

## Notice of a Meeting

### Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 6 October 2010 at 2.00 pm County Hall

#### Membership

Chairman - Councillor David Nimmo-Smith  
Deputy Chairman - Councillor Nicholas P. Turner

*Councillors:*

Roger Belson	Charles Mathew	John Tanner
Michael Gibbard	Anne Purse	David Turner
Pete Handley	Keith Strangwood	

#### Notes:

**Venue:** Committee Rooms 1&2  
**Date of next meeting:** 2 December 2010

#### What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

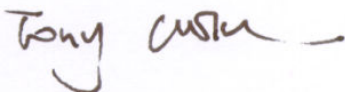
- Transport; highways; traffic and parking; road safety (those areas not covered by the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee); public passenger transport
- Regional planning and local development framework; economic development; waste management; environmental management; archaeology; access to the countryside; tourism
- The planning, highways, rights of way and commons/village greens functions of the Planning & Regulation Committee

#### How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

#### For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor David Nimmo-Smith E.Mail: david.nimmo-smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	-	Sue Whitehead, Tel: (01865) 810262 sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Tony Cloke  
Assistant Head of Legal & Democratic Services

September 2010

## About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

## About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

## What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

**If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting**

**A hearing loop is available at County Hall.**

## AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 13 May 2010 (**GI3(a)**) and 9 August 2010 (**GI3(b)**) and to note for information any matters arising on them.

4. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**

## SCRUTINY MATTERS

**To consider matters where the Committee can provide a challenge to the work of the Authority and its Partners**

5. **Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework: Core Strategy - Preferred Minerals Strategy** (Pages 15 - 56)

Report by Interim Head of Sustainable Development (**GI5**).

The Forward Plan indicates that the Cabinet on 19 October 2010 will seek approval to agree the Council's preferred minerals strategy for public consultation.

Following discussions at the Minerals and Waste Working Group (held on 27 September) the Committee has an opportunity to comment to the Cabinet on the recommended way forward.

***The Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the report and to make comments for consideration by the Cabinet.***

6. **Concessionary Fares** (Pages 57 - 58)

Report by Director for Environment & Economy (**GI6**).

***The Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the update on the current position.***

7. **Energy Consumption Tax Position** (Pages 59 - 60)

Report by Interim Head of Sustainable Development (**GI7**).

***The Scrutiny Committee is invited to note the update on the current position.***

8. **Forward Plan**

The Committee is asked to suggest items from the current Forward Plan on which it

may wish to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet before any decision is taken, together with details of what it thinks could be achieved by looking at any items.

## **9. Director's Update**

The Director for Environment & Economy will give an oral update on key issues.

## Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

### **The duty to declare ...**

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, ie where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

### **Whose interests are included ...**

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

### **When and what to declare ...**

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

### **Taking part if you have an interest ...**

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

### **"Prejudicial" interests ...**

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

### **What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...**

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

### **Exceptions ...**

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

### **Seeking Advice ...**

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

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## ITEM GI3(a)

### GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 May 2010 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.45 pm.

**Present:**

**Voting Members:**

Councillor David Nimmo-Smith – in the Chair

Councillor Roger Belson  
Councillor Michael Gibbard  
Councillor Pete Handley  
Councillor Charles Mathew  
Councillor Keith Strangwood  
Councillor John Tanner  
Councillor David Turner  
Councillor Nicholas P. Turner (Deputy Chairman)

**Other Members in Attendance:**

Councillor Ian Hudspeth (for Agenda Items 7, 9 &10)  
Councillor Rodney Rose (for Agenda Item 8)

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting                      Geoff Malcolm & Liz Johnston (Corporate Core)

Part of meeting

**Agenda Item**

**Officer Attending**

7	Chris Cousins (Environment & Economy)
7,8,9	Steve Howell (Environment & Economy)
8	Susan Kent (Environment & Economy)
10	Ian Walker (Environment & Economy)

*The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.*

## 15/10 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2010/11 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda No. 1)

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Turner seconded by Councillor Gibbard and carried nem. con.) that Councillor Nimmo-Smith be elected Chairman for the 2010/11 Council Year.

**16/10 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2010/11 COUNCIL YEAR**

(Agenda No. 2)

**RESOLVED:** (on a motion by Councillor Nimmo-Smith seconded by Councillor Gibbard and carried nem. con.) that Councillor Nicholas P. Turner be elected Deputy Chairman for the 2010/11 Council Year.

**17/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda No. 3)

Apology for Absence	Substitute
Councillor Anne Purse	-

**18/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE**

(Agenda No. 4)

Councillor Turner declared a personal interest in respect of:

Item 7 Oxfordshire County Council Carbon Management - as a dairy farmer;

Item 8 County Council Arrangements for Winter Maintenance of Roads & Footways (Snow Review) - as a farmer and chairman of an NFU group.

**19/10 MINUTES**

(Agenda No. 5)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2010 (GI5) were approved and signed.

**20/10 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CARBON MANAGEMENT**

(Agenda No. 7)

The Committee considered a report (GI7) which provided an overview of what Oxfordshire County Council was doing to hit its carbon reduction targets, and how it was looking to address the new financial and legislative drivers to hit current and future carbon reduction targets.

Ms Kent, Environment & Climate Change Manager gave a presentation on the carbon management targets, progress to date and future work & drivers. She then responded to questions and comments and invited members to advise on the planned work (summarised in paragraph (b) below).

The Committee noted that a report would be brought to scrutiny for comment in the future.

**AGREED:** to

- (a) note the work conducted by the carbon management programme over the past six months;



- (b) advise with regard to planned work:
  - converting at least 14,000 street lights to part-night lighting within 2 years;
  - developing a Schools Carbon Reduction Strategy within 12 months and a draft/interim statement in 6 months and that there should be a strategic cross county method of implementation with consultation but with a method of enforcement;
- (c) appoint a lead member (Councillor N Turner) to liaise with officers on the various areas of the Council's Carbon Management and report to the Committee on a regular (quarterly) basis; and
- (d) thank Ms Kent for her presentation and work.

**21/10 THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR WINTER MAINTENANCE OF ROADS AND FOOTWAYS (SNOW REVIEW)**  
(Agenda No. 8)

The Committee discussed with Councillor Rose, Cabinet Member for Transport his proposals for a leaflet/publicity on the Council's duties and arrangements for Winter maintenance of roads and footways.

Councillor Rose stated that he was giving the Committee early notice of his intention to develop a Snow Leaflet for publication later this year and that he would welcome the views of scrutiny as part of the drafting process. He circulated a summary (a copy of which is attached to the signed Minutes) of the aims of the proposed Leaflet and outlined the way in which it was being compiled.

Key points arising during discussion included:

The Committee supported Councillor Rose's proposals in principle and welcomed the opportunity to comment at this early stage

The leaflet should indicate clearly which agencies were responsible for the various aspects covered, with contact information provided where appropriate

The Committee supported the involvement of relevant others in the leaflet's preparation

Links with the Council's web pages were noted; both should be as comprehensive and easy to use as possible

Media coverage was encouraged in order to promote the use of the leaflet and the web pages

The Committee noted that the method of distribution and cost of the leaflet was still to be determined.

Councillor Rose thanked the scrutiny committee members for their comments at this early stage.

**22/10 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3**  
(Agenda No. 9)

Councillor Hudspeth, Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure and Mr. Howell, Head of Transport updated the Committee on the consultation process on Oxfordshire's third Local Transport Plan 2011-2030 (LTP3) which would set out the strategy for transport across the County for the next 20 years. Views were being sought through drop-in events in Oxfordshire and the County Council's Consultation Portal on what overall scenario the council should follow to develop our future strategies for transport in the County.

Key points arising during discussion included:

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to comment at this stage

The proposal to encourage as much feedback as possible from individuals, partners, councils and organisations was supported and welcomed

Comments concerning specific matters such as the implications of airport / rail development, the provision of financial support from others towards the infrastructure and access routes for example to schools and services could be put forward as part of the consultation to inform the final version of the Plan.

**AGREED:** to

- (a) appoint Councillor Keith Strangwood to the Working Group; and
- (b) thank Councillor Hudspeth and the Head of Transport for their update on the consultation process.

**23/10 HOMES & COMMUNITIES AGENCY SINGLE CONVERSION: LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN (LIP)**  
(Agenda No. 10)

In March this year the Cabinet had considered a report on the work with the Homes and Communities Agency to develop a Local Investment Plan (LIP) and Local Investment Agreement (LIA) for Oxfordshire.

Councillor Hudspeth updated the Committee on the Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (GI10), which was a working document. The LIP had been signed off by the Oxfordshire local authorities at the end of March and submitted to the Homes & Communities Agency.

The LIA had been prepared to commit the parties (the Homes & Communities Agency) and local authorities) to implementing the LIP. The aim was for the LIA to be signed off by the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) at the end of June, following consideration by meetings of the Cabinet/Executive of the six Oxfordshire local authorities.

One member expressed concern that page 42 of the Plan (Rural Housing) did not mention Culham Local Liaison Committee's concern that the South Central Oxfordshire Transport Study (SCOTS) did not include issues around transport to the Culham site.

One member noted that page 22 did not mention that Banbury was an area of deprivation.

**AGREED:** to note the update and thank Councillor Hudspeth.

**24/10 FORWARD PLAN**  
(Agenda No. 11)

**Forward Plan:**

no topics from the current Forward Plan were identified for scrutiny.

**Future Business:**

the Chairman agreed to consider with officers a suggestion that the Committee invite a representative from RAF Brize Norton in relation to the infrastructure around the airfield and to report back to a future meeting.

**25/10 FINMERE QUARRY**  
(Agenda No. 12)

Councillor Michael Gibbard, lead member appointed to monitor recommendations from the Finmere Quarry Review updated the Committee as follows:

- there had been 4 planning applications to the County Council and 1 application to the district Council; all had been refused;
- the Planning Inquiry against the refusals was scheduled for September 2010;
- a small amount of waste was going into the site within the rules; there had been no reported odours or complaints from residents.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

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## **GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Monday, 9 August 2010 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.15 pm.

### **Present:**

**Voting Members:** Councillor David Nimmo-Smith – in the Chair

Councillor Roger Belson  
Councillor Pete Handley  
Councillor Stewart Lilly (for Councillor Michael Gibbard)  
Councillor Charles Mathew  
Councillor Zoé Patrick (for Councillor David Turner)  
Councillor Anne Purse  
Councillor Keith Strangwood  
Councillor John Tanner  
Councillor Nicholas P. Turner (Deputy Chairman)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Cabinet member for Growth & Infrastructure (for agenda Item 4)  
Councillor Larry Sanders (for Agenda Item 4 )

### **Officers:**

Whole of meeting Chief Executive,  
Corporate Performance and Review Manager;  
Assistant Head of Finance (Procurement)  
A. Pau; F. Upton; R Finlayson (Environment & Economy)  
External Consultants – A. Ferguson (Ernst & Young), J. Hawkins (Trowers & Hamlins  
S. Whitehead (Chief Executives)

*The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting[, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda, reports and schedule are attached to the signed Minutes.*

## **26/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Michael Gibbard (Temporary appointment: Councillor Stewart Lilly) and David Turner (Temporary appointment Councillor Zoe Patrick).

**27/10 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda No. 3)

The following requests to address the meeting had been agreed:

Speaker	Item
John Kightley (Chair, Bucknell Parish Council) Hazel M Watt (Deputy Chair, Bucknell Parish Council) Mr Brian Wilson, Weston on the Green Dr Ian Groves, Ardley resident Mr Mark Ellis, Ardley resident Mr Jonothan O'Neill, Chairman, Ardley Against the Incinerator Councillor Larry Sanders	4. Call in of Decision of the cabinet – Oxfordshire Residual Waste Treatment Procurement – Award of Contract.

**28/10 CALL IN OF DECISION BY THE CABINET - OXFORDSHIRE RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT PROCUREMENT - AWARD OF CONTRACT**

(Agenda No. 4)

The Scrutiny Committee had before it the report of the Director for Environment & Economy and Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer to Cabinet on 27 July 2010 together with the draft minutes of that meeting.

The Chairman before inviting the speakers to address the Committee referred to emails and letters that members had received that made representations on the agenda item. He noted that some issues relating to location, traffic problems and environmental concerns were the subject of separate planning and environmental processes. He explained the remit of the Committee today was to review the procurement decision taken by Cabinet.

Mr John Kightley, Chair, Bucknell Parish Council spoke in support of the decision being referred back to Cabinet for further consideration. Mr Kightley felt that the decision was based on a market led policy and was commercially based. There was no alternative plan should planning permission be refused and he commented that in Europe and the US the use of the technology was declining. He queried why consideration had not been given to alternatives and sited a development in Yorkshire that was less expensive but achieved significant levels of recycling. He believed that the decision showed that the County Council was not listening to government views concerning the detrimental link between recycling and waste treatment.

Hazel M Watt, Deputy Chair, Bucknell Parish Council spoke in support of the call in commenting that she had attended the recent Public Inquiry. Viridor had stated that Combined Heat & Power was a preferred solution. However this was not being delivered. She referred to the length of the contract period that could be up to 35

years. Should planning permission be granted she believed that the County Council would be liable to meet the costs of conditions imposed by the Public Inquiry process. She referred to a quote in the Cabinet report about the robust case put forward by Viridor at the Public Inquiry. However she noted that this report had been written before the Public Inquiry had been completed and she referred to comments from County Council officers in their summing up that were contrary to this view. In summary she believed that the decision should be reviewed so that good money was not thrown after bad, because the government was committed to transparency and cutbacks and because an incinerator tax was a possibility.

Ms Watt, responding to a question from Councillor Handley about the £3m in fines that the Council could face if they did nothing, accepted that that was a lot but that it could cost more if the decision went ahead now. She believed that at the very least the decision should be deferred.

Mr Brian Wilson, Weston on the Green spoke in support of the call in and submitted a statement to members. He commented that recycling was increasing and challenged the view that construction costs were rising. He highlighted concerns about the possibility of compensation payments and the possibility of a changed policy from the new government. He believed that it was unwise to sign a contract at this point and felt that a relatively small delay of 5 months to enable the planning decision to be known was the right way forward.

