

**OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS AND
WASTE LOCAL PLAN:
CORE STRATEGY**

CONSULTATION DRAFT

February 2014

Section	Content	Page
1	Introduction	
	Introduction	
	How to respond the consultation	
	What happens next?	
2	Background	
	The Oxfordshire Area	
	Minerals in Oxfordshire	
	Waste in Oxfordshire	
	Policy Context	
	Issues	
	Habitats Regulations Assessment	
	Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment	
	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	
3	Vision and Objectives for Minerals and Waste in Oxfordshire	
	Introduction	
	Minerals Planning Vision	
	Minerals Planning Objectives	
	Waste Planning Vision	
	Waste Planning Objectives	
4	Minerals Planning Strategy	
	Recycled and secondary aggregate	
	Provision for working aggregate minerals	
	Locations for working aggregate minerals	
	Imported aggregates and rail depots	
	Non aggregate mineral working	
	Safeguarding mineral resources	
	Restoration and after use of mineral workings	
5	Waste Planning Strategy	
	Management of Oxfordshire waste	
	Management of waste from other areas	
	Diversion of waste from landfill	
	Provision of additional waste management capacity	
	Strategy for provision of waste management facilities	
	Siting of waste management facilities	
	Landfill	
	Hazardous waste	
	Management of radioactive waste	
	Safeguarding waste management sites	
6	Common Core Policies for Minerals and Waste	
	Sustainable development	

	Climate change	
	Flooding	
	Water environment	
	General amenity	
	Agricultural land and soils	
	Biodiversity and geodiversity	
	Landscape	
	Historic environment	
	Transport	
	Rights of Way	
7	Implementation and Monitoring	
	Implementation of the minerals strategy	
	Monitoring of the minerals strategy	
	Implementation of the waste strategy	
	Monitoring of the waste strategy	
Appendix 1	Flood Vulnerability Classification and Flood Zone Compatibility	
	Glossary	
	Index of Minerals Policies	
M1	Recycled and secondary aggregate	
M2	Provision for working aggregate minerals	
M3	Locations for working aggregate minerals	
M4	Working of aggregate minerals	
M5	Aggregates rail depots	
M6	Non-aggregate mineral working	
M7	Safeguarding mineral resources	
M8	Restoration of mineral workings	
	Index of Waste Policies	
W1	Management of Oxfordshire waste	
W2	Management of waste from other areas	
W3	Diversion of waste from landfill	
W4	Waste management capacity requirements	
W5	Locations for waste management facilities	
W6	Siting of waste management facilities	
W7	Landfill	
W8	Hazardous waste	
W9	Management of radioactive waste	
W10	Waste water and sewage sludge	
W11	Safeguarding waste management sites	

Index of Common Core Policies		
C1	Sustainable development	
C2	Climate change	
C3	Flooding	
C4	Water Environment	
C5	General environmental and amenity protection	
C6	Agricultural land and soils	
C7	Biodiversity and geodiversity	
C8	Landscape	
C9	Historic environment and archaeology	
C10	Transport	
C11	Rights of Way	
Index of Figures		
Fig 1	Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt in Oxfordshire	
Fig 2	Growth areas and other large development locations	
Fig 3	Sand and gravel and crushed rock resources in Oxfordshire	
Fig 4	Location of active mineral workings and sites with planning permission	
Fig 5	Existing temporary & permanent recycled and secondary aggregate facilities with planning permission	
Fig 6	Existing municipal and commercial & industrial waste facilities and sites with planning permission	
Fig 7	Existing permanent construction, demolition & excavation waste facilities and sites with planning permission	
Fig 8	Waste hierarchy	
Fig 9	Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton Area of Search	
Fig 10	Lower Windrush Valley Area of Search	
Fig 11	North East of Caversham Area of Search	
Fig 12	Thames Valley (Oxford to Goring Gap) Area of Search	
Fig 13	Corallian Ridge between Oxford and Faringdon Area of Search	
Fig 14	Duns Tew Area of Search	
Fig 15	Areas of the County around large towns, and smaller towns	
Fig 16	Waste Key Diagram	
Fig 17	Oxfordshire Lorry Route Map	

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1 The County Council is responsible for minerals and waste planning in Oxfordshire and is reviewing the current planning policies for mineral working and waste management. A new Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan is being produced.
- 1.2 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy (the plan) will provide the planning strategies and policies for the development that will be needed for the supply of minerals and management of waste in Oxfordshire over the period to 2030. It will set out policies to guide minerals and waste development over the plan period and common core policies which address development management issues relevant to both minerals and waste.
- 1.3 This document is the Council's draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy, published for public consultation. It sets out the Council's preferred approach to strategies and policies for minerals and waste, after the consideration of alternative options.
- 1.4 This consultation document is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulation Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Topic Papers also provide background information on key issues and the development of the strategies and policies. These supporting documents, and all other documents that make up the evidence base for the plan, are available on the Council's website.

How to respond to the consultation

- 1.5 The County Council wants to get as wide a response as possible to this consultation draft plan. This is an important opportunity to tell us your views on planning for minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire. We would also welcome comments on the evidence base documents. The plan and all related documents can be accessed from the County Council website or are available at the Council's Speedwell House office in Oxford.
- 1.6 Please let us have your views, preferably using the response form that can be downloaded from the Council's website or obtained from the Minerals and Waste Policy Team (see below). Comments made by letter or email will also be accepted. Please send response forms by post, fax or email to:

Minerals and Waste Draft Plan Consultation
(Speedwell House)
FREEPOST
Oxfordshire County Council

Fax No: 01865 241577

Email: mineralsandwasteplanconsultation@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-sire/minerals-and-waste-policy>

- 1.7 **The closing date for responses is 7 April 2014.**
- 1.8 For further information, please contact the Minerals and Waste Policy Team on 01865 810431 or 01865 815544, or the email address above or the following postal address:

Minerals and Waste Policy Team
Environment & Economy – Planning Regulation
Oxfordshire County Council
Speedwell House
Speedwell Street
Oxford OX1 1NE

What happens next?

- 1.9 The County Council will consider carefully all comments received in response to this consultation. We will take them into consideration in the next stage of the plan process, which will be preparation of the pre-submission draft of the plan. We expect to publish this later in 2014, providing a further opportunity for representations to be made.
- 1.10 The plan and the representations received will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2015, for independent examination by a government appointed inspector. We hope that the final plan will be adopted by the end of 2015. The programme for preparing the plan is set out in more detail in the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme¹.
- 1.11 A report on the responses to this consultation, including a summary of the points made in the responses, will be prepared and published on the Council's website following the consultation. Comments in full will be available at the Council's Speedwell House office in Oxford for inspection by appointment following the consultation.

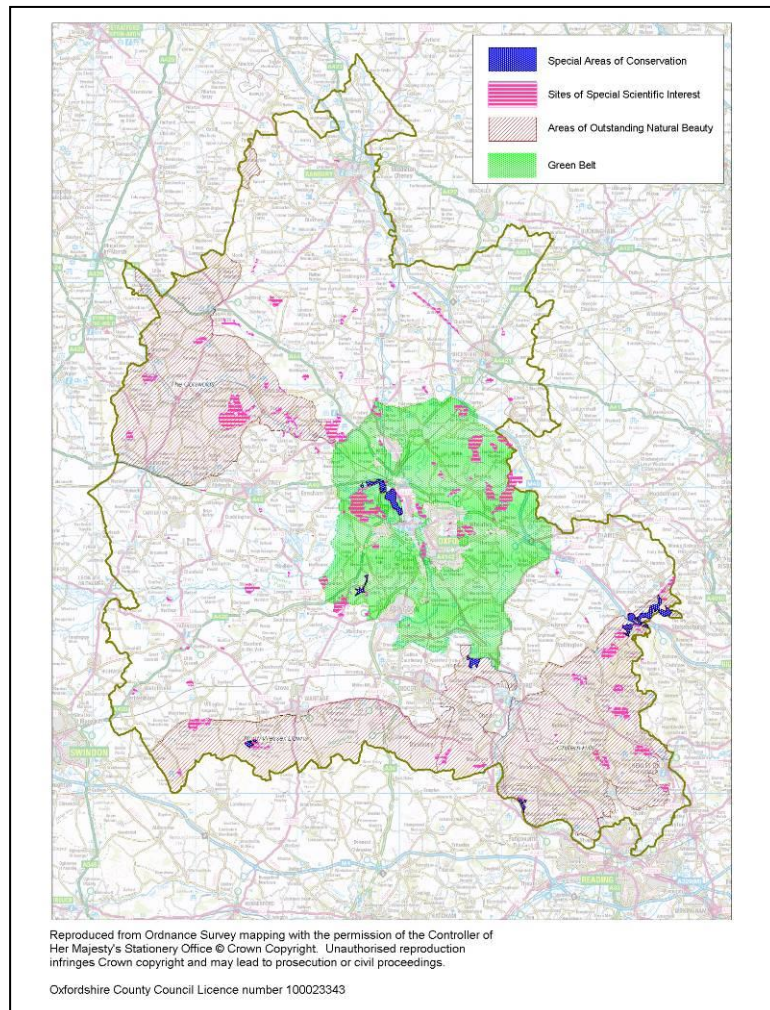
¹ The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (Fifth Revision) 2013 came into effect on 10 December 2013 and is available on the County Council website.

2. BACKGROUND

The Oxfordshire area

- 2.1 Oxfordshire is renowned for its knowledge-based economy and research and development facilities. It is also the most rural county in the South East of England and almost a quarter of the land area is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has seven Special Areas of Conservation which are protected by European legislation, numerous Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity. It also has a rich variety of landscapes, numerous historic buildings, extensive archaeological assets and areas of high grade agricultural land, including where sand and gravel deposits are located along the River Thames and its tributaries. An area around Oxford is Green Belt. Figure 1 shows the main protected areas in the county.

Figure 1: Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Green Belt in Oxfordshire



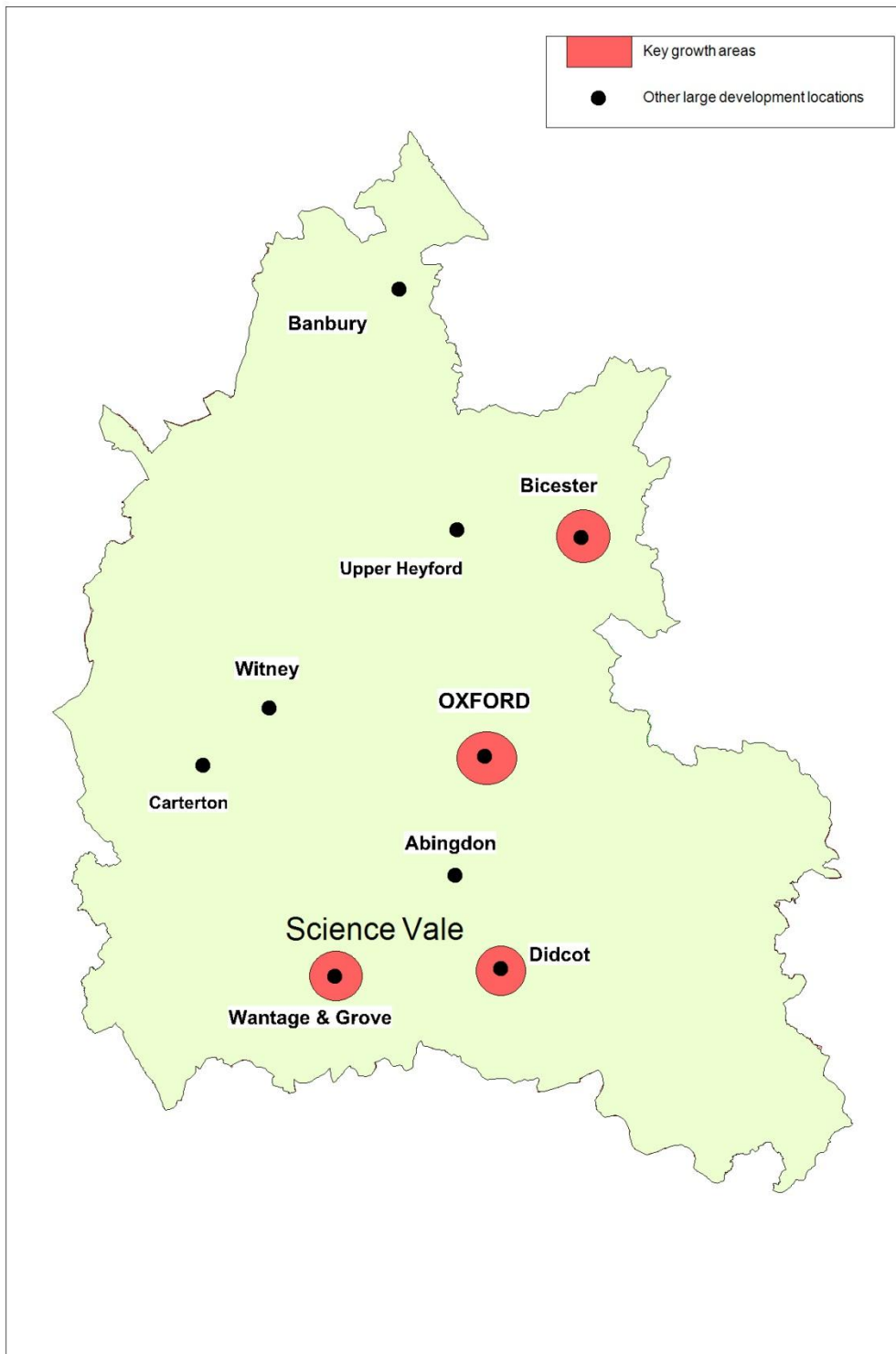
- 2.2 The population of the county is currently approximately 637,000. Over the next 20 years significant population growth, new housing, commercial and related development, investment in infrastructure and related traffic growth are

expected in Oxfordshire². This has implications for the demand for and supply of minerals and also for the production of waste and how it is dealt with. Oxfordshire has to balance the need to protect and enhance its special environment, both urban and rural, with the needs of economic growth and housing.

- 2.3 About 40,000 homes could be built in Oxfordshire between 2011 and 2026. There is a need for considerable investment in new infrastructure to support the objective for Oxfordshire of supporting a thriving economy and to meet the pressures on essential services such as schools, transport and other community facilities. Key challenges for the plan are to make provision for the construction materials that will be needed to be supplied and for the waste that will be produced to be dealt with in ways that are effective and sustainable. There is also a need to ensure that new developments reduce carbon emissions and are resilient to climate change.
- 2.4 Key locations for development, as shown on figure 2, are:
- Didcot and Wantage & Grove, which are within the Science Vale UK area which also includes Milton Park, Harwell Science and Innovation Campus and Culham Science Centre;
 - Bicester, which is set to experience considerable housing and employment growth over the next 20 years, including a 5,000 home eco-development, and for which a masterplan will provide a long-term vision and framework for integrating growth of the town; and
 - Oxford, which remains a world class centre of education, research and innovation.
- 2.5 Large housing developments (1000+ homes) are also proposed at Banbury, Upper Heyford, Witney and Carterton. Just over half of planned growth in Oxfordshire to 2026 is in the southern part of the county, with the remainder in the northern part.

² Oxfordshire's population is forecast to grow by a further 12% to 2026 with the building of about 40,000 new dwellings. Road traffic has grown rapidly in Oxfordshire, particularly on the M40 and A34, and congestion is a significant problem; and growth in all traffic on Oxfordshire roads is predicted to be over 25% over the period to 2026.

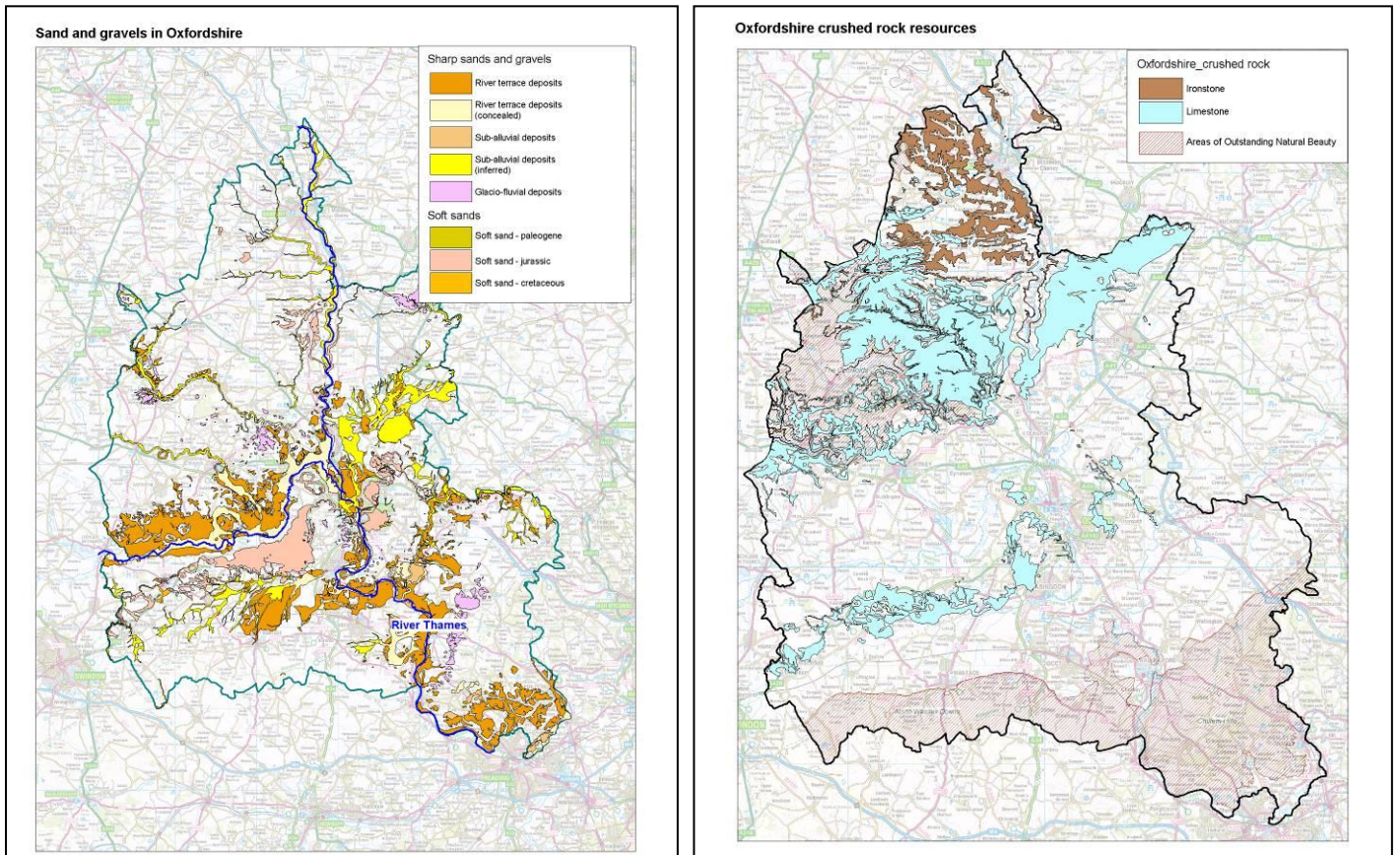
Figure 2: Key growth areas and other large development locations



Minerals in Oxfordshire

2.6 Sand and gravel is the most common mineral resource in Oxfordshire and this is typically found in river valley deposits, particularly along the River Thames and its tributaries the Windrush, Evenlode and Thame. Its primary use is to make concrete. Soft sand occurs mainly in the south west of the county; it is used in mortar and asphalt. Limestone and ironstone are found mainly in the north and west of the county; they are used primarily as crushed rock aggregate but also for building and walling stone. The resources include extensive areas of ironstone which received planning permission for mineral extraction in the 1950s, much of which is subject to environmental (Review Of Mineral Permissions (ROMP)) legislation which prevents further working until planning conditions that accord with up to date environmental standards have been agreed with the County Council. Figure 3 shows the location of mineral resources; and figure 4 shows the location of active mineral workings in the county.

Figure 3: Sand and gravel and crushed rock resources in Oxfordshire



2.7 Annual production of aggregates (sand and gravel and crushed rock) in Oxfordshire has fallen from 2.7 million tonnes to less than a million tonnes over the last 10 years³. A survey in 2009 found that 78% of sand and gravel

³ Oxfordshire County Council Local Aggregate Assessment 2013

and 51% of crushed rock produced in the county is used in Oxfordshire. The issue of how much should be provided for in future is covered in section 4.

Figure 4: Location of active mineral workings and sites with planning permission. (TO BE UPDATED)



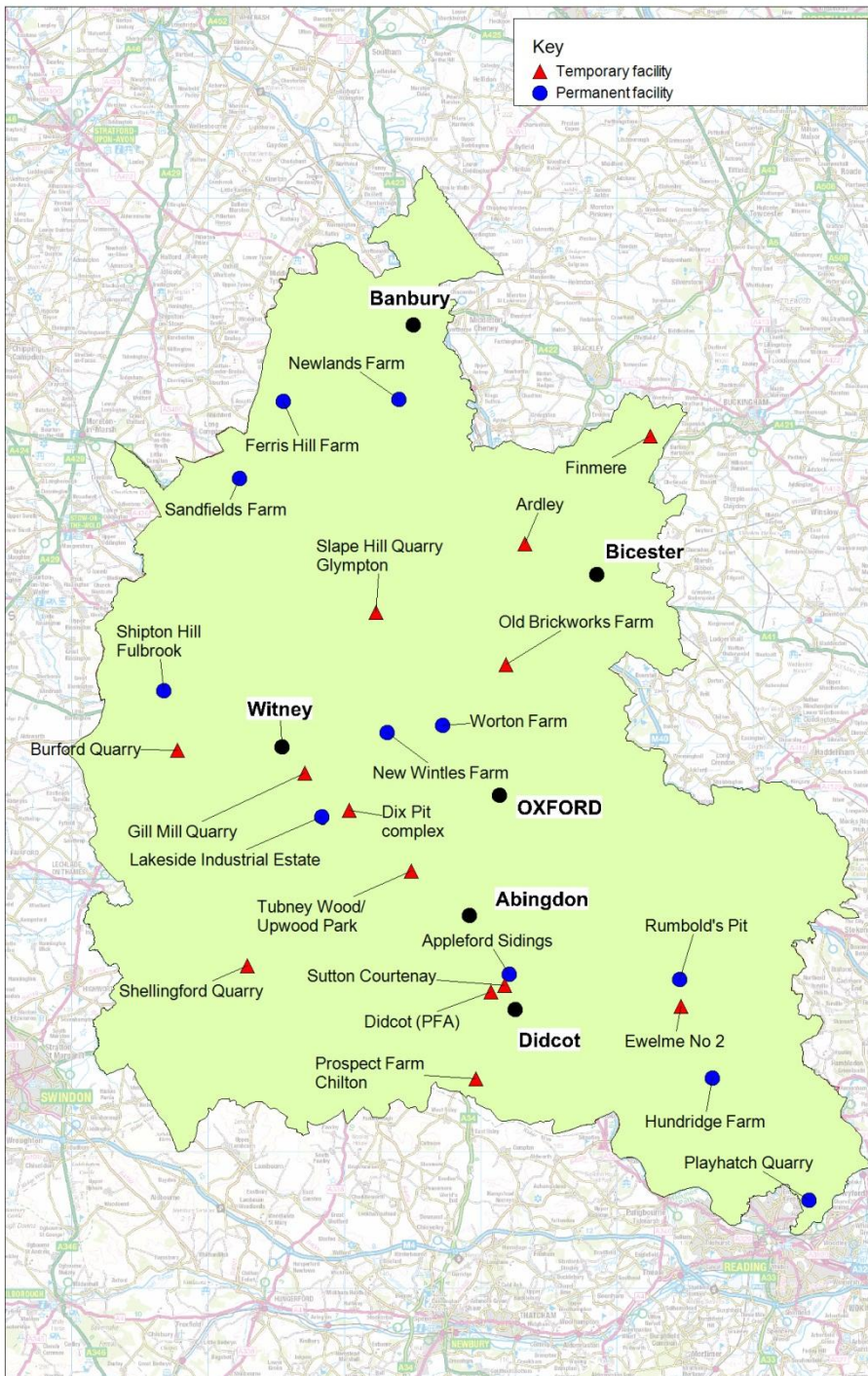
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2.8 There are movements of minerals both into and out of the county. The 2009 survey showed that Oxfordshire imported more sand and gravel and crushed rock than it exported. Hard rock aggregates are imported by rail from the Mendips and Leicestershire to meet construction needs which cannot be met by local, softer limestone and ironstone.

2.9 Production of aggregates from recycled construction and demolition waste and from secondary materials (including ash from Didcot A Power Station) is believed to have made an increasingly significant contribution to the overall requirement for aggregates. Didcot A power station closed in March 2013 but there will be a new source of ash when the Ardley energy from waste plant becomes operational. Locations of secondary and recycled aggregate facilities are shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: Existing temporary and permanent recycled and secondary aggregate facilities with planning permission (*TO BE UPDATED*)



Waste in Oxfordshire

- 2.10 Prior to the economic downturn, more than 2 million tonnes of waste⁴ was being produced annually by Oxfordshire residents, businesses and organisations, mostly comprising:
- Municipal (mainly household) waste (collected, processed and disposed of by the district and county councils) – approximately 15%;
 - Commercial and industrial waste (produced, processed and disposed of by the private sector) – approximately 25%;
 - Construction, demolition and excavation waste (produced, processed and disposed of by the private sector) – approximately 60%.
- 2.11 Agricultural and mineral wastes are also produced in significant quantity, but much of this is managed on site. Other wastes that need to be provided for are produced in smaller quantities. These are hazardous wastes (including oils and solvents, chemicals and asbestos); radioactive waste; metal waste; and sewage sludge.
- 2.12 About 90% of Oxfordshire's waste is dealt with in the county⁵. The main method of dealing with waste has been by disposal at local landfill sites, but waste is now increasingly being diverted from landfill by recycling and treatment. Existing waste facilities and sites with planning permission are shown on figure 6 (municipal and commercial & industrial waste) and figure 7 (construction, demolition and excavation waste).
- 2.13 Oxfordshire is a net importer of waste. Some waste is brought into the county from elsewhere for disposal at landfill sites, under commercial arrangements that are largely outside current planning controls. In particular, waste comes into Oxfordshire from London (much of it by rail) and Berkshire. In 2011 some 685,000 tonnes of waste from other areas was disposed in Oxfordshire landfills, half of which was inert waste from construction and demolition projects. Sutton Courtenay is the largest receiving landfill site.

Table 1: Waste disposed in Oxfordshire from other areas (tonnes)

Area	2008	2009	2010	2011
Berkshire	218,473	185,139	149,418	108,173
London	254,457	307,520	580,236	456,312
Rest of UK	67,628	64,497	65,655	120,965
Total	540,558	557,156	795,309	685,450

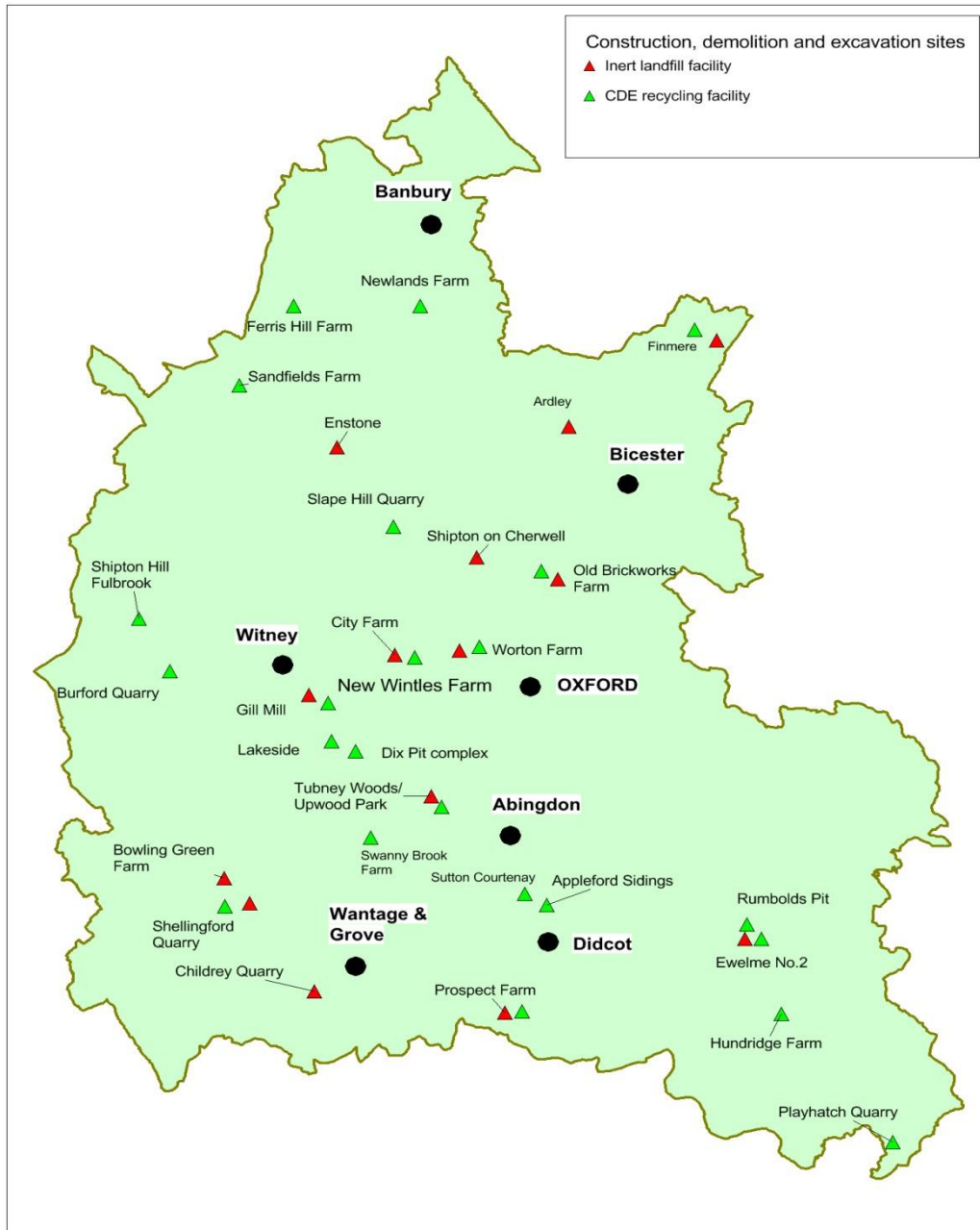
⁴ Annual Monitoring Report 2008 (relative amounts of specified wastes subsequently revised)

⁵ Oxfordshire Waste Needs Assessment 2012 and report by consultants BPP 2014.

