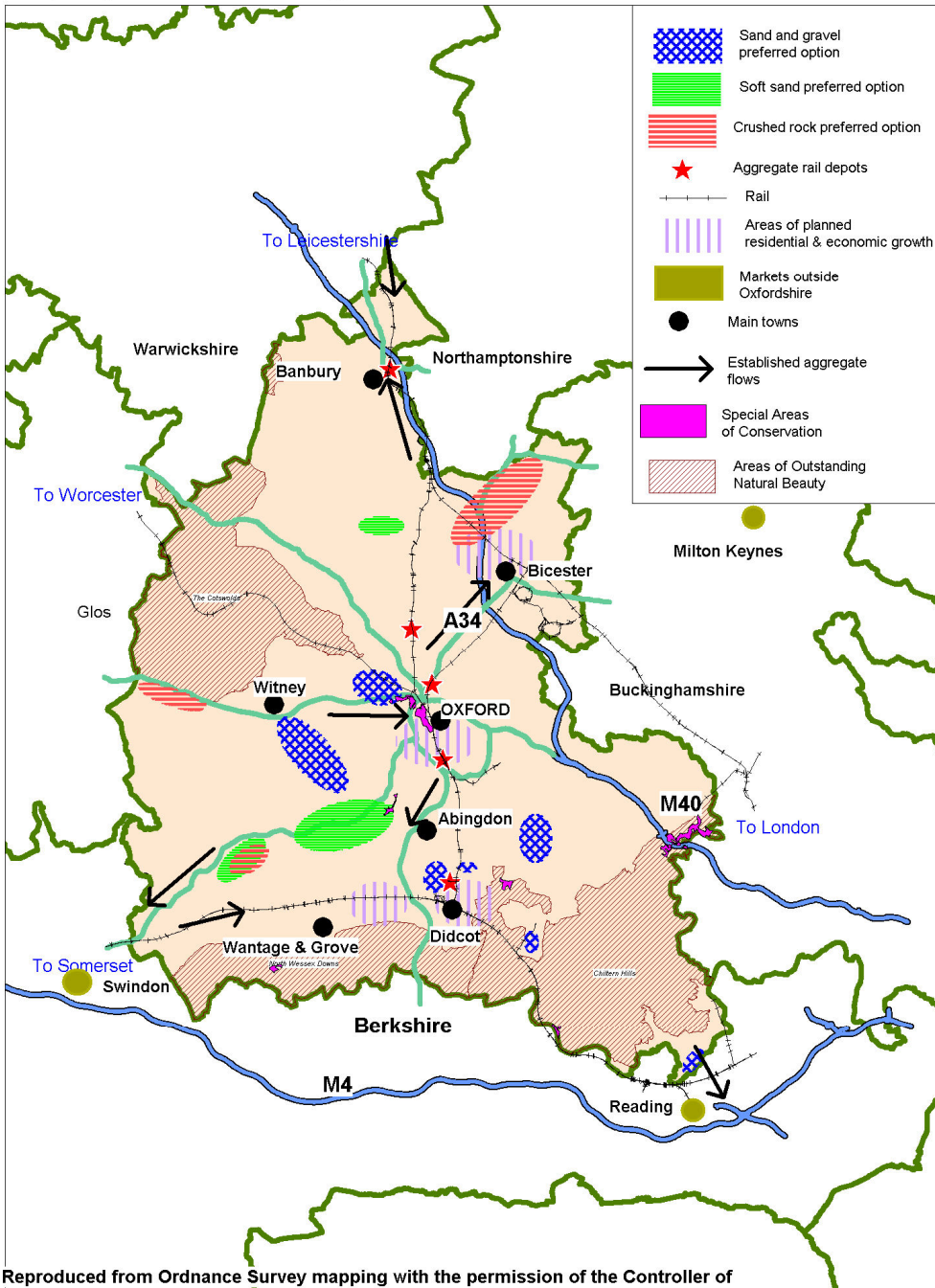
Where restoration could protect geodiversity and improve educational opportunities this should be incorporated into the proposed restoration scheme, such as by providing for important geological faces to be left exposed and enabling access to the faces.

Where mineral working is proposed on best and most versatile agricultural land, the restoration should be back to agricultural land if this is practicable.

Where a mineral working site has the potential to provide for local amenity uses, including appropriate sport and recreational uses, these uses should be incorporated into the restoration scheme.

Where appropriate, operators and landowners will be expected to contribute towards the management of restored mineral workings for an extended period beyond any formal aftercare period.

Key Diagram - Minerals Strategy



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