Mr Mark Ellis, an Ardley resident spoke in support of the call in referring to the danger to local children of increased traffic and to pollution concerns. He also referred to the visual impact of the chimney.

Dr Ian Groves, an Ardley resident, emphasised the pleasant and green environment of Ardley and the expectation of residents that this would be enhanced by the restoration of the land fill site in due course. He recognised and subscribed to the need to move waste up the waste hierarchy.

He was concerned that 9 months after the original planning application had been rejected there was no alternative. A smaller scale scheme would provide benefit to Oxfordshire but would be commercially unviable. He questioned whether the decision should be based primarily on the needs of local people, whose quality of life would deteriorate or on benefits to private business. On a point of clarification Councillor Mathew advised that Viridor was a publically quoted company. Mr Groves continued that a smaller facility could be designed having less impacts on the environment and the local communities. The current scheme was twice the size required and he felt that the Council had been blinkered to other proposals. Mr Groves referred to the financial implications if planning permission were refused or if it was allowed subject to conditions for which cost that the County Council would be liable. The Group considered that the decision should be held until the results of the planning application were known.

Mr Jonathan O'Neill, Chairman, Ardley Against the Incinerator spoke in support of the call in highlighting the overwhelming opposition in the local area. He referred to the planning and permit risks of entering into a contract now and commented that business lecturers he had spoken to had felt that the situation was frightening in its uncertainty. He commented that there was no back up plan should planning

permission not be granted. He referred to the financial penalties faced by the Council, once the contract was signed, if it did not go ahead or if the development was not completed in the set timescales. If the contract was based on need then it was reasonable to await the outcome of the planning application.

Councillor Larry Sanders spoke in support of the call in. He expressed opposition to the proposals that would pump carbon emissions into the atmosphere so that people would continue to suffer. He referred to other authorities who had changed their mind about going forward with an incinerator.

Councillor Sanders responding to a question from Councillor Tanner explained that he did not have the numbers relating to CO<sup>2</sup> emissions but that the question was whether the proposals were better or worse than a coal fired plant for generating electricity.

Councillor Tanner spoke in support of the call in drawing attention to the arguments put forward by members of the public. He felt that there was a great danger in a 25 year contract at a time when prices were falling. There was a grave danger that the County could become a 'waste dustbin' attracting waste from outside the County. The proposal was in the wrong location and he had environmental concerns that the large chimney that was supposed to disperse pollutants would not be effective. His view was that the technology was outdated and if there were any doubts at all then the Scrutiny Committee should ask the Cabinet to look at the matter again. Responding to a query from Councillor Handley Councillor Tanner confirmed that he would have sought a call in even had planning permission been in place.

Councillor Purse spoke in support of the call in. She expressed concern that there would not be sufficient residual waste in Oxfordshire to sustain the plant and that bringing in waste from elsewhere would have high environmental costs.

Councillor Patrick spoke in support of the call in. She was concerned that before the planning permission had been granted was not the right time to make the decision. She also had concerns over waste coming from elsewhere and possible health risks of the proposals.

Following a query from a member as to the relevance of the grounds for call in the following additional points were made:

1. Councillor Purse stated that Cabinet had not considered the issue of where waste would come from as recycling levels increased.
2. She referred to guidance that she thought indicated incinerators had to provide combined heat and power (CHP). This was not the case here so the proposal was outdated.
3. Councillor Tanner added that in the view of the signatories to the call in Cabinet had not given sufficient weight to the views as expressed this morning and had given too much weight to gate charges and fines over the next 25 years.

The Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from officers and external consultants (first given to Cabinet) that explained the context for the decision; the key



aspects of the contract and key risks; the financial deal and value for money assessment including risk sensitivities and the closing options. Officers commented that no decision was without risk and that Cabinet had been fully briefed on all aspects of the current decision and had considered the matter for 2 1/2 hours and had heard from many members of the public. The procurement process followed had been exacting and arduous and the contract still provided the most economic option.

At this point the Chairman invited the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure to the table. The Chairman indicated that he intended to take discussion through the main sections of the report.

During discussion the following points were made:

1. A member questioned how meaningful discussion on the cost of planning permission not being granted could be when it was based on percentage figures on information that the Scrutiny Committee did not have. A member sought assurance from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure that he was satisfied with the exempt information that he had received.
2. Greater detail was requested on the hedge fund.
3. Given that the length of the contract seemed to be an issue a member queried whether Cabinet considered any aspect of reviews of charges throughout the length of the contract.
4. The Cabinet Member was asked what circumstances would arise where he was not willing to commend the decision.

In response the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure replied that he understood the frustration of members about the exempt information. He confirmed that he was satisfied that Cabinet had had all the relevant exempt information and that the decision had been based on that information. He believed that the decision was sound. The whole process was begun on a neutral technology process and he could not surmise what the outcome would have been if a different approach had been followed.

The Assistant Head of Finance (Procurement) added that there had been a detailed process with a competitive dialogue with the preferred bidder. If officers had been unable to clarify or confirm points to their own satisfaction then the process would have gone back a stage or even begun again. He confirmed that there were no breakage points in the contract. The County was committed to 25 years and that was why there was so much care taken over the financial robustness of the proposals. He stressed that there was no obligation to deliver a specific tonnage. Andrew Pau clarified that they would however provide annual advice to the company and that was about an early accurate annual estimate of residual waste. The Committee was advised that the foreign exchange rate had not been hedged.

There followed further discussions during which the following further points were made:

5. Technology was always being updated and Cabinet was charged with making the best decision based on the most recent information available at the time. The Committee was advised that one of the most recent deals at Bexley heath

was CHP enabled but the deal had not been closed specifically on that point. There were alternative technologies such as thermal treatment available but there was a question mark over their ability to deal with all waste that gave rise to funding issues.

6. Responding to a question about the possible costs after planning and the costs of looking at alternatives the Committee was advised that it would be several million pounds at least and would take a further couple of years. There was a £6m capped figure if planning permission failed.
7. There was some discussion of the relative costs of closing now or after the planning decision was known. The various risks were detailed. There was discussion of the risks associated with the foreign exchange rates and the Cabinet's position was outlined to the Committee. The Chief Executive emphasised that the Cabinet had spent some considerable time looking at the closing options. The Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure confirmed that there had been considerable questions from Cabinet about the various options.
8. Following comments about the lack of CHP, Andrew Pau stated that the solution was not CHP. It allowed for retro fitting to offer better environmental and financial performance in the future. Stephen McHale added that CHP was an additional benefit to Energy from Waste that was being provided.
9. Responding to a question about what Viridor was likely to do if the contract was not signed, Andrew Pau indicated that that would be pure speculation. What he could say was that the contract was affordable and provided value for money in the market place.

Councillor Nicholas Turner stated that whilst the Committee had not seen all the financial information he accepted that it was commercially sensitive. He believed that Cabinet did have that information and that the decision was properly taken by them in the knowledge of that information. He therefore proposed that the decision taken by the Cabinet was made with relevant information and that the decision not be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.

During discussion of the proposal members indicated their views as follows:

1. Councillor Tanner indicated that he would vote against the proposal. His main issue was with the 25 year contract in the light of changing circumstances. It would be tying people who were children now into a very unfavourable deal.
2. Councillor Patrick proposed that the matter be referred back to Cabinet.
3. Councillor Mathew expressed concerns over the contract and suggested strongly that planning permission should be paramount. He was also unhappy about the exempt information not being available and felt that it was inappropriate for Ms Watt who had attended the Public Inquiry to have more information than members of the Scrutiny Committee. If information had been discussed at the public Inquiry then it should be available. His views were supported by Councillor Lilley. However Councillor Mathew was convinced that the process of procurement had not been taken lightly.
4. Councillor Purse indicated that she would vote against the proposal as she felt it should be looked at again.

On a show of hands it was:

**RESOLVED:** (by 5 votes to 3) to agree that the Scrutiny Committee was satisfied that the decision taken by the Cabinet was made with relevant information and that the decision not be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

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Division(s): N/A

## **GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 6 OCTOBER 2010**

### **OXFORDSHIRE MINERALS & WASTE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY – PREFERRED MINERALS STRATEGY**

**Report by Interim Head of Sustainable Development**

#### **Background**

1. The Minerals and Waste Development Framework will set out how minerals will be supplied and waste managed in the county. It will consist of a Core Strategy that sets out broad locations for mineral working, supported by site allocation documents that are informed by a local assessment of need. The Core Strategy will include a vision and strategic objectives, a spatial strategy, core policies, and a monitoring and implementation framework.
2. An update report on the Framework was made to the Growth and Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee on 28 October 2009. That recorded that progress had been delayed by uncertainties surrounding the context within which the Framework has to be developed but that work was proceeding on drawing up options for the spatial strategy.

#### **Development and Assessment of Minerals Strategy Options**

3. Following consideration of potential options by the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group, consultation was carried out in February and March 2010 with key stakeholders on an initial set of spatial strategy options for mineral working. Independently facilitated workshop meetings were held with District and County Council members, groups of parish councils (3 area events, at Benson, Standlake and Stanford in the Vale), environmental groups and mineral operators. Technical and statutory bodies were also consulted.
4. The output from that consultation was considered by the Working Group and revisions made to the options. Further consultation was carried out on a revised set of spatial strategy options in July 2010, involving two independently facilitated workshop meetings at Benson and Standlake and a workshop with mineral operators. Technical and statutory bodies were again consulted.
5. The revised minerals strategy options (July 2010) are set out in paper MW1 (paragraphs 4.8 – 4.10) attached as Annex 1. There are three options for sand and gravel and single options for soft sand and crushed rock. Paper MW1 includes the guiding principles that should underpin a minerals strategy. It also summarises responses to consultations on the options, a technical assessment and testing of the options. A sustainability appraisal of the options has also been carried out and the report has been published on the County Council's website.

## Views of the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group

6. The options in paper MW1 (Annex 1) were discussed by the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group on 27 September 2010 (meeting note attached as Annex 2).
7. The recommendation of the Working Group is that the County Council's preferred spatial strategy for sand and gravel working should be based on option 1 – concentrate extraction at existing areas of working: Lower Windrush Valley; Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton; Radley; Sutton Courtenay; and also Caversham. The Working Group agreed that this would provide clarity in the short to medium term. It also recommended that the ability of these areas to provide for the medium to longer term should be assessed in light of the work to determine local need. It highlighted that flexibility may be needed to consider new areas of working in the longer term.
8. For soft sand and for crushed rock, the Working Group concurred with the options in Paper MW1; for soft sand – working in three existing areas: south east of Faringdon; the Tubney / Marcham / Hinton Waldrist area; and Duns Tew; and for crushed rock – working in three existing areas: north of Bicester to the east of the River Cherwell; south of the A40 near Burford; and south east of Faringdon.

### Next Steps

9. A report on the minerals spatial strategy options and the next steps in the preparation of the Core Strategy will be made to Cabinet on 19 October. The work to provide a local assessment of the aggregates supply requirement for Oxfordshire is being commissioned and will be completed by December 2010.
10. The view of the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group is that consultation on the preferred spatial strategy for mineral working is combined with consultation on the local assessment of need and other key minerals policy matters. This will be carried out in early spring 2011, following consideration by the Working Group in January 2011 and by Cabinet in February 2011. The overall timetable for the Core Strategy remains unchanged, with a complete document (covering both minerals and waste) published for formal representations in December 2011, prior to submission to the Secretary of State in 2012 for independent examination.
11. **The Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee is INVITED to note the report and to make comments for consideration by Cabinet.**

MARTIN TUGWELL  
Interim Head of Sustainable Development

Background Papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Peter Day, tel. Oxford 815544

September 2010

**MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN WORKING GROUP - 27 September 2010****Paper MW1  
Minerals and Waste Core Strategy  
Assessment of Minerals Spatial Strategy Options****1 Context**

- 1.1 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework will set out how minerals will be supplied and waste managed in the county. The framework will consist of a Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and site specific documents for minerals and waste.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy will include a vision and strategic objectives, a spatial strategy, core policies; and a monitoring and implementation framework.
- 1.3 Work on the minerals element of the framework is being taken forward in advance of that on waste. The initial work is focused on agreeing the preferred spatial strategy for minerals. Detailed site allocations will be considered as a follow on piece of work, informed by an assessment of need. Such an approach enables consideration of individual sites to be undertaken within an agreed strategy but in response to changing demand. In this way the release of sites for exploitation can be aligned more closely with economic activity across the County.
- 1.4 Aggregate minerals are required to supply the construction materials needed both for new development and for repair and renewal of existing development. The supply of these minerals in Oxfordshire consists of locally won aggregates (sand and gravel, soft sand and crushed rock), crushed rock imported by rail and road, and secondary and recycled aggregates. Locally extracted aggregates reduce the need to transport materials long distances.

**2 Guiding Principles**

- 2.1 The principles that will underpin the minerals element of the overall framework are:
  - a) Ensure the supply of locally won sand and gravel, soft sand, crushed rock and secondary and recycled aggregates supports economic activity;
  - b) Ensure the supply of minerals is economically efficient whilst minimising the environmental impact;
  - c) Maximise the use of secondary and recycled aggregates in place of primary aggregates, and safeguard facilities for their production;

- d) Minimise the distance minerals are transported by road and encourage the movement of aggregates by conveyor, rail and water, and safeguard facilities for moving aggregates by rail or water;
  - e) Secure high quality restoration of mineral workings to nature conservation, agriculture, or other appropriate use, and increase biodiversity and habitat creation and provision for local access and recreational use;
  - f) Protect areas or sites of landscape, ecological, geological and heritage importance from adverse impacts;
  - g) Minimise the adverse impact of mineral extraction and transportation on local communities, and secure local benefits through mineral working and restoration;
  - h) Prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of Oxfordshire's sand and gravel, soft sand, crushed rock and fuller's earth resources by other forms of development.
- 2.2 In addition the framework will reflect the spatial priorities for growth in Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (2010-2030) identifies the main locations for housing and employment growth as being Bicester, Oxford and the Science Vale area which includes Didcot, Wantage and Grove. These locations account for the majority of growth across Oxfordshire and will therefore generate the greatest demand for aggregates. This is also the part of the county where there will be the greatest concentration of demand from repair and renewal of existing development.
- 2.3 Applying the guiding principles to this spatial strategy will be critical to minimising the adverse impact of mineral workings, and in particular will help reduce the impact on the transport system.
- 2.4 In addition the framework must take into account known movements of aggregates across the county boundary, particularly the movement of soft sand into the Swindon area and sand and gravel from Caversham into the Reading area.