Figure 6: Existing municipal and commercial & industrial waste facilities and sites with planning permission (*TO BE UPDATED*)



Figure 7: Existing permanent construction, demolition & excavation waste facilities and sites with planning permission (TO BE UPDATED)



Policy context

2.14 The draft plan reflects international, national and local policies and plans (regional plans are no longer relevant⁶). Broad areas of policy are outlined below; more specific aspects of planning policy are covered later in the document or in the relevant Topic Paper.

International/European

2.15 The key international plans and programmes which are relevant to the draft minerals and waste plan are:

- The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg (2002);
- Kyoto Protocol and the UN framework convention on climate change (1997);
- Bern Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats.

2.16 The European Union has issued a number of Directives which have been transposed into national legislation and policy and are of particular relevance to this plan (see paragraphs 2.17 and 2.21). These include the Waste Framework Directive⁷ and the Landfill Directive⁸. Other relevant Directives include the Habitats Directive⁹, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive¹⁰ and the Water Framework Directive¹¹.

National

2.17 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy is being prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a specific requirement (the Duty to Cooperate) that local authorities preparing Local Plans engage ‘constructively, actively and on an on-going basis’ on strategic issues having cross-boundary significance with other authorities and agencies.

2.18 In 2012 the Government replaced the former national planning policy statements with a briefer single document, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹². The detailed practice guidance notes that supported the former planning policy statements are still in place but are to be replaced by

⁶ The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (the South East Plan) was revoked in March 2013.

⁷ Directive on Waste (2008/98/EC) (transposed into English law under the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011).

⁸ Directive on the Landfill of Waste (99/31/EC) (transposed into English law under the landfill (England & Wales) Regulations 2002).

⁹ The Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna Directive (92/43/EC) (transposed into UK law under the Conservation of Habitats Species Regulations 2010).

¹⁰ Directive on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (2001/42/EC) (transposed into UK law under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004).

¹¹ Directive 2000/60/EC: establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

¹² The National Planning Policy Framework contains no specific policy on waste planning and has not replaced PPS 10 – Planning for Sustainable Waste Management.

the emerging briefer on-line national Planning Practice Guidance¹³. Other key publications include the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

- 2.19 The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with local planning authorities expected to 'positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area'. Sustainable development is expected to:
- Contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - Support strong, vibrant and healthy communities;
 - Contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 2.20 The NPPF recognises minerals as being 'essential to support sustainable economic growth and our quality of life'; and that there needs therefore to be 'a sufficient supply of material to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs'¹⁴. Mineral planning authorities are to plan for 'a steady and adequate supply of aggregates' and industrial minerals. The NPPF also includes policy for on-shore oil and gas development, including unconventional hydrocarbons.
- 2.21 The Government published a new national Waste Management Plan for England in December 2013. This is a high level document which provides an analysis of the current waste management situation in England and evaluates how it will support implementation of the objectives and provisions of the Waste Framework Directive. It sets out the policies that are in place to help move towards a zero waste economy as part of the transition to a sustainable economy.
- 2.22 National planning policy for waste is current set out in Planning Policy Statement 10 'Planning for Sustainable Waste Management', March 2011 (PPS 10), and this is cross-referred to in the Waste Management Plan for England. In July 2013 the Government undertook consultation on updated national waste planning policy.
- 2.23 PPS10 includes the key objective of preparing and delivering planning strategies that help deliver sustainable development through:
- Driving waste management up the waste hierarchy;
 - Addressing waste as a resource; and
 - Looking to disposal as the last option (but one that must be adequately catered for).
- 2.24 The waste hierarchy is a key part of European policy in the Waste Framework Directive, and of national policy for the management of waste. In this hierarchy, waste prevention is the most desirable option and disposal is the option of last resort.

¹³ On-line National Planning Practice Guidance was introduced in draft form in September 2013.

¹⁴ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 142.

Figure 8: Waste Hierarchy



- 2.25 By moving the management of waste up this hierarchy, away from disposal to reuse, recycling, composting and treatment to recover resources, the Government aims to achieve more sustainable waste management and to break the link between economic growth and the environmental impact of waste. This aim is shared by the County Council.
- 2.26 Landfilling biodegradable waste produces methane gas which is a powerful greenhouse gas. European and national legislation and policy has put in place strong financial and policy drivers and challenging targets to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste that is sent to landfill, and to increase the recovery of resources from waste. Landfill tax (which applies to all wastes and has been increasing year on year) has been and continues to increase the costs of landfill so that it will no longer be the cheapest means of dealing with waste.
- 2.27 The Government therefore expects waste plans to provide sufficient opportunities for the provision of waste management facilities of the right type, in the right place and at the right time. Communities are encouraged to take more responsibility for their own waste, with waste disposed in one of the nearest appropriate installations in ways that do not endanger human health or harm the environment. Competitiveness in the management of waste is also encouraged¹⁵.

Local

- 2.28 The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2006 was adopted by the County Council in July 1996. It contains detailed policies for the supply of minerals, the provision of waste management facilities and for the control of minerals and waste developments. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 many of the policies of this Plan have been 'saved'¹⁶ and

¹⁵ Planning Policy Statement 10: paragraphs 2 and 3.

¹⁶ Letter from Government Office for the South East (Housing and Planning Directorate) 25 September 2007.

currently form part of the development plan for Oxfordshire pending their replacement by policies in the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

- 2.29 In October 2012 the County Council submitted an Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination. This was intended to replace the 2006 Local Plan and had been the subject of widespread stakeholder engagement and public consultation¹⁷: The Inspector appointed to carry out the independent examination of the Core Strategy raised issues over the adequacy of the evidence base in relation to the recently published NPPF and its compliance with the new duty to co-operate. In view of this, the examination was suspended in February 2013 and in July 2013 the County Council resolved to withdraw that plan and to prepare a revised Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan¹⁸.
- 2.30 Local plans prepared by the City and District Councils¹⁹ contain policies that are relevant to minerals and waste planning. The current position with local plans in Oxfordshire is shown in the following table.

District Council	Adopted Plan
Cherwell	Local Plan (1996)* – saved policies**
Oxford City	Core Strategy (March 2011)
South Oxfordshire	Core Strategy (December 2012)
Vale of White Horse	Local Plan (July 2006) – saved policies**
West Oxfordshire	Local Plan (June 2006) – saved policies**

* Non-statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 also relevant to the determination of planning applications.

** Policies saved by Secretary of State in September 2007.

- 2.31 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy must take into account and, as far as possible, should be consistent with the plans of other mineral and waste planning authorities which share strategic minerals or waste issues with Oxfordshire (including neighbouring authorities, those which export hard rock to Oxfordshire and those which receive hazardous or radioactive waste from Oxfordshire).
- 2.32 The County, City and District Councils have worked in partnership to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy for Oxfordshire – Oxfordshire 2030. This is a partnership plan for improving quality of life in Oxfordshire. It sets out a long-term vision for Oxfordshire’s future: ‘By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities’.
- 2.33 The strategic objectives of Oxfordshire 2030 include:

¹⁷ 400 representations were received on the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document, May 2012; the County Council’s response to those representations forms part of the evidence base for the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan, and is available on the Council’s website.

¹⁸ Information on withdrawal of the previous plan is contained in a report to the County Council on 9 July 2013.

¹⁹ The Development Plan for Oxfordshire comprises the District Councils’ adopted Local Plans and the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

- World class economy: To build on Oxfordshire's vibrant economy and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to be included in that success.
 - Healthy and thriving communities: To tackle lack of housing and respond effectively to the demographic challenges we face over the next 20 years.
 - Environment and climate change: To respond to the challenges of climate change by minimising the effects of flooding, looking after our environment, reducing waste and use of energy to improve the quality of life for all.
- 2.34 Separate Community Strategies for the City and District Councils take their lead from these principles.
- 2.35 The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is responsible for championing and developing the Oxfordshire economy and was launched by the Business Minister in March 2011. It aims to make Oxfordshire a globally competitive, knowledge based, economy open for business and at the heart of UK-wide economic growth, innovation and private sector job creation. The Business Plan for Growth 2013 looks to focus on three key spatial priorities:
- Science Vale UK: build on its existing research infrastructure and the designation of Harwell as the home of the national Satellite Applications 'Catapult';
 - Bicester: where improved infrastructure and increased land availability is unlocking the potential for significant increases in employment growth;
 - Oxford: continue to invest in developing the critical infrastructure necessary to realise the full potential of its world-class education, research and innovation.
- 2.36 The County Council is both the planning authority for waste development; and the waste disposal authority, with responsibility for the management and disposal of municipal waste, mainly comprising the household waste and some commercial waste collected by the five district councils.
- 2.37 The county and district councils work together on municipal waste management under the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership. The Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2013²⁰ has replaced the previous strategy 'No Time to Waste' that was agreed by the Partnership in 2007. The new strategy provides a framework and policies for the management of municipal waste in the county to 2030. The Partnership's vision for the future is: 'A society where everyone tries to prevent waste and sees waste materials as a potential resource'.
- 2.38 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy includes policies:
- to ensure Zero growth or better of municipal waste per person per annum;
 - to recycle or compost at least 65% of household waste by 2020 and at least 70% by 2025;

²⁰ Oxfordshire Waste Partnership: Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2013

- to minimise waste to landfill and recover energy from non-recyclable waste and seek to landfill no more than 5% of non-recyclable household waste; and
- to work with the Waste Planning Authority to ensure that waste facilities are suitably sized and distributed with the aim of minimising the transport of waste

The strategy document is supported by two annexes:

- Annex A – Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Action Plan;
- Annex B – Waste Prevention Strategy 2010–2020.

2.39 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy is separate from the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy but should be informed by and consistent with its provisions.

Issues

2.40 The plan needs to make provision for mineral working and supply to meet the needs for Oxfordshire’s planned growth and development that is likely to take place over the next 20 years and to maintain the existing built fabric of the county. It also needs to make provision for waste management facilities to meet the needs of the current population and businesses of Oxfordshire and the planned growth and development.

2.41 Much of the work that was undertaken in preparing the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (see paragraph 2.26) is still relevant to the preparation of this new plan. The Topic Papers that support the Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Core Strategy make reference to this previous work where relevant. Many of the issues that need to be addressed by this plan were previously identified in the preparation of and consultation on the former Core Strategy.

Minerals

2.42 National policy²¹ recognises that minerals are a finite natural resource and can only be worked where they are found. Most mineral workings are located in rural areas, many of which are served by minor roads. In some cases lorries carrying aggregates have to pass through small villages and towns, contributing to congestion and impacting on local communities and the environment. The River Thames cuts across the county and the movement of sand and gravel is constrained by the limited number of river crossings, many of which have weight restrictions. One particular consequence of this is that aggregates from sources in West Oxfordshire (e.g. the Lower Windrush Valley) have to be transported longer distances, crossing the river at Oxford, in order to reach markets in the southern part of the county. Some communities have experienced extensive working in the past, and in certain areas the local landscape has been significantly altered by the creation of lakes from sand and gravel workings.

²¹ National Planning Policy Framework: paragraph 142.

2.43 Key issues for minerals planning in Oxfordshire that this plan needs to address are:

- The provision that should be made for aggregate minerals (sand and gravel, soft sand and crushed rock) taking into account the needs of Oxfordshire for construction materials, the contribution that can be expected from other areas and the needs for supply to other areas.
- The contribution to aggregate supply that could be made by secondary and recycled aggregate and how that contribution could be best secured.
- The locations that would best meet the provision that needs to be made for aggregate mineral working and how those locations should be identified in the plan.
- The approaches that should be taken to proposals for aggregate mineral working within identified locations, and elsewhere.
- The approach that should be taken to supply of aggregates from outside Oxfordshire, particularly by rail through aggregate railhead depots.
- The provision that should be made for non-aggregate minerals (e.g. building stone) and the approach that should be taken to proposals for mineral working.
- The approach that should be taken to the restoration and aftercare of mineral workings.
- The safeguarding of Oxfordshire's important mineral resources from sterilisation by other forms of development.

Waste

2.44 National policy²² puts an emphasis on the need for new waste management facilities, to drive the management of waste up the waste hierarchy and divert waste from landfill. In Oxfordshire a number of new waste management facilities have already been developed across the county. Some existing sites are the subject of temporary planning permissions and further facilities are expected to be needed. Sites already in longer term waste management use are valuable but can be vulnerable to pressures for other forms of development.

2.45 The government expects communities to take more responsibility for their own waste, but it can be difficult to find suitable sites for waste management facilities within or close to centres of population. Consequently, many waste facilities are located in rural areas away from the built up areas where most waste is produced. In and around Oxford, the difficulties of finding appropriate sites are further accentuated by the need to consider the protection of the Green Belt.

2.46 Oxfordshire has a considerable amount of landfill space in comparison with most other counties, but increasingly less waste is being disposed in landfills as new waste treatment facilities become operational. The disposal of Oxfordshire's waste by landfill will be significantly reduced when the new Ardley Energy from Waste plant opens later in 2014. This may lead to

²² PPS 10 – Planning for Sustainable Waste Management

proposals for the durations of landfill sites to be extended beyond what was originally intended, with the consequent continuation of any impacts on the local communities that host them.

2.47 Key issues for waste planning in Oxfordshire that this plan needs to address are:

- The types of waste the plan should provide for and the quantities of those wastes likely to be produced in Oxfordshire over the plan period.
- The ways in which the wastes produced in Oxfordshire should be managed over the plan period.
- The amount of waste management capacity that will be needed to manage the wastes produced in Oxfordshire and the approach that should be taken to provision over and above the level required for Oxfordshire's waste.
- The approach that should be taken to waste that comes into Oxfordshire from other areas.
- The new waste management facilities that will be required and where they should be located.
- Whether there are any types of waste that cannot be managed in Oxfordshire and how provision should be made for these.
- The types of locations and sites that should be used for waste management facilities.
- The way in which Oxfordshire's existing landfill sites should be considered in the event that the quantities of waste being landfilled fall significantly.
- The safeguarding of waste management facilities for future waste use and how might this would be best achieved.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.48 The Habitats Directive requires that planning authorities assess the likely effects of their plans, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, on sites which have been designated as being of European importance for the habitat or species they support. In Oxfordshire there are seven sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). A Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report, prepared by the Council (to support the subsequently withdrawn Core Strategy), identifies the seven sites and the conservation objectives that apply to each and provides an assessment of the likely impacts on them.

2.49 The screening report suggested that there could potentially be an impact of mineral extraction near Oxford Meadows SAC and Cothill Fen SAC. Further work was commissioned to provide a hydrogeological assessment of mineral working in the Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton sharp sand and gravel area and the soft sand area north and south of the A420, west of Abingdon (part of the Corallian Ridge between Oxford and Faringdon). The consultants' report forms an addendum to the screening report. The report concluded that, with certain safeguards, mineral extraction could take place if required in these areas without being likely to have an effect on the SACs.

- 2.50 The County Council considers that this Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report and addendum is adequate to support the consultation draft plan. The screening report will be reviewed in the light of relevant responses to the consultation in consultation with Natural England and, if necessary, a revised screening report will be prepared to support the pre-submission draft of the plan.

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.51 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that an assessment is carried out of the likely impacts of the plan on a range of environmental criteria. Policies and proposals in development plan documents must also be subject to sustainability appraisal, which includes consideration of social and economic as well as environmental factors. A sustainability appraisal scoping report²³ has been prepared and published following consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.
- 2.52 The Council commissioned consultants to carry out a sustainability appraisal incorporating a strategic environmental assessment of options²⁴ to assess the potential impacts of minerals and waste development against a range of environmental, economic and social criteria and this has informed the preferred approach set out in this draft plan.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

- 2.53 Local Authorities are expected to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to inform the development of strategies and policies in local plans²⁵. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment assesses the potential risk of flooding to and from development that may take place, and provides detailed mapping of areas at risk of flooding from all potential sources and anticipates the potential impact of climate change. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment provides the main source of data to apply sequential testing of development options with a view to ensuring that, as far as possible, development takes place in areas at least risk of flooding.
- 2.54 The Council commissioned consultants to carry out a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in October 2010 to inform preparation of the (subsequently withdrawn) Minerals and Waste Core Strategy. The data in that assessment remains up to date and relevant and will form the basis for any update of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment²⁶ that is necessary, including to record and takes account of changes to planning policy since the previous document was prepared. The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment does not identify a need for a Level 2 (more detailed) study of flood risk in any area where minerals or waste development is anticipated.

²³ Reference required.

²⁴ Reference required.

²⁵ National Planning Policy Framework: paragraph 100.

²⁶ Reference required.

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR MINERALS AND WASTE IN OXFORDSHIRE

Introduction

- 3.1 The vision and objectives of the plan provide the basis for the development of the strategy, policies and proposals for minerals supply and waste management through the period to 2030. The objectives seek to address the issues identified in chapter 2 above, taking into account relevant national and local policies, in particular the need to support Oxfordshire's economy, protect its environment and help develop healthy and thriving communities²⁷.
- 3.2 The objectives have been revised to take account of recent changes in national policy and comments made on the previously published plan.

Minerals Planning Vision

- 3.3 The growth that is planned for Oxfordshire presents major challenges for minerals planning, including that adequate supplies of the minerals needed for construction are made available when and where required and in the most sustainable way possible.
- 3.4 The proposed vision for minerals planning in Oxfordshire in 2030 is that:
- a) There will be a sufficient supply of aggregate materials available to meet the development needs of the county with a world class economy, and make an appropriate contribution to wider needs, provided from the following sources (in order of priority):
 - secondary and recycled aggregate materials;
 - locally produced sand and gravel, soft sand, limestone and ironstone; and
 - import of materials such as hard crushed rock that are not available locally.
 - b) Mineral workings and supply facilities will be located and managed to minimise:
 - the distance that aggregates need to be transported by road from source to market;
 - the use of unsuitable roads, particularly through settlements; and
 - other harmful impacts of mineral extraction, processing and transportation on Oxfordshire's communities and environment.
 - c) Restored mineral workings will enhance the quality of Oxfordshire's natural environment and the quality of life for Oxfordshire residents by:
 - creating new habitats and protecting biodiversity;
 - providing opportunity for access to the countryside and recreation activity; and

²⁷ Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy Oxfordshire 2030.

- helping to reduce the risk of flooding and adding to flood storage capacity.

Minerals Planning Objectives

3.5 The following objectives are proposed:

- i. Facilitate the efficient use of Oxfordshire's mineral resources by encouraging the maximum practical recovery of aggregate from secondary and recycled materials for use in place of primary aggregates.
- ii. Make provision for a steady and adequate supply of sand and gravel, soft sand and crushed rock over the plan period to meet the planned economic growth and social needs of Oxfordshire.
- iii. Make an appropriate contribution to meeting wider needs for aggregate minerals, having regard to the strategic importance of Oxfordshire's mineral resources, particularly sand and gravel.
- iv. Enable a continued local supply of limestone and ironstone for building and walling stone for the maintenance, repair and construction of locally distinctive buildings and structures, and of clay to meet local needs for engineering and restoration material.
- v. 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 has regard to existing and planned infrastructure.
- vi. Minimise the flood risk associated with minerals development and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including through restoration schemes which provide additional flood storage capacity in the floodplain where possible.
- vii. Minimise the transport impact of mineral development on local communities, the environment and climate change by minimising the distance minerals need to be transported by road and encouraging where possible the movement of aggregates by conveyor, pipeline, rail and on Oxfordshire's waterways.
- viii. Protect Oxfordshire's communities and natural and historic environments (including important landscapes and ecological, geological and archaeological and other heritage assets) from the harmful impacts of mineral development (including traffic).
- ix. Ensure the high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral extraction sites at the earliest opportunity to ensure the establishment of long term and stable after uses that provide benefit to Oxfordshire's natural environment, local communities and local economy.

- x. Safeguard important known resources of sand and gravel, soft sand, crushed rock and fuller's earth to ensure that those resources are not needlessly sterilised and remain potentially available for future use and are considered in future development decisions.
- xi. Safeguard important facilities for the production of secondary and recycled aggregate, railhead sites for the bulk movement of aggregate into Oxfordshire by rail and facilities for the manufacture of coated materials, concrete and concrete products.

Waste Planning Vision

3.6 The growth that is planned for Oxfordshire presents significant challenges for waste planning including that the waste generated by existing and new developments is managed and used in the most effective and sustainable way possible. The underlying philosophy is to seek to reduce waste generation and to see waste as a resource, through maximizing reuse, recycling and composting and recovery of value from residual waste.

3.7 The proposed vision for waste planning in Oxfordshire in 2030 is that:

- a) There will have been a transformation in the way that waste is managed in Oxfordshire, with:
 - increased re-use, recycling and composting of waste;
 - treatment (so far as is practicable) of all residual waste that cannot be recycled or composted; and
 - only the minimum amount of waste that is necessary being disposed of at landfill sites.
- b) The county will remain largely self-sufficient in dealing with the waste it generates. An economically and environmentally efficient network of clean, well-designed recycling, composting and other waste treatment facilities will have been developed to recover material and energy from the county's waste and support its thriving economy.
- c) Waste management facilities will be distributed across the county, with larger-scale and specialist facilities being located at or close to large towns, particularly the growth areas, and close to main transport links, and with smaller-scale facilities serving more local areas. This network will have helped to build more sustainable communities that increasingly take responsibility for their own waste and keep to a minimum the distance waste needs to be moved within the county.

Waste Planning Objectives

3.8 The following objectives are proposed.

- i. Make provision for waste management capacity that allows Oxfordshire to be net self-sufficient in meeting its own needs for household waste, commercial and industrial waste and construction, demolition and excavation waste.

- ii. Make an appropriate contribution towards provision needed for the management of hazardous and radioactive wastes produced in Oxfordshire and wider needs, recognising that the more specialist facilities required for these waste types often require provision at a sub-national or national level.
- iii. Support initiatives that help reduce the amounts of waste produced and provide for the delivery, as soon as is practicable, of waste management facilities that will drive waste away from landfill and as far up the waste hierarchy²⁸ as possible; in particular facilities that will enable increased re-use, recycling and composting of waste and the recovery of resources from remaining (residual) waste.
- iv. Seek to provide for waste to be managed as close as possible to where it arises to:
 - minimise the distance waste needs to be transported by road;
 - reduce adverse impacts of waste transportation on local communities and the environment; and
 - enable communities to take responsibility for their own waste.
- v. Provide for a broad distribution of waste management facilities to meet local needs across Oxfordshire and make more specific provision for larger facilities that are not practical below a certain size and that are needed to serve the whole or more substantial parts of the county or a wider area.
- vi. Seek to ensure that waste management facilities where possible provide benefits to the communities they serve, including employment and the potential for recovery and local use of energy (heat and power) from waste, and are recognised as an integral part of community infrastructure.
- vii. Make provision for waste that cannot be recycled or treated (residual waste) and that will need to be disposed of in landfill.
- viii. Provide for an appropriate contribution to meeting the need for disposal of residual waste from other areas which do not have sufficient disposal capacity to be made through Oxfordshire's existing landfill sites.
- ix. Seek to avoid the permanent loss of green field land when making provision for sites for waste management facilities.
- x. Protect Oxfordshire's communities and natural and historic environments (including important landscapes and ecological, geological and archaeological and other heritage assets) from the harmful impacts of waste management development (including traffic).
- xi. Secure the satisfactory restoration of temporary waste management sites, including landfills, where the facility is no longer required or acceptable in that location.

²⁸ The waste hierarchy is shown at paragraph 2.24.

4. MINERALS PLANNING STRATEGY

- 4.1 This section sets out the County Council's minerals planning strategy and policies for the period to 2030. Provision must be made for a steady and adequate supply of aggregate minerals over the plan period. The Council intends that this should be done by encouraging the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as well as by identifying areas for mineral working to meet the need for primary aggregates such as sand and gravel and crushed rock. The minerals strategy for Oxfordshire is illustrated on the key diagram at the end of this section.
- 4.2 The strategy also addresses safeguarding of mineral resources and infrastructure to ensure future availability of supply. A policy for restoration of mineral working recognises the temporary nature of mineral extraction and the importance of restoring sites to enhance the environment and to provide amenities for the public.

Recycled and secondary aggregate

- 4.3 Recycled and secondary aggregate in Oxfordshire currently include:
- Locally derived construction and demolition waste;
 - Locally derived road planings;
 - Spent rail ballast (brought in by rail to a site at Sutton Courtenay).
- 4.4 Oxfordshire has capacity for recycling approximately 0.9 million tonnes a year of construction and demolition waste (much of this is in temporary sites at quarries and landfill sites). Didcot A power station ceased to operate during 2013 and ash recycling at Didcot is not included in this figure. It is expected that some ash from the energy from waste facility that is under construction at Ardley will be used as secondary aggregate.
- 4.5 The total production of recycled and secondary aggregate is difficult to quantify because it includes, for example, material from mobile crushing plants at building and road development sites which is recycled and sometimes re-used on site, and material which passes through waste transfer stations. A survey of secondary and recycled aggregate producers in Oxfordshire in 2012 gave a total of 470,000 tonnes, but the overall supply was likely to be higher than that as the survey was not comprehensive.
- 4.6 The previous Minerals and Waste Core Strategy included a policy target for recycled and secondary aggregate facility provision of 0.9 million tonnes per year. That target was from the now revoked South East Plan. It is now more appropriate for policy M1 not to set a specific target, which could be misconstrued as setting a maximum level to be achieved, but rather to seek to maximise the contribution to aggregate supply in Oxfordshire from recycled and secondary aggregate sources. Policy M1 is a positive policy to enable facilities to be provided in order to achieve this.
- 4.7 The targets in policy W3 for recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste (increasing to 70% by 2030) and policies W4, W5 and W6

on waste management capacity requirements and provision and siting of facilities will operate in conjunction with policy M1 to deliver facilities for recycled aggregate production, which is expected to form the majority of recycled and secondary aggregate supply in Oxfordshire.

- 4.8 Provision for additional facilities for the production of recycled aggregates from construction and demolition waste will be made through policies W4, W5 and W6 on waste management capacity requirements and provision and siting of facilities. Policy W6 included provision for recycling facilities to be located within the Green Belt in very special circumstances and policy C8 allows for small-scale facilities serving local needs to be provided in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Recycled and secondary aggregate facilities with permanent permission, or with temporary permission extending at least to the end of the plan period, will be safeguarded under policy W11. Restoration of temporary facilities located at quarries and landfill sites will be required in line with policy M7.

4.9 **Policy M1: Recycled and Secondary Aggregate**

The production and supply of recycled and secondary aggregate will be encouraged, in particular through:

- **Recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste;**
- **Recycling of road planings;**
- **Recycling of rail ballast;**
- **Recovery of ash from combustion processes;**

to enable the contribution made by these materials towards meeting the need for aggregates in Oxfordshire to be maximised.

Permission will be granted for facilities for the production and/or supply of recycled and secondary aggregate, including temporary recycled aggregate facilities at aggregate quarries and inert waste landfill sites, at locations that meet the criteria in policies W5, W6 and C1 – C11.

Sites for the production and/or supply of recycled and secondary aggregate will be safeguarded in accordance with policy W11.

Provision for working aggregate minerals

- 4.10 The National Planning Policy Framework requires mineral planning authorities to prepare an annual Local Aggregate Assessment based on a rolling average of 10 years sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including recycled and secondary aggregate sources). The plan must make provision for the aggregate supply requirements identified in the Local Aggregate Assessment.
- 4.11 The County Councils Oxfordshire local Aggregate Assessment 2013 sets the following requirements for provision for land-won aggregate supply:
- Sharp sand and gravel – 0.81 million tonnes a year;
 - Soft sand – 0.19 million tonnes a year;

- Total sand and gravel – 1.00 million tonnes a year;
 - Crushed rock – 0.47 million tonnes a year.
- 4.12 These figures are based on the 10 year sales average for Oxfordshire's quarries over the period 2003 to 2012. These figures are higher than the levels of sales in 2012 and provide significant headroom to accommodate possible changes in local circumstances such as an increase in economic activity and consequent demand for aggregates. Oxfordshire has been a net importer of sharp sand and gravel in recent years but these levels of provision will allow local production to increase again such that Oxfordshire meets its own needs for sharp sand and gravel, with flexibility for appropriate cross-boundary movements of aggregates. These provision figures will also allow Oxfordshire to continue to be a net exporter of soft sand, which is a less widely distributed mineral.
- 4.13 The crushed rock produced in Oxfordshire is generally of relatively low quality with limited end uses. Hard crushed rock is not available locally and will continue to be imported from elsewhere (particularly Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Leicestershire), to meet needs that require this type of aggregate. But Oxfordshire is one of the few places in the South East of England where there are resources of rock, and provision figures will enable the county to continue to make an appropriate contribution towards local and wider requirements for crushed rock.
- 4.14 National policy and guidance requires provision to be made for the maintenance of landbanks of reserves with planning permission of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock, based on the latest Local Aggregate Assessment. Policy M2 provides for this. In Oxfordshire sharp sand and gravel and soft sand generally occur in different locations and have distinct and separate uses and markets. In line with current national policy, separate landbanks will be maintained for these minerals.
- 4.15 The Local Aggregate Assessment is to be reviewed annually and the provision figures are likely to change as the 10 year sales average period moves forward and in response to any significant changes in other relevant local information. Regular monitoring of aggregates supply and demand in Oxfordshire will be carried out through the plan period and will be recorded in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports and used in the annual reviews of the Local Aggregate Assessment.
- 4.16 The current Local Aggregate Assessment annual figures indicate the following additional requirements for which provision needs to be made over the plan period (2013 to 2030), taking into account existing planning permissions:
- Sharp sand and gravel – 7.87 million tonnes;
 - Soft sand – 0.80 million tonnes; and
 - Crushed rock – no additional requirement.
- Table 2 shows how these requirements are calculated.

