

Section 5: Minerals Planning Monitoring

Aggregates (sand and gravel and crushed rock) and building stone are the mineral resource currently worked in Herefordshire. Although the number of active quarries is small, these resources supply both local markets and the wider regional and national area.

Strategic Context and Duty to Cooperate

Minerals planning authorities (MPAs) plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals by cooperating with neighbouring and more distant authorities to coordinate the planning for their extraction. This contact with other MPAs, neighbouring councils, the Marches LEP and local representatives of the minerals industry is supplemented through Herefordshire Council's membership of the West Midlands Aggregates Working Party (AWP).

Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA)

A LAA is a report produced annually to assess the demand for and supply of aggregates in the county. This then informs the content of the policies and proposals being developed for the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) development plan document and will also constitute a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The most recent LAA has taken account of feedback from the review of LAAs completed by the secretariat of the West Midlands AWP in 2016. The AWP has agreed to use a ten-year rolling average as the principle indicator for aggregates production, consistent with national policy guidance. However, the three year average shows more recent trends in sales and demand.

The LAA will establish whether there is a shortage or surplus of supply and provides evidence for determining the level of provision of mineral aggregates to be made in the MWLP for Herefordshire. Currently the county has only two active sites quarrying crushed rock and one producing sand and gravel. Some aggregates are also produced through facilities where construction, demolition and excavation waste is recycled to produce aggregates.

Sales data for crushed rock production is not available for Herefordshire alone due to the long standing confidentiality arrangements agreed between the industry and Government to protect operators' commercial interests. This means that sales data will not be released or published where there are less than three operational sites in an area. Crushed rock figures therefore have to be combined with sales data in other MPAs within the West Midlands region. In addition, the smaller of the two crushed rock operators in the county has not returned information to the council and therefore sales and reserves data has been estimated, based on the last available data from 2013. On a positive note, however, the operator has now agreed to provide the requested information in future years.

Although there is only one operational sand and gravel quarry, express permission to publish sales information for sand and gravel has been granted by the operator in this instance.

The first section of the LAA report reviews evidence relating to the supply of aggregates in Herefordshire and then assesses other relevant information to provide a forecast for demand

and the need for additional aggregate minerals resources. Headline performance indicators for minerals are illustrated in table M1 below.

Table M1: Headline Mineral Monitoring Indicators 2015

		Sand and gravel	Crushed rock
Production	2015 production	0.538 mill tonnes	0.608 mill tonnes [^]
	10-year average	0.23 mill tonnes**	0.2 – 0.35 mill tonnes *
	Informatics	In 2016 the operator of the one active quarry gave permission for data to be made public	Commercial confidentiality, the combining of data with other WM authorities, and incomplete data makes providing accurate figures impossible.
Landbank	Reserves	2.66 mill tonnes	10.2 mill tonnes
	Landbank	9.4 years	24.1 years
	Minimum landbank required	7 years	10 years
	Informatics	Figures are now more accurate (see above informative)	The landbank is potentially greater than indicated since data is incomplete.

* Due to reasons of commercial confidentiality and incomplete data, precise figures cannot be provided

[^] Figure combined with Staffordshire and Warwickshire for commercial confidentiality

** Figures obtained using some years where information was combined with Worcestershire for commercial confidentiality

Secondary Aggregates

Figures for secondary and recycled materials used as aggregates are currently only collected nationally and sub-nationally and the projected demand for these products, estimates of levels of commercial and industrial waste recycling will be used. This is forecasted to increase in future years with the development of opportunities to reuse and recycle construction and demolition and quarrying wastes. Although this would be dependent upon the market's appetite for such new materials.