### **3 Current Pattern of Mineral Working**

- 3.1 Over the last 10 to 15 years, sharp sand and gravel working has been focussed on Sutton Courtenay, Sutton Wick, Stanton Harcourt (Lower Windrush Valley) and Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton. A decline in reserves in the Sutton Courtenay, Sutton Wick and Radley areas to the south of Oxford has led to an increased concentration of working in West Oxfordshire, in the Lower Windrush Valley and Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton areas.



- 3.2 Soft sand working is concentrated in a corridor between Oxford and Faringdon, with some working in the north of the county at Duns Tew, reflecting where this resource is found.
- 3.3 Limestone aggregate quarries are mainly worked in the north of the county outwith the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to the south of Burford and at Ardley. There is also some limestone working in association with soft sand extraction in the south west of the county, where higher quality, harder stone is found. Ironstone is worked in the area north west of Banbury.

#### **4 Spatial Strategy: Developing the Options**

- 4.1 Using British Geological Survey maps, eighteen sand and gravel resource areas, one soft sand resource area and three limestone resource areas were initially identified for potential inclusion within a spatial strategy.
- 4.2 As there are significant reserves of ironstone already available with planning permission, no additional sites are required for the foreseeable future.

##### **Initial Options: February 2010**

- 4.3 Three options were set out for sand and gravel extraction:
  - a) To concentrate working centrally in the county, with three sub-options: north and west of Oxford; south and east of Oxford; and a combination of these options;
  - b) To disperse working to resource areas close to markets; and
  - c) To phase extraction, moving from extensions to existing sites in the short term to new working areas in the longer term.
- 4.4 For soft sand, a single option involved one extensive resource area in the south west of the county.
- 4.5 For crushed rock, a single option involved limestone extraction from three areas, based on existing workings.
- 4.6 A summary of the consultation responses to these options is at Appendix 1.

##### **Revised Options: July 2010**

- 4.7 As a result of the initial consultation, a revised set of options were produced for consultation in July 2010. A summary of the consultation responses is at Appendix 2.

- 4.8 Diagrams showing the revised options are at Appendix 3. The revised set of options for sand and gravel are:
- a) Concentrate mineral extraction in four existing areas of working: Lower Windrush Valley; Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton; Radley; and Sutton Courtenay;
  - b) Concentrate mineral working in some or all of the following new areas, moving away from existing areas of working during the plan period: Clanfield / Bampton; Sutton / Stanton Harcourt; Clifton Hampden / Wittenham; Benson / Shillingford / Warborough; and Cholsey;
  - c) Disperse working across the resource areas, including all the existing and new areas as well as 3 other existing areas of working: Finmere; Faringdon; and Caversham.
- 4.9 The revised option for soft sand includes three more tightly defined areas: around Duns Tew; south east of Faringdon; and the Tubney / Marcham / Hinton Waldrist area.
- 4.10 The revised option for crushed rock is based on three areas of existing working: north of Bicester to the east of the River Cherwell; south of the A40 near Burford; and south east of Faringdon (associated with soft sand extraction).

## 5 Assessment of Options

- 5.1 A framework, based on Policy M2 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan (2016)<sup>1</sup>, has been used to assess the implications of each option. The assessment criteria are:
- a. Proximity to markets;
  - b. Accessibility to the main transport routes;
  - c. Risk of birdstrike;
  - d. Restoration and after use potential, especially habitat creation and public access;
  - e. Archaeological remains and historic buildings;
  - f. Areas and sites of nature conservation importance, especially Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
  - g. Features of landscape importance, especially Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
  - h. Best and most versatile agricultural land;
  - i. Water environment: flooding; surface and water ground water flows;
  - j. Impact on local communities and the local economy;

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<sup>1</sup> This is a 'saved' policy and these criteria reflect issues identified in Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and Minerals (November 2006)

k. Safety and convenience of road users.

5.2 Stakeholders' views on these criteria were sought and their responses are summarised in Appendix 4. Annexes A – G provide an assessment of each option against each of the criteria. In addition a sustainability appraisal of the options has been carried out by consultants.

## **6 Testing the Options**

6.1 The South East Plan was revoked in July 2010. The guidance accompanying the government's letter of revocation states that planning authorities in the South East should work from the apportionment (the level of supply provision to be planned for) set out in the "Proposed Changes" to the revision of South East Plan Policy M3, published on 19 March 2010. The Proposed Changes set a figure of 2.1 million tonnes a year of sand and gravel for Oxfordshire. The guidance goes on to say that Mineral Planning Authorities can choose to use alternative figures if they have new or different information and a robust evidence base.

6.2 The County Council opposed the figure of 2.1 million tonnes a year. A locally derived assessment of the quantity of sand and gravel that provision needs to be made for is being undertaken and will be used to inform the identification of detailed site allocations.

6.3 For the purposes of current considerations, the key issue is whether the level of minerals provision required has fundamental implications for the spatial strategy. In other words, does the level of provision needed invalidate any of the options under consideration?

6.4 The figures in Appendix 5 show that all options are capable of accommodating any of the supply provision scenarios considered to date. Sites nominated by operators are a good indication of commercial deliverability.

6.5 As a consequence the identification of a preferred spatial strategy can be policy led.

## **7 Additional Commentary on Sharp Sand and Gravel Options**

### **7.1 Option 1**

- The Radley area is close to Oxford; it has poor access to the west of the River Thames but could be accessed from the A4074 (a local lorry route) to the east of the river.
- There are limited sand and gravel resources remaining in the Sutton Courtenay area, and it could only make a strategic contribution to supply for a limited part of the plan period.
- The Lower Windrush Valley and the Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton areas have plentiful resources and good access via the A40 to north Oxford and to Bicester, but are further from south Oxford, Didcot

and Wantage and Grove. There has been a cumulative impact of mineral working and transportation on local communities, landscape and lorry traffic levels in these two areas. Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation poses a potential constraint to working the southern part of the Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton area.

## 7.2 Option 2

- The Clanfield/Bampton area is poorly located relative to markets for aggregates and would require big improvements to infrastructure to enable large scale working without impacting on villages and local roads.
- The Sutton/Stanton Harcourt area has good access to the A40 via the Eynsham bypass. But working in this area could increase the cumulative impact of working in West Oxfordshire and on the A40.
- The Clifton Hampden part of the Clifton Hampden/Wittenham area is accessible by local lorry route (A415 and A4074) and has few environmental constraints, although there are some Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) and lorries would have to pass through Clifton Hampden and Burcot. An extensive SAM, the nearby Little Wittenham SAC and the adjoining North Wessex Downs AONB are major constraints on the Wittenham part of the area.
- The southern part of the Warborough/Benson/Shillingford area is constrained by the presence of SAMs and Grade 1 agricultural land, but the northern part has few environmental constraints and could be linked to the A4074 near Berinsfield.
- The Cholsey area has good access to the local lorry network and is near to Didcot. The proximity of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs AONBs could constrain mineral working in parts of this area.

## 7.3 Option 3

A dispersal strategy would not encourage effective and economic use of resources, would be likely to increase mineral miles and would not enable objectives for restoration and local benefits to be achieved effectively.

7.4 A revised approach could draw upon some elements of all three options to create a hybrid option which reduces mineral miles, spreads the burden of mineral working and supplies the aggregates markets from areas both to the west and south of Oxford.

7.5 An example of such a hybrid option might involve: continuing working in the Lower Windrush Valley and Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton areas (with a possible move to Sutton/Stanton Harcourt in the long term), which could supply the northern part of the county, including Oxford and Bicester; limited further working at Sutton Courtenay and phased development of new areas at Cholsey, Clifton Hampden, Radley (northern part) and Warborough / Shillingford / Benson (northern part) implemented through the plan period, which could supply the southern part of the county, including Oxford and Didcot; and a continuation of

working in the Caversham area, to supply south east Oxfordshire and the Reading area.

## **8 Next Steps**

- 8.1 A report on the assessment of minerals spatial strategy options and seeking approval for a preferred minerals strategy for public consultation will be made to Cabinet on 19 October 2010. This item is due to be considered by the Growth and Infrastructure Committee on 6 October.
- 8.2 Subject to the decision of Cabinet, public consultation will be carried out on the preferred minerals strategy, commencing in November. This will be a further and important stage of consultation in the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, leading to the proposed submission draft of the plan which we are aiming to produce by the end of 2011 for independent examination in 2012.
- 8.3 The views of the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group on the minerals spatial strategy options and the assessment work carried out, as set out in this paper, are invited.

Lois Partridge / Peter Day  
20 September 2010

## **Appendix 1: Responses to February/March 2010 Consultation**

Some general themes of the responses were:

The options were not thought to be sufficiently distinct. Some options included the same areas as other options; this was particularly the case for the sand and gravel phased option (option 3).

The areas covered by some options were thought to be too extensive and included areas thought unlikely to be economically viable to work or are constrained by national environmental designations.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about the sand and gravel concentration strategy, particularly potential transport impacts, impacts on local communities and environment, and local acceptability.

### **Sand and Gravel Strategy Option 1a** – concentration of sand and gravel working to the west / north west of Oxford:

- a) The Environment Agency expressed concern about concentrating mineral extraction in this area, as it could have hydrological impacts particularly on the Lower Windrush Valley, where low river flow is a concern.
- b) The Highways Agency was concerned that a concentration strategy in this area could result in a potential increase in trip generation which could increase congestion at the Peartree junction on the A34.
- c) Natural England was concerned that this option included part of Oxford Meadows SAC and other SSSIs.
- d) The biodiversity group recognised that concentrating development in this area could offer the greatest opportunities for landscape scale restoration and to create joined up areas for nature conservation.
- e) Oxford Airport noted that birdstrike could potentially be a problem for aircraft, should this option be brought forward for mineral development.
- f) Parish Councils noted the cumulative impact of working on local communities and the lack of flexibility that the concentration strategy offered.

### **Sand and Gravel Strategy Option 1b** – concentration of sand and gravel working to the south / south east of Oxford:

- a) OCC transport officers noted issues of accessibility of some of this area to the strategic road network. The Highways Agency noted that this option could lead to an increase in mineral miles and that the impacts of mineral traffic on Marcham junction of the A34 would need to be assessed.
- b) Natural England expressed concern that this option includes Little Wittenham SAC and is in close proximity to Cothill Fen SAC. The setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB also needs to be taken into account.
- c) There are a number of archaeologically significant sites in this area which may pose a potential constraint to mineral extraction.

- d) The biodiversity group recognised that concentrating development in this area could offer opportunities for landscape scale restoration and to create joined up areas for nature conservation.

Sand and Gravel Strategy Option 1c – concentration of sand and gravel working in both the areas identified in Options 1a and 1b:

- a) The same issues were identified as in Options 1a and 1b, but stakeholders recognised that the concentration would be less intense in either area.

Sand and Gravel Strategy Option 2 – dispersal of sand and gravel working across resource areas which are close to markets:

- a) A truly dispersed option would encompass all potentially available resources and not be limited to areas close to markets.
- b) Some stakeholders thought this option would lead to many communities being affected by the impacts of mineral extraction. Some also thought that any decrease in current impact on communities caused by a dispersal strategy was unlikely to be in proportion to the principle of dispersal.
- c) Operators recognised the benefits of dispersing working to reduce impacts on any one area but thought that a dispersal strategy would give fewer opportunities for developer funding of highway and amenity and biodiversity improvements.
- d) The Environment Agency and the Highways Agency expressed a preference for a dispersed strategy to reduce the potential impacts of mineral working in any one area.
- e) The dispersal option was not favoured by the biodiversity group as it reduces the potential for landscape scale restoration from sites.

Sand and Gravel Strategy Option 3 – a phased approach with continued sand and gravel working from extensions to existing areas of working during the plan period and identification and planning of a new area or areas of working for beyond the plan period:

- a) Stakeholders commented that the strategy should only address the need for minerals during the plan period, not beyond it, and that in any case the issue of longer term provision is common to all options. But the minerals industry favoured long term planning for new sites.
- b) Stakeholders thought there was too much overlap with options 1b and 1c, with currently unworked resource areas to the south east of Oxford being included in both (and also in option 2).
- c) The Environment Agency preferred this option because it would enable strategic planning for ecologically viable habitat restoration and would reduce the concentrated impact of extraction on any one area.
- d) The Highways Agency expressed concern that this option still includes the area north and west of Oxford and therefore their concerns about the impacts of working in this area on the strategic road network remain.

Soft Sand Strategy Option – mineral working within a single extensive area in the south west of the county:

- a) The technical consultees had no major concerns about this option.
- b) Stakeholders noted that the area identified was very extensive and suggested that it could be made smaller.
- c) Stakeholders noted that the option did not take into account the soft sand resource in the North of the county.
- d) Stakeholders voiced concerns about the ability of local roads to cope with minerals lorries.

Crushed Rock Strategy Option – mineral working within three areas: an extensive area between Bicester and Chipping Norton: the Burford area; and the soft sand strategy option area in the south west of the county:

- a) The technical consultees had no major concerns about this option other than the Highways Agency, which voiced concern about the potential impact of this option on the Peartree junction on the A34.
- b) Stakeholders noted that the area between Bicester and Chipping Norton was very extensive and suggested that it could be reduced in size, taking into account the location of workable resources.



## **Appendix 2: Responses to July Consultation**

A summary of the consultation responses to the revised options from the stakeholder workshops held in July 2010 is provided below. The main themes from these responses were:

Sand and gravel option 1- continue working in existing areas:

- This option would take advantage of existing infrastructure and existing working arrangements
- The option would result in continued and cumulative impact of mineral working on some local communities
- Caversham should have been included in this option
- The option could result in many applications for extensions to existing sites, which could result in the use of long conveyors to move material back to plant for processing.