Table 2: Aggregate provision required over plan period 2012 – 2030

	Sharp Sand & Gravel (million tonnes)	Soft Sand (million tonnes)	Crushed Rock (million tonnes)
A. Annual Provision (from LAA)	0.81	0.19	0.47
B. Requirement 2013 – 2030 (A x 18 years)	14.58	3.42	8.46
C. Permitted Reserves at end 2012	5.84	2.41	11.49
D. Permissions granted since end 2012	0.87	0.21	0.48
E. Total permitted reserves (C + D)	6.71*	2.62	11.97
F. Remaining requirement to be provided for in MWCS (B – E)	7.87	0.80	(3.51)

* Not including extensions to Caversham Quarry (1.86 million tonnes) and Gill Mill Quarry (5.0 million tonnes), which are subject to resolutions to grant planning permission

- 4.17 This is the current position but this may change over the plan period if the level of provision changes as the Local Aggregate Assessment is reviewed annually. Such changes are likely to be relatively small from one year to another but may add up to more substantial change over a period of years. The strategy for mineral working therefore needs to have sufficient flexibility to allow for changes in demand for locally supplied aggregates. Policy M2 therefore does not include the figures from the current Local Aggregate Assessment but instead makes a policy commitment to meeting the requirement in the most recent Local Aggregate Assessment.
- 4.18 In line with the objective of the plan to minimise the distance that minerals need to be transported by road, policy M2 seeks a broad balance of production capacity for sharp sand and gravel between western Oxfordshire and southern Oxfordshire, reflecting the broadly similar levels of economic growth and development, and consequent demand for aggregate, expected in the northern and southern parts of the county (taking Oxford as a mid-point). Over the recent past, production of sharp sand and gravel has been predominantly from areas in western Oxfordshire. The minerals planning strategy should enable a more balanced distribution of production to be achieved over the plan period.

4.19 Policy M2: Provision for working aggregate minerals

Provision will be made to enable the supply of aggregate minerals from land-won sources within Oxfordshire to meet the requirement identified in the most recent Local Aggregate Assessment.

Permission will be granted for aggregate mineral working to enable separate land banks of reserves with planning permission to be maintained for the extraction of minerals of:

- at least 7 years for sharp sand and gravel;
- at least 7 years for soft sand;
- at least 10 years for crushed rock;

in accordance with the annual requirement rate in the most recent Local Aggregate Assessment.

In order to enable an effective supply of locally sourced construction material to the county's main growth areas, a broad balance in annual production capacity for sharp sand and gravel between the mineral resource areas in western Oxfordshire (west of Oxford and north of the River Thames) and southern Oxfordshire (south of Oxford) will be sought.

Locations for working aggregate minerals

4.20 Minerals can only be extracted where they exist in the ground. The identification of locations where extraction is likely to be able to take place acceptably provides greater certainty of where mineral working will take place and where it will not take place. Policy M3 identifies the broad areas – areas of search – within which it is proposed that future working for sharp sand and gravel, soft sand and crushed rock should take place. These areas provide a basis for sites for working to be selected by the mineral industry and planning applications submitted; and for those applications to be considered by the County Council, also taking into account all the other relevant policies of the plan.

4.21 Table 1 above indicates that there is currently no requirement for additional provision for crushed rock working. The areas of search for crushed rock identified in policy M3 are included as a contingency in the event that the requirement for local crushed rock increases significantly and additional permitted reserves are required to maintain the landbank and ensure an adequate level of supply.

Sharp Sand and Gravel

4.22 At the current Local Aggregate Assessment requirement rate (0.81 million tonnes a year), existing planning permissions could on average provide for a supply of sharp sand and gravel until 2020, although in practice some sites will be exhausted sooner and others will last longer. The strategy in this

document makes provision for sharp sand and gravel for the rest of the plan period, to 2030.

- 4.23 Principles which have informed the selection of the preferred strategy for sand and gravel extraction are:
- Although there are extensive sand and gravel resources in west Oxfordshire, the rate and intensity of mineral working in the area should not increase, to meet concerns about generation of traffic, impacts on local rivers and groundwater flows, and to ensure that the cumulative impact of mineral working on local communities is not unacceptable.
 - The distances minerals need to be transported from quarry to market should be as short as is practicable.
 - There should be continued sand and gravel working in the area of the county to the south of Oxford to enable local supply of aggregates for planned housing and economic growth in southern Oxfordshire, including the Science Vale area.
- 4.24 In line with these principles and the policy objective in policy M2 for a more balance distribution of production capacity between western and southern Oxfordshire, it is expected that there will be a need for a new working area within southern Oxfordshire during the plan period. The existing Sutton Courtenay Quarry has only a few years' worth of permitted reserves remaining and limited possibilities for further extensions; and other existing quarries in southern Oxfordshire are either already exhausted or small scale, with the exception of Caversham Quarry which serves a market area in the far south east of the county extending into Reading and other parts of Berkshire.
- 4.25 The Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report has concluded that a finding of no likely significant effect on Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) cannot be reached in respect of land to the east and north east of the River Evenlode within the Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton area. The Habitats Directive requires the Council to take a precautionary approach in the plan and therefore proposals should not involve mineral working within that part of this area. The screening report has also concluded that any proposals for working in the Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton area would need to demonstrate that they would not affect water levels at Oxford Meadows SAC.
- 4.26 Potentially important archaeological constraints have been identified in the Lower Windrush Valley, south of Hardwick, and at a number of locations within the Southern Oxfordshire Thames Valley (Oxford to Goring Gap) area. The Council will work with English Heritage to ensure that important archaeology is given appropriate protection.

Soft sand

- 4.27 Soft sand accounts for approximately 20% of sales of all sands and gravels in Oxfordshire. Two types of soft sand are worked, supplying different markets: sand from the Tubney area generally meets higher specifications than sand

from the Faringdon area. The strategy in policy M3 should enable both types of soft sand to continue to be worked.

- 4.28 At the current Local Aggregate Assessment requirement rate (0.19 million tonnes a year), existing planning permissions could on average provide a supply of soft sand until 2024, although in practice some sites will be exhausted sooner and others will last longer. For the period to 2030, it would be preferable for further soft sand working to be from extensions to existing quarries where this is possible, rather than from new quarries. This would make efficient use of existing plant and infrastructure and minimize additional impact.
- 4.29 The Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report has concluded that proposals for mineral working in the area north and south of the A420 to the west of Abingdon would need to demonstrate that they would not affect water levels at Cothill Fen SAC.

Crushed rock

- 4.30 At the current Local Aggregate Assessment requirement rate (0.47 million tonnes a year), current permitted reserves of crushed rock could on average last until 2036, although in practice some sites will be exhausted sooner and others will last longer. Production of crushed rock has fluctuated considerably over past years. Existing working areas of limestone are south east of Faringdon, south of Burford and north west of Bicester. There is one existing area of ironstone working in the north of the county at Alkerton / Wroxton.
- 4.31 The ironstone resource area in the north of the county is less well located relative to strategic routes and market areas in Oxfordshire than are some areas of limestone resource; and there are substantial permitted reserves of ironstone remaining to be worked. Better quality aggregate is generally available from within the limestone deposits than from the ironstone. Any additional provision should be made within the limestone areas. Such provision should preferably be made through extensions to existing quarries rather than from new quarries, to make efficient use of existing plant and infrastructure, and minimize additional impact.
- 4.32 The Local Aggregate Assessment 2013 indicates no requirement for further areas for crushed rock working during the plan period but, if demand increases significantly, additional permissions could be needed towards the end of the plan period. It is likely that any such additional requirement could be met from extensions to existing quarries and that new quarries will not be needed during the period of this plan. In view of this, and given that crushed rock resources in Oxfordshire – in particular the resources of limestone outside in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – are extensive, areas for possible future crushed rock working are named in policy M3 but areas of search are not defined on maps. The need for areas for areas of search to be defined will be kept under review through the plan period.

4.33 Government policy is that major minerals developments should only be permitted in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in exceptional circumstances. There are sufficient aggregate resources in Oxfordshire outside the AONBs such that working within these areas is not necessary. Policy C8 provides protection for the landscape quality of the county.

4.34 **Policy M3: Locations for working aggregate minerals**

Permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals within the following areas provided that the criteria in policy M4 are met:

A. Areas of search for sharp sand and gravel working, as shown on figures 9 – 12:

Western Oxfordshire:

- Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton (including Lower Evenlode Valley).
- Lower Windrush Valley;

Southern Oxfordshire:

- North East of Caversham.
- Thames Valley (Oxford to Goring Gap);

B. Areas of search for soft sand working, as shown on figures 13 – 14:

- Corallian Ridge between Oxford and Faringdon;
- Duns Tew.

C. Areas for crushed rock working:

- North West of Bicester;
- South of the A40 near Burford;
- East and south east of Faringdon.

Policy M4: Working of aggregate minerals

4.35 **Permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals within the areas defined in policy M3 provided that:**

- In all cases, the mineral is required to maintain a steady supply of aggregate in accordance with policy M2 and the requirements of policies C1 – C11 are met;

and

- In the case of proposals for working sharp sand and gravel, the proposal is consistent with the need to achieve a broad balance of production capacity in accordance with policy M2;
- In the case of proposed working within the Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton area of search, it has been demonstrated that there will be no change in water levels in the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation and the proposal does not involve the working of land to the north or north east of the River Evenlode;

- In the case of proposed working within the Corallian Ridge area of search, it has been demonstrated that there will be no change in water levels in the Cothill Fen Special Area of Conservation;
- In the case of proposed working within the Western Oxfordshire areas of search, there would be not more than three operational mineral working sites within these areas combined;
- In the case of proposed working within the North East of Caversham area of search, it would be either an extension to or a replacement for the existing Caversham Quarry;
- In the case of proposed working within the Thames Valley between Oxford and Goring Gap area of search, it would be either an extension to the existing Sutton Courtenay Quarry or a new quarry required to replace an existing sharp sand and gravel quarry in Oxfordshire;
- In the case of proposals for new quarries for soft sand or crushed rock, the requirement to maintain a steady supply of aggregate in accordance with policy M2 cannot be met from extensions to existing quarries.

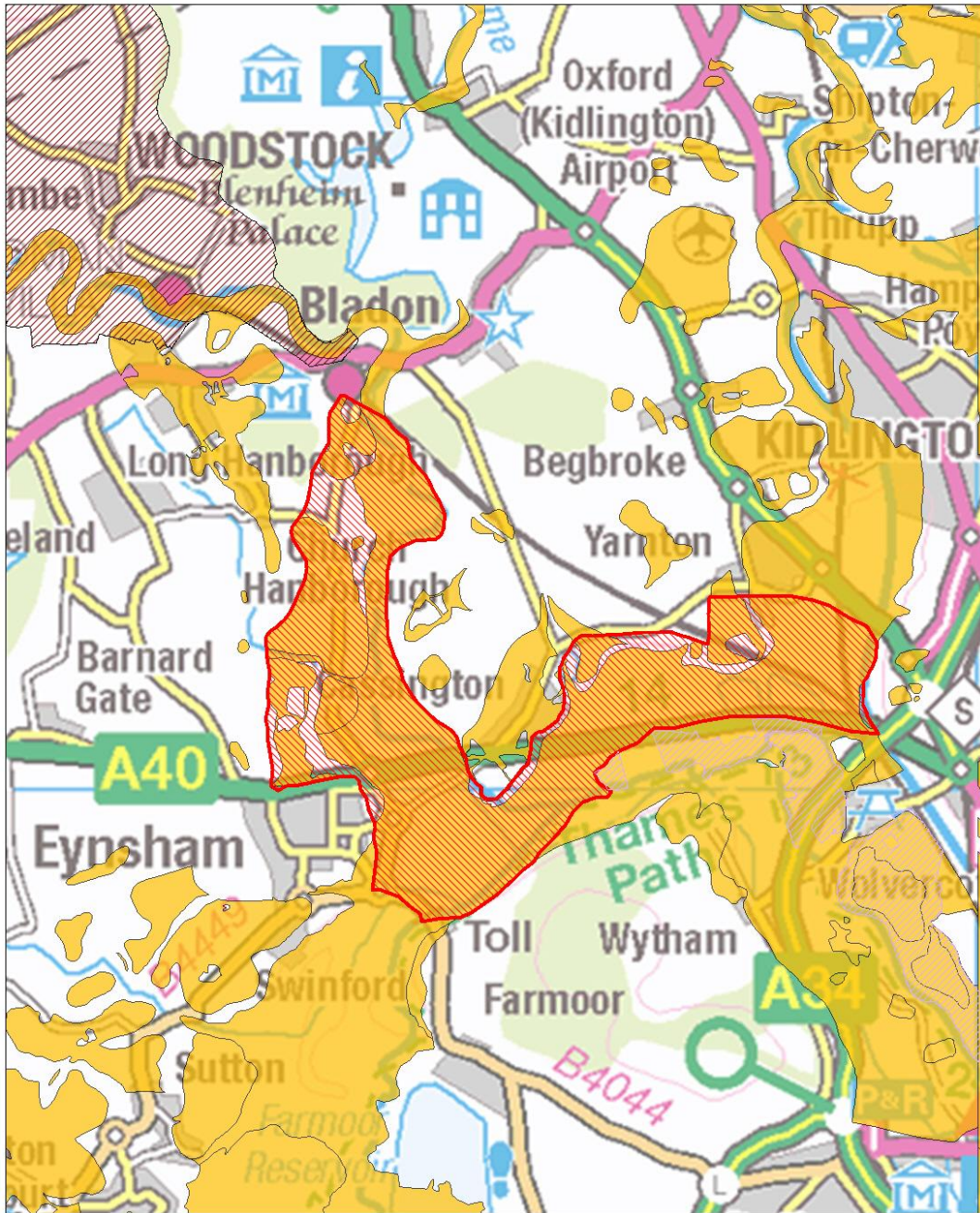
Permission will not be granted for the working of aggregate minerals outside the areas defined in policy M3 unless the requirement to maintain a steady supply of aggregate in accordance with policy M2 cannot be met from within those areas.

Permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals both within the areas defined in policy M3 and elsewhere provided that extraction of the mineral is required prior to a planned development in order to prevent the mineral resource being sterilised and that the requirements of policies C1 – C11 are met.

Further working of minerals for aggregate use will not be permitted within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Permission for working of ironstone for aggregate use will not be permitted except in exchange for revocation without compensation of an equivalent existing permission in Oxfordshire containing workable resources and where there would be an overall environmental benefit.

Figure 9: Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton Area of Search

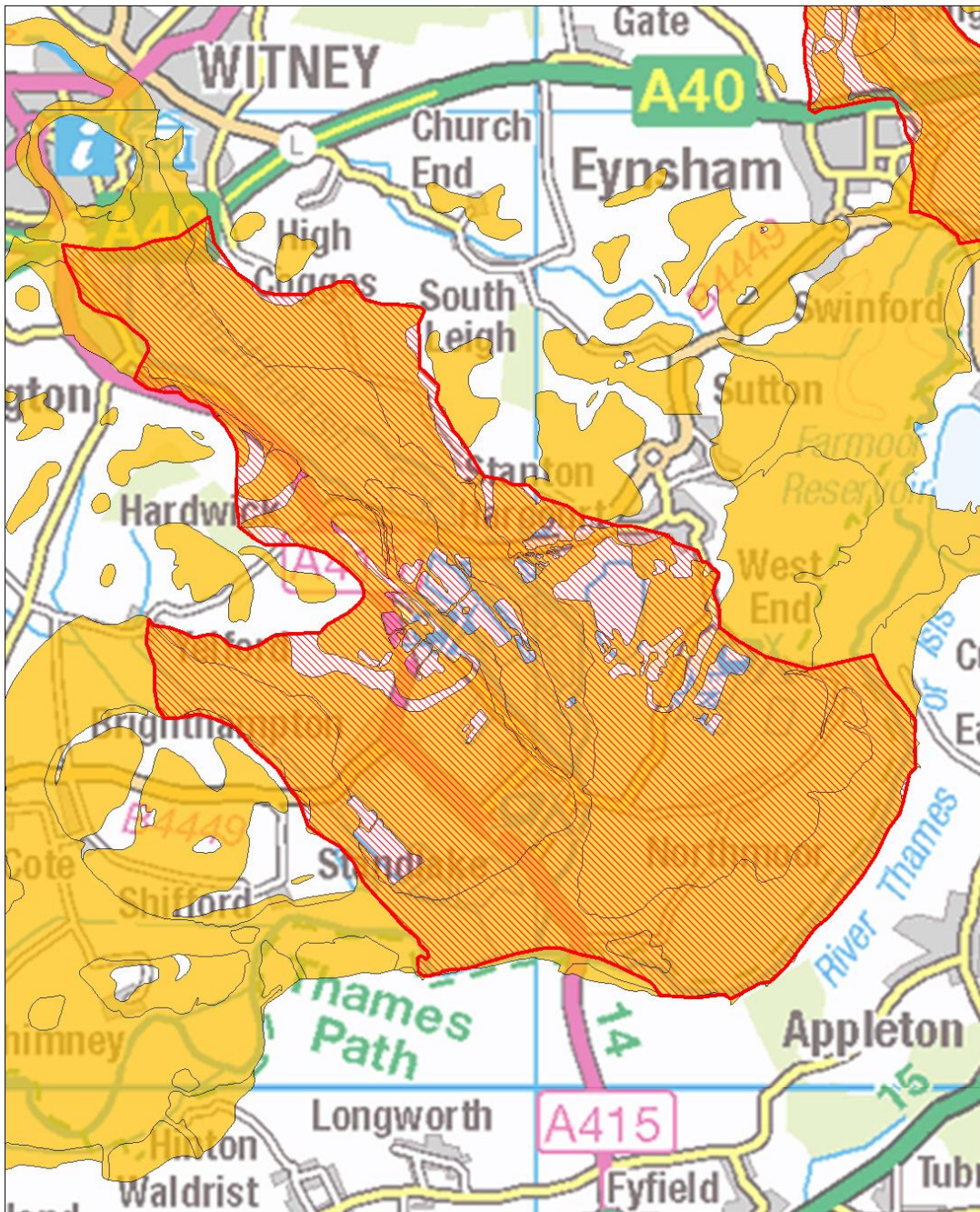


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Figure 10: Lower Windrush Valley Area of Search

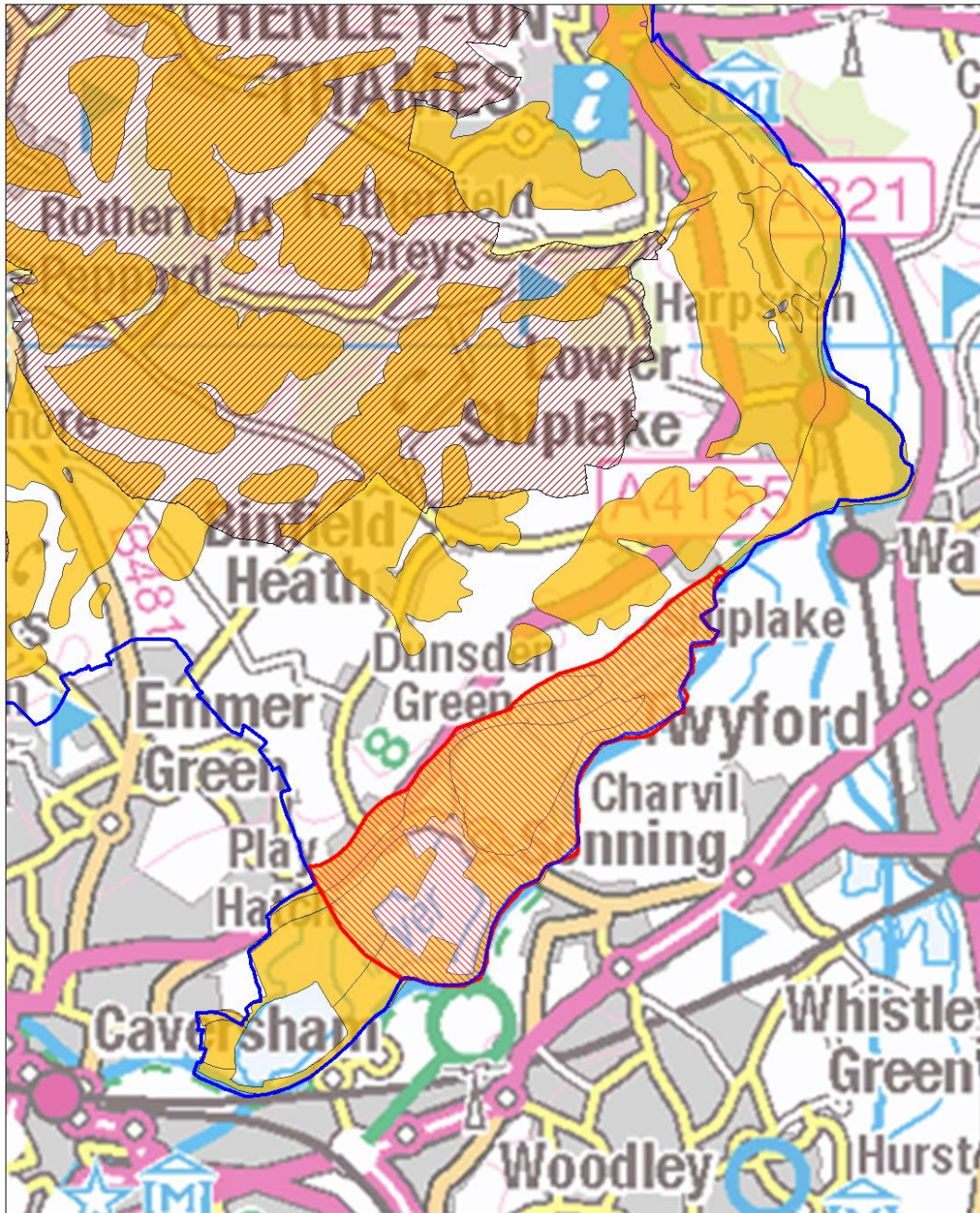


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Figure 11: North East of Caversham Area of Search



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Figure 12: Thames Valley (Oxford to Goring Gap) Area of Search

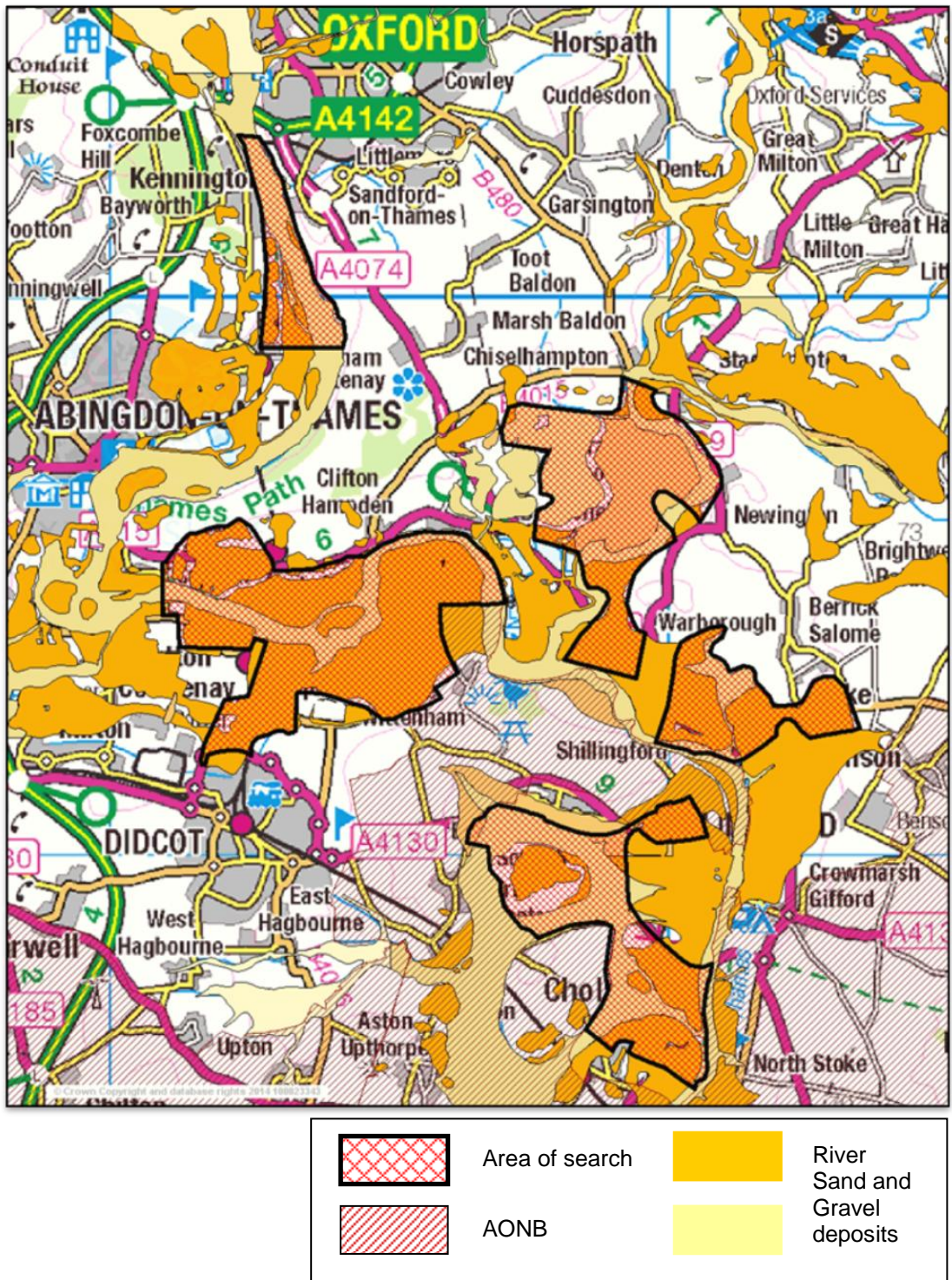
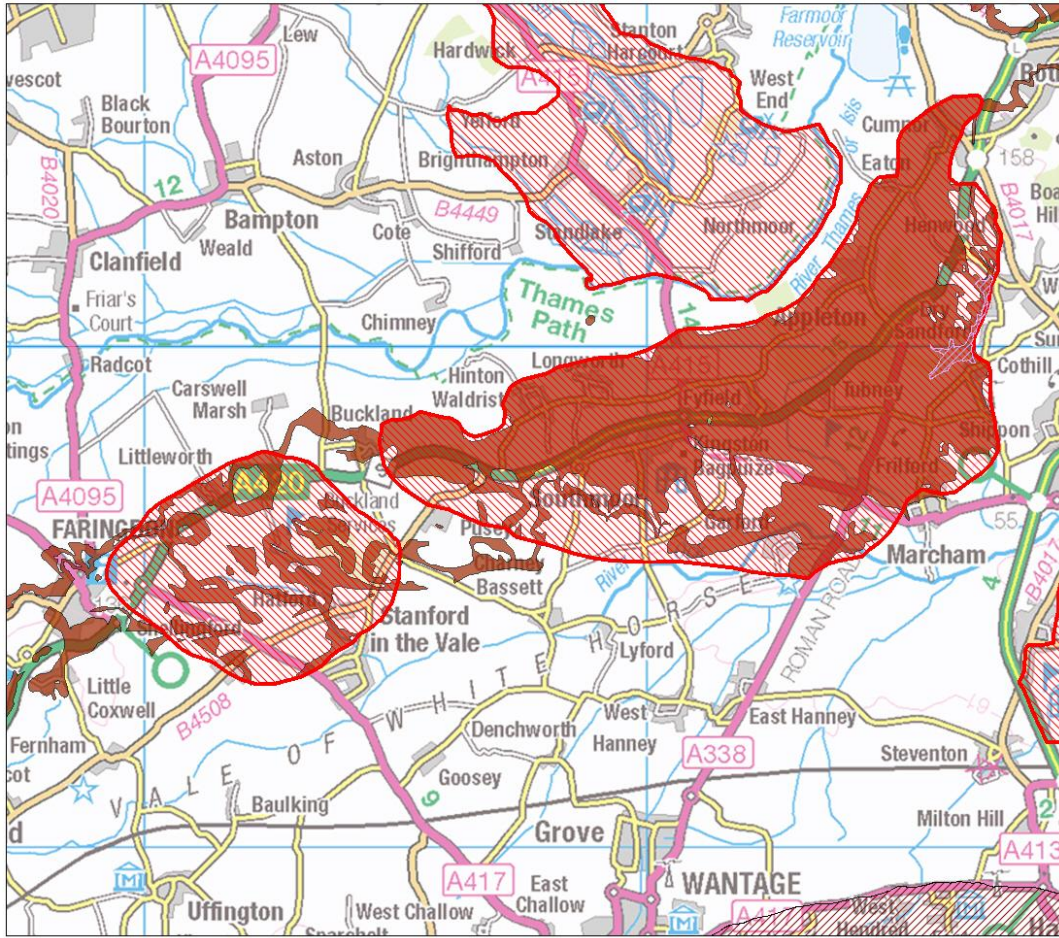


