

Issues Raised by Technical Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal of Sand and Gravel Options

Option 1 – Existing Working Areas

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.

Option 2 – New Working Areas

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) 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.

Option 3 – Dispersed Working

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.

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