Sand and gravel option 2-new areas of working:

- Relief for communities currently experiencing working
- New workings may be more efficient than old workings
- This option is likely to result in need for new and improved infrastructure and therefore represents an inefficient use of existing infrastructure
- This option represents a higher risk to deliverability than the existing sites option
- This option may lead to an increase in mineral miles between working and markets
- Concern that there are many bridges over the River Thames in the new areas which are not capable of carrying mineral lorries and many roads which are not suitable for HGV traffic.
- Some of the new areas have extensive archaeological remains within them
- Many of the new areas are in close proximity to airfields, raising concerns about safeguarding to prevent birdstrike.

Sand and gravel option 3- dispersed pattern of working:

- This option would lead to disadvantages of scale; small operations with few opportunities to seek funding from operators for infrastructure improvements or high quality restoration
- This option could lead to an increase in the number of sites for OCC to manage and monitor effectively
- Lack of focus for infrastructure developments or planning
- Will increase the number of areas affected by 'planning blight'

Soft sand option:

- Common sense approach, based on existing areas of activity
- Good transport links except in Marcham and Newbridge
- Issue of archaeology at Marcham/Frilford
- Potential issue of cumulative impact of development in this area if the reservoir goes ahead.

Crushed Rock option:

- Advantages of basing the strategy on existing sites recognised, eg infrastructure in place
- Advantages of combining soft sand and crushed rock extraction on the same sites recognised.
- Ardley; transport issues around Bicester and ancient woodland NW of Bicester

In addition to the feedback received from the stakeholder workshops, separate responses were also received from PAGE, AGGROW, CPRE, Nuneham Courtenay parish council and 240 individuals. Where appropriate, information from these responses has been incorporated into the assessment tables.

Mineral operators' responses to July consultation

The revised options were discussed at a meeting with mineral operators in July. Overall, the operators prefer a dispersed option which they note offers more flexibility and enables working to be located closer to markets. A summary of their responses is below.

a) General comments on all options

The market is not constrained by county boundaries and there are some cross boundary movements of aggregates. This is especially the case when aggregates have been processed to make value-added products, which increases their value and the economic viability of them travelling longer distances.

The number and location of new areas proposed needs to consider the spatial picture of neighbouring counties and the associated impacts on supply in relation to any existing and/or future minerals operations close to Oxfordshire's county borders.

b) Crushed Rock option

It may be preferable to have a mixture of both small and large facilities to make provision for crushed rock, and also to maintain an adequate provision of building stone for the historic built environment, over the plan period.

c) Sand and gravel option 1- existing areas of working

Concern was expressed that if option 1 concentrates development in a few, large sites, the strategy will be dependent on few operators.

It is more difficult to maintain supply from large production units because a large permitted reserve needs to be maintained.

It was also noted that there could potentially be difficulty in delivering sites within a concentration strategy, in the face of well organised, significant local opposition.

It was suggested that concentrating working around Oxford may not necessarily be the most efficient strategy to supply the market, as the Oxfordshire market is much more than just Oxford.

d) Sand and gravel option 2- new areas of working

It was suggested that greater clarity is needed on the aims of this option to make it clear that existing sites will effectively be shut down when permissions expire and that new areas would be phased in.

There was broad support for this option in so far as it would move production closer to the demand centres. However, it was pointed out that more of the areas featured in this option lie further away from the primary road network and that access must be one of the most important criteria by which the options are assessed.

Option 2 was generally thought not to be deliverable in the shorter term. Operators also thought that concentration on new areas should focus on what is deliverable in the plan period, not beyond.

e) Sand and gravel Option 3- dispersal option

Option 3 was considered to be more favourable than Option 2. A dispersed approach would allow a mix of existing and new working areas; it would relate well to markets; and it could be delivered within the required timescale.

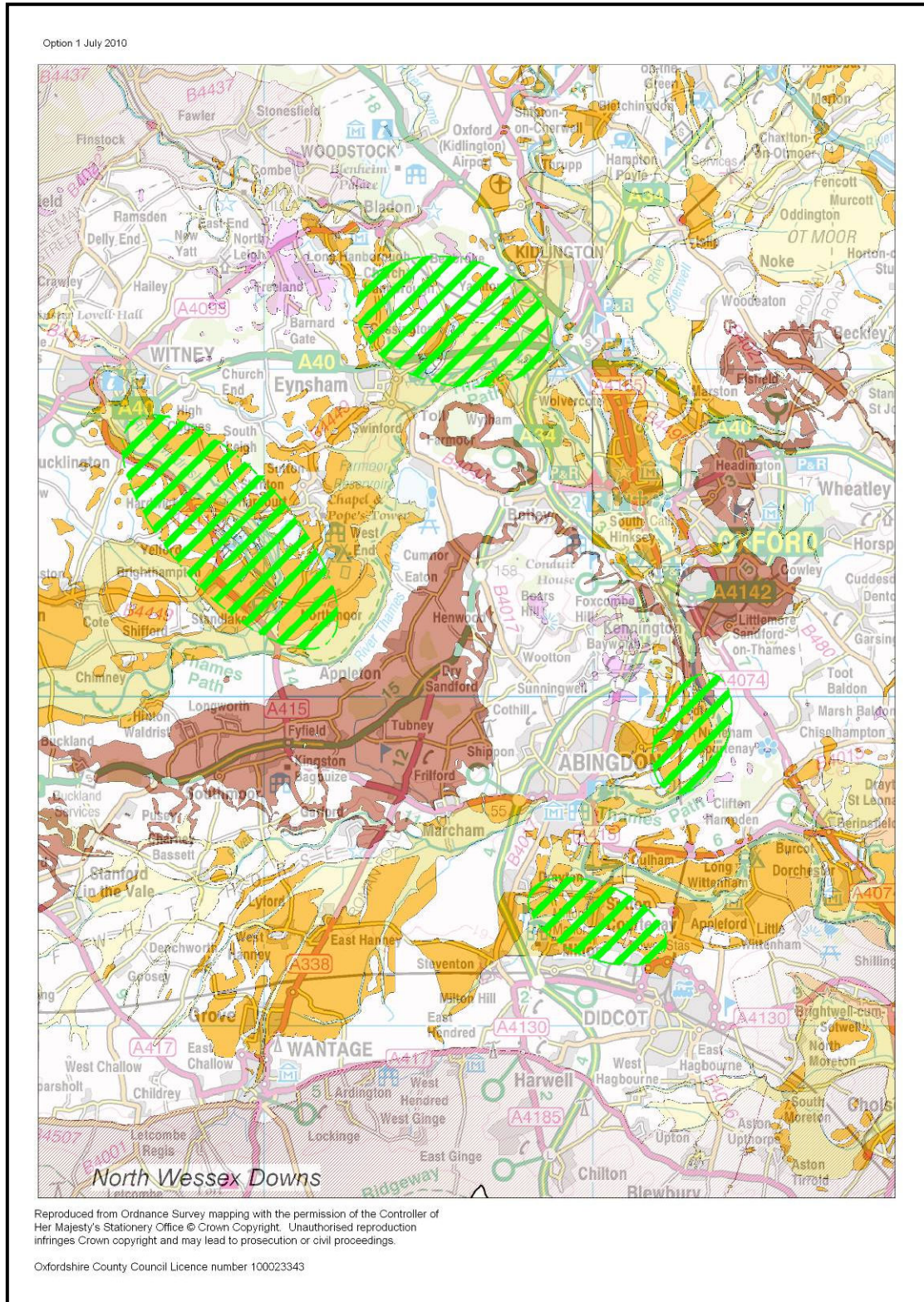
There are advantages of concentrating working in a large number of small areas. It was noted that local communities often prefer the development of small sites, which will only have a life of a few years. However, the operators recognised the difficulty of ensuring that such sites do not subsequently apply for extensions, thereby extending their period of working and undermining the local community's goodwill towards them.

Land ownership issues can also make larger sites more difficult to deliver than smaller sites.

But operators noted that both options 2 and 3 could result in planning blight on several areas of the county, with continued uncertainty as to when mineral development may take place in those areas.

**Appendix 3: Maps of the Options July 2010**

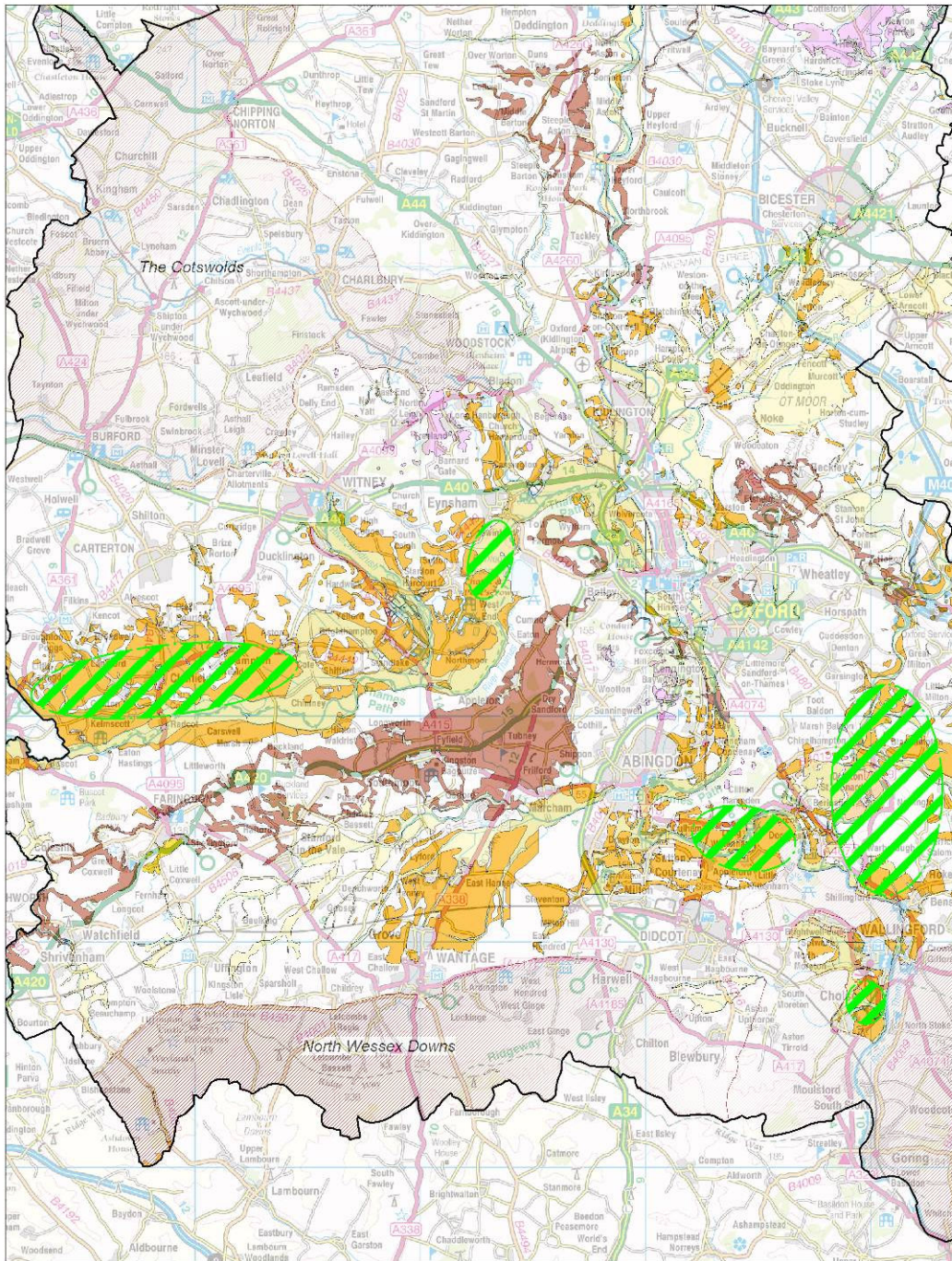
**Sand and gravel option 1**





Sand and gravel option 2

Option 2; concentration on new areas July 2010



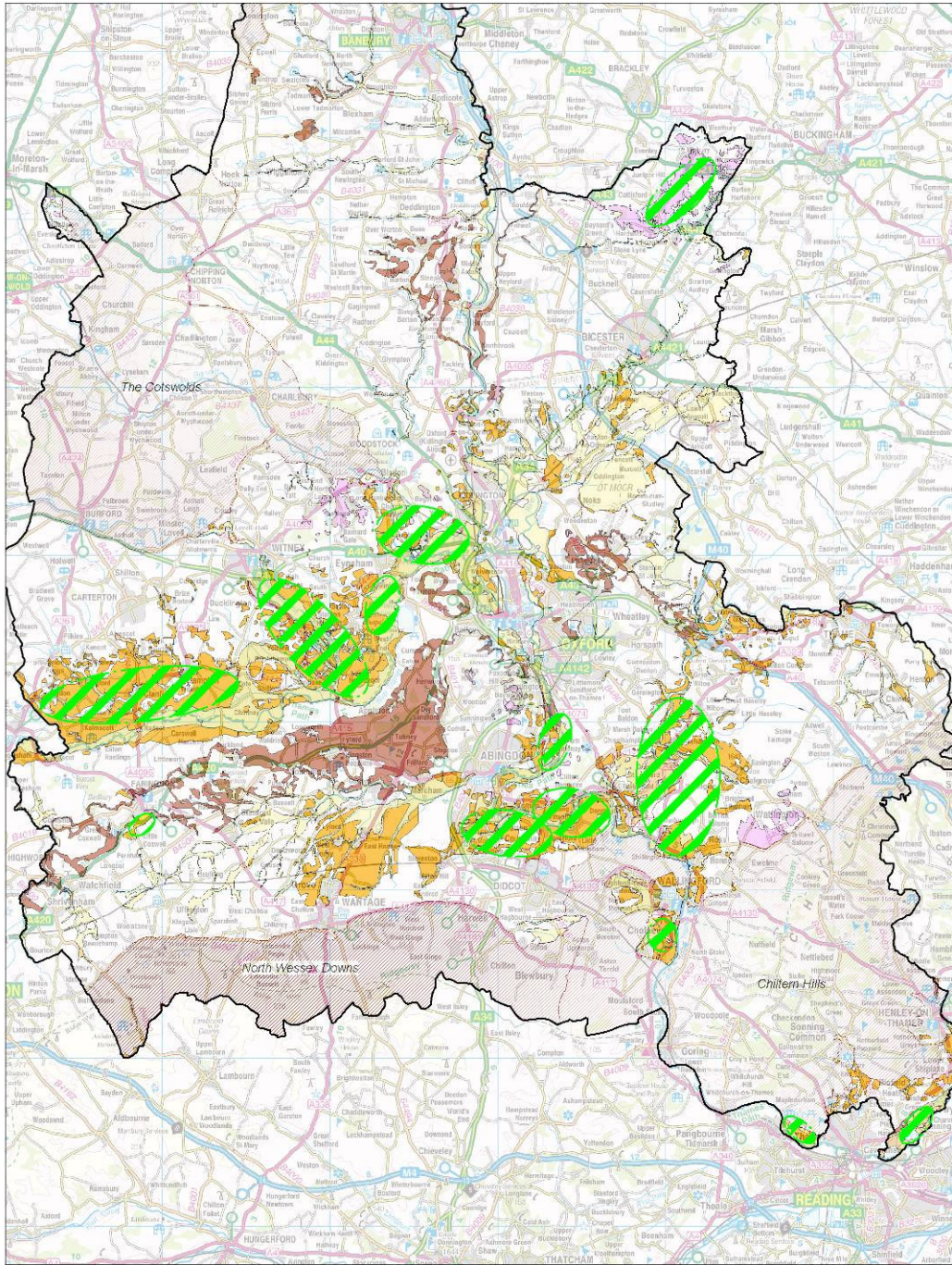
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Sand and gravel option 3