Figure 13: Corallian Ridge between Oxford and Faringdon Area of Search



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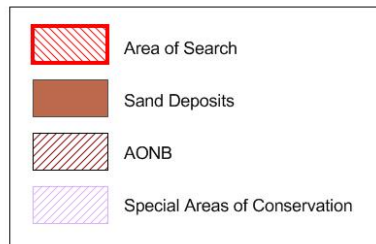
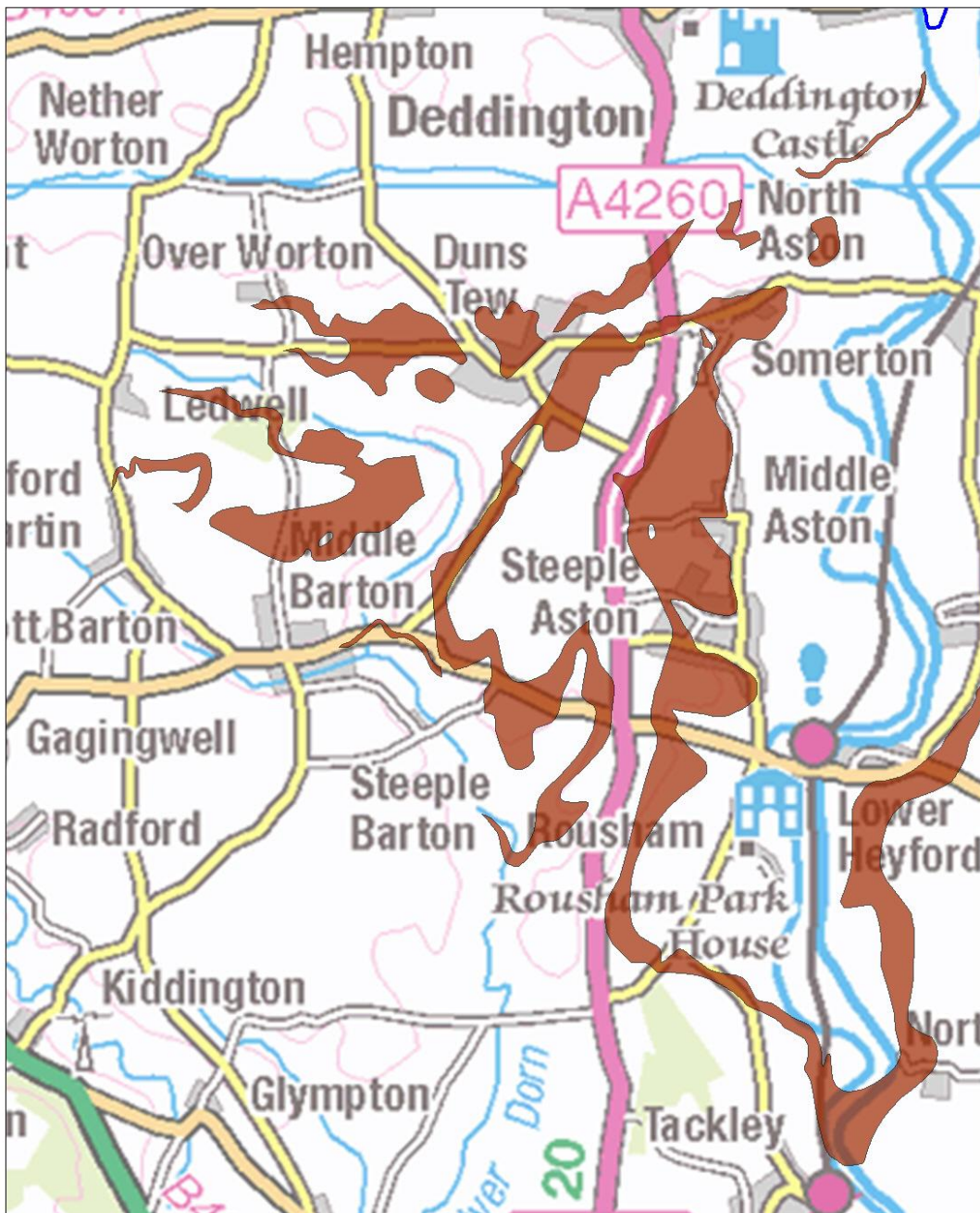


Figure 14: Duns Tew Area of Search



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Imported aggregates and rail depots

- 4.36 Aggregates are imported through three rail depots at Banbury, Sutton Courtenay and Kidlington²⁹. Planning permission has been granted for a rail depot at Shipton on Cherwell. There is a depot at Hinksey Sidings, Oxford which is used solely by the rail industry to bring in rail ballast for internal use, but this is not currently in use³⁰.
- 4.37 There will be an ongoing need for importation of aggregate materials that cannot be quarried locally, particularly hard rock for roadstone. Rail and water transport should take priority over road, particularly for longer distance movements. Existing and permitted depots should therefore be safeguarded; and additional depots should be permitted at suitable locations should the opportunity arise.
- 4.38 **Policy M5: Aggregates rail depots**

The following rail depot sites are safeguarded for the importation of aggregate into Oxfordshire:

- **Hennef Way, Banbury (existing facility);**
- **Kidlington (permitted replacement facility);**
- **Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay (existing facility);**
- **Shipton on Cherwell Quarry (permitted facility);**
- **and any other aggregate rail depot sites which are permitted, as identified in the Annual Monitoring Report.**

Permission will be granted for new aggregate rail depots at locations with suitable access to an advisory lorry route and that meet the criteria in policies C1 – C11.

Proposals for development that would result in the direct loss of a safeguarded aggregate rail depot site will not be permitted unless a suitable alternative site can be provided.

Development sensitive to disturbance from, and which would prejudice the operation or establishment of an aggregate rail depot at a safeguarded site should not take place unless:

- **a suitable alternative site can be provided; or**
- **it can be demonstrated that the rail depot is no longer needed for Oxfordshire's aggregate supply requirements.**

²⁹ The existing Kidlington rail depot is to be relocated to a nearby permitted site to enable the construction of a new station at Water Eaton.

³⁰ The rail depot at Hinksey Sidings, Oxford is solely for the supply of ballast to Network Rail and is not therefore considered part of the County's aggregates supply.

Non-aggregate mineral working

Building Stone

- 4.39 The Council recognises the importance of small scale building, roofing and walling stone extraction in rural areas for the conservation and restoration of historic buildings and to maintain local distinctiveness in new development. Limestone is particularly important for maintaining the built environment in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4.40 Large quantities of waste stone can be generated during the extraction of building stone, particularly in the initial phases of working. Waste stone may have a potential use as aggregate; the use or disposal of it is an issue which needs to be considered on a case by case basis through a planning application.

Clay

- 4.41 Clay has been worked at certain sand and gravel quarries to produce material for lining landfill sites and for use in restoration and landscaping. In accordance with policy M4, within the Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton area working of clay associated with sand and gravel extraction should only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it would not lead to changes in water levels in the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation.

Chalk

- 4.42 Chalk has been extracted in Oxfordshire in the past, in particular for industrial and agricultural uses. There is no current indication of demand for a resumption of chalk working during the plan period but, in the event there is, this could be accommodated in suitable locations on a small scale basis. Most of Oxfordshire's chalk resource lies with the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which would need to be given appropriate protection in accordance with policy C8. In line with policy M4, it is unlikely that working of chalk for aggregate use would be acceptable within these areas.

Fuller's earth

- 4.43 Fuller's earth is a nationally scarce industrial mineral which occurs in the Baulking – Fernham area in the south west of the county. It was previously worked but, whilst there are remaining resources that are potentially workable, there has been no market for this mineral for a number of years and there is no indication that this position is likely to change during the plan period.

Oil and gas

- 4.44 There is currently no exploration for or production of oil or gas in Oxfordshire. Exploratory work in the past did not find any oil or gas fields, although gas was encountered in some of the holes drilled. In addition to requirements for

planning permission, oil and gas exploration and production can only be undertaken within areas that have been licensed by the government. There are currently no licence areas covering Oxfordshire. The government proposes to award a new round of onshore oil and gas licences in 2014. A strategic environmental assessment that has been prepared in connection with this includes some parts of Oxfordshire but it is not yet known whether licences will be offered covering any parts of the county.

- 4.45 In the event that licences are awarded covering parts of Oxfordshire, it is possible that proposals for exploratory drilling would come forward, which could be followed by proposals for production in the event that significant oil or gas reserves were found. Proposals could be for drilling either by conventional means or by hydraulic fracturing (fracking). The section on oil and gas in policy M6 will provide a policy basis consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and national guidance on oil and gas against which any such planning applications can be considered.

4.46 **Policy M6: Non- aggregate mineral working**

Building Stone

Permission will be granted for extensions to existing quarries and new quarries for the extraction of traditional local building stone where a need for the material has been demonstrated and the proposed quarrying is small-scale.

Clay

The extraction of clay will be permitted in conjunction with the working of sharp sand and gravel from the locations in policy M3 A. The extraction of clay will not be permitted in other locations unless it can be demonstrated that there is a local need for clay which:

- **cannot be met by extraction in conjunction with sharp sand and gravel working; or**
- **would be met with less overall environmental impact than by extraction in conjunction with sharp sand and gravel working.**

Chalk

The extraction of chalk for agricultural or industrial use in Oxfordshire will be permitted provided the proposed quarrying is small-scale. Extraction of chalk for wider purposes, including as an aggregate or for large scale engineering will not be permitted unless the proposal is demonstrated to be the most sustainable of all alternative options.

Fullers Earth

The working of fullers earth will be permitted provided that a national need for the mineral has been demonstrated.

Oil and Gas (conventional and unconventional)

Proposals for the exploration and appraisal of oil or gas will be permitted provided arrangements are made for the timely and suitable

restoration and after-care of the site, whether or not the exploration or appraisal operation is successful.

The commercial production of oil and gas will be supported in the following circumstances:

- **A full appraisal programme for the oil or gas field has been successfully completed;**
- **The proposed location is the most suitable, taking into account environmental, geological and technical factors;**
- **For major development in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty it is clearly demonstrated that the proposal is in the public interest, including in terms of national considerations.**

All proposals for the working of non-aggregate minerals, including exploration and appraisal, shall meet the criteria in policies C1 – C11.

Safeguarding mineral resources

- 4.47 Mineral deposits are finite resources and can only be worked where they exist in the ground. It is Government policy that important mineral resources should be safeguarded for the long term. Mineral planning authorities are required to define Mineral Safeguarding Areas in minerals plans so that resources are not sterilised by non-mineral development, although there is no presumption that the resources will be worked. The County Council will have regard to the British Geological Survey good practice advice on mineral safeguarding.
- 4.48 Sharp sand and gravel, soft sand and limestone are currently and will continue to be worked in Oxfordshire. Fuller's earth is no longer worked but is a nationally scarce mineral. It is therefore proposed to safeguard what are currently considered to be the economically viable areas of these resources. Whilst ironstone is also currently worked, there is no need for this mineral to be safeguarded as an aggregate resource in view of the extensive resources of better quality limestone in the county. Limestone and ironstone are not safeguarded as potential resources building stone in view of the variability of these minerals and the lack of clear information on deposits and locations where safeguarding is justified.
- 4.49 Mineral safeguarding areas will be defined on maps. The extent of safeguarded areas can be reviewed if economic or other considerations change.
- 4.50 District councils in Oxfordshire are responsible for planning development (other than minerals and waste) in their areas. The County Council, as Mineral Planning Authority, must also identify mineral consultation areas and specify the types of application for non-mineral related development on which the relevant district council must consult the County Council within these areas. The mineral consultation areas will be based on the minerals safeguarding areas and will include land within 250m of the boundary of a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

4.51 Policy M7: Safeguarding mineral resources

Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be defined on maps, covering the following mineral resources:

- **Sharp sand and gravel in the main river valleys, including the areas identified in policy M3 A, and other areas of proven resource;**
- **Soft sand within the areas identified in policy M3 B;**
- **Limestone within the areas identified in policy M3 C;**
- **Fuller's earth in the Baulking – Fernham area.**

Mineral resources in these areas are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:

- **The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or**
- **The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.**

Mineral Consultation Areas, based on the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, will be defined, identified and updated when necessary in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports.

Restoration and after-use of mineral workings

4.52 Proposals for restoration, aftercare and after-use should be submitted with applications for mineral working, should include provision for long-term maintenance of the after-use and enhancement of the environment and should accord with District Local Plan policies, including environmental protection, countryside and access enhancement and noise management. Proposals for restoration should demonstrate that local communities have been consulted on options for after use.

4.53 Mineral working can provide opportunities for environmental improvements, such as new habitats and improved public access, which benefit the local community and may offset the impact of working³¹. The restoration of each mineral working site should be determined on its individual merits and circumstances. Restoration to the original land-use may not be the best option and is not always possible. Restoration to an alternative use (e.g. creation of priority habitat) may be equally acceptable or preferable. Generally, nature conservation, agriculture, woodland and recreation are acceptable restoration after-uses for mineral workings, subject to the particular local circumstances such as the existing and neighbouring habitats, biodiversity and landscape. Each restoration scheme should have a coherent land use strategy with a

³¹ Within the flood plain restored sand and gravel workings can reduce the risk of flooding by providing for increased flood water storage capacity and improved conveyance of flood water.

particular primary end use or end uses. Measures to conserve and enhance biodiversity should always be incorporated in restoration schemes.

- 4.54 Where restoration could assist or achieve priority habitat or species targets and/or Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan targets, the relevant biodiversity after-use should be incorporated within the restoration scheme. Where restoration could protect and/or improve 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 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. Within the floodplain, restoration of mineral workings should where possible include provision for increased flood storage capacity to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 4.55 Mineral working involves disturbance and change to the landscape. Restoration should take place as soon as possible after working to minimise the impact of open quarry workings. In larger workings restoration can commence before working has ended and restoration should be planned in a timely and phased manner. There is increasing difficulty in securing material for restoration, and policy W7 seeks to ensure that inert waste is prioritised for use in mineral restoration schemes. The County Council will work with the District Councils to secure this, but the shortage of suitable material may result in restoration that relies on infilling with inert waste taking some years to complete.
- 4.56 Because of a general shortage of inert waste material for infilling, sand and gravel workings in the river valleys are often restored to wetlands³². In the flood plain, when suitable material is available, consideration should always be given to filling below original land levels to improve flood storage capacity. This should be done on a site specific basis with an assessment of the impact on groundwater aquifers. The Environment Agency should be consulted at an early stage to establish the extent to which waste material can be used to restore sand and gravel workings in the flood plain³³.
- 4.57 The risk to aircraft from bird strike is also an important consideration and this may restrict the location of some workings and/or affect the design of restoration schemes, as most of Oxfordshire's sand and gravel resources (and some sand and limestone resources) lie within 13 kilometres of a military airfield or civilian aerodrome³⁴. Within these areas, proposals for working, restoration and after-use will need to be drawn up and designed in consultation with the MOD and/or Oxford Airport; and consultation with relevant biodiversity organisations may also be helpful. A bird hazard

³² Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework also determines that landfill is not appropriate in the functional flood plain, thereby effectively precluding restoration of land to original ground levels.

³³ The Topic Paper on Restoration explains in more detail the circumstances in which waste can be used to help restore workings in the flood plain.

³⁴ MoD and/or Oxford Airport should be consulted and involved in the design of restoration schemes for mineral workings within 13 km of specified airfields or the need for a bird hazard management plan. Relevant biodiversity organisations should also be involved.

management plan may need to be prepared as part of a planning application. Through careful use of inert fill and other engineering techniques, some areas of open water may be formed that lead to the creation of wetland habitats that offer lower risk of bird strike and greater value for biodiversity.

- 4.58 It is important that restoration is achieved to a high standard and this will generally be required through conditions attached to planning permissions. Planning conditions can provide for aftercare provisions to be put in place for a period of up to five years following restoration, to successfully establish an after-use: longer term management may be secured through legal agreement and is sought where necessary (for example many species require a period longer than 5 years to become successfully established)³⁵. Such agreements may also be sought to secure a desired long term management strategy, particularly where public access is also anticipated. Financial guarantees to secure satisfactory restoration may be justified, but only in exceptional circumstances³⁶.
- 4.59 Policy M7 sets out the general approach to restoration of mineral workings. Core policies C3, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9 and C11 are also relevant to considering the type of after-use that may be appropriate and the content of a restoration scheme.

4.60 **Policy M7: Restoration of mineral workings**

Mineral workings shall be restored to a high standard and in a timely and phased manner to an after-use that is appropriate to the location and aims to provide for a net gain in biodiversity, taking into account:

- **the characteristics of the site prior to mineral working;**
- **the character of the surrounding landscape;**
- **the amenity of local communities including opportunities to provide for local amenity uses;**
- **the capacity of the local transport network;**
- **flood risk and opportunities for increased flood storage capacity;**
- **bird strike risk and aviation safety;**
- **the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity appropriate to the local area; and**
- **opportunities to protect and/or improve geodiversity.**

Planning permission will not be granted for mineral working unless satisfactory proposals have been made for the restoration, aftercare and after-use of the site, including where necessary the means of securing them in the longer term.

³⁵ In Oxfordshire the standard long-term management period is 20 years, in addition to the 5-years of statutory aftercare.

³⁶ National Planning Policy Guidance on Minerals advises that financial guarantees can be sought for a novel or untested form of restoration or where there is reliable evidence of a potential technical or financial failure.

5. WASTE PLANNING STRATEGY

- 5.1 This section sets out the County Council's waste planning strategy and policies for the period to 2030. Provision must be made for the facilities that will be needed for the management of waste in the county over the plan period. The Council intends that this should be done in a way that promotes and enables the movement of waste up the waste management hierarchy, away from landfill and towards increased re-use, recycling, composting and recovery of resources from waste.
- 5.2 How many and what sort of facilities will be needed for dealing with waste in Oxfordshire over this period cannot be predicted with accuracy. The strategy can only be based on the best information available. A separate waste needs assessment³⁷ has been prepared which sets out estimates of the quantities of waste that will need to be managed in Oxfordshire; the waste management capacity currently available; and the additional capacity that may be required up to 2030. These will be monitored regularly and updated in the Council's Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 5.3 The strategy includes a spatial strategy for the delivery of the new waste infrastructure that is expected to be needed, which is illustrated on the key diagram at the end of this section, and policies which provide the context for considering future proposals for waste development. The strategy provides a framework for the submission of planning applications by operators for new waste management facilities.

Management of Oxfordshire waste

- 5.4 Although attitudes and behaviour concerning waste are changing, the amount of waste produced in Oxfordshire is still expected to grow as population increases and the economy develops, particularly in the main urban areas of Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, Witney, Abingdon, Didcot, and Wantage and Grove. For the three main types of waste produced in Oxfordshire, the amounts needing to be managed could increase over the period to 2030 in line with the estimates in Table 3.
- 5.5 Other types of waste are also expected to increase over the period 2010 to 2030: *(TO BE UPDATED)*
- Hazardous Waste – from approximately 50,000 to 75,000 tonnes per annum;
 - Metal Waste – from approximately 50,000 to 60,000 tonnes per annum;
 - Sewage Sludge – from approximately 20,000 to 25,000 tonnes per annum (dry solids).

³⁷ OCC Waste Needs Assessment May 2012 and BPP Review 2014

Table 3: Estimates of Oxfordshire waste to be managed 2010 – 2030
(tonnes per annum) *(TO BE UPDATED)*

Waste Type	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Municipal	310,000	330,000	340,000	350,000	370,000
Commercial & Industrial	570,000	580,000	600,000	620,000	640,000
Construction, Demolition & Excavation	650,000*	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000
Total	1,530,000	2,210,000	2,240,000	2,270,000	2,310,000

Figures rounded to nearest 10,000 tonnes

*Reflects reduction in construction activity due to current economic position; prior to the recession approximately 1.3 million tonnes of construction, demolition and excavation waste were produced annually.

- 5.6 For municipal waste it is assumed that from 2012 there will be no further increase in the amount of waste produced by each household. Projected growth in municipal waste is therefore based only on what will arise from the expected increase in population, using planned increases in housing. Estimates of waste arisings will be kept under review by the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership through its work on the Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.
- 5.7 For commercial and industrial waste, a relatively low growth rate has been assumed (0.63%). This is in line with work done by the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group. Any changes to the basis of this assumption (e.g. the possible effect of closure of Didcot 'A' Power Station) will be monitored.
- 5.8 Production of construction, demolition and excavation waste is believed to have fallen sharply due to the economic downturn, to about half the pre-recession level. It is assumed that this will increase again with economic recovery and that by 2015 production of construction, demolition and excavation waste will have returned to previous levels.
- 5.9 Government policy points to counties being net self-sufficient in managing the quantity of waste they produce, with cross boundary movements of waste generally being in balance. This principle guides the assessment of the amounts of commercial and industrial waste and construction, demolition and excavation wastes that need to be provided for in Oxfordshire.
- 5.10 Policy W1 includes the principle of net self-sufficiency in waste management provision for municipal waste, commercial and industrial waste, construction, demolition and excavation waste and agricultural waste, which comprise the great majority of the waste produced in Oxfordshire. This does not apply to the much smaller quantities of hazardous waste and radioactive waste, for which more specialist facilities are required that usually need to be provided on a wider than individual county basis. Specific policies cover those wastes, as well as waste water and sewage sludge.

5.11 The estimates in Table 2 of the quantities of waste that will need to be managed over the plan period are likely to change over time as new information becomes available. Policy W1 therefore does not include figures for the quantities of waste to be provided for. Instead it refers to the Council's Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports, which will monitor and update these estimates as necessary over time. The estimates in the latest Annual Monitoring Report will provide the basis for assessing the requirement for waste management facilities in Oxfordshire, although these amounts should be seen as the minimum to be planned for and in calculating the amounts of waste management capacity required, in policies W3 and W4, a contingency of 10% should be added. The market will also play a key role in establishing the type and number of waste facilities to be provided. Provision for the management of waste from outside Oxfordshire is addressed in policy W2.

5.12 **Policy W1: Management of Oxfordshire waste**

Provision will be made for waste management facilities that allow Oxfordshire to be net self-sufficient in the management of its municipal waste, commercial and industrial waste, construction, demolition and excavation waste and agricultural waste over the period to 2030. Provision for hazardous waste, radioactive waste and waste water and sewage sludge will be made in accordance with policies W8, W9, W10.

The amounts of waste that need to be managed in the period to 2030 will be monitored and updated as necessary in the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports.

Management of waste from other areas

5.13 Large amounts of waste from other counties are managed in Oxfordshire. Much is disposed in licensed landfill (see table xx – policy W7) reflecting the continuing availability of landfill space in Oxfordshire³⁸, the relative proximity of a number of urban centres (e.g. Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell and Newbury) and the general shortage of landfill capacity in other areas – in particular Berkshire and north Hampshire. London also has a shortage of landfill capacity and exports waste for disposal to other places, including Oxfordshire, much of it by rail. These movements are over and above the local cross boundary movements of waste that could normally be expected and accommodated within a policy of net self-sufficiency. As this seems likely to continue for the foreseeable future, policy W2 is included to provide a policy on the management of non-hazardous and inert waste from outside Oxfordshire (hazardous waste is dealt with separately in policy W8).

5.14 Inert waste is included in policy W2 because in recent years Oxfordshire has received large amounts of inert waste for disposal³⁹, in addition to the on-

³⁸ All of Oxfordshire's landfills can take waste from other areas, but in some cases there are restrictions on the areas from which waste can be imported.

³⁹ In 2010 and 2011 over 600,000 tonnes of inert waste was received from London; it is understood that most of this came from the construction of the Olympics site and was transported by rail.

going receipt of non-hazardous waste. The county could be seen as a possible location for the disposal of surplus inert waste from future large scale engineering projects such as the Thames Tideway Tunnel in London and HS2, particularly given the potential for moving the waste by rail. Policy W2 also addresses proposals for waste management facilities, for both the treatment of residual waste and for recycling, composting and food waste treatment, which provide substantially for non-hazardous waste from outside Oxfordshire.

Disposal of non-hazardous waste

- 5.15 The recently adopted London Plan commits the London Boroughs to becoming self-sufficient in dealing with their own waste and similar strategies are being pursued in most of the counties adjoining Oxfordshire⁴⁰. But it is likely that waste will continue to be received for disposal in Oxfordshire for the foreseeable future. Although the terms of the planning permissions governing the existing landfills allow for this, a commitment to the continued availability of Oxfordshire landfill space to accommodate waste from other areas is sensible. It provides reassurance to other Waste Planning Authorities and to existing landfill operators for the continued management of these sites.
- 5.16 The rate at which waste might be imported for disposal in landfill is, however, difficult to predict. This is affected by supply and demand and the contracts entered into by waste companies. But generally speaking a decline in the amounts of waste that are imported for disposal in landfill can be expected as new recycling and residual waste treatment facilities are developed in other areas. There are signs that this is already happening (see table 7 – policy W7) and a fairly significant decline is expected in the near future⁴¹. An estimate of the amount of waste that may be imported for disposal is set out in table 4⁴². This helps to identify what impact imported waste may have on the availability of landfill for Oxfordshire's needs. Some 5.61 million tonnes of non-hazardous waste may need to be disposed during the plan period. If Berkshire fails to become net self-sufficient and waste from that area increases toward the end of the plan period⁴³, the estimate would increase to some 6.0 million tonnes. These may prove to be high estimates; but it appears this amount of waste can be accommodated in Oxfordshire's existing landfill void.

⁴⁰ Waste planning in Berkshire is less advanced and there is an acknowledged shortage of landfill space in that area.

⁴¹ Contractual arrangements for the disposal of municipal waste from West London are changing and most of the waste being disposed at Sutton Courtenay is now expected to be disposed in South Gloucestershire.

⁴² More detail is provided in a separate Topic Paper – provide reference.

⁴³ The Re3 authorities have a long term contract for the disposal of their municipal at Sutton Courtenay – more information is available in the waste Needs Assessment.

Table 4: Oxfordshire: estimates of waste imported for disposal to landfill 2010 – 2030

Waste Source	Total Imports for 5 year periods (million tonnes)			
	2010 – 2015	2016 – 2020	2021 – 2025	2026 – 2030
London	1.45	1.04	0.62	0.23
Elsewhere	0.98	0.71	0.42	0.16
Total	2.43	1.75	1.04	0.39

London Waste Imports are from the adopted London Plan

Waste from elsewhere is based on an assumed current import rate of 216,000 tpa (data supplied by Environment Agency), then declining at the same rate as for London

5.17 The transport of non-hazardous waste into Oxfordshire for disposal at landfill sites is not a sustainable practice and cannot be seen as a long term solution. For this reason, the amount of imported waste should decline during the plan period. However, since direct control over waste to the existing landfills is effectively beyond the scope of the plan, it is not appropriate to include this aspiration within policy W2. Therefore no reference to the rate at which waste is brought into Oxfordshire over the plan period is included in this policy. However, the County Council will continue to work with other authorities to achieve a reduction in the amounts of waste that are imported into the county for disposal⁴⁴.

Disposal of inert waste

5.18 Policies M7 (Restoration) and W7 (Landfill) both make reference to a general shortage of suitable material to achieve the satisfactory restoration of worked quarries. Construction, demolition and excavation waste from developments in Oxfordshire will continue to be generated. But the proportion of waste that can be used in restoration (either by recovery or landfill) is only likely to decrease as recycling techniques improve and the amounts recycled increase further. There are many unrestored quarries in Oxfordshire, and the importation of inert waste into Oxfordshire could contribute to quarry restoration where the movement of this type of waste from outside then county is economic. This is more likely to be the case where the waste can be moved in bulk by rail (as in the case of waste from the Olympics site), rather than by road, and this would be environmentally preferable.

Other management of non-hazardous and inert waste

5.19 There have been cases of proposals being submitted for the development of new facilities in Oxfordshire to treat residual waste from other areas. The government's aim that communities take more responsibility for their own waste would not be helped by the development of such facilities in Oxfordshire. They would be likely to lead to waste travelling longer distances than necessary and if designed as temporary facilities at landfill sites they are likely to compromise restoration objectives. There is not expected to be a need for further capacity to treat Oxfordshire's residual waste beyond that

⁴⁴ For example through regular liaison on the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group.

already permitted. Therefore only if there is no prospect of a site nearer to the source of waste being identified should facilities for the treatment of residual non-hazardous waste from elsewhere be considered acceptable.

- 5.20 Policy W4 is generally encouraging of proposals for re-use, recycling, composting and treatment of food waste. This policy aims to provide for facilities that enable Oxfordshire to achieve net self-sufficiency in the management of its non-hazardous and inert waste. Generally, the movement of waste into Oxfordshire for treatment at such facilities would not conflict with this policy and it would help to move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy. It is also very likely that the location of such a facility in Oxfordshire would provide additional capacity for the management of Oxfordshire waste, even if taking waste from outside the county. Policy W2 therefore includes provision for facilities for the re-use, recycling, composting or food waste treatment of waste from outside Oxfordshire provided they will also make a significant contribution to meeting Oxfordshire's waste management needs.

5.21 Policy W2: Management of waste from other areas

Provision will be made for the disposal of non-hazardous and inert waste from London and elsewhere outside Oxfordshire at landfill sites, in accordance with policy W7.

Proposals for facilities which provide substantially for the treatment of residual non-hazardous waste from outside Oxfordshire will not be permitted unless it can be established that there is no realistic prospect of a site nearer to the source of waste being identified. Facilities providing for the re-use, recycling, composting or food waste treatment of waste from outside Oxfordshire should demonstrate that they will make a reasonable contribution to the capacity required to manage Oxfordshire's waste.

