

**CABINET**  
**29 SEPTEMBER 2016****WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL AGGREGATES ASSESSMENT**

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**Relevant Cabinet Member**

Dr K A Pollock

**Relevant Officer**

Director of Economy and Infrastructure

**Recommendation**

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure recommends that Cabinet:**
  - (a) approves the annual Worcestershire Local Aggregate Assessment to facilitate planning for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates;**
  - (b) approves the preparation of updates of the Local Aggregate Assessment on an annual basis in accordance with extant guidance and having regard to the advice of the West Midlands Aggregate Working Party; and**
  - (c) delegates authority to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure to agree and adopt the Local Aggregates Assessment annually.**

**Background**

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states: "*Minerals are essential to support sustainable economic growth and our quality of life. It is therefore important that there is a sufficient supply of material to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs.*"
3. The NPPF requires Minerals Planning Authorities to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by preparing a Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA). There are three main types of aggregate: sand, gravel, and crushed rock. Aggregates can be an end product in themselves but are also used as a raw material in the manufacture of construction products such as concrete, asphalt, lime and mortar and, as such, maintaining a steady and adequate supply is critical to enabling development and keeping Worcestershire open for business.
4. Worcestershire County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority for Worcestershire and is responsible for preparing the LAA. The Council is also preparing a new Minerals Local Plan (MLP) for the county which will set out planning policies to guide mineral working and site restoration in the county. The LAA will inform the development of the MLP and will be critical to monitoring success once

the MLP is adopted. It is also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

5. The LAA is an assessment of the demand for and supply of aggregates in the county based on a rolling average of 10 years sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options, including recycled and secondary aggregates<sup>1</sup>, marine aggregates, imports and exports, and land-won resources (sand, gravel and crushed rock).

6. It is required to be updated annually, taking the advice of the West Midlands Aggregate Working Party into account. The annual updates of the LAA are published as part of the Annual Monitoring Report on the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

7. The Cabinet in June 2013 considered the first Local Aggregate Assessment for Worcestershire, approving both the 2013 document and the method used as the basis for annual updates, and delegating responsibility to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Business, Environment and Communities to approve the annual updates using that methodology.

8. Subsequently, further guidance on the production of an LAA has been published in national Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) and by the Planning Officers Society and Mineral Products Association (April 2015) which has changed the approach to the production of LAA's nationally, meaning that the Council must also change its approach from that approved in June 2013.

9. It is now widely recognised by both Minerals Planning Authorities and the minerals industry that the Local Aggregate Assessment is a technical document which informs policy and decision making, rather than being policy in and of itself. In response to the publication of this new guidance and policy, Worcestershire has revised and updated its methodology for the publication of the LAA.

10. The Worcestershire Local Aggregate Assessment 2016 has been developed in accordance with the latest guidance, taking into account consultation comments received on previous versions and the comments of the West Midlands Aggregate Working Party. Focused discussions have also been undertaken with the South West, East Midlands and South Wales Aggregate Working Parties regarding Worcestershire's limited ability to supply crushed rock.

11. It is therefore proposed that Cabinet approves the Worcestershire Local Aggregate Assessment for 2016 prepared using the new methodology, that further annual updates are prepared in accordance with extant guidance and having regard to the advice of the West Midlands Aggregate Working Party, and that Cabinet

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<sup>1</sup> Secondary and recycled aggregates play an important role in minimising the need for extraction of primary materials. Secondary aggregates are produced as by-products from other industrial processes such as blast furnace/steel slag, power station ash, incinerator ash or spent foundry sand. There are currently no industrial processes or waste management facilities in Worcestershire which are known to produce or process secondary aggregates. Recycled aggregates arise from several sources, notably from the demolition of buildings or from civil engineering works such as road resurfacing (producing asphalt planings) and railway track maintenance (producing ballast).

delegates authority to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure to agree and adopt the Local Aggregates Assessment annually.

## Local Aggregates Assessment 2016

12. The main findings of the 2016 LAA are outlined in the table below.

		Sand and gravel	Crushed rock
Production	2015 production	0.538 million tonnes	0 tonnes
	3-year average	0.572 million tonnes	0 tonnes
	10-year average	0.637 million tonnes	0.036 million tonnes
	Annual Production Guideline	<b>0.637 million tonnes</b>	<b>0 tonnes</b>
	Informatives	Production guideline based on 10-year average. No other relevant local information which indicates deviation from this average is required.	Significant constraints on delivering crushed rock production, and lack of sites being put forward by industry, indicate deviation from 10 year average is appropriate
Landbank	Reserves at 31 December 2015	0.895-0.945 million tonnes	0 tonnes
	Landbank at 31 December 2015 (based on annual production guideline)	<b>1.41-1.48 years</b>	<b>0 years</b>
	Landbank requirement	7.00 years	10.00 years
	Informatives	22% of reserves in "inactive" sites. Planning permission granted for 1 additional site (1.4 million tonnes) and applications pending for two further sites.	Discussions with the West Midlands, East Midlands, South West and South Wales Aggregate Working Parties concluded that Worcestershire's production guideline for crushed rock should be reduced to 0 tonnes, but with the emerging Minerals Local Plan providing a policy framework which could enable crushed rock development to take place. The Mineral Planning Authorities and Aggregate Working Parties have indicated that supplying Worcestershire's demand for crushed rock can be accommodated.

## Legal, Financial and HR Implications

13. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## Privacy Impact Assessment

14. None identified.

## Equality and Diversity Implications

15. An Equality Relevance Screening has been completed in respect of the development of the Minerals Local Plan as a whole. The screening did not identify any potential equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.

## Supporting Information

- Worcestershire Local Aggregate Assessment 2016 – available electronically and at County Hall Reception

## Contact Points

### County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

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### Specific Contact Points for this report

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## Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Economy and Infrastructure) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 June 2013

Local Aggregates Assessment 2013 -

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/487/the\\_local\\_aggregates\\_assessment\\_for\\_worcestershire\\_-\\_june\\_2013](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/487/the_local_aggregates_assessment_for_worcestershire_-_june_2013)

Local Aggregates Assessment 2014 -

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4696/annual\\_monitoring\\_report\\_20132014\\_annex\\_1\\_laa](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4696/annual_monitoring_report_20132014_annex_1_laa)

Local Aggregates Assessment Statement 2015 -

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6766/annual\\_monitoring\\_report\\_201415\\_annex\\_1\\_laa](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6766/annual_monitoring_report_201415_annex_1_laa)