Option 3: dispersed option July 2010



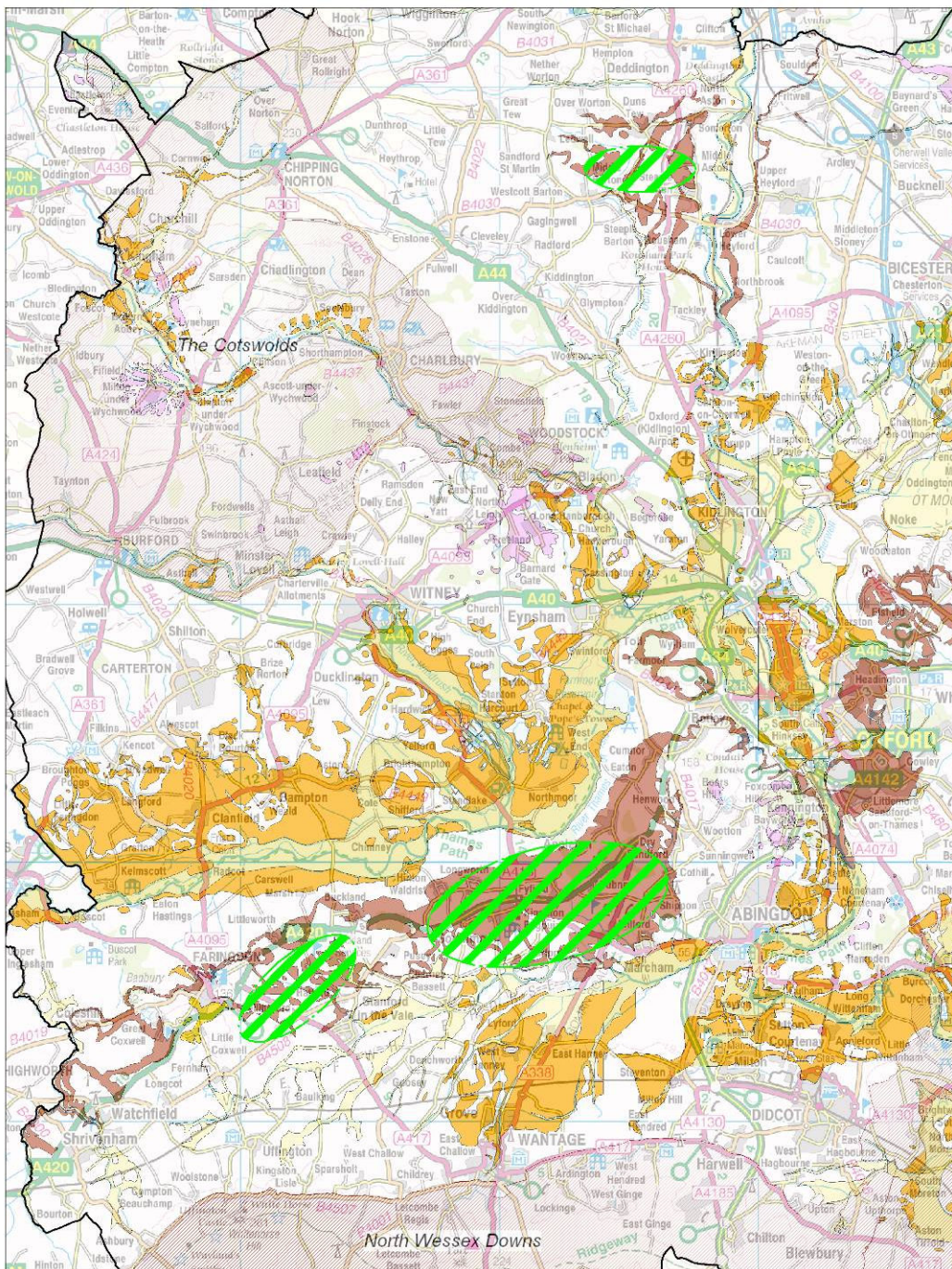
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Soft sand option

Soft sand option July 2010

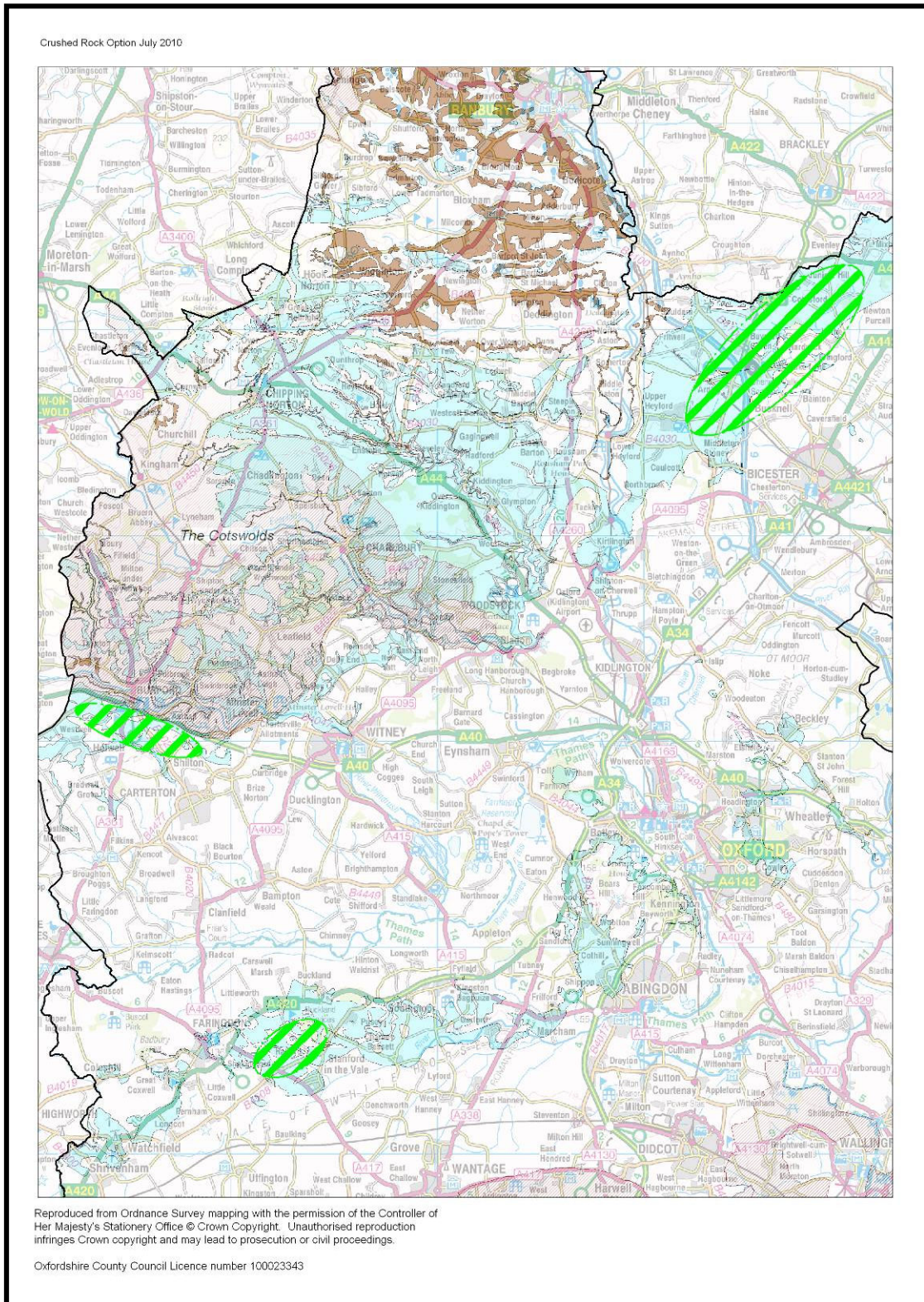


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Crushed rock option





**Appendix 4: Responses to Consultation on Proposed Criteria, July 2010**

<i>Stakeholders were asked 'Do you agree with the use of these criteria for the assessment of the options?'</i>	
Comment made	Recommendation
The use of geological maps and classification of agricultural land are standard assessment criteria and should therefore be investigated further	BGS mapping will be used to assess the quality and depth of deposits, as far as available data allows. Natural England provides comments on the options and best and most versatile agricultural land.
'Proximity to market'; the assessment needs to clarify which locations make up the market.	This will be fully described and justified in the assessment paper. Need to clarify that 'the market' refers to major towns in Oxfordshire.
The list was too simplistic	No constructive alternatives offered.
The criteria are good but need to be applied locally	The criteria will be applied to each of the areas within the options, which will enable an assessment to take place at a local level.
Restoration and after use should take into consideration their long term impacts on local communities	This is assessed under the criterion 'impact on communities and local economy'
Sites of nature conservation should not only cover the designated site, but the area near to the site	The designation of sites for nature conservation should ensure consideration of mineral working close to SACs and SSSIs.
Some of the criteria could be made more area specific, eg bird strike at Brize Norton	The criteria will be used to assess all the option areas to enable a comparison to be made between them, so they cannot be specific to one locality.
'Proximity to roads' should take into consideration only those roads that can take lorries	To enable a comprehensive assessment to take place, the options will be assessed according to their accessibility to major roads.
All criteria are important	It is agreed that all criteria are important. However, some criteria such as sites designated for environmental importance eg SACs may prevent working.
Proximity to markets should include climate impacts	Climate impacts are considered through the assessment of proximity to markets. The sustainability appraisal also considers accessibility of options to markets, likely mineral miles travelled and associated emissions of greenhouse gases.
Suitable transport routes – needs to take into consideration the context of roads and trucks involved	The assessment of options by transport officers and the Highways Agency have contributed to this assessment.
Sites of nature conservation should also include broader list of such areas including the Thames PPS 9 conservation areas.	This possibly refers to Conservation Target Areas. These are being considered in terms of impact on areas of biodiversity importance within them and in

	the context of restoration and afteruse potential criterion.
One group identified suitable transport routes, implications for local residents and road safety issues as being the most important.	All three are covered by the criteria.
Bird strike should also take into consideration the broader area including training grounds.	The Defence Estates response identifies broad areas of the county within the mineral option areas which need to be considered because of their proximity (within 8 miles) of a number of MOD bases. As far as we are aware, there are no training grounds in Oxfordshire, with the exception of Otmoor.
<i>Are there other criteria which should also be considered?</i>	
Clarity should be made about whether the supply of minerals is just for use within Oxfordshire	This is covered by the criteria 'proximity to markets', which focus on markets within Oxfordshire.
Should consider density and quality of the minerals deposit	This will be considered as an issue in the assessment of deliverability of the options.
Impact on tourism	The impact of tourism and on local business could be included in the criterion 'impact on communities and local economy'.
Proximity to rail network for out of county exports	Of little relevance due to distance of most options from rail network and evidence base which shows that most aggregate is imported into the county, not exported from it. Sand and gravel and Oxfordshire rock travel limited distances to market and markets are dispersed; rail is only good for large scale, long distance movement from one point location to another.
Transport to final destination	This will be considered as part of the assessment of the options against the 'proximity to markets' criterion.
Effect on existing businesses	This will be included in the criterion 'impact on communities and local economy'
Enforcement of planning conditions	It would not be practical to include this as a criterion for assessing options for future working.
Planning gains for local communities	This could be included as a positive criterion under 'impact on residents' and comes under the 'restoration and afteruse' criterion.
Accessibility of proposed sites	This will be considered under the 'accessibility to the main transport routes' criterion.
Wildlife proximity	Options are assessed against sites designated for their environmental significance. Conservation target Areas

	also provide a potential positive impact on wildlife.
Detailed hydrological assessments (before extraction)	At this strategic level, it is not appropriate to carry out detailed hydrological assessments. The SFRA sets out the appropriate level of detail for the Core Strategy.
Impact on local businesses	As above
Impact on tourism	As above
Water Framework Directive	The requirements of the WFD are covered by the Environment Agency's response to the consultation.
Biodiversity and landscape amenity impacts	These are considered under the criteria which assesses the options against 'sites designated for their environmental importance' and 'sites designated for their landscape importance.'
Impact on wells in the surrounding area including degradation following dewatering process	This issue cannot be considered at this strategic level but it may be appropriate to address this when specific sites are being considered for inclusion in a Sites Development Plan Document.
Control/policing of agreed transport routes	It is not practical to include this as a criterion for assessing options for future working.
<i>Other comments</i>	
What about creating buffer zones around working?	This is a site specific implementation issue, for consideration at planning application stage, or possibly in Sites DPD, but not appropriate to strategic level assessment.
Can more be done to obtain funding for necessary improvements to roads?	This relates to the criterion 'accessibility to major roads' and an assessment of whether funding would be available to improve road infrastructure.
Communities may be prepared to accept quarries, but they do not want the sites to become waste facilities after use.	The after use of quarries and their potential for restoration is considered by the assessment.
When evaluating road impacts this should cover the whole route including proper traffic flow assessments and potential should include identification of needs for specific road improvements	Transport officers are providing a comprehensive assessment of the options and the impact of working in these areas on the road network.