Diversion of waste from landfill

- 5.22 The way that waste is dealt with in Oxfordshire has changed markedly in recent years. From a past position of most waste being disposed by landfill, half is now believed to be recycled or recovered for other use. The recycling and recovery of municipal waste is leading this trend (58% in 2012/13) and further improvement can be expected as a result of investment in new waste facilities.
- 5.23 This strategy seeks, as quickly as is practical, the provision of additional facilities in accordance with the waste hierarchy, to increase recycling and composting and recovery of resources from waste, and to minimise disposal of waste to landfill.
- 5.24 The targets in this strategy inform the waste needs assessment. They have evolved from waste management targets in the former South East Plan but have been modified to reflect updated local circumstances in Oxfordshire,

including the objectives and policies of the Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2013, to move waste management even further up the waste hierarchy. In particular they reflect:

- higher recycling and composting targets for municipal waste that are considered achievable in Oxfordshire; and
- maximum diversion from landfill of municipal waste and commercial and industrial waste.

- 5.25 Oxfordshire's new municipal waste strategy aims for recycling of at least 65% of household waste by 2020 and at least 70% by 2025. Other areas are setting recycling targets at around 70% for commercial and industrial waste, and there seems no reason why recycling targets in Oxfordshire for this waste stream should not match those for municipal waste. For construction, demolition and excavation waste, the targets are based on ones in the former South East Plan, which appear to be at least as challenging as those of the National Waste Strategy, but in the light of a review of the Waste Needs Assessment an increased recycling target of 70% at the end of the plan period is now considered achievable. The recycling and composting targets in policy W3 are minimum levels for which provision is to be made and should not be regarded as setting ceilings on provision for recycling and composting.
- 5.26 The County Council as Waste Disposal Authority has entered a contract for the treatment of municipal waste that is not recycled or composted, and an energy from waste treatment plant is now being built at Ardley. When this becomes fully operational later in 2014, no more than 5% of the County's municipal waste need be sent direct to landfill. The plant is also capable of treating most of Oxfordshire's commercial and industrial waste that is not recycled or composted: there is again no reason why by the latter part of the plan period any more than 5% of this waste need be sent direct to landfill (but this does not include hazardous residues from waste treatment processes, which are covered by policy W8).
- 5.27 Most recycled construction, demolition and excavation waste comprises hard material which can be used as aggregate and lesser amounts of soil. The recycling target reflects the physical nature of this waste and is unlikely to be capable of significant improvement. The waste remaining will not all need to be disposed of in landfill as much of it will be used to restore quarries and as engineering and cover material at non-hazardous landfills.

5.28 Policy W3: Diversion of waste from landfill

Provision will be made for capacity to manage Oxfordshire's municipal waste, commercial and industrial waste and construction demolition waste in accordance with the following targets, to provide for the maximum diversion of waste from landfill.

Oxfordshire waste management targets 2010 – 2030

Waste Management / Waste Type	Target Year				
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Municipal waste:					
Composting & food waste treatment	28%	31%	33%	35%	35%
Dry Recycling	24%	31%	32%	35%	35%
Treatment of residual waste	0%	30%	30%	25%	25%
Landfill	48%	8%	5%	5%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Commercial and industrial waste:					
Recycling, composting & food waste treatment	50%	60%	65%	70%	70%
Treatment of residual waste	0%	15%	25%	25%	25%
Landfill	50%	25%	10%	5%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Construction, demolition and excavation waste:					
Recycling	50%	50%	60%	65%	70%
Landfill/Restoration	50%	50%	40%	35%	30%*
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* 25% restoration (recovery); 5% landfill

Municipal waste targets for 2010 approximate to actual performance for 2010/11

Proposals for the management of all types of waste should demonstrate that the waste cannot reasonably be managed through a process that is higher up the waste hierarchy than that proposed.

5.29 Table 5 applies the targets in policy W3 to the amounts of waste to be managed (table 3) and should be used as a guide to the provision to be made for the management of each of the main waste streams. For commercial and industrial waste and for construction, demolition and excavation waste, these include a contingency of 10% to allow for greater uncertainty in the estimates for these waste streams and also to provide some flexibility for the movement

of waste across administrative boundaries, which may not always be in balance. Estimates for municipal waste are considered to be more certain and no contingency has been added. These estimates will be kept under review through the plan period and if necessary will be revised through the Council's Minerals and waste Annual Monitoring Reports.

Table 5: Oxfordshire: estimated waste to be managed 2010 – 2030
(tonnes per annum) *(TO BE UPDATED)*

Waste Management / Waste Type	Target Year				
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Municipal waste:					
Composting & food waste treatment	84,100	100,800	111,500	123,100	128,100
Dry Recycling	76,100	100,800	108,100	123,100	128,100
Treatment of residual waste	–	97,500	101,400	87,900	91,500
Landfill	140,000	26,000	16,900	17,600	18,300
Total	300,200	325,100	337,900	351,700	366,000
Commercial & industrial waste:					
Recycling, composting & food waste treatment	311,800	386,000	431,500	479,600	494,800
Treatment of residual waste	–	96,500	166,000	171,300	176,700
Landfill	311,700	160,900	66,400	34,200	35,400
Total	623,500	643,400	663,900	685,100	706,900
Construction, demolition & excavation waste:					
Recycling	358,000	715,000	858,000	858,000	858,000
Landfill/Restoration	357,000	715,000	562,000	562,000	562,000
Total	715,000	1,430,000	1,430,000	1,430,000	1,430,000

Totals for commercial & industrial waste and for construction, demolition and excavation waste include a contingency of 10% to allow for uncertainty in waste estimates and cross-boundary movements.

Landfill totals do not include hazardous waste arising from residual waste treatment.

- 5.30 Materials recovered from construction, demolition and excavation waste provide much of the secondary and recycled aggregate which the County aims to make provision for in order to maximise supply from that source of aggregate under policy M1. Not all of the recovered material is in the form of hard aggregate, but Table 4 helps to demonstrate the extent to which policy M1 should be achievable.

Provision of additional waste management capacity

- 5.31 In deciding on the facilities that might be required and when they should be provided, account needs to be taken of the estimated future level of waste arisings for each waste stream, the waste management targets that are to be applied and the capacity already available to manage that waste.
- 5.32 In line with the waste hierarchy, policy W4 concentrates on the additional capacity likely to be required to recycle, compost and recover resources from waste. (Landfill is dealt with separately in policy W7). Adequate provision has already been made for of green waste composting, recycling and food waste treatment for municipal waste. The key requirements are for recycling capacity for commercial and industrial waste (which may include some composting and treatment of food waste) and for construction, demolition and excavation waste. The Ardley energy from waste plant should provide for the County's residual non-hazardous waste treatment needs.
- 5.33 It is currently estimated that the total amount of waste that will need to be provided for is approximately 2.3 million tonnes a year. Taking into account the targets in policy W3 and the capacity already available at existing waste facilities and sites with planning permission, it is currently estimated that additional provision needs to be made for recycling and residual waste treatment facilities with a combined capacity of approximately 700,000 tonnes a year. The estimated additional capacity required increases through the plan period, as waste production is expected to increase slightly and as the capacity at existing facilities with temporary planning permission becomes exhausted. The capacity requirement will also be affected by the rate at which planning permissions are taken up. The waste management capacity requirement will be monitored and kept under review through the Council's Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 5.34 Policy W4 gives general encouragement to facilities for re-use, recycling, composting and food waste treatment, to promote the movement of waste as far as possible up the waste management hierarchy, away from landfill. The policy takes a more restrictive approach to the provision of facilities for treatment of residual waste, recognising its position below recycling and composting in the waste hierarchy. No need for capacity over and above that to be provided at the Ardley energy from waste plant has been identified, and significant additions would be likely to draw waste into the County from other areas and could compromise the achievement of recycling and composting targets. It may become viable for small scale residual waste treatment facilities to be provided to serve local areas, possibly linked to local provision of heat and power, and such facilities may be acceptable if they do not prejudice the achievement of recycling and composting targets.

5.35 Policy W4: Waste management capacity requirements

Provision for additional waste management facilities should take account of the capacity required to effectively manage Oxfordshire's waste. Capacity requirements will be monitored and updated in the Annual Monitoring Reports and will set out:

- **The contribution made by existing permanent facilities;**
- **The contribution made by temporary facilities up to their end date;**
- **The potential contribution made by facilities with planning permission but not yet built.**

New facilities for re-use, recycling and composting of waste and for treatment of food waste will generally be encouraged. Further capacity for the treatment of residual municipal and/or commercial and industrial waste will be permitted only if it is demonstrated that this would not impede the achievement of other waste management targets.

Strategy for provision of waste management facilities

5.36 From policies W3 and W4 there is general need for new recovery facilities, in particular for recycling. Policy W5 sets out the general strategy for where facilities should be located. A key objective of this plan is to manage waste as close as reasonably possible to the source of its arising, and this generally points to a broad spread of facilities in order to minimise transport distances. However, some types of waste management require larger scale facilities to be practicable and for some waste management technologies there are efficiencies to be gained from larger scale facilities. The strategy therefore provides flexibility to allow the market to respond appropriately to the need for waste management facilities.

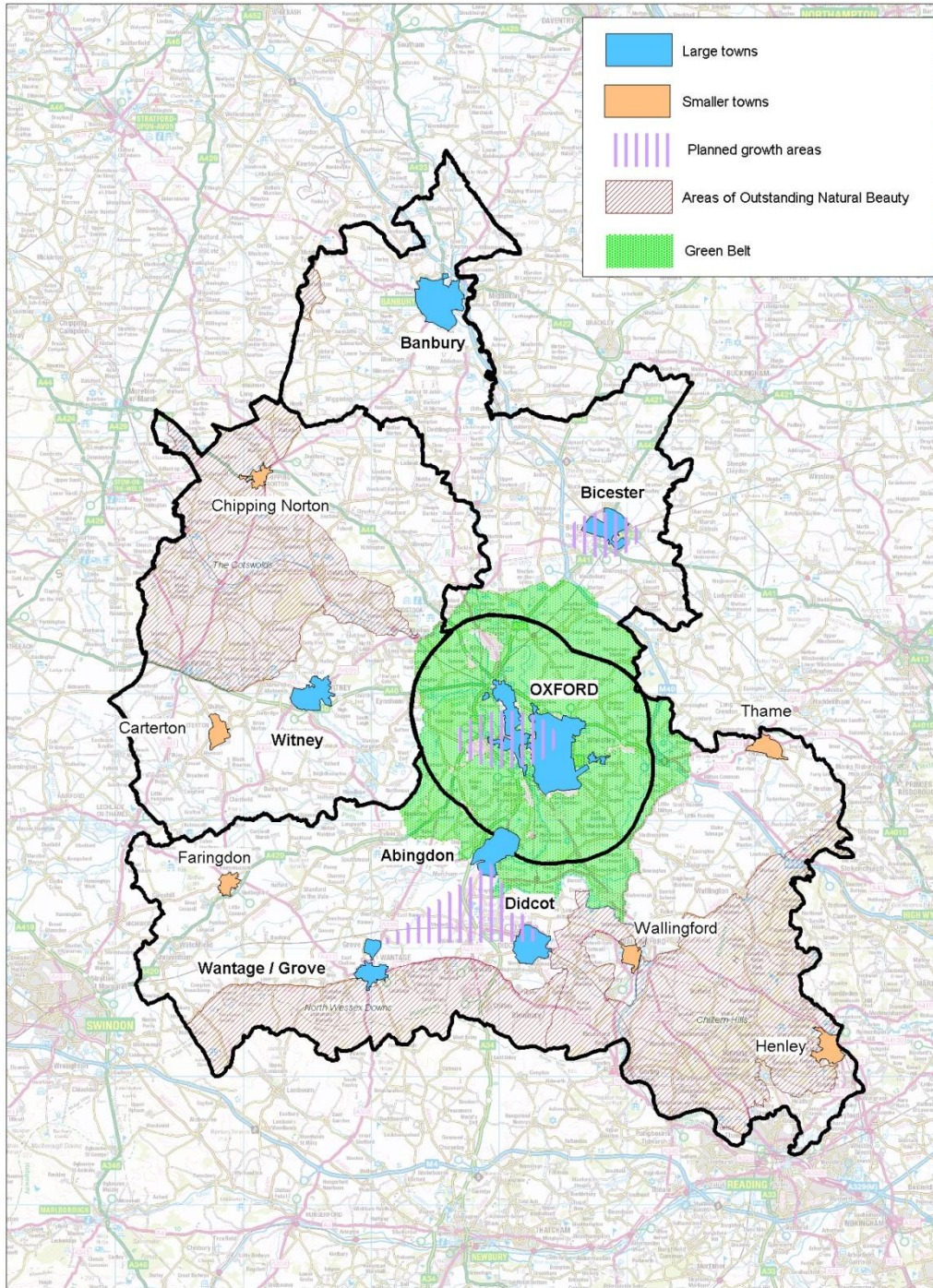
5.37 As a guide to securing an appropriate distribution of waste management capacity across the county, the population of Oxfordshire is divided into areas based around the large towns, as listed in table 6 and shown on figure 15. Figure 15 also indicates the key locations where growth is planned in the County: Bicester; Oxford; and the Science Vale area.

Table 6: Population distribution by areas based around large towns

Area of the County and Large Towns	Population: number	Population: percentage
Northern Oxfordshire: Banbury and Bicester plus most of Cherwell District	120,000	18%
Oxford: City plus nearby communities within surrounding Districts	210,000	32%
Southern Oxfordshire: Abingdon, Didcot and Wantage & Grove plus most of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts	225,000	35%
Western Oxfordshire: Witney plus most of West Oxfordshire District	95,000	15%
Oxfordshire Total	650,000	100%

Figures rounded to nearest 5,000

Figure 15: Areas of the County around large towns, and smaller towns



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- 5.38 The need for facilities for each of the main waste streams is considered separately below although municipal and commercial and industrial waste recycling and treatment facilities can cater for both of these types of waste. Locational requirements are similar and acceptable sites will be determined by applying the criteria in the core policies C1 – C11 and policy W6, which sets out the types of site (in terms of current land use) that may be appropriate for waste management developments.
- 5.39 Facilities should, as far as practicable, be sized and distributed to minimise transport distance; and be well related to and proportionate to the needs of the population of the area they will serve. Provision is needed for a range of additional waste management facilities (taking into account the locations of existing and permitted facilities). Strategic facilities should be situated in a broad core area around the towns of Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot, which are linked by A34/M40 for convenient movement of waste within the County. There is a concentration of existing development and therefore of waste arisings in this broad area and it includes the main locations where large-scale growth is expected, offering potential opportunity for suitable sites.
- 5.40 Oxford is the largest centre of waste arising and has very few waste facilities at present. Opportunity should be taken to rectify this imbalance where possible, although the broad area of search offers flexibility in meeting Oxford's needs in the event that suitable sites cannot be found in or around the City. Strategic facilities are those that will serve significant parts of the County: as a guide it would be expected that any new facility handling more than 50,000 tonnes of waste per annum would be located within the broad core area around Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot.
- 5.41 Beyond this broad strategic area, non-strategic waste facilities should generally be located in or close to the towns in the core area and the other large towns (Wantage and Grove; Witney and Carterton; and Banbury). If possible, facilities should be located within 5 km from the built up area. But the key criterion is good access to the Oxfordshire lorry route network (Core Policy C10), and locations that are further from the towns may be suitable where this is the case.
- 5.42 Significant parts of the County are more rural and 'remote' from the advisory lorry routes and main sources of waste. Such areas often contain attractive countryside and small communities. In these areas waste facilities should only be small in scale and should be in keeping with their surroundings. Controls may be imposed, including limits on the volume of waste handled and times of operation, to control excessive growth of operations and ensure that facilities remain compatible with their general location.
- 5.43 Policy W5 does not include specific provision for new waste management facilities. Waste management is a rapidly changing industry and it is not certain what new facilities will be required in order to deliver the additional waste management capacity required over the plan period. This will largely be determined by the market, particularly for commercial and industrial waste and

construction, demolition and excavation waste, which account for most of the requirement.

Municipal waste

- 5.44 Facilities to handle municipal waste are already being provided for in accordance with the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2013. Existing and planned facilities for handling municipal waste are shown on figure 6.
- 5.45 The Ardley energy from waste plant is expected to meet all Oxfordshire's requirement for residual municipal waste treatment from the latter half of 2014. There is a need to provide for bulking up and transfer of residual municipal waste from the southern and western parts of the County for efficient transportation to Ardley (for which the County Council as waste disposal authority has let a contract) and policy W5 provides for these to be delivered⁴⁵. The policy will also allow delivery of any requirements flowing from the County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centre Strategy.

Commercial & industrial waste

- 5.46 Taking into account the capacity already available at existing waste facilities and sites with planning permission, it is estimated that provision needs to be made for additional recycling capacity of approximately 200,000 tonnes a year in the latter half of the plan period: this may include capacity for composting and food waste treatment. There are permissions for significant facilities at Banbury, Kidlington (Gosford) and Finmere which, depending on whether or not they are built, could affect the level of provision needed and influence when and where other facilities are required.
- 5.47 Metal wastes are mainly recycled at dedicated scrap yards. Although metal waste production is expected to increase, there are sufficient existing permanent facilities to provide the required capacity.

Construction, demolition and excavation waste

- 5.48 Additional provision needs to be made for recycling facilities with a combined capacity increasing to approximately 500,000 tonnes a year by 2030. Permanent sites need to be carefully chosen, and should be focussed on areas where there are expected to be concentrations of arisings of construction, demolition and excavation waste, particularly where significant new development is planned, taking into account existing permanent facilities. This requirement will in particular be at Bicester, Didcot, Wantage and Grove, which have very limited capacity at present, and also at Banbury. Oxford will accommodate significant new development involving urban renewal, which is a major generator of this type of waste. There are currently no permanent

⁴⁵ The County Council has resolved to grant permission for waste transfer facilities at Sutton Courtenay and Dix Pit, Stanton Harcourt.

facilities in or close to Oxford, and provision should be made for such facilities if suitable sites can be identified.

- 5.49 There are potential benefits, through operating synergies and reduced transport of waste, in locating temporary recycling facilities at landfill and quarry sites. Based on the current position, half of the additional capacity required could be provided at temporary facilities, and this approach is allowed for in policy W6.

5.50 **Policy W5: Locations for waste management facilities**

Strategic waste management facilities should be located in a broad area around Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon and Didcot as identified in the key diagram (figure 16). Non-strategic facilities should be well related to the main sources of waste arising (Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon, Didcot, Witney/Carterton, Wantage/Grove and Banbury). Elsewhere, and particularly in more remote rural areas, facilities should only be small scale, in keeping with their surroundings.

Proposals for new waste management facilities shall meet the criteria in policies W6 and C1 – C11.

Siting of Waste Management Facilities

- 5.51 Policy W6 identifies the types of land that are likely to be the most appropriate for future waste management facilities. This policy will be considered alongside the core policies in considering sites for waste development through the planning application process.
- 5.52 Priority will be given to land that is previously developed and is suitable for industrial purposes; this includes redundant farm buildings in rural areas, which may be suitable for small scale facilities. Greenfield sites will not normally be appropriate for waste management facilities unless there is a compelling need and any harmful impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. Temporary waste management facilities will normally be acceptable at active mineral working and landfill sites provided they will be removed when that operation is completed; permanent facilities will not normally be acceptable at these sites.
- 5.53 The Cotswolds, North Wessex Downs and Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty lie close to towns where growth is expected and additional waste will be produced. Any new waste facilities that are required should if possible be located in or close to these towns, outside of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Proposals for waste development within or in proximity to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be considered against policy C8.
- 5.54 Small scale waste management facilities for local needs should not be precluded within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty where the development

would not compromise the objectives of the designation. It is unlikely that waste management facilities larger than 20,000 tonnes per annum throughput will be compatible with a location within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- 5.55 Oxford is the largest generator of waste materials in the county, yet there are few waste facilities available there. There is a need to explore whether there are potential opportunities in the Oxford area for new waste facilities, particularly for recycling commercial and industrial waste and construction, demolition and excavation waste.
- 5.56 In most cases waste management development in the Green Belt would be inappropriate but, where there is a pressing case for a particular waste facility to be located in Green Belt, the need for the development may constitute a very special circumstance to be taken into account. If there is no reasonable prospect of an alternative location becoming available in the foreseeable future, waste development in the Green Belt may be justified. Strategic facilities which cater for wider needs than those of Oxford will need to demonstrate that no other acceptable site is available within the broad core area identified in policy W5. Specific controls may be required to ensure that any facility in the Green Belt serves Oxford in the first instance.

5.57 Policy W6: Siting of waste management facilities

Priority will be given to siting waste management facilities on land that:

- **is already in waste management or industrial use; or**
- **is previously developed, derelict or underused; or**
- **is at an active mineral site; or**
- **involves existing agricultural buildings and their curtilages; or**
- **is at a waste water treatment works.**

Proposals for facilities on land that is being used temporarily for another purpose (including mineral working and landfill sites) should include removal of the facility before that temporary use is required to cease.

Waste management facilities will not be permitted on green field land unless there is an over-riding need that cannot be met in any other way.

Within the Green Belt, waste management facilities may be permitted provided that very special circumstances are demonstrated. Proposals for such facilities will need to demonstrate that they are required to serve a recognised need arising in Oxford and that there is no reasonable prospect of a suitable alternative site becoming available outside the Green Belt. Controls may be imposed to ensure that such facilities serve a waste management need arising in Oxford.

Landfill

5.58 Government policy (PPS10) sees disposal of waste as the option of last resort, but one that must still be adequately catered for, to enable waste to be disposed of in one of the nearest appropriate installations. Policy W8 deals with disposal of non-hazardous (municipal and commercial and industrial) and inert wastes by way of landfill. Disposal of hazardous and radioactive waste is covered by policies W9 and W10.

Non-hazardous waste

5.59 Oxfordshire's non-hazardous landfill sites have taken in more than a million tonnes of municipal and commercial and industrial waste each year. If landfilling continued at that rate, the estimated landfill void would be exhausted well before the end of the plan period⁴⁶. However, table 7 shows that the amount of non-hazardous waste from Oxfordshire going to landfill is falling as recycling increases⁴⁷. This is expected to decrease still further when the Ardley energy from waste plant opens later in 2014. It is also expected that the amount of imported waste will decline as new waste treatment facilities are built in other areas, although some 5.6 million tonnes of imported non-hazardous waste may need to be disposed during the plan period (possibly increasing to 6.0 million tonnes if Berkshire fails to become net self-sufficient and waste from that area increases toward the end of the plan period). Oxfordshire could still have some non-hazardous landfill space remaining at 2030 but the number of facilities will almost certainly have reduced.

Table 7: Waste to Oxfordshire licensed landfill sites by type and origin (tonnes)

	2008		2010		2012	
	HIC	CDE	HIC	CDE	HIC	CDE
London	254,313	144	259,133	321,103	160,757	25,222
Berkshire	215,576	2,897	144,872	4,546	82,857	8,894
Rest of UK	13,874	53,754	45,857	19,798	46,177	63,230
Imports Total	483,763	56,795	449,862	345,447	289,609	97,346
Oxon	548,111	337,361	403,483	217,544	312,651	205,839
Overall Total	1,031,874	394,156	853,345	562,991	602,260	303,185

HIC = household, industrial & commercial wastes

CDE = construction, demolition & excavation wastes

⁴⁶ The Waste Needs Assessment (May 2012) estimated a total void space of 10,000,000 cubic metres at January 2012, although one site contributing to this figure (void of 850,000 cubic metres) had already closed due to a lack of waste locally.

⁴⁷ More information is contained in the Waste Needs Assessment.

- 5.60 The previous Minerals and Waste Core Strategy made no additional provision for landfill for non-hazardous waste. To make efficient use of the remaining resource it required that existing voids be husbanded for the longer term. As the amount of waste going to landfill was expected to dwindle, provision was also made to extend the life of existing landfills if necessary.
- 5.61 Little has changed since. It is still expected that the amount of waste going to Oxfordshire's landfills will reduce significantly in future years. Although it is difficult to estimate the level of demand for landfill space in future years (this depends on the economics of supply and demand and contracts entered into by waste companies – see also policy W2), there appears to be no case for making provision for new landfill sites in this plan.
- 5.62 The case for husbanding the remaining landfill void needs careful consideration. A husbanding policy cannot force a commercial operator to keep open a facility that it believes to be unviable. Placing a facility in care and maintenance can also be costly. The local community may also welcome the early closure of a site – particularly if accompanied by proposals to bring forward and implement a final restoration scheme. However, the preferred approach is for a policy designed to husband existing void. There is no evidence that operators are interested in opening new landfills either in Oxfordshire or neighbouring areas, and until it becomes clear that there is no need for landfill space in future⁴⁸ it makes sense to try to protect the remaining void for potential future use. This does not prevent consideration of a detailed case being put forward for closure of a particular site prematurely, but there should be detailed evidence to support such a proposal.
- 5.63 If the amount of waste going to landfill continues to fall operators are likely to be faced with a choice of either closing the site within the period originally envisaged, and amending the original restoration scheme to address the fact that the landfill is incomplete, or applying for permission to extend the period within which the landfill should be complete. A flexible approach needs to be taken to the time within which non-hazardous landfill sites should be restored if a husbanding policy is adopted. But the general rule should otherwise remain that sites be restored as quickly as possible, in accordance with policy M8. Proposals seeking to extend waste activity on a landfill site for any reason other than husbanding, thereby delaying final restoration, should require a particularly strong justification. This would also apply to proposals for development that involves disturbance to a restoration that had been successfully completed.
- 5.64 The Landfill Directive requires that landfill sites taking biodegradable waste incorporate measures to capture the gas produced (and preferably utilise this for energy recovery. Landfill sites also produce leachate and discharges also need to be controlled to avoid pollution to watercourses and groundwater. Provision for any further development that may be required to effectively control gas and leachate on existing landfill sites is made through policy W6.

⁴⁸ Waste technology continues to advance and further ways are being developed to treat some waste that still has to be disposed by way of landfill due to lack of suitable alternatives.

Former landfills were not required to capture gas and should further waste development be envisaged on these sites provision for the capture of landfill gas should always be considered.

Inert waste

- 5.65 A large proportion of inert waste from construction, demolition and excavation projects (that which is not recovered as soils or recycled aggregate) is otherwise used beneficially in the restoration of mineral workings and as engineering material at landfill sites. The amount of waste available and that could be used in this way could be as much as 560,000 tonnes per annum⁴⁹.
- 5.66 Approved schemes for the restoration of existing and committed quarries will require the use of some 8 million tonnes of inert material⁵⁰ – including the restoration of the significant voids at Shellingford and Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarries. If all of the waste produced in Oxfordshire (that which is not recycled as aggregate or soil) were to be used for quarry restoration, the approved and committed restoration schemes could be achieved in the period to 2025. Further voidspace of about 1.5 million cubic metres would then be required for the disposal of the residual waste likely to be produced from 2025 to the end of the plan period.
- 5.67 There are a number of unrestored quarries in Oxfordshire and new quarries are expected to be opened during the plan period. So there is not likely to any shortage of options for the disposal of the residual waste arising in Oxfordshire throughout the plan period. The issue is much more likely to be one of a shortage of suitable waste material to achieve satisfactory restoration (see also policy M8).
- 5.68 The previous Minerals and Waste Core Strategy envisaged that priority be given to the use of residual inert waste to restore mineral workings. Other forms of landfill or land-raising using inert waste, including the construction of bunds and other landscaping features and raising the levels of agricultural land was to be generally be avoided unless there would be a clear environmental benefit. Provision for the additional inert waste disposal capacity required was to be made in conjunction with new sites for mineral working.
- 5.69 There is no reason to change this approach. The Waste Needs Assessment has been reviewed⁵¹ and the opportunity has been identified to increase the targets for diverting inert waste from landfill (see policy W3). The effect of this is likely to be to reduce further the availability of suitable material for quarry

⁴⁹ A report by WRAP in 2008 (Construction, demolition and excavation waste arisings, use and disposal for England) found that some 61% of CDE waste was recycled as aggregate or soil, leaving 40% available for landfill and/or restoration.

⁵⁰ As at January 2012.

⁵¹ Refer to BPP report.

restoration towards the end of the plan period (whether by way of landfill disposal or recovery of materials⁵²).

5.70 **Policy W8: Landfill**

Permission will not be granted for new landfill sites for non-hazardous waste. Existing non-hazardous landfill capacity will be husbanded for the disposal of residual non-hazardous waste. Permission will be granted to extend the life of existing non-hazardous landfill sites where this is necessary to meet the need for disposal of residual non-hazardous waste and enable completion and restoration of the landfill.

Priority will be given to the use of inert (construction, demolition and excavation) waste which cannot be recycled as infill material at active or unrestored quarries where such material is required in order to achieve satisfactory restoration for appropriate after use. Permission will not be granted for the disposal of inert waste elsewhere unless there would be overall environmental benefit.

Landfill sites shall be restored in accordance with policy M7 for restoration of mineral workings.

Hazardous waste

5.71 Hazardous waste comprises a variety of materials that require specialist treatment or disposal. Facilities to manage hazardous waste can be expensive to develop and operate and they often serve an area wider than a single county. These wastes are often transported longer distances to suitable management facilities than are other types of waste. Oxfordshire is a net exporter of hazardous and radioactive waste: it is estimated that less than 30% of the hazardous waste produced is currently managed within the county. Most of the facilities in Oxfordshire are small scale, but there is a significant transfer and recycling facility at Ewelme and an asbestos disposal facility at Ardley landfill, both of which provide for Oxfordshire and a wider area. There are hazardous waste landfills in adjoining counties, at Swindon, Cheltenham and East Northamptonshire (which is also permitted to accept very low level radioactive waste); and the nearest hazardous waste incinerators are at Slough and Fawley (Southampton).