**Appendix 5: Testing the Options against a Range of Supply Figures**

A nineteen year period is used; this covers the period from the end 2008 (when data was last published on permitted reserves) to 2027, which provides a 15 year period from the expected adoption of the Core Strategy in 2012.

SHARP SAND AND GRAVEL	Average 5 year figure (0.956 mtpa) x 19 years = <b>18.15</b> million tonnes	Average 10 year figure (1.23 mtpa) x 19 years = <b>23.37</b> million tonnes	SEERA figure (1.311 mtpa) x 19 years = <b>24.91</b> million tonnes	CLG recommended figure (2.1mtpa) x 19 years = <b>39.9</b> million tonnes
Sand and gravel option 1				
- Permitted reserves	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000
- Estimated yield of nominations	33, 291,000	33, 291,000	33, 291,000	33,291
TOTAL	38,978,000	38,978,000	38,978,000	38,978,000
Sand and gravel option 2				
- Permitted reserves	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000
- Estimated yield of nominations	58,690,000	58,690,000	58,690,000	58,690,000
TOTAL	64,377,000	64,377,000	64,377,000	64,377,000
Sand and gravel option 3				
- Permitted reserves	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000	5,687,000
- Estimated yield of nominations	96,681,000	96,681,000	96,681,000	96,681,000
TOTAL	102,368,000	102,368,000	102,368,000	102,368,000

SOFT SAND	Average 5 year figure (0.196 mtpa) x 19 years = 3.71 million tonnes	Average 10 year figure (0.209 mtpa) x 19 years = 3.97 million tonnes	SEERA figure (0.223 mtpa) x 19 years = 4.23 million tonnes
Soft sand option			
- Permitted reserves	1,231,000	1,231,000	1,231,000
- Estimated yield of nominations	10,900,000	10,900,000	10,900,000
TOTAL	12, 131,000	12, 131,000	12, 131,000

CRUSHED ROCK	0.66mtpa x 19 years = 12.54 million tonnes
Crushed rock option	
- Permitted reserves	12,592,000 tonnes
- Estimated yield of nominations	17,210,000 tonnes
TOTAL	29,802,000 tonnes



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ANNEX A TRANSPORT					
	Sand and Gravel Option 1	Sand and Gravel Option 2	Sand and Gravel Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
ACCESSIBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE	+	-		+	+
	Good access from Lower Windrush Valley to the strategic lorry network (to A40 via A4095). Congestion on A40 at peak times. Good proximity of EYC area to A40 and A44, although these roads already have capacity issues at peak times. Access to Radley area is poor but possible from Nuneham Courtenay onto A4074. The Highways Agency favours extending existing sites in option 1 because existing facilities and infrastructure can be utilised. It wishes to see evidence that expanding operations in any of the areas identified in option 1 would not adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the Peartree, Marcham and Milton interchanges.	The Clanfield/Bampton area has poor access to the major road and strategic lorry network. There are some weight restrictions on bridges over the Thames. Access from Sutton/Stanton Harcourt would need to use Eynsham bypass. Sites in the south of the Warborough/Benson area have better access than in the north of this area. However, the Cholsey area has good access to the A4130. The Highways Agency notes that Option 2 would require new infrastructure and facilities to be developed which may be difficult to justify and potentially problematic. The A4074 through the Warborough area passes through the villages of Shillingford & Nuneham Courtenay but is identified on the local lorry route.	Access is largely better to existing areas of working which have had infrastructure improvements than to proposed new areas of working. The Highways Agency notes that Option 3 would require infrastructure and facilities to be developed which may be difficult to justify and potentially problematic. A number of the sites are small in option 3 and are located in areas difficult to access by HGV.	Good access for this area to A420 although number and type of HGVs may need to be controlled. The HA would wish to see evidence that soft sand extraction along the A420 would not adversely impact the safe and efficient operation of the Botley interchange.	Good access to A40 at Burford, A420 from Hatford and M40 from Ardley. The HA is concerned that the proposed level of rock extraction in the area north of Bicester and east of the River Cherwell will not compromise the safe and efficient operation of junction 9 of the M40.
PROXIMITY TO MARKETS	+	0	0	-	-
	EYC and Lower Windrush Valley in close proximity to markets in Oxford and Bicester. Sutton Courtenay in close proximity to growth area Didcot/Wantage/Grove.	The Clanfield/Bampton area is further from markets in central and south Oxfordshire than other areas. The Warborough/Shillingford/Benson area is closer to the central axis of demand but access is poor due to the constraints posed by the River Thames. The Cholsey area is close to Didcot. Good proximity from the eastern part of Radley area to S Oxford.	Dispersed pattern of working may reduce mineral miles although distance from areas to markets varies; some closer than others.	Good access to markets in the west and north of the county. Less good to south of county.	Good access to markets in the north and west of the county, less good for the south.
SAFETY OF ROAD USERS	-	-	0	-	0
	Need to divert lorries from Yarnton village; access across railway line may be needed.	Proposed routes pass through small villages in Clanfield/Bampton area. Proposed routes in Warborough/Shillingford area pass through Nuneham Courtenay & Shillingford. Cholsey and eastern Radley unlikely to impact on road safety of local communities.	Dispersed pattern of working may reduce the impact of traffic on some communities, but increase it for others.	Concern from local residents about safety of A417	Few issues with road safety for other users.
POTENTIAL TO USE RIVER/RAIL	--	-	-	--	--
	No potential to use alternative forms of transport identified	Potential problems raised over the ability of the R Thames to transport sand and gravel for W Oxfordshire; presence of pleasure craft, small locks, weak banks. The SA notes that the Cholsey and Radley areas could be served by rail link and that sites at Radley could use the River Thames to transport aggregate; however, the rail route at Cholsey does not link to the main network.	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. Finmere and Faringdon do not have the potential to use alternative forms of transport. There could be potential to use the R Thames to transport aggregate from Caversham, but this has not been suggested by operators.	No potential to use alternative forms of transport identified	No potential to use alternative forms of transport identified
	Key				
	Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria			
	++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact			
	+	The option is likely to have a positive impact			
	0	No significant effect/no clear link			
	-	The option is likely to have a negative effect			
	--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect			

ANNEX B: OPTION AREAS AND FLOOD ZONES						
Crushed Rock Areas		Fluvial flood zones (ha)				
	Total area of nominations	1	2	3a+cc	3a	3b
South of Burford						
CR-02	37.7	37.7	0	0	0	0
CR-07	25.7	25.7	0	0	0	0
CR-10	12.39	12.39	0	0	0	0
	<b>75.79</b>	<b>75.79</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
E of R Cherwell/N of Bicester						
No nominations						
Hatford						
CR-06	13.57	13.57	0	0	0	0
CR-11	12.91	12.91	0	0	0	0
	<b>26.48</b>	<b>26.48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Soft Sand Areas		Fluvial flood zones (ha)				
		1	2	3a+cc	3a	3b
Hatford/Shellingford						
SS-03	42.23	41.01	0	0	1.22	0
SS-07	38.79	38.79	0	0	0	0
SS-08	42.85	42.85	0	0	0	0
SS-09	126.8	126.8	0	0	0	0
SS-12	18.78	18.78	0	0	0	0
	<b>269.45</b>	<b>268.23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.22</b>	<b>0</b>
Tubney/Hinton Waldrist/Marcham						
SS-01	26.66	25.67	0.08	0	0	0.91
SS-04	27.72	27.72	0	0	0	0
SS-05	31.24	31.24	0	0	0	0
SS-10	48.01	47.95	0.01	0	0	0.05
SS-11	74.66	71.75	0.59	0	0	2.31
	<b>208.29</b>	<b>204.33</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.27</b>
Duns Tew						
SS-06	5.94	5.94	0	0	0	0
	<b>5.94</b>	<b>5.94</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Sand and gravel areas		Fluvial flood zones (ha)				
		1	2	3a+cc	3a	3b
Lower Windrush Valley						
SG-14	44.36	0	2.13	0	0	42.23
SG-18	13.6	0	0	0	0	13.6
SG-21	45.4	44.22	0	0.95	0.23	0
SG-22	14.6	12.45	0	0	0.35	1.79
SG-23	25.2	18.79	0	0	4.49	1.92
SG-24	31.8	24.26	0.51	0.7	5.02	1.3
SG-27	52.3	45.19	0	0	2.56	4.55
SG-28	13.8	11.45	0	0	0.53	1.79
SG-30	54	51.28	0	2.69	0	0
SG-32	24.4	24.4	0	0	0	0
SG-34	23.2	8.19	0	2.9	8.3	3.8
SG-36	33.68	33.68	0	0	0	0
SG-39	166.05	11.76	0	13.82	7.95	132.52
SG-50	379.3	0	0	11.7	2.2	365.4
	<b>921.69</b>	<b>285.67</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>32.76</b>	<b>31.63</b>	<b>568.9</b>
Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton						
SG-04	7	1.69	0	5.1	0	0.2
SG-05	9.3	0	0	0	0	9.3
SG-08	215.4	145.61	0	1.29	0	68.49
SG-16	32.8	2.59	0	11.7	0.99	17.5
SG-20	170.9	2.03	0	4.01	0.99	163.89
SG-20a	77.96	0	0	0	0	77.96
SG-20b	39.94	0	3.71	0	0	36.23
	<b>553.28</b>	<b>151.92</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>373.57</b>
Radley						
SG-41	49.21	12.69	0.84	1.869	1.67	32.13
SG-41a	94.31	57.72	12.07	1.89	1.89	20.75
SG-42	87	22.88	15.57	8.53	5.92	34.1
	<b>231</b>	<b>93.29</b>	<b>28.48</b>	<b>12.289</b>	<b>9.48</b>	<b>86.98</b>
Sutton Courtenay						
SG-06	10.53	0	0	0	0	10.53
SG-19	34.74	0	1.01	2.81	4.2	26.72
SG-52	49.11	2.79	0.16	0	0.14	46.02



GI5

SG-53	26.4	26.4	0	0	0	0
SG-56	8.23	0.4	7.613	0	0.16	0.06
SG-62	24.07	15.36	3.63	0	0	5.08
	<b>155.1</b>	<b>44.55</b>	<b>12.413</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>88.4</b>
Clanfield/Bampton						
SG-15	240.8	89.8	0	27.3	0.7	123
SG-38	446.4	174.54	0	58.03	1.34	212.49
SG-54a/b	799.8	101.46	46.23	0	0	652.11
SG-55a/b	1343.9	191.9	0	243.3	0	908.7
SG-58	128.9	112.01	0	10.18	0	6.7
SG-58a	194.8	129.15	0	10.13	0	55.52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3154.6</b>	<b>798.86</b>	<b>46.23</b>	<b>348.94</b>	<b>2.04</b>	<b>1958.52</b>
Warborough/Benson/Shillingford						
SG-03	4.08	0	0.061	0.07	0.21	3.74
SG-09	167	86.51	32.23	0	0	48.26
SG-13	220.4	108.66	87.49	0	0	24.24
SG-48	254.1	131.64	18.63	0	0	103.83
SG-49	544.21	533	10.41	0	0	0.8
SG-59	65.95	27.83	2.7	0	0	35.42
	<b>1255.73</b>	<b>887.64</b>	<b>151.521</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>216.29</b>
Sutton/Stanton Harcourt						
SG-29	142.9	49.3	9.57	1.14	0	82.88
SG-31	185.5	0	0	3.38	1.12	181.04
	<b>328.43</b>	<b>49.3</b>	<b>9.57</b>	<b>4.52</b>	<b>1.12</b>	<b>263.92</b>
Cholsey						
SG-33	67	51.19	14.07	0	0	1.74
SG-46	43.08	43.08	0	0	0	0
SG-57	12.4	7.86	1.99	0	0	2.54
SG-60	15.02	1.33	4.04	3.98	1.69	3.98
	<b>137.5</b>	<b>103.46</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>1.69</b>	<b>8.26</b>
Clifton Hampden/Wittenham						
SG-17	143.7	29.03	51.59	8.91	4.31	49.86
SG-44	509.4	166.78	133.4	37.37	46.51	125.34
SG-45	248.99	140.9	46.77	0	0.9	60.42
	<b>902.09</b>	<b>336.71</b>	<b>231.76</b>	<b>46.28</b>	<b>51.72</b>	<b>235.62</b>
Finnere						
No nominations						
Caversham						
SG-11	64.08	0	1.67	3.72	0	58.69
SG-12	51.19	0	1.23	0	4.35	45.61
	<b>115.27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>104.3</b>
Faringdon						
SG-01	19.07	19.07	0	0	0	0
SG-02	14.72	14.72	0	0	0	0
	<b>33.79</b>	<b>33.79</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

ANNEX C WATER ENVIRONMENT					
	Sand and Gravel Option 1	Sand and Gravel Option 2	Sand and Gravel Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
Impact on flood zones	-	-	-	+	+
	Two thirds of the area of the sites identified in the Lower Windrush Valley lie within flood zones 2, 3a or 3b. A third of the area of the nominated sites is therefore in flood zone 1. Three quarters of the area of the sites identified in the Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton area lie within flood zones 2-3b; a quarter of their area is in flood zone 1. Just over half of the area of sites identified in the Radley area falls within FZ 2-3b, just under half is in FZ1. Two thirds of the area of the sites nominated in the Sutton Courtenay area lie on FZ 2-3b, one third of the area in FZ1.	Three quarters of the area of the sites nominated in the Clanfield/Bampton area lie within FZ 2-3b; one quarter of the area lies in FZ 1. Only one third of the areas of the sites nominated in the Warborough/Benson/Shillingford area lie in FZ 2-3b, one third lies in FZ 1. Eighty five per cent of the area of the sites at Sutton/Stanton Harcourt lie in FZ 2-3b, only 15% lies in FZ 1. One quarter of the area of the sites nominated in the Cholsey area lie in FZ 2-3b, three quarters in FZ 1. Two thirds of the area of the sites identified in the Clifton Hampden/Wittenham area lie in FZ 2-3b, one third in FZ 1.	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. No sites have been identified in the Finmere area. The Faringdon area lies wholly in FZ 1. More than 90% of the sites identified in the Caversham area lie in FZ 3b, the functional floodplain.	The areas identified in this option are almost completely in flood zone 1, with the exception of one very small area at Hatford which is in flood zone 3a, adjacent to a brook and the edge of two areas identified by OCC which are adjacent to Sandford Brook and one small area of a nomination at Tubney, adjacent to an unnamed brook, in flood zone 3b.	The areas identified in the crushed rock option lie entirely within flood zone 1.
Ground water flows	-	0	0	0	0
	The Environment Agency notes that concentrated mineral extraction can restrict groundwater flows.	No specific comments on the impacts of the new areas identified on ground water.	The Environment Agency prefers a dispersed pattern of working to disperse the impacts on ground water flows.	No comments on the soft sand option and groundwater	No comments on the crushed rock option and groundwater.
Surface water flows	-	-	0	0	0
	Restricting ground water flows can cause low surface water flows in rivers down gradient from the working. Low flows in the Lower Windrush Valley are of particular concern. The Evenlode and Thames rivers are not subject to low flows.	Surface water flows in the Clanfield/Bampton area are complicated by expanded operations at RAF Brize Norton and by expansion of Carterton.	The Environment Agency prefers a dispersed pattern of working to disperse the impacts on surface water flows.	No comments on the soft sand option and groundwater	No comments on the soft sand option and groundwater
	Table 1 shows the symbols used when completing the matrices.				
	Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria			
	++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact			
	+	The option is likely to have a positive impact			
	0	No significant effect/no clear link			
	-	The option is likely to have a negative effect			
	--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect			

ANNEX D BIODIVERSITY					
	Sand and Gravel Option 1	Sand and Gravel Option 2	Sand and Gravel Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
Impact on national environmental designations	-	O	O	-	O
	The Eynsham/Cassington Yarnton area includes parts of Oxford Meadows SAC, including the component SSSI Cassington Meadow and Pixey and Yarnton Meads. It appears that this option area still covers these sites. Detailed hydrological assessments would need to be carried out to ensure that there are no detrimental impacts.	No impacts of the new areas included in this option have been identified. There are few SSSIs and no SACs in the new working areas.	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. These areas do not have potential impacts on environmentally designated areas.	The Tubney/Marcham/Hinton Waldrist area of this option contains within it parts of Cothill Fen SAC. This site has a sensitive hydrological regime and assessments will need to be carried out to ensure that any mineral works in close proximity to the designated site will not have a detrimental effect upon it. The OCC ecology planner notes that Option 1 for sand and gravel and the soft sand option are both close to European sites (Oxford Meadows SAC and Cothill Fen SAC). Close consultation with Natural England will be required as to the level of assessment needed for the Minerals LDF if these options are taken forward. It is likely that further assessment by OCC will be required, which may be time-consuming and expensive. An alternative would be to ensure that the boundaries of these option areas are sufficiently far away from the SACs to negate the need for detailed assessments by OCC at the Minerals LDF stage.	The areas included in the crushed rock option are unlikely to have an impact on sites designated for their national environmental importance.
LANDSCAPE					
Impact on national landscape designations	O	-	O	O	-
	The existing working areas are not in close proximity to sites designated for their national landscape importance.	The eastern extent of the Clifton Hampden/Wittenham area falls within the Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area at Cholsey could potentially affect the setting of the Chilterns AONB, as could the Warborough/Shillingford/Benson area.	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. These areas do not have potential impacts on sites designated for their national landscape importance, although potentially the Caversham area could have an impact on the setting of the Chilterns AONB.	The soft sand option is unlikely to have any impact on sites designated for their national landscape importance.	OCC ecology planner notes that the area south of Burford is adjacent to the Cotswold AONB and could have an impact on its setting. Although option 2 for sand and gravel and the crushed rock option could both impact on AONBs, these impacts will be temporary, provided that the restoration scheme is appropriate to the area.
AGRICULTURE					
Best and most versatile agricultural land	O	-	-	O	O

		Some of the area around Warborough is Grade 1 agricultural land, which potentially constrains some of the available resource but other parts of the Warborough area and of the other areas lie in lower grade agricultural land. OCC ecology planner notes that provided BMV is safeguarded, it will not necessarily prevent minerals working. As long as the sub and topsoil is stored during extraction and then restored appropriately, the BMV will be safeguarded.			No impacts on BMV land identified	No impacts on BMV land identified
RESTORATION						
Potential for restoration for habitat creation	++	++	-	O	O	
	Natural England encourages new working in existing areas . Option 1 is therefore a preferred option for Natural England from a potential for restoration perspective. The biodiversity group also notes that option 1 and 2 potentially offer the greatest opportunity for landscape scale restoration as they result in the most concentrated mineral workings and therefore the opportunity to create joined up areas restored for nature conservation at a landscape scale.	Natural England encourages new working in new strategic areas of extraction. Option 2 is therefore a preferred option for Natural England from a potential for restoration perspective. The biodiversity group also notes that option 1 and 2 potentially offer the greatest opportunity for landscape scale restoration as they result in the most concentrated mineral workings and therefore the opportunity to create joined up areas restored for nature conservation at a landscape scale. The LDF is an opportunity to achieve great biodiversity enhancement in Oxfordshire for wildlife and people and it would be a shame for this opportunity to be wasted.	Dispersing working may not enable strategic, planned restoration at a landscape scale.		Restoration is planned at the site level rather than at the strategic option level.	Restoration is planned at the site level rather than at the strategic option level.
	Table 1 shows the symbols used when completing the matrices.					
	Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria				
	++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact				
	+	The option is likely to have a positive impact				
	0	No significant effect/no clear link				
	-	The option is likely to have a negative effect				
	--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect				

ANNEX E ARCHAEOLOGY

	Sand and Gravel Option 1	Sand and Gravel Option 2	Sand and Gravel Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
	O	-	-	O	O
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	The Lower Windrush Valley, Radley and Sutton Courtenay each contains approximately three Scheduled Ancient Monuments and some other areas that are potentially of national importance, which should not be considered for extraction. EH notes that this is particularly the case south of Hardwick. However, these constraints should not preclude other parts of this area being considered for future extraction. In the Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton area, there is a remnant of an Iron Age Fort. EH recommends that further assessment of this area be undertaken before it is included in the strategy. No specific constraints in the Radley area. EH notes the presence of extensive crop marks in the Sutton Courtenay area.	A number of the areas identified in this option contain SAMs: Clanfield/Bampton has approx 11 (and extensive crop marks), Warborough/Shillingford /Benson has approx 7( EH notes presence of significant complexes in the south of this area around Dorchester), there are two in Sutton/Stanton Harcourt and three in Clifton Hampden/Wittenham. These do not preclude other parts of these areas being considered for extraction. There are no sites of archaeological significance in the Cholsey area.	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. There are no sites of national importance in any of these three additional areas and EH notes that they do not have extensive cropmark evidence, so further work should be carried out to determine significance.	The area south and east of Faringdon and the Tubney/Marcham/Hinton Waldrist area both have one SAM, which should not be considered for extraction but do not preclude development in other parts of these areas. There are no specific sites of national importance in the Duns Tew area.	The area east of the River Cherwell/North of Bicester contains 4 SAMs and some other areas that are of potentially national importance. The area south and east of Faringdon contains one SAM. These constraints should not preclude development in other parts of these areas. There are no sites of national importance south of Burford.
	-	-	-	-	-
National Parks and Gardens	The setting of Nuneham Courtenay house and Sutton Courtenay manor needs to be taken into account.	The setting of Fair Mile hospital, to the south of the Cholsey area, and Ascott House, east of Stadhampton need to be taken into account	Option 3 identifies all the areas in option 1 and option 2, with the addition of Finmere, Caversham and Faringdon. There are no sites on the Register of Parks and Gardens in any of these three additional areas.	The setting of Hinton House needs to be taken into account.	The setting of Buckland and Pusey Houses need to be taken into account.
	O	-	O	O	O
Crop mark complexes	There are some cropmarks and others may be beneath the alluvium.	There are a number of crop mark complexes in the Warborough/Shillingford , Clanfield/Bampton area which may be indicative of significant sites. Others may survive beneath alluvium.	As Options 1 & 2. Other archaeological sites may be present under the alluvium.		

Table 1 shows the symbols used when completing the matrices.

Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria
++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact
+	The option is likely to have a positive impact
0	No significant effect/no clear link
-	The option is likely to have a negative effect
--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect

ANNEX F SAFEGUARDING					
	Sand and Gravel Option 1	Sand and Gravel Option 2	Sand and Gravel Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
Impact on MOD airfields	-	--	--	O	O
	The MOD prefers Option 1 for sand and gravel. However, further clarification is required regarding proposed restoration. It proposes that in option 1, OCC should concentrate on the areas identified to the centre and east of the option area. All areas fall within safeguarding zones but this does not preclude development.	The MOD notes that the main 'show stopper' is the large area identified between Clanfield and Bampton, in the vicinity of RAF Brize Norton. The MOD is concerned with the cumulative impact of an expected wetland restoration in the vicinity of key military air bases, which have a negative effect on aviation. It is important that information regarding the restoration and after use is established as early as possible. All new areas have potential implications for birdstrike which need to be considered but do not preclude working.	The MOD notes that the main 'show stopper' is the large area identified between Clanfield and Bampton, in the vicinity of RAF Brize Norton. The MOD is concerned with the cumulative impact of an expected wetland restoration in the vicinity of key military air bases, which have a negative effect on aviation. It is important that information regarding the restoration and after use is established as early as possible.	The MOD does not have any concerns about the soft sand option.	The MOD does not have any concerns about the crushed rock option.
Impact on civil airfields	--	O	O	O	O
	Oxford Airport expressed concern about continued working in the Lower Windrush Valley, Stanton Harcourt and Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton because of the attraction of birds and the possible presence of physical structures over 45m in height.	No comment	No comment	No comment	No comment
	Table 1 shows the symbols used when completing the matrices.				
	Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria			
	++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact			
	+	The option is likely to have a positive impact			
	O	No significant effect/no clear link			
	-	The option is likely to have a negative effect			
	--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect			

ANNEX G IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES						
		Sand and Gravel				
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Soft sand option	Crushed rock option
Cumulative impact of development		-	-	0	0	0
		Some areas of the Lower Windrush Valley and villages in the Sutton Courtenay area have experienced working for many years; the SA notes the cumulative impact of impacts on local communities especially with regard to traffic and amenity issues.	New areas of working will impact on communities which have not previously experienced mineral working, although in the SA, these are judged to be less significant than for communities which have experienced many years of working. The cumulative impact of	Dispersing working will spread the effects on communities more widely, lessening it for some areas but increasing it for others.	Continued working in the existing areas could result in cumulative effects over time on the local communities including on landscape and local amenity – noise, air, dust and traffic impacts.	Continued working in the existing areas could result in cumulative effects over time on the local communities including on landscape and local amenity – noise, air, dust and traffic impacts. However, it is envisaged that there will be no significant increa
Local economy		0	0	0	0	0
		Potential economic benefits of continuing existing working is likely to be marginal as many areas have already been restored for recreational use.	The SA notes that there could be some positive economic benefits in terms of providing employment in the new areas of working. There is also potential to create recreational facilities which could enhance local tourism. However, local residents are concer	The SA notes that there could be some positive economic benefits in terms of providing employment in the new areas of working. There is also potential to create recreational facilities which could enhance local tourism. However, local residents are concer	The SA notes that this option allows the current pattern of extraction of two different quality sands to be continued which has a positive economic benefit. Continued extraction may also provide a limited amount of local employment.	No benefits or disbenefits of continuing the current pattern of extraction on the local economy are identified.
		0	-	0	0	0
Crop mark complexes		There are some cropmarks and others may be beneath the alluvium.	There are a number of crop mark complexes in the Warborough/Shillingford , Clanfield/Bampton area which may be indicative of significant sites. Others may survive beneath alluvium.	As Options 1 & 2. Other archaeological sites may be present under the alluvium.		
		Table 1 shows the symbols used when completing the matrices.				
		Symbol	Likely impact of option on criteria			
		++	The option is likely to have a very positive impact			
		+	The option is likely to have a positive impact			
		0	No significant effect/no clear link			
		-	The option is likely to have a negative effect			
		--	The option is likely to have a very negative effect			

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**MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN WORKING GROUP****Note of Meeting 27 September 2010**

**Present:** Members: Cllr Ian Hudspeth (Chair), Cllr Patrick Greene, Cllr Anne Purse. Cllr Charles Mathew (substitute), Cllr Lorraine Lindsey-Gale (substitute).  
Observers: Cllr Melinda Tilley.  
Officers: Martin Tugwell, Ian Walker, Peter Day, Lois Partridge.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Peter Jones, Cllr George Reynolds.
2. **Note of meeting on 28 June 2010 and matters arising**
  - 2.1 The note of the meeting on 28 June 2010 was agreed.
  - 2.2 **Matters Arising**
  - 2.3 Cllr Mathew thought it was unsatisfactory that the June meeting note referred to the intention to prepare a brief to commission consultants to carry out an assessment of need for aggregates in Oxfordshire and that this had not yet been actioned.
  - 2.4 Peter Day said that the brief would be completed by mid October and that tenders would be sought from at least 3 consultants. The successful consultant would be required to complete their report by December and that their findings on need would be reported to the Working Group in January 2011.
  - 2.5 The meeting agreed unanimously that this work needs to be completed as soon as possible, but that it is also important that it is a good quality piece of work that will provide an alternative figure of need that can be defended.
3. **Assessment of Mineral Spatial Strategy Options**
  - 3.1 Peter Day introduced paper MW1 on the assessment of minerals spatial strategy options. He outlined the need for a new minerals strategy for Oxfordshire and the context for the generation of strategy options. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy will include a strategy and policies for a 15 – 20 year period. There will be separate documents for site allocations. Initial spatial strategy options and then revised options had been the subject of stakeholder consultation during 2010 and a technical assessment of the options and a sustainability appraisal had been carried out. A preferred minerals strategy could now be selected on the basis of policy and is not dependent on the amount of mineral required.