5.72 The amounts of hazardous and radioactive waste produced are expected to increase. Further treatment facilities will be required as European legislation directs hazardous waste away from landfill and stricter pollution control measures are introduced. In Oxfordshire, the Ardley energy from waste plant will produce hazardous residues that will need to be disposed of at suitable facilities. Although difficult to measure, capacity to manage an additional

⁵² This issue is also discussed in the Topic Paper on Quarry Restoration, where the differentiation between disposal and recovery becomes more important for the restoration of quarries in the functional flood plain.

50,000 tonnes per annum could be required for Oxfordshire to become self-sufficient in the management of these wastes.

- 5.73 In view of the variety of different waste materials produced and the specialist nature of waste facilities needed, provision of the required capacity within Oxfordshire is not likely to be practicable. The aim is therefore for Oxfordshire to be as self-sufficient in the management of these wastes as possible. The former South East Plan (policy W15) identified a number of priorities for the treatment of hazardous waste which could still be relevant to Oxfordshire, including: treatment facilities for air pollution control residues (from combustion plants); waste electronic equipment; and contaminated construction, demolition and excavation waste.
- 5.74 The general aim of policy W8 is to enable facilities for these wastes to be developed where they provide for waste produced in Oxfordshire, recognising that most facilities are likely to serve a wider area. Such facilities may be regarded as being strategic but, as they are likely to handle only relatively small tonnages and to have relatively wide catchment areas, it may not be appropriate to limit their location to the broad area for strategic facilities in policy W5. They should, nevertheless, be located in accordance with policy W6 and the core policies.
- 5.75 Some of Oxfordshire's non-hazardous landfills could be made technically suitable for disposal of hazardous waste (and very low level radioactive waste – see policy W9). However, there has been no indication that proposals for disposal of hazardous waste at landfill sites in Oxfordshire will come forward. This may reflect the proximity of facilities in other counties. Nevertheless, policy W8 provides flexibility to respond to changing circumstances should this be necessary and appropriate.
- 5.76 **Policy W8: Hazardous waste**

Permission will be granted for facilities for the management of hazardous waste where they are designed to meet a requirement for the management of waste produced in Oxfordshire. Facilities that also provide capacity for hazardous waste from a wider area should demonstrate that they will meet a need for waste management that is not adequately provided for elsewhere.

Management of radioactive waste

- 5.77 There are three categories of radioactive waste – Low Level (LLW), Intermediate Level (ILW) or High Level (HLW) – according to how much radiation it contains and the heat produced during the decay of the radioactivity. Radioactive waste arises from both nuclear and non-nuclear activities. The more significant amounts of radioactive waste produced in Oxfordshire are from the former research facility at Harwell and the Joint European Taurus (JET) facility at Culham. Other radioactive waste is produced from non-nuclear activities including the medical, educational and

manufacturing sectors but these are believed to be in very small quantities and categorised as LLW.

- 5.78 The Government has identified⁵³ that the disposal network available to the non-nuclear industry is 'fragile' and non-existent in some parts of the country. Existing disposal routes therefore need to be conserved and other routes developed or strengthened as necessary. With the exception of the management facilities already at Harwell and Culham (see below) there are believed to be no other facilities in Oxfordshire capable of managing radioactive waste. The only disposal route for some of these wastes is the LLW repository near Drigg in Cumbria, but very low level wastes (VLLW) can be disposed by way of incineration or at licensed landfill and these routes enable the repository near Drigg to be used more effectively. For Oxfordshire, the nearest incinerator capable of taking certain low level radioactive wastes is in Hampshire and is expected to continue to provide a management route for this waste. None of Oxfordshire's landfills are licensed to accept VLLW – the nearest appropriate landfill is in East Northamptonshire which has permission to operate to 2027⁵⁴.
- 5.79 Facilities to manage radioactive waste are highly specialised and expensive to develop: unless dedicated to manage waste on the source site, they are likely to serve a much wider area than a single county. There is no evidence that proposals are likely to be brought forward to manage waste from the non-nuclear industry in Oxfordshire, but provision should still be made for such facilities to be considered positively, in line with national policy, as any such facility would be likely to help manage waste produced in Oxfordshire. Otherwise, facilities may be required during the plan period to manage radioactive waste arising at Harwell and Culham: the County Council as Waste Planning Authority would deal with planning applications for the management of radioactive waste on these sites.

Harwell

- 5.80 There are major research facilities at Harwell and the site includes an area identified as a nuclear licensed site. The Harwell licensed site is being progressively decommissioned with a view to its redevelopment as part of the Harwell Oxford Campus. This decommissioning work will involve the treatment and storage of the legacy radioactive wastes that remain on site and will continue throughout the lifetime of the plan. Part of the Harwell Oxford Campus is within the recently designated Science Vale Enterprise Zone: the site is also within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

⁵³ Strategy for the management of solid low level radioactive waste from the non-nuclear industry in the United Kingdom (March 2012).

⁵⁴ The East Northamptonshire Resource Facility is operated by Augean Ltd: there are no restrictions which would preclude the small amounts of VLLW from the non-nuclear sector being disposed in the facility.

Culham

5.81 The Culham facility is located in the Green Belt. It continues to operate the JET project. Decommissioning of the JET facility is due to commence within the period of the plan. At present, the planning requirement is to clear the JET facility when the existing temporary permissions expire and to leave the land as landscaped ground, although the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority's view is that, consistent with its vision for the site and policies in the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, the JET site could continue to host research activity.

ILW at Harwell and Culham.

5.82 There is no waste of high level radioactivity at Harwell or Culham, but some is or will be of intermediate level radioactivity. This will eventually be disposed of at the proposed national facility (deep geological repository) but that is not expected to be available during the period to 2030. In the meantime there will be a requirement for treatment and storage of an estimated 10,000 cubic metres of intermediate level waste from Harwell and a smaller amount from Culham.

5.83 Facilities for the treatment and long term storage of intermediate level radioactive waste already exist at Harwell: facilities at Culham do not provide for long term storage. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has agreed that some of the waste at Harwell can be more effectively managed at the Sellafield site in Cumbria but the operator of the Harwell site has identified that existing storage facilities at Harwell would still not be adequate to accommodate all of the site's waste. A new storage facility has recently been permitted at Harwell and has been designed also to accommodate intermediate level radioactive waste from Culham. Work on the new facility should commence in xxx and be complete by yyyy. The facility has also been designed to accommodate some ILW from the former research site at Winfrith in Dorset, to facilitate the early decommissioning of that site and secure a return of the site to heathland.

5.84 The operator of the Harwell site has not identified a need for further facilities to manage ILW beyond that to be provided in the new store. But to provide for necessary flexibility in managing this waste in advance of the identification, construction and opening of the national disposal facility, provision should be made for any further development that may be needed to treat and store waste from Harwell and Culham. It is not envisaged that further development at Harwell will be necessary to facilitate storage of ILW from sites outside Oxfordshire⁵⁵; if such proposals emerge they would need to be considered against national policy and for it to be demonstrated that the proposal was the best alternative option in terms of sustainability and environmental considerations.

⁵⁵ In November 2013 the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority consulted on proposals for the consolidation of storage facilities for legacy nuclear waste. This did not envisage a wider role for Harwell beyond that already provided for in the recently approved ILW store.

LLW at Harwell and Culham.

- 5.85 Much of the legacy waste at Harwell and Culham will be of low level radioactivity from demolition and clearance of buildings and groundworks having only a small amount of radioactive contamination. It is estimated that there is approximately 100,000 cubic metres of this waste at Harwell. A much smaller quantity will arise at Culham. Some of this will have to be taken for disposal to the Low Level Waste Repository near Drigg, Cumbria, or may possibly need to be disposed of at the proposed national deep geological repository. But the majority is likely to be classified as very low level waste and would not need to be disposed at the Low Level Waste repository, where space is now at a premium.
- 5.86 The Environment Agency has identified that very low level radioactive waste can be disposed of in suitable non-hazardous landfill facilities. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's approach to disposal of very low level radioactive waste⁵⁶ is that local circumstances will dictate whether or not disposal in a bespoke on-site facility or at a commercial facility elsewhere is preferable. There seems no likelihood that operators of non-hazardous landfill sites in Oxfordshire will consider submitting proposals for the disposal of very low level radioactive waste from Harwell or Culham. VLLW from Harwell is currently being taken for disposal at the nearest available facility, in East Northamptonshire.
- 5.87 The operator of the Harwell site undertook a study of the best practical environmental options for the disposal of VLLW both off site and on site⁵⁷. Three credible options were identified and the operator's initial conclusion was that on-site disposal was marginally preferred. However, following re-appraisal of the options, and taking account of revised guidelines and costs, the operator's preference was revised⁵⁸ to disposal of the waste at an off-site facility.
- 5.88 Disposal of waste at the site of waste arising would normally be the most sustainable approach to waste management, and sustainability appraisal⁵⁹ supports such an outcome. However, the sustainability appraisal was undertaken at a strategic level and the operator's more detailed work for Harwell indicates that this may not be a sound conclusion in this case. Disposal of Harwell's very low level radioactive waste off site would also be more compatible with the site end state, which is redevelopment as part of the Harwell Oxford Campus. Nevertheless, flexibility needs to be provided within the policy to allow for reconsideration of options, including on-site disposal, should it not be possible to maintain the current disposal route.
- 5.89 Temporary radioactive waste storage could be required at Culham in support of JET decommissioning activities, although changes to the Environmental

⁵⁶ Policy for the Long Term Management of Solid Low Level Radioactive Waste in the UK (March 2007).

⁵⁷ The HVLW Waste Public Consultation at UKAEA Harwell: Update No.1.

⁵⁸ The HVLW Waste Public Consultation at RSRL Harwell: Update No.3 (January 2011).

⁵⁹ Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Pre Submission Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Report (March 2012) prepared by URS for the County Council.

Permitting Regulations reduces the need (and therefore volume) for some Culham waste to be categorised as radioactive waste. The operator believes that economic and environmental considerations will result in the disposal of any radioactive waste arising from the decommissioning of the JET facility at off-site facilities. Disposal of very low level radioactive waste at Culham could conflict with the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority's proposals to re-use/redevelop the general purpose JET buildings for research work as part of its masterplan for the Culham site as a whole. Notwithstanding that the operator does not believe this to be necessary, provision needs to be made for on-site disposal at Culham should the need arise. The Culham site is in the Green Belt, where there is a general presumption against inappropriate development, and on-site disposal should only take place in exceptional circumstances.

5.90 **Policy W9: Management of radioactive waste**

Permission will be granted for proposals for the management or disposal of low level radioactive waste where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will make a significant contribution to the management of waste produced in Oxfordshire.

Provision will be made for:

- **Temporary storage of Oxfordshire's intermediate level legacy radioactive waste at Harwell Oxford Campus, pending its disposal at a planned national disposal facility elsewhere;**
- **Temporary storage of low level legacy radioactive waste at Harwell Oxford Campus and Culham Science Centre pending its disposal elsewhere.**

Disposal of low level radioactive waste at bespoke facilities at Harwell Oxford Campus or Culham Science Centre will be permitted only if it can be demonstrated that no other suitable disposal facility is available elsewhere.

Waste water (sewage)

- 5.91 Thames Water plc. operates strategic waste water (sewage) treatment works at Banbury, Bicester, Oxford, Witney, Didcot and Wantage/Grove. These treat raw sludge before recycling to agricultural land: three works (Oxford, Banbury and Didcot) recover energy from these processes. Thames Water's 25-year Sludge Strategy (December 2008) identifies a need to improve treatment processes at strategic sites in response to growing waste volumes and a likely reduction in the amount of treated sludge that is spread on agricultural land. This may give rise to a need for new plant such as anaerobic digestion or energy from waste, which could provide opportunities for the provision of facilities that can also deal with other types of waste, particularly commercial and industrial.

5.92 The Thames Water Sludge Strategy does not identify a need for additional new strategic waste water treatment sites in Oxfordshire, but the need may arise for new treatment works to be provided locally. Any proposals for new waste water treatment facilities will be considered under policies W5, W6 and W10 and against the criteria in the core policies.

5.93 **Policy W10: Waste water and sewage sludge**

Provision for the treatment and disposal of waste water and sewage sludge will continue to be made at existing facilities. Additional capacity may be found acceptable:

- **As a necessary extension or replacement of existing infrastructure;**
- **To improve operational efficiency;**
- **To enable planned development to be taken forward.**

Safeguarding waste management sites

5.94 Waste facilities have the potential to give rise to conflicts with a wide range of environmental interests and there is acknowledged difficulty in finding suitable sites. In Oxfordshire this is compounded by the high value of development land and competition from more profitable forms of development.

5.95 The previous Minerals and Waste Core Strategy included a policy designed to safeguard sites with permanent planning permission for future waste management use. This was with a view to preventing their loss to other forms of development, keeping them available as options for developing additional capacity as required and reducing the need to find new sites for waste uses.

5.96 Representations on the previous policy wording on the one hand suggested that the policy would prevent otherwise acceptable alternative forms of development taking place, contrary to the approach that should be taken to sustainable development, but on the other hand that safeguarding should be extended to temporary waste sites as well as permanent ones. Informal consultation has since taken place with District Councils and larger waste site operators on options for safeguarding. There is general support for the safeguarding of waste sites, although views may vary on how it should be approached.

5.97 There continues to be a strong case for safeguarding permanent waste sites but this should be extended to include temporary sites with a planning permission that extends beyond the plan period (2030). It would not be appropriate to safeguard temporary sites where the permission will expire before the end of the plan period, and a decision on the possible continuation of such use should only be taken after consideration of all of the relevant planning considerations at the time. Safeguarding should cover all types and size of waste management facilities with the exception of landfill (to which policy W7 applies). Safeguarding should apply for the duration of the plan, subject to any review of the plan.

- 5.98 Safeguarded sites need to be specified and a mechanism confirmed for review of this list. A list of sites to be safeguarded will be included and kept up to date in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports. There will be a presumption against any other form of development taking place on a safeguarded waste site unless a suitable alternative location for the waste use can be provided. A site may be released from safeguarding if it is established that there is no need for a waste management facility of any type in the area, or that the activity is particularly unsuited to its location (e.g. not compatible with an adjoining residential use).
- 5.99 District Councils are asked to consult the County Council on all planning applications for non-waste development that affect a safeguarded site. This will allow the County Council as the waste planning authority to consider any waste planning issues raised. The District Councils will also be asked to consult the County Council on proposals for development that may be incompatible with and/or prejudicial to the future of a safeguarded facility. The County Council will provide further guidance on the types of development on which consultation should take place and maps of the safeguarded sites and a consultation zone around each site⁶⁰.

5.100 **Policy W10: Safeguarding waste management sites**

The following sites are safeguarded for future waste management use:

- **Sites already in use for waste management purposes and with planning permission to operate throughout the plan period;**
- **Sites with planning permission to operate as a waste management facility throughout the plan period but not yet developed for that purpose.**

Sites safeguarded for future waste management use will be specified and kept up to date in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports, and will also include:

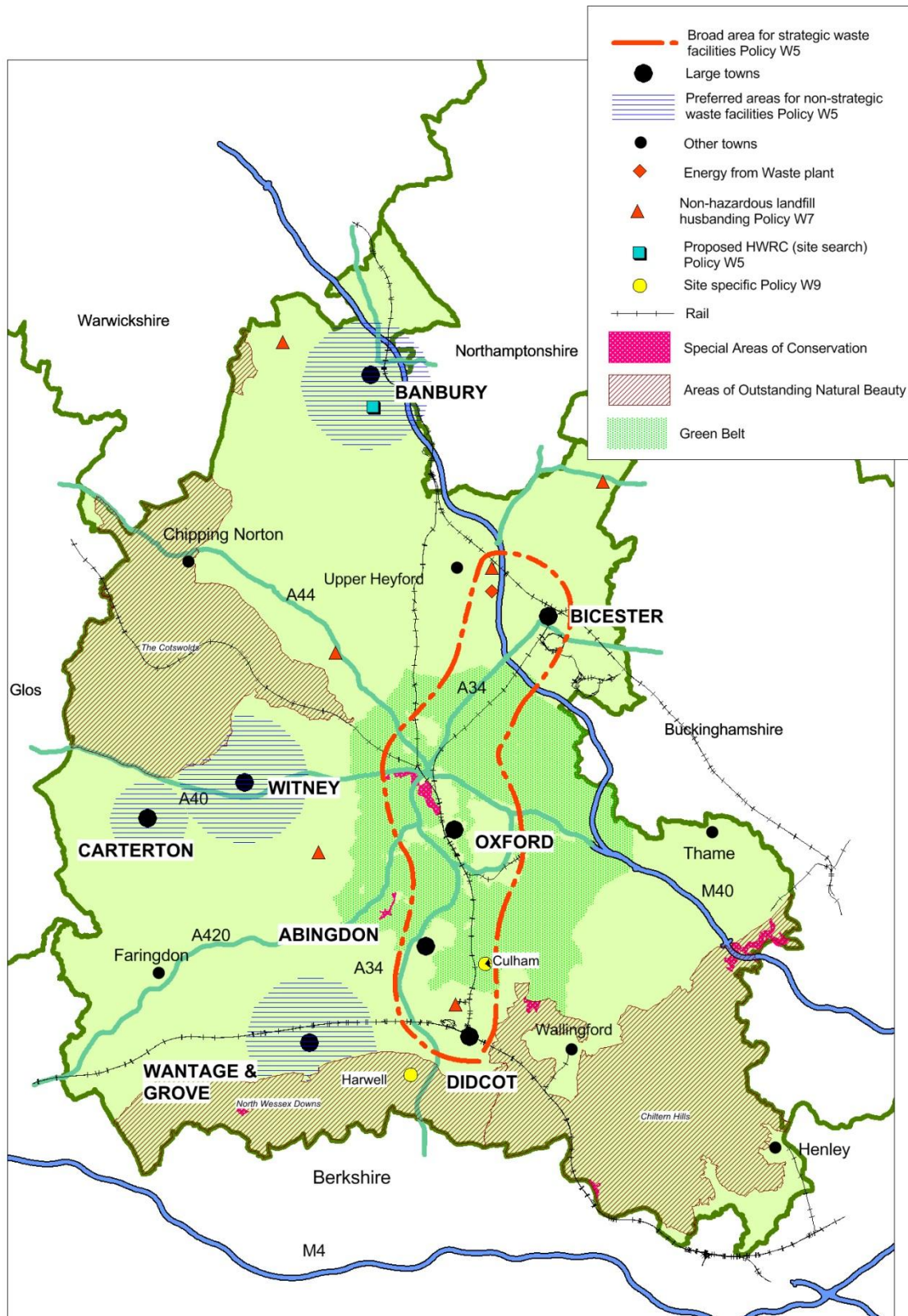
- **Sites with a lawful use for waste management purposes and that are not already identified;**
- **Sites where planning permission is granted for the operation of a waste management facility throughout the plan period.**

Proposals for development that would prevent or prejudice the use of a site safeguarded for waste management will not normally be permitted unless:

- **provision for new waste management capacity is made at a suitable alternative location; or**
- **it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer needed or suitable for waste management use.**

⁶⁰ Such zones would normally be in the order of 250 metres from a safeguarded site boundary.

Figure 16: Waste Key Diagram



6. CORE POLICIES FOR MINERALS AND WASTE

Sustainable Development

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out how planning policies for England are expected to be applied. There is a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development and local plans are expected to follow this approach. The plan's objectives are built on the principle of sustainable development. The plan's policies seek to deliver sustainable development and decisions on planning applications should be taken in accordance with these policies unless material circumstances determine otherwise. But for the avoidance of doubt, an over-arching policy is included in the plan to ensure that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is taken into account in all decisions on minerals and waste development. Such a policy was not included in the previous Core Strategy as it was prepared prior to the National Planning Policy Framework being published.⁶¹

6.2 Policy C1: Sustainable Development

A positive approach will be taken to minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and the aim to improve economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application, or relevant plan policies are out of date, planning permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

- **any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework; or**
- **specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework indicate that the development should be restricted.**

Climate Change

6.3 Average carbon dioxide emissions from Oxfordshire are higher than the South East and national averages. The County Council is committed to increasing energy efficiency and reducing emissions. Waste recycling and recovery facilities contribute to reducing emissions by diverting waste from landfill: this is addressed specifically in policy W3. Minerals and waste facilities that are

⁶¹ The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27 March 2012: the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy was approved by the Council for submission to the Secretary of State on 9 April 2012.

well located, designed and operated can minimise the generation of greenhouse gases and be resilient to the impacts of climate change.

- 6.4 Minerals and waste development proposals, including operational practices and restoration proposals, must take account of climate change for the lifetime of the proposed development. This will be through measures to minimise generation of greenhouse gas emissions and to allow flexibility for future adaptation. Applications for major developments should consider providing information on climate change in the accompanying Environmental Statement.
- 6.5 Methods of adaptation to climate change include the use of sustainable drainage systems designed to improve the rate and manner of absorption of water from hard and soft surfaces, reducing direct run-off into rivers or storm water systems; the use of sustainable construction methods; sustainable transport methods where possible; and the use of environmentally friendly fuels.
- 6.6 **C2: Climate Change**

Proposals for minerals or waste development, including restoration proposals, should take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development from construction through operation and decommissioning. Applications for development should adopt a low carbon approach and measures should be considered to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and provide flexibility for future adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

Flooding

- 6.5 Minerals and waste development is vulnerable to flooding, most commonly from fluvial sources; but damage or inconvenience can also arise from surface water run-off and groundwater. Development can increase flood risk to other property if not adequately mitigated, but may also have a positive benefit by adding to flood water storage capacity through well considered restoration of mineral workings (see also policy M7). Consideration of the risk caused by flooding must be taken into account at all stages of the planning process.
- 6.6 Government policy and guidance⁶² aims to steer development to areas of lowest flood risk. As this is not always possible, development is categorised according to its flood risk. The level of flood risk associated with minerals and waste development is set out in Appendix 1 (table A.1).
- 6.7 Development in areas other than Flood Zone 1 (the lowest flood risk zone) must be sequentially tested to establish whether it could take place in an area of lower flood risk. In some cases a further test (the exceptions test) must be undertaken to establish whether development may take place in areas

⁶² Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework and draft National Planning Policy Guidance on flooding.

vulnerable to flooding. Appendix 1 (table A.2) sets out the circumstances in which minerals and waste development may take place in areas that are vulnerable to river flooding.

- 6.8 Sand and gravel working is ‘water compatible development’ – a category of development that is at the lowest vulnerability of flooding. Sand and gravel working is the only form of mineral extraction that can take place in the functional flood plain (Flood Zone 3b), provided a sequential test is undertaken. Other mineral working and all processing activities have a higher flood risk vulnerability classification.
- 6.9 Processing activity associated with sand and gravel working may involve plant and machinery or the formation of stockpiles, all of which can displace flood water, reduce flood water storage and interfere with water flows at times of flood. Such development can take place in areas that are at some risk of flooding (see Appendix 1) but not in the functional flood plain. As mineral working may span more than one flood zone a sequential approach to layout is needed. For sand and gravel working and processing this means that any development likely to displace flood water (including stockpiles) should be located on land that is outside the functional floodplain.
- 6.10 Waste development, depending on the nature of the operation, is not appropriate in the functional flood plain. This includes landfill operations - which may raise ground levels and pollute or disrupt groundwater flows. Where waste development is allowed in areas at lower risk of flooding (see Appendix 1) the sequential test and, for landfill sites, the exceptions test must first be satisfied. The potential for pollution to groundwater should also be taken into account (see paragraph 6.14). Inert waste may need to be imported to a site to achieve the satisfactory restoration of a sand and gravel working situated in the flood plain and this can take place in certain circumstances and where there is overall improvement to flood storage capacity⁶³.
- 6.11 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)⁶⁴ assesses the extent to which future minerals and waste development in Oxfordshire may be at risk of flooding or increase flood risk to other property. This also takes into account the future impact of climate change. The SFRA did not identify a flood risk from potential waste development, but identified that many of the possible locations for sand and gravel working are in areas that are vulnerable to flooding. A sequential test of potential areas has been undertaken⁶⁵ and established that land to meet Oxfordshire’s aggregate requirement cannot reasonably be met without extracting sand and gravel from sites that lie in the functional floodplain.
- 6.12 Planning applications for minerals and waste development of more than a hectare in size or where situated in an area at risk of flooding must be

⁶³ Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework precludes the disposal of waste in landfill in Flood Zone 3b (the functional flood plain). Further information on where waste can be used to help restore quarries in the flood plain is set out in section 5 of the Topic Paper on Restoration.

⁶⁴ Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste (Level 1) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Scott Wilson, October 2010.

⁶⁵ Topic Paper: Flooding and Water Environment (date).

accompanied by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment. Further guidance is given in the SFRA⁶⁶.

6.13 Policy C3: Flooding

Minerals and waste development will, wherever possible, take place in areas that are not at risk of flooding. Where development takes place in an area of identified flood risk this should only be where alternative locations in areas of lower flood risk have been explored and discounted (using the Sequential Test and Exceptions Test as necessary) and where a flood risk assessment is able to demonstrate that the risk of flooding is not increased from any source, including:

- **an impediment to the flow of floodwater;**
- **the displacement of floodwater and increased risk of flooding elsewhere;**
- **a reduction in existing floodwater storage capacity;**
- **an adverse effect on the functioning of existing flood defence structures;**
- **the discharge of water into a watercourse.**

The opportunity should be taken to increase flood storage capacity in the flood plain where possible, particularly through the restoration of sand and gravel workings.

Water environment

6.13 Minerals and waste development has the potential to affect water quality and pollute groundwater resources. Surface water run-off from hard standing areas, for example, can pollute groundwater resources. So too can the discharge of waste water from waste management operations such as composting or recycling plants if not properly controlled. Leachate from non-hazardous landfill needs to be particularly carefully controlled.

6.14 Careful consideration also needs to be given to the impact of sand and gravel extraction on groundwater resources. In the river valleys the water table is often higher and working normally gives rise to a need for dewatering. Mineral extraction can cause disruption to ground and surface water flows in these circumstances, as can the formation of artificial lakes or the partial filling of void using inert waste as part of restoration⁶⁷. Dewatering may also impact on local groundwater abstractions and may have an adverse effect on vegetation and nearby watercourses by lowering the water table in the vicinity of workings.

6.15 In Oxfordshire there has already been much extraction of sand and gravel from the river valleys, in particular the Thames and Lower Windrush valleys.

⁶⁶ See also the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Policy Guidance.

⁶⁷ The circumstances in which waste can be used to help restore sand and gravel workings in the flood plain are considered in more detail in Section 5 of the Topic Paper on Restoration.

Further mineral working is expected to take place in the river valleys and the cumulative impact of extraction and restoration on groundwater needs careful consideration in these areas in addition to the specific impact of an individual working. Proposals close to an area of existing working⁶⁸ will need to take account of cumulative impact by considering:

- the nature of the geological deposits in the area;
- the characteristics of the aquifer;
- water balance calculations for operational and restoration phases of working; and
- volumetric flows or levels of local watercourses or other groundwater dependent receptors for operational and restoration phases of working.

6.16 The Environment Agency can offer appropriate advice on groundwater impact⁶⁹. Where significant cumulative impact is envisaged groundwater modelling may need to be undertaken. The Environment Agency also has a regulatory function in relation to licensing discharges to the water environment and the abstraction of water. Abstractions that are used for drinking water (including private and unlicensed abstractions) lie in Source Protection Zones 1 and 2 and are subject to a minimum 50 metre and 250-500 metre radius protection respectively. When granting planning permission, the County Council will consider whether it is necessary to attach appropriate conditions to mitigate any potential harm to groundwater and will liaise with the Environment Agency to ensure these do not conflict with or unnecessarily duplicate other controls.

6.17 All proposals for mineral development should demonstrate how the operation and restoration of a site will, where appropriate, protect water resources from pollution and contribute towards the aim of the River Thames River Basin Management Plan to achieve good ecological status in all waters by 2015.

6.18 **Policy C4: Water environment**

Proposals for minerals and waste development will need to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable adverse impact on or risk to:

- **The quantity or quality of surface or groundwater resources required for habitats, wildlife and human activities;**
- **The quantity or quality of water obtained through abstraction unless acceptable alternative provision can be made;**
- **The flow of groundwater at or in the vicinity of the site.**

Proposals for minerals and waste development should ensure that the River Thames and other watercourses and canals of significant landscape, nature conservation or amenity value are adequately protected.

⁶⁸ Within 1 kilometre of an area of existing or historic working, as recommended by the Environment Agency.

⁶⁹ See also Environment Agency Groundwater Protection: Principles and Practice (November 2012)

General Amenity

- 6.19 Provision for minerals and the effective management and disposal of waste must be balanced with the need to protect people and the environment from potential harm⁷⁰. If alternative locations are available, needs should normally be met on land that causes least overall harm to amenity, particularly bearing in mind the need to protect human health⁷¹. Minerals and waste development often gives rise to concerns about pollution and harm to people and the environment. Planning decisions should ensure that no unacceptable harmful impact⁷² results from development and measures can normally be put in place to ensure that development meets appropriate standards.
- 6.20 Issues of noise, dust, air quality and vibration should be taken into account when considering proposals for mineral development. Pollution from associated traffic and visual impact are also relevant and in some cases issues associated with tip and quarry-slope stability, differential settlement of quarry backfill and subsidence may also arise⁷³. A buffer zone can help to mitigate potential harm from workings. Standard distances for buffer zones between workings and sensitive receptors⁷⁴ are not specified as they can lead to unnecessary restriction and sterilisation of mineral resources: they may also result in inadequate protection measures for affected property. The extent of any buffer zone should be decided on a case by case basis at the planning application stage.
- 6.21 Many of the issues raised by mineral development are also relevant to proposals for waste management. Concerns about odour, vermin, birds, litter and light pollution may also arise⁷⁵. In many cases there are national standards⁷⁶ to help assess whether any harm may be unacceptable and the County Council will seek advice from the relevant District Council on certain issues, particularly noise. The extraction of minerals can be concentrated in particular areas, for example where there are commercially workable mineral resources and there has been investment in infrastructure. Proposals for further development should consider the cumulative impact of working on local amenity. Cumulative impact should also be taken into account in proposals for the expansion of existing waste facilities.
- 6.22 The Environment Agency operates controls that overlap with the planning process. Planning focuses on the acceptable use of land and the impact of that use⁷⁷ and when decisions are made it can be assumed that pollution control regimes will operate effectively to control emissions to air and

⁷⁰ A key objective of the NPPF is that “planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution”.

⁷¹ Paragraph 120 of the National Planning Policy Framework and paragraph 1, Planning Policy Statement 10 – Planning for Sustainable Waste Management.

⁷² Paragraph 144 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 123 also draws attention to the need to avoid “significant adverse impact” from noise.

⁷³ Impacts arising from site restoration, including bird strike, are addressed in policy M7.

⁷⁴ Including housing, schools, hospitals and offices. Also applies to waste development.

⁷⁵ A full list of considerations is set out in Appendix E of PPS 10 – Planning for Sustainable Waste Management

⁷⁶ See Topic Paper on General Amenity.

⁷⁷ Paragraph 122 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

discharges to water, etc. An application for an environmental permit can be sought prior to or concurrently with a planning application. This allows for all relevant information to be available at the planning stage and can help avoid unnecessary duplication of controls. Planning conditions should not normally be used to control matters that are the subject of an environmental permit.

6.23 Policy C5 addresses general environmental and amenity considerations only. Other core policies address areas associated with environmental protection, including water quality, the natural environment, the historic environment and landscape.

6.24 **Policy C5: General environmental and amenity protection**

Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors, including from noise, dust, visual intrusion, light pollution, traffic, air quality, odour, vermin, birds, litter, vibration, tip and quarry-slope stability, differential settlement of quarry backfill, subsidence and the cumulative impact of development.

Agricultural land and soils

6.24 Where significant development on agricultural land is necessary, national policy⁷⁸ normally expects areas of poorer quality land to be used in preference to that of a higher quality. There are extensive areas of high quality agricultural land in Oxfordshire, much of which lie in areas underlain by minerals. Proposals for minerals development will be expected to address the impact of the development on the extent and quality of any best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a)⁷⁹. Where appropriate, agricultural land classification survey information should be provided. Proposals for waste development should be capable of avoiding best and most versatile agricultural land⁸⁰ and permanent development involving the loss of such land will not normally be permitted.

6.26 Where mineral extraction affects BMV agricultural land, proposals for restoration and aftercare should look to preserve the long-term potential for the land and its soils as a high quality agricultural resource wherever possible. Proposals for restoration need to be realistic, however, and in some cases a return to agriculture may need to be at lower level due to availability of suitable inert infill material. In the floodplain the use of fill to restore mineral working must take account of national policy on flood risk (see also policies C3 and M7)⁸¹ and a return to agriculture may not always be possible.

⁷⁸ Paragraph 112: National Planning Policy Framework.

⁷⁹ Agricultural Land Classification: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1998). The Topic Paper on Restoration also shows the classification of agricultural land in Oxfordshire.

⁸⁰ See policy W6.

⁸¹ In the flood plain it may not always be possible to return land to pre-existing levels and a return to agricultural land at lower level may not be practicable in view of the high water table.

6.27 Where BMV agricultural land cannot be restored after mineral extraction proposals will need to demonstrate that any need cannot be met on lower grade land and that there is good planning reason to justify the development in that location. Provision for the sustainable management and use of all disturbed soils during extraction should be demonstrated, including means of stripping soils and storage in ways that maintain soil quality. Where BMV agricultural land is not restored, proposals must show how alternative and beneficial use is to be made of high quality soils that are not being replaced.

6.28 **Policy C6: Agricultural land and soils**

Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they take into account the presence of any best and most versatile agricultural land.

The permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land will only be permitted where it can be shown that there is a need for the development which cannot reasonably be met using lower grade land, taking into account other relevant considerations.

Development proposals should make provision for the management and use of soils in order to maintain soil quality, including making a positive contribution to the long-term conservation of soils in any restoration.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

6.29 Oxfordshire has a significant number of statutorily designated sites of international, national and local nature conservation importance, intended to protect important species, habitats and geological features⁸². These include seven Special Areas of Conservation designated under European legislation. National policy provides that the level of protection given to designated sites depends on their status. The overall intention is to ensure that a net gain in biodiversity is achieved, including by establishing ecological networks to reduce habitat fragmentation.

6.30 Mineral development can often impact on biodiversity, but restoration of sites normally offers opportunity for net gains in the longer term. Policy C7 provides the basis for considering whether the impact of minerals or waste development in terms of biodiversity is acceptable or capable of satisfactory mitigation. It also addresses the restoration of sites where the after-use is related to biodiversity (see also policy M7). Arrangements for the long term management of restored sites need to be agreed, including arrangements for monitoring and remediation (should establishment of habitats or mitigation for species prove unsuccessful).

⁸² For details see the Topic Paper on Biodiversity and Geodiversity. There are 102 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Oxfordshire, some of which are also designated as National Nature Reserves. There are 362 locally designated Local Wildlife Sites, some of which are also designated as Local Nature Reserves.

- 6.31 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are protected by particular legislation and are not specifically referred to in policy C7. Oxfordshire has four National Nature Reserves, also designated as a SAC or a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). SSSIs are designated nationally and, in line with national policy, these are afforded the highest level of protection. Development likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI should not normally be permitted. An exception should only be made where the benefits of developing the site clearly outweigh the harm likely to be caused to the SSSI and any broader impact on the national network.
- 6.32 Oxfordshire also has a large number of sites locally designated for their importance to wildlife or habitat including Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. Development should avoid or mitigate any adverse effects on these areas. If the effects cannot be avoided or mitigated then the development should not be allowed to proceed.
- 6.33 A variety of legally protected species, notable species and UK priority habitats and species are found in Oxfordshire. The highest level of protection is given to European Protected Species. However, harm to all protected species, notable and priority species and habitats should be avoided.
- 6.34 A number of Conservation Target Areas (CTAs)⁸³ have been identified in Oxfordshire to help deliver the objectives of the National and Local Biodiversity Action Plans⁸⁴. The CTAs include concentrations of existing high value nature conservation sites, including designated sites, as well as land that can provide important ecological linkages between these sites. They provide a network of green infrastructure where targeting improvement can achieve maximum benefit for biodiversity. Minerals and waste development close to or within a CTA should ensure that opportunity is taken to conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest of the CTA, including improving habitat connectivity.
- 6.35 Only about 6% of the county is covered by woodland. Ancient woodland accounts for half of the tree cover and is particularly valued because it is irreplaceable. Species-rich grassland is another example of an irreplaceable habitat. Ancient woodland should be protected from loss or adverse impact. Elsewhere, development should seek to preserve existing trees wherever possible and provide for additional tree planting with native species for screening and landscaping as appropriate. Tree planting may provide a productive land use on restored mineral workings where landscape and biodiversity objectives are met.
- 6.36 Oxfordshire has a rich geological resource. Some important geological sites are already designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Local Geology Sites should continue to be protected, but previously unknown geological features and remains of importance (including fossils and trace fossils) may

⁸³ There are currently 36 Conservation Target Areas in Oxfordshire.

⁸⁴ The objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan are now incorporated within Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife & Ecosystems.

also be discovered. Where such finds are made, every effort should be made to protect those of potential international or national importance. Where it is not possible to afford the same protection to finds of more local importance, they should be appropriately recorded. Where possible, access to all geological finds should be provided for educational purposes.

6.35 **Policy C7: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

Minerals and waste development should conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity.

Sites and species of international nature conservation importance (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation and European Protected Species) will be given the highest level of protection.

Development shall ensure that:

- **there is no adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, either individually or in combination with other development;**
- **irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees are not lost or harmed;**
- **no damage is caused to sites locally designated for the purposes of nature conservation and/or geological interest, including;**
 - **Local Nature Reserves;**
 - **Local Wildlife Sites;**
 - **Local Geology Sites;**
 - **Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation;**

Development that does not meet these requirements will be refused permission, unless the impact can be mitigated to result in a net gain in biodiversity or, if the impact cannot be fully mitigated, the need for the development on that site clearly outweighs the harm. In the case of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the need for the development would need to clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Development shall avoid harm to protected, priority or notable species and habitats.

All proposals for mineral working and landfill shall demonstrate how the development will make an appropriate contribution to the maintenance and enhancement of local habitats, biodiversity or geodiversity (including fossil remains and trace fossils), including contributing to the objectives of the Conservation Target Areas wherever possible. Satisfactory long-term management arrangements for restored sites shall be clearly set out and included in proposals. These should include a commitment to ecological monitoring and remediation (should habitat creation and/or mitigation prove unsuccessful).

Landscape

- 6.36 When considering proposals for minerals and waste development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) the County Council has a statutory duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of those areas. The setting of and views associated with the Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs AONBs should also be taken into account in considering development proposals⁸⁵. Major development should not take place in AONBs unless there are exceptional circumstances and such development is 'in the public interest'⁸⁶. A key aim of planning in AONBs is to take account of the need to safeguard agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and the economic and social needs of local communities⁸⁷. This points to development being small scale⁸⁸ to serve local needs. In Oxfordshire this is likely to rule out most mineral development with the possible exception of small quarries supplying local building stone. Proposals for development within AONBs should be informed by the relevant AONB Management Plan.
- 6.37 National planning policy recognises the importance of the countryside⁸⁹. Across the county proposals for minerals and waste development should be designed to minimise visual impact and where possible enhance the quality and character of the countryside and landscape. Restoration and after use of mineral working should take account of the landscape character areas set out in the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape study and other relevant landscape character assessments.
- 6.22 Minerals and waste development close to a settlement should take account of the character and setting of the settlement. Proposals should set out measures for an acceptable separation distance with landscaping and planting that is appropriate to the character of the area and that would be consistent with the proposed after-use of the site. Where development is considered acceptable, consideration should be given to after-uses that help develop a network of green infrastructure for the benefit of the local community, wildlife and habitat.

6.38 Policy C8: Landscape

Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they respect and where possible enhance local landscape character, and are informed by landscape character assessment. Proposals shall include measures to mitigate adverse impacts on landscape, including careful siting, design and landscaping.

⁸⁵ The relevant AONB Management Plan will inform the consideration of proposals for development within or in proximity to an AONB.

⁸⁶ Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

⁸⁷ Natural England website guidance.

⁸⁸ The Topic Paper on Landscape gives examples of the scale of minerals and waste development that has been found to have an unacceptable impact on an AONB.

⁸⁹ National Planning Policy Framework – Core Planning Principles (para 17).

High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Proposals for minerals and waste development within an AONB shall demonstrate that they take this into account and are informed by the relevant AONB Management Plan. Proposals for minerals and waste development that would affect the setting of an AONB shall also take this into account. Development within AONBs shall normally only be small-scale, to meet local needs and should be sensitively located and designed.

Historic environment

- 6.39 Oxfordshire has a wide range of heritage assets including listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and ancient monuments, which influence the character of the environment and sense of place. There are extensive archaeological assets located in the river valleys where mineral resources are also present. Proposals for minerals and waste development should include measures to conserve designated heritage assets and to protect them from loss or harm.
- 6.40 Before determining an application for mineral extraction or waste development the County Council will normally require the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, and any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance but sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 6.41 Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, the applicant should carry out a preliminary desk-based archaeological assessment to determine the nature and significance of any archaeological assets, and the contribution of the setting to that significance, as well as any potential impacts on the assets or its setting. This preliminary assessment should also identify any previously unidentified heritage assets. The County Council may, subject to the results of this initial assessment, require an archaeological field evaluation of the site to inform the determination of the application. This information should identify any means for mitigating the impact of extraction on the heritage assets.
- 6.42 **Policy C9: Historic environment and archaeology**

Proposals for minerals and waste development will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that they or associated activities will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the historic environment. Great weight will be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets such as Blenheim Palace, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic battlefields, registered parks and gardens and archaeological assets which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument, and the setting of those assets.

Where an application would affect a non-designated heritage asset, the benefits of the proposal will be balanced against the scale of harm to or loss of the heritage asset and its significance.

Where, following assessment of an application, the loss (wholly or in part) of a heritage asset is considered acceptable in principle, the applicant will be required to record and advance understanding of that asset, proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance, and to publish their findings.

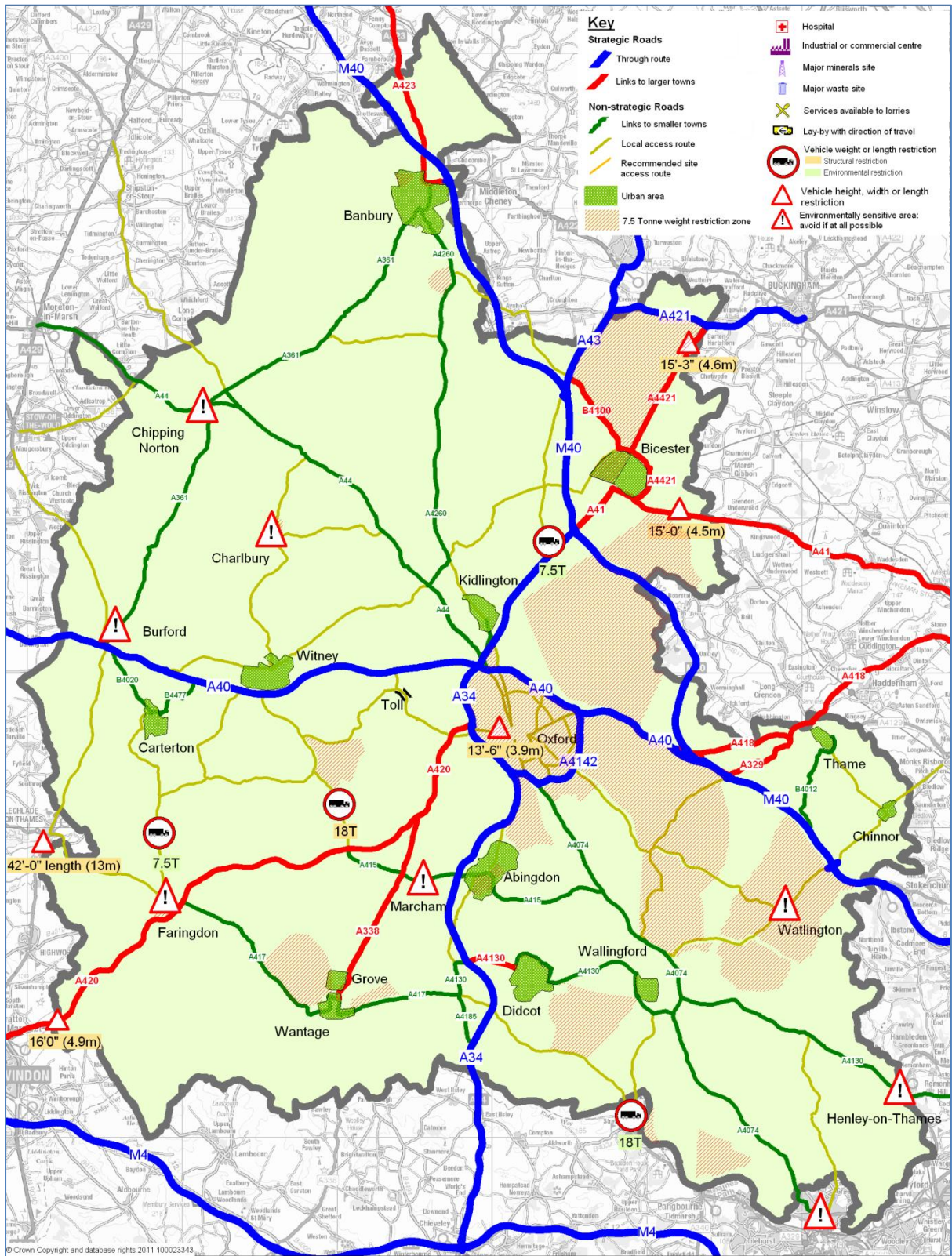
Transport

- 6.42 The Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030 (LTP3) aims to reduce carbon emissions from transport, improve air quality and reduce other environmental impacts. The County Council recognises that the transport network should be operated in a way that balances the protection of the local environment with efficient and effective access for freight and distribution. To ensure that traffic from new development can be accommodated safely and efficiently on the transport network, contributions are often sought to mitigate adverse impacts: commuted sums can also be sought toward the operation and maintenance of facilities, services and infrastructure⁹⁰.
- 6.43 The impact of traffic associated with minerals and waste development must always be taken into account when considering the suitability of a site in relation to local communities and the environment generally. Account should also be taken of the need to minimise the distances materials need to be transported, to achieve a commensurate reduction in air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and overall impact on the environment.
- 6.44 The harm caused by the movement of minerals and waste by road can be reduced by encouraging the uptake of alternative transport methods such as rail, conveyor, pipeline and water. These alternatives can be practicable where movement of large quantities over long distances is involved or in particular local circumstances⁹¹. But it may not be economically viable or practicable for quarries and waste facilities to use such alternatives where minerals are distributed mostly to local markets or where waste is produced and handled locally. For these reasons aggregates and waste in Oxfordshire are likely to continue to be transported mainly by road.

⁹⁰ Policy SD2 of the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2030 (revised April 2012).

⁹¹ Oxfordshire's long term need for crushed rock is met by material being transported by rail to depots at Banbury, Kidlington and Sutton Courtenay.

Figure 17: Oxfordshire Lorry Route Map



Source: Oxfordshire Lorry Routes (Feb 2012) Oxfordshire County Council

- 6.45 Most of the traffic associated with minerals and waste development involves heavy goods vehicles, and it is important that sites secure safe and suitable access⁹² to roads that are suitable for such traffic. Figure 17 shows the network of roads that the County Council considers suitable for use by heavy goods vehicles (the Oxfordshire Lorry Route Map). Direct access to this network will not always be possible, particularly in the case of motorways and trunk roads. Where direct access is not possible, sites should generally be in locations that have access to a road which provides convenient access to this network and avoids the use of roads not suited to heavy goods vehicles or which pass through rural settlements.
- 6.46 The provision of safe and suitable access to the Oxfordshire lorry route network may require alteration of road junctions or improvements to minor roads. Where this is likely the Council will seek a contribution to such improvement before development starts. Lorries can damage highways and lead to a need for more frequent maintenance and commuted sums towards on-going maintenance of part of a route to the Lorry Network may also be sought, in line with the Local Transport Plan.
- 6.47 The harmful impact of lorry traffic in environmentally sensitive locations and settlements can be reduced by routeing agreements to control traffic movements. Such agreements will direct lorry traffic to and along the lorry route network (figure 17) taking into account road standard, settlements, road safety issues and other factors. This also needs to be balanced against the likelihood of vehicles driving further, increasing carbon emissions and pollution. If appropriate mitigation of unacceptable traffic impacts cannot be secured, the site is unlikely to be suitable for the type of development proposed.
- 6.48 **Policy C10: Transport**

Minerals and waste development will be expected to make provision for safe and suitable access to the advisory lorry routes in ways that maintain and, if possible, lead to improvements in:

- the safety of all road users including pedestrians;
- the efficiency and quality of the road network;
- residential and environmental amenity.

Where development leads to a need for improvement to the transport network to achieve this, developers will be expected to provide such improvement or make an appropriate financial contribution.

Where practicable minerals and waste developments should be located, designed and operated to enable the transport of minerals and/or waste by rail, water, pipeline or conveyor.

Where minerals and/or waste will be transported by road:

⁹² Paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- a) **mineral workings should as far as practicable be in locations that minimise the road distance to locations of demand for the mineral, using roads suitable for lorries, taking into account the distribution of potentially workable mineral resources; and**
- b) **waste management and recycled aggregate facilities should as far as practicable be in locations that minimise the road distance from the main source(s) of waste, using roads suitable for lorries, taking into account that some facilities are not economic or practical below a certain size and may need to serve a wider than local area.**

Rights of way

- 6.49 The Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2030 set out the County Council’s intention to protect and maintain public rights of way and natural areas so that all users are able to understand and enjoy their rights in a responsible way. These plans also note that the County Council will seek opportunities for network improvements and initiatives to better meet the needs of walkers, cyclists, and horse riders, including people with disabilities, for local journeys, recreation, and health.
- 6.50 Proposals to enhance, promote and improve the rights of way network and to increase permissive access to the countryside should be brought forward as part of restoration plans for mineral workings and landfill sites⁹³. Operators and landowners can usefully discuss plans with the local community before finalising such proposals. Proposals should consider arrangements for future management of access routes in the longer term.
- 6.51 If a proposal for mineral extraction would necessitate the temporary diversion or closure of a right of way, the planning application should provide all details, including the proposed route, the width of the proposed diversion, the materials to be used and the access implications for users, which demonstrate that a safe and convenient right of way will be maintained. Where temporary diversions are required applications should also provide details of how the right of way will be restored when the mineral workings are completed. The process for diverting a public right of way whether on a temporary or permanent basis follows a separate application process and advice from Oxfordshire County Council should be sought beforehand.
- 6.52 Public access to restored mineral workings should be carefully managed so as to not adversely impact on any sensitive habitats and species in the restored area.

⁹³ Paragraph 75 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.53 Policy C9: Rights of way

The integrity of the rights of way network shall be maintained and if possible retained in situ in safe and useable condition. Diversions should be safe, attractive and convenient and, if temporary, shall be reinstated as soon as possible. If permanent diversions are required, these should seek to enhance and improve the public rights of way network.

Improvements and enhancements to the rights of way network will generally be encouraged and public access sought to restored mineral workings, especially if this can be linked to wider provision of green infrastructure. Where appropriate, operators and landowners will be expected to make provision for this as part of the restoration and aftercare scheme.

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation of the minerals strategy

- 7.1 Implementation of the Minerals Planning Strategy will be achieved primarily through the determination of planning applications for mineral working and other minerals developments. In carrying out its responsibilities as mineral planning authority for dealing with applications for minerals development, the County Council will cooperate with the District Councils (the local planning authorities). The County Council will seek to work closely with local stakeholders, other statutory bodies and the minerals industry, to provide appropriate advice, prior to the submission of applications and to engage with local residents.
- 7.2 The aim will be to ensure that development delivers the objectives of the Minerals Planning Strategy. This will be done by taking due account of the policies and proposals in the strategy in pre-application discussions and when determining planning applications and by imposing appropriate planning conditions and, where necessary, negotiating legal agreements when permissions are granted.
- 7.3 The minerals strategy aims to enable sufficient supply of aggregate minerals to meet the development needs of Oxfordshire and to make an appropriate contribution to wider needs. The quarries and other minerals supply facilities and infrastructure that will be needed will be delivered through investment and development by the private sector, in particular landowners and the minerals industry. Implementation of the strategy will depend on proposals for sufficient sites (for recycling plants, quarry extensions and/or new quarries) in appropriate locations coming forward as planning applications in time to be available to enable supply needs to be met. The Council will cooperate with other mineral planning authorities to ensure an adequate & steady supply of minerals is maintained.
- 7.4 The Local Aggregate Assessment identifies the provision for minerals supply that needs to be made over the plan period, and that the minerals strategy needs to provide for. The strategy makes separate provision for secondary and recycled aggregates and for locally extracted aggregates: sharp sand and gravel; soft sand; and crushed rock; and includes a policy on importation of aggregates by rail.
- 7.5 The strategy indicates that on the basis of Local Aggregate Assessment 2013, currently the additional provision required for mineral working over the plan period is: 7.87 million tonnes of sharp sand and gravel; 0.80 million tonnes of soft sand; and no additional requirement for crushed rock. Locations where the required mineral working should take place are identified (policy M3).
- 7.6 Provision for secondary and recycled aggregates (policy M1) is to be made through a mix of permanent facilities and temporary facilities at aggregate quarries and inert waste landfill sites. Supply is expected to be primarily from recycling of construction and demolition waste. Provision for this will need to

be made in conjunction with the provision for construction, demolition and excavation waste facilities as part of the Council's waste planning strategy. Many existing aggregates recycling facilities are operating on temporary permissions; these will need to be replaced or have their operational life extended in order to maintain supply capacity.

- 7.7 Four areas of search for working of sharp sand and gravel are identified (policy M3). It is anticipated that current permitted reserves will on average last until around 2020. Further working is to be through extensions to existing quarries or new quarries to replace exhausted quarries, but with no increase in the overall level of working in the two West Oxfordshire areas (Lower Windrush Valley and Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton). It is expected that there will be a need for a new working area within southern Oxfordshire during the plan period, particularly since the existing Sutton Courtenay Quarry has only a few years' worth of permitted reserves remaining and limited possibilities for further extension. Implementation of the strategy will depend on sufficient applications coming forward in acceptable locations to enable all five areas to make an appropriate contribution to the overall level of supply, including a phased transition of working from existing quarries that become exhausted to new working areas.
- 7.8 Two areas of search, where there are existing workings, are identified for further provision of soft sand (policy M3). It is anticipated that current permitted reserves will on average last until around 2024. Continuation of supply is preferentially to be through extensions to existing quarries, to make the most efficient use of existing plant and infrastructure. But new quarries will be permitted if sufficient supply cannot be made through extensions. Implementation of the strategy will depend on sufficient applications coming forward in acceptable locations to enable each area to make an appropriate contribution to the overall level of supply.
- 7.9 Three areas, where there are existing workings, are identified for further provision of crushed rock (policy M3). It is anticipated that current permitted reserves will on average last until 2036. Additional provision may be needed towards the end of the plan period if demand increases. If so, this is preferentially to be through extensions to existing quarries, to make the most efficient use of existing plant and infrastructure. Any site allocations required will be identified in the site allocations document. New quarries will be permitted if sufficient supply cannot be made through extensions.
- 7.10 Proposals for mineral working may come forward in other locations, but these will not normally be permitted unless the provision required to deliver the strategy cannot be met from identified areas.
- 7.11 Possible sites for mineral working have been put forward (nominated) to the County Council by mineral operators and landowners. A preliminary technical assessment of these site options has been undertaken to check that the minerals planning strategy is potentially capable of being delivered.

- 7.12 Provision to meet requirements for non-aggregate minerals, in particular building stone and clay, will depend on applications coming forward in acceptable locations, which will be considered against policy M5. Proposals for working other minerals are not currently expected but policy M5 provides a policy basis for considering any such applications.
- 7.13 Improvements to infrastructure, particularly roads and junctions, may be required in order that new quarries or extensions to existing quarries can be developed in a way that is locally acceptable. Appropriate financial contributions for such improvements will be sought from mineral developers and operators through legal agreement at the planning application stage. Provisions for obtaining developer contributions are changing with the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, which will need to be taken into account in implementing the strategy.
- 7.14 The strategy depends on permitted mineral working sites, secondary and recycled aggregates production sites and aggregates rail depots being available to be worked or operate to their full extent or capacity. It also depends on potentially workable mineral resources being kept available throughout the plan period and not being sterilised by other development. This is also important for ensuring that mineral resources are potentially available for the longer term. Mineral safeguarding areas will be defined and identified; and mineral consultation areas will be drawn up to define areas wherein the District Councils must consult the County Council on applications for specified types of development. Delivery of this part of the strategy will require liaison with the District Councils.
- 7.15 The core policies have been developed to ensure the minerals strategy is delivered in an environmentally acceptable way, including by setting out criteria against which planning applications will be considered. These policies will be implemented by the County Council through the development management process.

Monitoring of the minerals strategy

- 7.16 The Minerals Planning Strategy is based on current circumstances and currently available information, but it must be able to respond to changing circumstances and needs. The County Council as Mineral Planning Authority will monitor the effectiveness of the policies and proposals in delivering the vision and objectives of the strategy and the changing context within which the strategy is being used.
- 7.17 The Council will produce a Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report at least annually, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). These reports will include an assessment of:
- the extent to which the policies in minerals and waste plans are being achieved;
 - any changes needed where policies are not working or objectives are not being met; and

- progress on the preparation of minerals and waste plans.

Any relevant changes in government or other policy will be addressed through the monitoring reports.

- 7.18 The Council will continue to carry out regular monitoring of sales and reserves of aggregate minerals and of planning applications and decisions, as well as monitoring of mineral working sites. The Council will work with the minerals industry and with other mineral planning authorities, including through the South East Aggregates Working Party, in monitoring sales, distribution and reserves of aggregates and changes in patterns of supply, and in forecasting future demands.
- 7.19 The Council will also make use of monitoring and survey work undertaken by other agencies, such as the Environment Agency and Natural England, and of other work carried out within the Council such as for transport planning and biodiversity, to monitor change.
- 7.20 Observations recorded in the monitoring reports will feed into reviews of the Minerals Planning Strategy. It is intended that the strategy will be reviewed and rolled forward every five years. But monitoring may indicate a need for review of part or the whole of the strategy sooner. For example, if it becomes clear that the provision for minerals supply in the strategy is insufficient or excessive, or that sites are not coming forward as planning applications within strategy areas, an earlier review of the strategy may be required.
- 7.21 An implementation and monitoring framework for the minerals planning strategy will be included in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports. Indicators and targets will be developed to provide a consistent basis for monitoring the performance of the strategy's vision, objectives and policies for minerals development to 2030. The indicators will reflect the intent of the strategy objectives and the sustainability appraisal framework identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- 7.22 In the case of some of the core policies it will not be possible to set a specific target but it will still be possible to assess the effectiveness of these policies in relation to minerals development.
- 7.23 The results of monitoring against the implementation and monitoring framework will be reported in the monitoring reports.