- 3.2 Three options for sand and gravel have been identified: to concentrate on existing working areas; to move to new working areas; or to disperse working across both existing and new areas. A preferred strategy could be chosen based on one of these options or on a hybrid which draws upon elements of these options. There are single options for soft sand and for crushed rock, both based on continuing working in existing areas.
- 3.3 Peter Day advised that there is limited scope for further working at Sutton Courtenay and that this area would not be able to continue to provide sand and gravel throughout the plan period. Consequently a strategy based solely on existing working areas may result in increased concentration of working in the Lower Windrush Valley and Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton areas. Concerns about the transport implications of increased working in these areas and the resultant increase in minerals traffic on the A40, at the Wolvercote roundabout and at the Peartree interchange with the A34 have been raised by the Highways Agency and OCC transport officers.
- 3.4 Cllr Hudspeth asked about the implications of increasing working in these West Oxfordshire areas for traffic on the A40 and its intersection with the A34. Martin Tugwell noted that the Sutton Courtenay could continue to supply sand and gravel for some years, which would give time to consider this further and explore possible mitigation measures.
- 3.5 Cllr Lindsey-Gale noted that although land at Nuneham Courtenay lies within the Radley existing working area, it is essentially a new working area which would require the creation of a new access onto the A4074. Peter Day confirmed that access from this area would be to the A4074, on the straight stretch south of the dual carriageway section.
- 3.6 Cllr Mathew questioned whether extensions to sites which are linked by conveyor to neighbouring plant sites can be really defined as extensions. It was clarified that continued extraction within existing working areas is a different issue from extensions to existing sites; it could involve extensions and/or new sites.
- 3.7 Cllr Lindsey-Gale noted that Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council had stated that working had not taken place at Radley for 30 years. She asked officers to verify when working had last taken place in the Radley area.
- 3.8 In response to Cllr Purse, Peter Day noted that the minerals industry had indicated a maximum mileage for sand and gravel deliveries of about 30 miles, but that most journeys average 15-20 miles.
- 3.9 Cllr Mathew thought that the pattern of supply for Oxfordshire as a whole was important and that the preferred strategy should take proximity to markets into account.

- 3.10 Peter Day said there would be a significant need for supply of aggregates to the continuing planned development of the Didcot and Wantage and Grove areas, and that option areas to the south of Oxford are closer to this Science Vale growth area. He explained that the assessment of options pointed to the possibility of a hybrid strategy which could combine the best elements of the three options to minimise mineral mileage by providing a spread of supply, which would also spread the burden. An example was set out at paragraph 7.5 of paper MW1, involving continued working in the Lower Windrush Valley and Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton areas, the Radley area (northern part) the Sutton Courtenay area in the short term, and also at Caversham, and phased development of new areas of working in southern Oxfordshire, such as Cholsey, Clifton Hampden and Warborough / Shillingford / Benson (northern part).
- 3.11 Cllr Purse noted that aggregates extracted at Caversham do not meet the needs of the Oxfordshire market because they are largely exported into Berkshire. Peter Day said working at Caversham supplies the south east part of Oxfordshire and the Reading area, as it is now the closest source of sand and gravel to Reading. The minerals strategy should take account of cross-boundary movements of aggregates, especially where this provides a local sustainable source for markets which would otherwise have to be supplied from much greater distances. Aggregates are also imported into Oxfordshire, particularly hard crushed rock, which is not available in Oxfordshire.
- 3.12 Cllr Lindsey-Gale thought a hybrid option should not be considered since there had been no consultation on it; this was the first time it had been put forward. Peter Day explained that the possibility of a hybrid had been mentioned during the July consultations and the results of the consultation process and the technical assessment now pointed to this type of approach.
- 3.18 Cllr Mathew expressed support for a hybrid option which involved a balance of working in west Oxfordshire and in south Oxfordshire, to meet the needs of markets and to minimise mineral miles. He pointed out that the Lower Windrush Valley was enclosed by the Thames, the A40 and the A 415 and that practically all sites in Oxfordshire were subject to the same constraints such as archaeology, highways, bridges, flood risk and the like, and therefore the final decision needs to be based on sustainability and market proximity as well as the acreage per tonne consideration. He said that this pointed to the hybrid option as the most equitable and sensible solution.
- 3.19 Cllr Purse also supported a hybrid option that would provide a better balance of supply to meet demand both in west and north Oxfordshire and in south Oxfordshire.
- 3.20 Cllr Lindsey-Gale expressed support for option 1, continuing working in existing areas. She said the gravel areas which constitute Option 1 are

well placed in relation to the markets and best located to provide access to the principal road network. Reserves at existing sites can take us through the plan period. Existing sites have gone through a planning process and their suitability has already been accepted. It seems perverse to expect the aggregates companies to take on the costs of opening new sites, with new processing plants and new transport arrangements without a good business case for doing so. Minerals extraction is a demand led industry, and companies will only move when they have exhausted supplies. They are operating at 40% below expected targets at the moment and the housing industry does not expect an upturn in their market for the next ten years. Now we have a national hold on infrastructure projects. It is unlikely that there will be an upturn in a demand for gravel in the foreseeable future, and therefore there is no logical reason to plan to open new areas for extraction. It also relied upon areas which have already been permitted through the planning process.

- 3.21 Cllr Greene also supported option1, subject to a caveat that would allow other sites to be identified if required to meet future levels of demand.
- 3.22 Martin Tugwell suggested that such a caveat might be more appropriate in a site allocations document, to enable the control of the release of sites as aggregates are needed.
- 3.23 Cllr Tilley, as an observer, indicated that she favoured the principle of a hybrid option.
- 3.24 Cllr Hudspeth supported option 1, and therefore the majority view of the Working Group was for a strategy based on continued concentration of sand and gravel extraction in existing working areas. It was agreed that this should include the Caversham area.
- 3.25 Martin Tugwell suggested that, given there are existing sites with permitted reserves which would enable an existing areas strategy to continue for some time and in the light of the work on determination of need which should be available in January, the Working Group's recommendation to Cabinet could be to support option 1 as the starting position for at least the short term but this position could be looked at again in January when the position on need has been established. The recommendation could include flexibility to review the possibility of new areas of working if the level of need for sand and gravel considered against the ability of existing areas to supply indicates this is necessary, taking into account proximity to markets.
- 3.26 Cllr Hudspeth thought that the recommendation to Cabinet should also include encouragement to increase secondary and recycled aggregates to reduce the need for primary aggregates. He noted that the County Council is asking the District Councils to provide better

information on the availability of recycled aggregates through the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership.

- 3.27 Cllr Mathew asked whether the consultant's brief for the need study would include a requirement to review the need for both primary and secondary and recycled aggregates, and whether it would consider geographical differences of need within the county. Peter Day confirmed that the brief would cover need for both primary and secondary and recycled aggregates. In response to Cllr Tilley, Peter Day confirmed that the consultant's brief would be made available to the members of the Working Group.
- 3.28 Cllr Mathew asked Cllr Hudspeth to write to Government, asking that an increased proportion of the £2/tonne Aggregates Levy is returned to local projects and goes towards encouraging secondary and recycled aggregates. Cllr Hudspeth said that he has already written to the Government about this but was happy to do so again.
- 3.29 Martin Tugwell suggested that the proposed consultation on a preferred strategy approach should be deferred until the spring and combined with consultation on need for aggregates and other policy issues. This would reduce costs and enable work on the need study to be progressed as quickly as possible, but it would not affect the overall timetable for the Core Strategy. It was noted that it would also reduce consultation fatigue.
- 3.30 It was agreed that both paper MW1 and the note of this meeting should be included in the report to the Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee meeting on 6 October.
- 3.31 It was agreed that the recommendation of the Working Group to the Cabinet meeting on 19 October is:
- for sand and gravel – a starting position spatial strategy for concentration of extraction in existing areas of working, at Lower Windrush Valley, Eynsham / Cassington / Yarnton, Radley, Sutton Courtenay and Caversham, but that this position be looked at again in January when the requirement for sand and gravel supply has been established, with flexibility to review the possibility of new areas of working if the need for sand and gravel considered against the ability of existing areas to supply indicates this is necessary, taking into account proximity to markets;
  - for soft sand – a spatial strategy for extraction in three areas, at south east of Faringdon, Tubney / Marcham / Hinton Waldrist and Duns Tew;
  - for crushed rock – a spatial strategy for extraction in three areas, at north of Bicester to the east of the River Cherwell, south of the A40 near Burford and south east of Faringdon (associated with soft sand extraction);
  - for consultation on a preferred strategy for mineral working to be combined with consultation on the need for aggregates supply and

other key minerals policy matters and carried out in Spring 2011, following consideration by the Working Group in January 2011 and by Cabinet in February 2011.

**4. Date of Next Meeting**

- 4.1 The next meeting will be held in late January 2011, the date to be confirmed once the timetable for the need assessment report is known.

LGP/PHD  
28 September 2010

Division(s): All

## **GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 6 OCTOBER 2010**

### **CONCESSIONARY FARES**

**Report by Director for Environment & Economy**

#### **Funding**

1. Government has passed the responsibility to Upper Tier authorities. We will not know what funding will transfer until the autumn and even then there may not be complete transparency. Current district costs are around £8.2 million per year. Our estimate is that OCC costs will be in the range £7m - £10m, depending on the use of the concession and overall take up.
2. We are likely to go for a basic offer, but with a 9am start rather than the 9.30am statutory minimum. We will not be recommending continuation of discretionary elements such as travel tokens, travel on Dial a Rides and Rail cards. Some districts may wish to continue to pay for enhancements
3. Unless Government changes the statutory requirements, our main way of keeping costs down are via our contract negotiations with bus companies and our contract for back office administration.

#### **Accessibility for users**

4. From April 2011 the county will provide the administration of the provision of the pass and anticipate this being through the current contractual arrangement in the Vale and South. We also intend to continue the ability of customers to pick up application forms from the district offices but applications will need to be sent to our contractor for processing.
5. Currently, district officers help local people with advice and filling in applications. We hope this will continue.
6. The Customer Service Centre will also provide help to applicants. The processing will continue to be by post for the time being, but we will consider providing this in house or online in the future.

#### **Procurement of Smartcards**

7. Use of the current system used in the south of the county is being proposed in the short term but we will look to procure our own system or to work with other south east counties to do so.

HUW JONES  
Director for Environment & Economy

Contact Officer: Steve Howell. Deputy Director Tel: (01865) 815845

September 2010

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Division(s): All
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## GROWTH & INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 6 OCTOBER 2010

### ENERGY CONSUMPTION TAX POSITION

**Report by Interim Head of Sustainable Development**

#### Background

1. The CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme started in April 2010, and by April 2011 will introduce a tax on energy consumption. The scheme, designed to incentivise energy efficiency, requires the council to purchase carbon allowances to cover the amount of energy it forecasts to consume each year. The council will be participating against other public and private organisations and its performance will be published on a publically available league table each year. The council's position in the league table will be dependant on its energy efficiency performance, and will dictate the degree of financial rewards or penalties it will receive in year.
2. Between 2011 and 2013 the price of carbon is fixed at £12 per tonne, with an unlimited number of allowances available in the market. In 2013 a cap will be introduced to the number of allowances available, therefore increasing the price per tonne of carbon.

#### Statutory minimum

3. If the council maintains its 2008/09 carbon footprint and merely complies with the scheme, the cost of allowances will rise to £2.8 mill per year by 2013 (assuming £50/tonne). The council is also likely to be at the bottom of the league table due to poor energy performance and will face additional financial pressure (penalties) of £1.4mill by 2015.

	Cap on available allowances				
	2011/12 (£000s)	2012/13 (£000s)	2013/14 (£000s)	2014/15 (£000s)	2015/16 (£000s)
League table gearing	+/-10%	+/-20%	+/-30%	+/-40%	+/-50%
Good performance rewards (income)	-68	-136	-849	-1,132	-1,415
Net position on the league table	-679	-679	-2,830	-2,830	-2,830
Poor performance penalties (pressure)	-68	-136	849	1,132	1,415

## Forecasting our current position

4. Based on our actual carbon footprint from 2008/09 (61,500 tonne), taking account of 2009/10 reduction and a forecasted reduction of 3% year on year from 2011/12, the council's tax position has been profiled to show that the cost of allowances will be £679k in 2011/12 increasing to £2.6mill by 2013/14.
5. The council will not know its position in the league table until it is published in July 2011 and therefore will not know if it will be rewarded or penalised; this forecast is based on the assumption that through the basic compliance work already completed and the successful implementation of early actions the council will be in the upper half of the league table and so will be in a net nil position with the likelihood of a small financial reward (£10,000s).
6. The profiling above includes the assumption that allowances will cost £50/tonne on the primary market when the cap is introduced, with associated penalties of +/- £1.2mill by 2015 depending on energy efficiency performance. If allowances need to be purchased in the secondary market the price could escalate up to £150/tonne.

## Cross Cutting Theme

7. The council's carbon tax position will be impacted by any decisions made through the council's main energy consumption functions e.g. Property Asset Strategy, Street Lighting, ICT. Performance could be improved through the reduction in corporate (non-school) buildings, but these savings could be negated by the use of temporary builds for schools unless we're able to procure buildings with high energy ratings. The council needs to take advantage of the current changes to assess the suitability of the existing business model being used to achieve energy efficiency in light of the new directorate and council structure, and the tax imposed by the CRC scheme.

MARTIN TUGWELL  
Interim Head of Sustainable Development

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September 2010