Implementation of the waste strategy

- 7.24 The waste planning strategy is a plan for where the facilities that will be needed to deal with waste in Oxfordshire should be located. It must be read and applied in conjunction with strategies that cover other aspects of waste management. Other strategies, including the Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, have informed the proposals in the plan for how different wastes should be dealt with.

- 7.25 This plan sets targets for ways in which different wastes should be managed (by composting, recycling, treatment and landfill) but it does not attempt to dictate which particular technologies should be used within each type of management. Different technologies will be appropriate in different circumstances. This is largely a matter for the waste industry. Waste management technologies are likely to develop and change through the plan period.
- 7.26 The waste planning strategy addresses the government's aim of reducing the amount of waste produced in the estimates of waste growth. Other agencies and strategies are better able to lead on influencing behaviour patterns and financial issues relating to waste generation, such as the government's Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and European Pathway to Zero Waste. Locally, the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership has produced a Waste Prevention Strategy 2010-2020.
- 7.27 Implementation of the Waste Planning Strategy will be achieved primarily through the determination of planning applications for waste facilities. In carrying out its responsibilities as waste planning authority for dealing with applications for waste development, the County Council will cooperate with the District Councils (the local planning authorities). Where the District Councils deal with proposals for development which have significant implications for the management of waste, the County Council should be consulted. The County Council will seek to work closely with local stakeholders, other statutory bodies and the waste industry, to provide appropriate advice, prior to the submission of applications.
- 7.28 The aim will be to ensure that development delivers the objectives of the Waste Planning Strategy. This will be done by taking due account of the policies and proposals in the strategy in pre-application discussions and when determining planning applications and by imposing appropriate planning conditions and, where necessary, negotiating legal agreements when permissions are granted.
- 7.29 The waste strategy aims to enable sufficient waste facility capacity to deal with the waste that is expected to be produced in Oxfordshire, including from new developments, and some waste from outside the county. The waste facilities and infrastructure that will be needed will be delivered through investment and development by the private sector.
- 7.30 In the case of facilities for municipal waste, this is likely mainly to be done under contract or partnership arrangements with the County or District Councils, as waste disposal and collection authorities. Implementation of the strategy will depend on proposals for sufficient facilities (particularly for composting, recycling and treatment of waste) in appropriate locations coming forward as planning applications in time to be available when they are required to enable waste management needs to be met.
- 7.31 The provision for additional waste management capacity that needs to be made over the plan period (policy W4) will be identified, monitored and

updated through the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports. The waste planning strategy identifies the broad locations where the additional waste management facilities to meet this requirement should be located (policy W5) and sets out criteria for the siting of facilities (policy W6).

- 7.32 Possible sites for waste development have been put forward (nominated) to the County Council by waste operators and landowners; and a number of other possible sites have been identified during preparation of the plan. These potential sites have informed the generation of the options for provision of waste facilities, which have in turn led to the waste planning strategy.
- 7.33 For facilities that are needed in the short term, site availability is particularly important; preliminary work indicates that the strategy should be capable of being delivered. For longer term needs, other sites may be put forward or identified, but the number of site options already known indicates that needs should be capable of being met in accordance with the strategy. A preliminary assessment of sites will be prepared to check that the waste planning strategy is potentially capable of being delivered.
- 7.34 Some proposals for waste facilities may come forward in locations that are not identified in the plan. Government policy (PPS10) is that such applications should be considered favourably where they are consistent with planning policy. This may lead to more capacity for waste composting, recycling and treatment being permitted than has been estimated to be needed. But, except where it is clear this would lead to an unacceptable level of waste importation into Oxfordshire (contrary to policy W2) or there would be unacceptable impact, the provision of facilities that would help to increase the amount of waste diverted away from landfill should not be restricted.
- 7.35 In addition to the provision for additional waste facilities made in this plan, at the local community level smaller scale facilities can make an important contribution towards meeting targets for increased recycling and composting of waste. The local bottle banks and recycling bins already located in many communities provide tangible evidence of this. Opportunities may arise for further local facilities of this type to be provided and also for community composting sites, like the existing community facility at Coleshill.
- 7.36 Major development proposals, such as large housing schemes, may provide opportunities for waste management facilities to be provided as part of the infrastructure for the overall development. Such facilities could provide a local waste recycling site or a local source of heat and power generated from waste. This could help to deliver the provision proposed in policy W5 or could be additional provision in accordance with policy W6.
- 7.37 Improvements to infrastructure, particularly roads and junctions, may be required in order that new or expanded waste management facilities can be developed in a way that is locally acceptable. Appropriate financial contributions for such improvements will be sought from developers and waste operators through legal agreement at the planning application stage. Provisions for obtaining developer contributions are changing with the

introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy, which will need to be taken into account in implementing the strategy.

- 7.38 The Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011⁹⁴ refers to the principle that those most impacted by waste developments should benefit most, and says this should operate at all levels. The Review says this should be achieved through dialogue between communities, local authorities and waste operators and refers to industry protocols for providing community benefits in relation to infrastructure projects, as has been developed for wind generation. The provision of community benefits by developers could help in securing the timely delivery of the waste facilities that are needed in Oxfordshire. The County Council will work with communities and waste operators on the provision of community benefits in relation to waste development proposals where this is appropriate having regard to the nature, scale and potential impacts of the development.
- 7.39 The strategy depends on permitted permanent waste facility sites being available to operate to their full capacity throughout the plan period and not being prejudiced by other development. Existing and proposed permanent waste management sites will be safeguarded for waste use (policy W11). The District Councils should consult the County Council on applications for other development that would prevent or prejudice the use of a safeguarded site for waste management. Delivery of this part of the strategy will require liaison with the District Councils.
- 7.40 The core policies have been developed to ensure the waste strategy is delivered in an environmentally acceptable way, including by setting out criteria against which planning applications will be considered. These policies will be implemented by the County Council through the development management process.

Monitoring of the waste strategy

- 7.41 The Waste Planning Strategy is based on current circumstances and currently available information, but it must be able to respond to changing circumstances and needs. Regular monitoring is necessary, both to identify the impact of changes and to check that the strategy is achieving its objectives and identify whether there is a need to adjust the strategy in order to achieve the desired outcomes.
- 7.42 The County Council as Waste Planning Authority will monitor the effectiveness of the policies and proposals in delivering the vision and objectives of the strategy; and the changing context within which the strategy is being used.

⁹⁴ Government Review of Waste Policy in England 2011, Defra, June 2011

- 7.43 The Council will produce a Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report at least annually, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). These reports will include an assessment of:
- the extent to which the policies in minerals and waste plan are being achieved;
 - any changes needed where policies are not working or objectives are not being met; and
 - progress on the preparation of minerals and waste plan documents.
- Any relevant changes in government or other policy will be addressed through the monitoring reports.
- 7.44 The Council monitors the quantities of municipal waste produced and the ways in which it is managed, but is reliant on other agencies, in particular the Environment Agency, for data on other types of waste. The Council also monitors planning applications and decisions and the capacity available at waste facilities, as well as monitoring waste sites. The Council will work with the waste industry, the Environment Agency and with other waste planning authorities, including through the South East Waste Planning Advisory Group, in monitoring production and movements of waste and the ways in which it is managed and in forecasting future waste production and waste management requirements.
- 7.45 The Council will also make use of monitoring and survey work undertaken by and information available from other agencies, such as Defra, Environment Agency and Natural England, and on other work carried out within the Council such as for transport planning and biodiversity, to monitor change.
- 7.46 Observations recorded in the monitoring reports will feed into reviews of the Waste Planning Strategy. It is intended that the strategy will be reviewed and rolled forward every five years. But monitoring may indicate a need for review of part or the whole of the strategy sooner. For example, if it becomes clear that the provision for additional waste facilities in the strategy is insufficient, or that sites are not coming forward as planning applications within strategy locations, an earlier review of the strategy may be required.
- 7.47 An implementation and monitoring framework for the waste planning strategy will be included in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Reports. Indicators and targets will be developed to provide a consistent basis for monitoring the performance of the strategy's vision, objectives and policies for waste development to 2030. The indicators will reflect the intent of the strategy objectives and the sustainability appraisal framework identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- 7.48 In the case of some of the core policies it will not be possible to set a specific target but it will still be possible to assess the effectiveness of these policies in relation to waste development.
- 7.49 The results of monitoring against the implementation and monitoring framework will be reported in the monitoring reports.

Appendix 1. Flood Vulnerability Classification and Flood Zone Compatibility

Table A1: Minerals and Waste Flood Vulnerability Classification

Development Type	Vulnerability Classification	Flood Zone Compatibility
Mineral or waste development requiring hazardous substances consent	Highly Vulnerable	Flood Zone 1 and 2
Landfill sites*	More Vulnerable	Flood Zone 1 and 2
Waste management facilities handling hazardous waste	More Vulnerable	Flood Zone 1 and 2
Minerals working and processing (except for sand and gravel working)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a
Sand and Gravel Workings	Water Compatible	Flood Zone 1, 2, 3a, 3b
Sand and Gravel processing sites (including grading and washing plant)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zone 1, 2, and 3a
Sewage Treatment Plants	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a
Waste recycling, composting and transfer uses (including recycling to produce recycled aggregate)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a
Secondary aggregate re-cycling (considered as minerals processing)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a
Waste treatment processes (including anaerobic digestion, mechanical biological treatment, incineration, gasification and pyrolysis).	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2, and 3a
Concrete block manufacture (considered as minerals processing)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a
Concrete batching plant (considered as minerals processing)	Less Vulnerable	Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a

This table is developed from Tables 2 and .3 in Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012.

Waste management categories are based on guidance in Planning for Sustainable Waste Management Companion Guide to PPS10 – page 31.

* Inert waste imported for the restoration of sand and gravel workings not included where imported as part of a recovery operation (an increase in flood storage capacity is likely in these circumstances)

Table A2. PPS25 Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility
 (Developed from Tables 2 and 3 in Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012)

Minerals & Waste Development Type	Use Category	FLOOD ZONE			
		1	2	3a	3b
Any mineral or waste proposal which also requires hazardous substances consent	Highly Vulnerable	✓	Use only appropriate if Sequential Test is passed ⇓ Use only appropriate if the Exception Test is passed ⇓ ✓	* Use should not be permitted	* Use should not be permitted
Landfill sites or sites used for waste management facilities for hazardous waste	More Vulnerable	✓	Use only appropriate if Sequential Test is passed ⇓ ✓	Use only appropriate if Sequential Test is passed ⇓ Use only appropriate if the Exception Test is passed ⇓ ✓	* Use should not be permitted
Waste management facilities (except landfill and hazardous waste), Minerals working and processing (except for sand and gravel workings)	Less Vulnerable	✓	Use only appropriate if Sequential Test is passed ⇓ ✓	Use only appropriate if Sequential Test is passed ⇓ ✓	* Use should not be permitted
Sand and gravel workings (that exclude processing operations)	Water Compatible	✓	Sequential Test suggested as means of prioritising sites at allocation stage ✓	Sequential Test suggested as means of prioritising sites at allocation stage ✓	Sequential Test suggested as means of prioritising sites at allocation stage ✓

*: Use should not be permitted ⇓: If passed proceed ✓: Appropriate use

Glossary

Aggregates – sand, gravel and crushed rock that is used in the construction industry to make things like concrete, mortar, asphalt and drainage material. For secondary or recycled aggregates, see below.

Agricultural waste – waste from a farm or market garden including pesticide containers, tyres and old machinery.

Aftercare – The management and treatment of land for a set period of time immediately following the completed restoration of a mineral working to ensure the land is returned to the required environmental standard.

After-use – The long term use that land formerly used for mineral workings is restored to, e.g. agriculture, forestry, nature conservation, recreation or public amenity such as country parks.

Anaerobic Digestion Facility – facility involving process where biodegradable material is encouraged to break down in the absence of oxygen, which changes the nature and volume of material and produces a gas which can be burnt to recover energy and digestate which may be suitable for use as a soil conditioner.

Ancient Woodland – woodland that has existed continuously since or pre -dates 1600. Before this date planting of new woodland was uncommon, so a wood present in 1600 was likely to have developed naturally. The ancient woodland inventory is a data source held and maintained by the Woodland Trust on the location and extent of ancient woodlands.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) – see Monitoring Report.

Apportionment – the allocation between minerals and waste authorities of an overall total amount of provision required for mineral production or waste management, for a particular period of time, e.g. as set out in the South East Plan.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Biodegradable waste – materials that can be broken down by naturally-occurring micro-organisms, e.g. food, garden waste and paper.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) – strategy prepared by the local planning authority together with nature conservation organisations aimed at protecting and enhancing the biological diversity.

Biological Diversity / Biodiversity – the variety of life including plants, animals and micro-organisms, ecosystems and ecological processes.

Buffer zones – areas drawn around settlements or properties in which mineral development is prohibited. The purpose of these zones is to protect settlements from

disruption caused by the working of minerals. They can also be used to prevent sterilisation of minerals resources by the encroachment of other developments.

Climate change – long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the earth's climate.

Commercial and Industrial waste – waste from factories or premises used for the purpose of trade or business, sport, recreation or entertainment.

Composting – the breakdown of organic matter aerobically (in presence of oxygen) into a stable material that can be used as a fertiliser or soil conditioner.

Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) – important areas for wildlife in Oxfordshire, where the main aim is to restore biodiversity at a landscape-scale through the maintenance, restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.

Construction, Demolition and Excavation waste – waste arising from the building process comprising demolition and site clearance waste and builders' waste from the construction/demolition of buildings and infrastructure. Includes masonry, rubble and timber.

Core Strategy – sets out the long-term spatial vision for a local planning authority area and the strategic policies and proposals to deliver that vision.

Crushed rock – naturally occurring rock which is crushed into a series of required sizes to produce an aggregate.

Designated Heritage Asset – a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated as such under the relevant legislation.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – spatial planning documents that form part of a Local Plan or a Minerals and/or Waste Plan and are subject to independent examination. They have 'development plan' status. They can include Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs.

Energy from Waste (EfW) Facility/Plant – residual waste treatment facility where energy (heat and/or electricity) is recovered from waste; either from direct combustion of waste under controlled conditions at high temperatures; or from combustion of by-products derived from the waste treatment process such as biogas or refuse-derived fuel.

Energy Recovery – covers a number of established and emerging technologies, though most energy recovery is through incineration technologies. Many wastes are combustible, with relatively high calorific values – this energy can be recovered through processes such as incineration with electricity generation, gasification or pyrolysis.

Environment Agency (EA) – Government advisor and agency with statutory responsibilities to protect and improve the environment (including air, land and water).

Extension to quarry – extraction of minerals on land which is contiguous or non-contiguous with an existing quarry, where extracted material is moved to the existing quarry processing plant and access via means other than the highway (e.g. by conveyor or internal haul-road).

Gasification – A technology related to incineration where waste is heated in the presence of air to produce fuel rich gases.

Greenfield site – site previously unaffected by built development.

Greenhouse gases – gases such as methane and carbon dioxide that contribute to climate change.

Green Infrastructure – a network of strategically planned and managed natural and working landscapes and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to human populations.

Groundwater – water held in water-bearing rocks, in pores and fissures underground.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – an assessment of the likely impacts of the possible effects of a plan's policies on the integrity of European sites (including Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas), including possible effects 'in combination' with other plans, projects and programmes.

Hazardous waste – waste that may be hazardous to humans and that requires specific and separate provision for dealing with it. Categories are defined by regulations. Includes many "everyday" items such as electrical goods. Previously referred to as Special Waste.

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) – place provided by the Waste Disposal Authority where members of the public can deliver household wastes for recycling or disposal (also known as Civic Amenity Sites).

Heritage Asset – A building, monument, site, place area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or the plan-making process (including local listing).

Household Waste – waste from household collection rounds, street sweeping, litter collection, bulky waste collection, household waste recycling centres and bring or drop-off recycling schemes.

Incineration – burning of waste at high temperatures under controlled conditions. This results in a reduction in bulk and may involve energy reclamation. Produces a

burnt residue or 'bottom ash' whilst the chemical treatment of emissions from the burning of the waste produces smaller amounts of 'fly ash'.

Independent Examination – process whereby an independent Planning Inspector publicly examines a Development Plan Document for its soundness before issuing their report and recommendations to the planning authority.

Inert waste – waste that does not normally undergo any significant physical, chemical or biological change when deposited at a landfill site. It may include materials such as rock, concrete, brick, sand, soil or certain arisings from road building or maintenance. Most of the category “construction, demolition and excavation” waste is inert waste.

Industrial waste – wastes from any factory, transportation apparatus, scientific research, dredging, sewage and scrap metal.

Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) – radioactive wastes which exceed the upper activity boundaries for Low Level Waste but which do not need heat to be taken into account in the design of storage or disposal facilities.

In-Vessel Composting Facility – facility where the composting process takes place inside a vessel where conditions are controlled and optimised for the aerobic breakdown of materials.

Landbank – the reserve of unworked minerals for which planning permission has been granted, including non-working sites, expressed in tonnage or years.

Landfill – permanent disposal of waste into the ground by the filling of voids or by landraising.

Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) – a government scheme to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill, under which Waste Disposal Authorities are allocated annual allowances for the amounts of biodegradable municipal waste that may be landfilled; the allowances are tradeable between authorities.

Landfill gas – gas generated by the breakdown of biodegradable waste within landfill sites, consisting mainly of methane and carbon dioxide.

Landfill tax – Government tax on waste disposed of at landfill sites. Aims to encourage more sustainable waste management methods.

Landraise or **Landraising** – permanent disposal of waste material above ground, resulting in the raising of the ground level.

Landscape character – a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (e.g. soil and landform) and/or human (e.g. settlement and

development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse⁹⁵.

Local Development Framework (LDF) – folder of local development documents prepared planning authorities, that sets out the spatial planning strategy for the area.

Local Development Scheme – the programme for the preparation of local development documents.

Local Nature Reserve – an area of particular wildlife interest declared by a local authority under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; usually managed by the local authority.

Local Plan – part of the statutory development plan that sets out policies on land use and development, prepared by planning authorities.

Low Level Waste (LLW) – radioactive waste having a radioactive content not exceeding four gigabecquerels per tonne (GBq/te) of alpha or 12 GBq/te of beta/gamma radioactivity, but not including radioactive materials that are acceptable for disposal with municipal and general commercial or industrial waste; includes soil, building rubble, metals and organic materials arising from both nuclear and non-nuclear sources; metals are mostly in the form of redundant equipment; organic materials are mainly in the form of paper towels, clothing and laboratory equipment that have been used in areas where radioactive materials are used, such as hospitals, research establishments and industry.

Marine aggregates – aggregates sourced by dredging from the sea bed.

Marine-borne material – sand and gravel that is taken from the sea bed and imported to land.

Materials Recovery/Recycling Facility (MRF) – facility where recyclable materials are sorted and separated from other wastes before being sent for reprocessing.

Mechanical and Biological Treatment (MBT) – residual waste treatment process involving the mechanical separation of recyclable materials followed by composting of the remaining material to produce a fuel or stabilised waste for landfilling.

Mineral Consultation Areas – areas of potential mineral resource wherein district planning authorities should consult the County Council on applications for development, to prevent mineral resources being lost ('sterilised').

Mineral reserves – Mineral deposits which have been investigated and are proven to be of economic importance due to the quality, quantity and nature of the deposit. Permitted reserves also have planning permission for extraction.

⁹⁵ Natural England definition;
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/default.aspx>

Mineral resource – A potential source of a mineral without permission for extraction, where the deposit's nature, quality and quantity may not yet have been assessed.

Mineral Safeguarding Areas – areas of known mineral resource that are considered to be of sufficient economic or conservation value (such as building stones) to warrant protection for generations to come.

Mineral Local Plan – part of the statutory development plan that sets out the land use policies for minerals for the plan area, prepared by a minerals planning authority (unitary or county council).

Minerals Planning Authority – the planning authority responsible for planning control of minerals development.

Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) – folder of local development documents prepared by minerals and waste planning authorities that sets out the spatial planning strategy for minerals and waste planning for the area.

Mitigation measures – actions to prevent, avoid, or minimise the actual or potential adverse effects of a development, action, project, plan, or policy.

Monitoring Report – assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being achieved.

Municipal waste/Municipal solid waste (MSW) – waste that is collected by a waste collection authority. Mostly consists of household waste, but can also include waste from municipal parks and gardens, beach cleansing, waste resulting from clearance of fly-tipped materials and some commercial waste.

National Planning Policy Framework – Planning policy document (March 2012) for England issued by central Government which supersedes the majority of Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes, Minerals Policy Statements and Minerals Planning Guidance notes. Does not replace PPS 10.

National Nature Reserve – nationally important area of special nature conservation interest, designated by Natural England under Section 16 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Natural England – the Government's advisor on the natural environment.

Non-Hazardous Waste – waste, which is neither inert nor hazardous, which is permitted to be disposed at a non-hazardous landfill; also referred to as non-inert waste.

Non-inert waste – waste that is potentially biodegradable or may undergo significant physical, chemical or biological change when deposited at a landfill site. Also referred to as “non-hazardous waste”.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) – a non-departmental public body with responsibility to deliver the decommissioning and clean-up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy.

Permitted reserves – mineral reserves with planning permission for extraction.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) – documents issued by Central Government setting out its national land use policies and guidance for England on different areas of planning. These were gradually being replaced by Planning Policy Statements.

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) – documents issued by Central Government to replace the existing Planning Policy Guidance in order to provide clearer and more focused policies for England on different areas of planning (with the removal of advice on practical implementation, which is better expressed as guidance rather than policy). Most were replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012.

Planning permission – formal consent given by the planning authority to develop or use land.

Primary aggregates – naturally-occurring mineral deposits that are used for the first time as an aggregate.

Pyrolysis – a technology related to incineration where waste is heated in the absence of air to produce gas and liquid fuel plus solid waste.

Recycled aggregates – derived from reprocessing waste arising from construction and demolition activities (e.g. concrete, bricks and tiles), highway maintenance (e.g. asphalt plantings), excavation and utility operations. Examples include recycled concrete from construction and demolition waste material, spent rail ballast and recycled asphalt.

Recycling – the recovery of waste materials for use as or conversion into other products (including composting but excluding energy recovery).

Recovery – obtaining value from waste through one of the following means:

- Recycling;
- Composting;
- Other forms of material recovery (such as anaerobic digestion);
- Energy recovery (combustion with direct or indirect use of the energy produced, manufacture of refuse derived fuel, gasification, pyrolysis or other technologies).

Residual waste – the waste remaining after materials have been recovered from a waste stream by re-use, recycling, composting or some other material recovery process (such as anaerobic digestion).

Residual Waste Treatment Facility – facility for processing waste which has not been re-used, recycled or composted in order to recover resources and minimise the amount of waste that needs to be disposed by landfill; the two most common forms

of residual waste treatment are energy from waste and mechanical and biological treatment.

Resource Park – a site comprising a number of different waste recovery, treatment and reprocessing facilities which enables synergy between those facilities to be realised through common location.

Restoration – methods by which the land is returned to a condition suitable for an agreed after-use following the completion of minerals or waste operations.

Re-use – the repeat utilisation of an item/material for its original (or other) purpose.

Screening report – in Habitats Regulations Assessment, the first stage of the assessment process to determine whether there will be possible effects of a plan's policies on the integrity of European sites.

Secondary Aggregates – usually the by-products of other industrial processes, e.g. blast furnace slag, steel slag, pulverised-fuel ash (PFA), incinerator bottom ash, furnace bottom ash, recycled glass, slate waste, china clay sand and colliery spoil.

Sensitive Receptor – the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development, including in particular population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between these factors⁹⁶.

Sewage Sludge or Sludge – the semi-solid or liquid residue removed during the treatment of wastewater.

Site of Special Scientific Interest – site notified by Natural England under Section 25 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as having special wildlife or geological features worthy of protection.

Sludge Treatment Centre – facility at a sewage treatment plant where sludge removed from waste water (sewage) is subject to a treatment process to enable it to be recovered and/or disposed.

Soundness – in accordance with national planning policy, local development documents must be 'soundly' based in terms of their content and the process by which they were produced. They must also be based upon a robust, credible evidence base. There are four tests of soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

South East Aggregates Working Party (SEEAWP) – a non-executive technical group covering the South East of England with the role of advising government (the Department for Communities and Local Government), Mineral Planning Authorities and industry on aggregates, including helping mineral planning authorities fulfil the duty to cooperate on strategic mineral planning issues, comprising officers of the

⁹⁶ Definition in EIA regulations

mineral planning authorities, representatives of the minerals industry and government representatives .

South East Waste Planning Advisory Group (SEWPAG) – a non-executive technical group comprising the waste planning authorities of South East England and representatives of the Environment Agency, the waste industry and the environmental sector which provides advice to help waste planning authorities fulfil the duty to cooperate on strategic waste planning issues.

South East Plan – the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East region, prepared by the former South East England Regional Assembly and approved by the Secretary of State in May 2009.

Special Area of Conservation – site of international importance for nature conservation, designated under the EU Habitats Directive.

Special Protection Area (SPA) – designation of international importance for nature conservation made under the EU Birds Directive to conserve the best examples of the habitats of certain threatened species of birds.

Statement of Community Involvement – document which outlines the standards and approach that the County Council will undertake in engaging stakeholders and the local community in producing minerals and waste plans and in considering planning applications.

Statutory consultee – Organisations with which the local planning authority must, by regulation, consult on the preparation of its land use plan or in determining a planning application. For land use plans, this always includes the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.

Sterilisation – this occurs when developments such as housing, roads or industrial parks are built over mineral resources, preventing their possible future extraction.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – an environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use, which complies with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC; it involves the preparation of an environmental report, carrying out of consultation, taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultation in decision making, provision of information when the plan or programme is adopted and showing that the results of the environment assessment have been taken into account.

Structure Plan – framework of strategic planning policies, produced by the County Council. The Oxfordshire Structure Plan was largely replaced as a statutory planning document by the South East Plan in May 2009.

Sustainable Development / Sustainability – development that meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs, by taking into consideration long-term social, economic and environmental impacts.

Sustainable Community Strategy – statutory strategy for promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. Prepared through partnership working between statutory sector providers, the community and voluntary sector, businesses, residents and the local authorities.

Sustainability Appraisal – an appraisal of the economic, environmental, and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with the principles of sustainable development and to check policies against sustainability objectives. The scoping report of a sustainability appraisal seeks the agreement of statutory consultees and the competent authority on the intended range of issues to be covered in the assessment. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a sustainability appraisal to be undertaken of all development plan documents.

Thermal Treatment – generic term encompassing incineration, gasification and pyrolysis.

Transfer Station – a bulk collection point for waste prior to its onward transport to another facility for treatment or disposal.

Very Low Level Waste (VLLW) – radioactive waste with very low concentrations of radioactivity, arising from both nuclear and non-nuclear sources, which because it contains little total radioactivity can be safely treated by various means, including disposal with municipal and general commercial and industrial waste at landfill sites. Formal definition:

(a) **in the case of low volumes ('dustbin loads') of VLLW** "Radioactive waste which can be safely disposed of to an unspecified destination with municipal, commercial or industrial waste ("dustbin" disposal), each 0.1m³ of waste containing less than 400 kilobecquerels (kBq) of total activity or single items containing less than 40 kBq of total activity. For wastes containing carbon-14 or hydrogen-3 (tritium):

- in each 0.1m³, the activity limit is 4,000 kBq for carbon-14 and hydrogen-3 (tritium) taken together; and
- for any single item, the activity limit is 400 kBq for carbon-14 and hydrogen-3 (tritium) taken together.

Controls on disposal of this material, after removal from the premises where the wastes arose, are not necessary."

(b) **in the case of high volumes of VLLW** "Radioactive waste with maximum concentrations of four megabecquerels per tonne (MBq/te) of total activity which can be disposed of to specified landfill sites. For waste containing hydrogen-3 (tritium), the concentration limit for tritium is 40MBq/te. Controls on disposal of this material, after removal from the premises where the wastes arose, will be necessary in a manner specified by the environmental regulators".

Voidspace – volume within landfill (including landraising) sites that is permitted and/or available to receive waste.

Waste Collection Authority – local authority that has a duty to collect household waste, usually district or unitary authorities.

Waste Disposal Authority – local authority responsible for managing the waste collected by the collection authorities, and the provision of household waste recycling centres, usually county or unitary councils.

Waste Planning Authority – local planning authority responsible for planning control of waste management and disposal, usually county or unitary councils.

Waste Local Plan – part of the statutory development plan that sets out the land-use policies for waste for the plan area, prepared by a waste planning authority (unitary or county council).

Waste water – the water and solids from a community that flow to a sewage treatment plant operated by a water company.

Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) – a government body which helps to develop markets for material resources that would otherwise have become waste, provides advisory services and helps influence public behaviour through national level communication programmes.

Abbreviations

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AD	Anaerobic Digestion
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CDE	Construction, demolition and excavation waste
C&I	Commercial and industrial waste
CTA	Conservation Target Area
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
EfW	Energy from Waste facility
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
HWRC	Household Waste Recycling Centre
ILW	Intermediate Level Waste
IVC	In-vessel composting facility
LATS	Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme
LDF	Local Development Framework
LLW	Low level waste
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MBT	Mechanical and Biological Treatment
MPA	Minerals Planning Authority
MPS	Minerals Policy Statement
MRF	Materials Recycling/Recovery Facility
MSW	Municipal Solid Waste
MWDF	Minerals and Waste Development Framework
NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
NHW	Non Hazardous Waste

CA7

PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEEAWP	South East Aggregates Working Party
SEWPAG	South East Waste Planning Advisory Group
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
VLLW	Very low level waste
WCA	Waste Collection Authority
WDA	Waste Disposal Authority
WPA	Waste Planning Authority
WRAP	Waste and Resources Action Programme