

Warwickshire County Council

Guidance Notes for the Preparation of Mineral Assessment Reports (July 2025)

Introduction

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) acting as the County Planning Authority is a statutory consultee on the preparation and adoption of District and Borough Council local plans and planning applications for non-mineral development.

National planning policy requires the authority to have in place planning policies to safeguard mineral resources and existing, planned, and potential mineral sites and also waste management infrastructure.

The adopted Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan 2018 – 2032 provides the relevant planning policy framework for mineral safeguarding in Warwickshire through policies MCS 5 and DM10.

Policy CS 8 in the adopted Warwickshire Waste Core Strategy provides the planning policy framework for waste safeguarding.

The focus of the local planning policy framework is to avoid needless sterilisation of mineral resources and to safeguard the minerals and waste infrastructure required to supply the future needs of local communities in Warwickshire and beyond.

WCC's approach is to safeguard valuable and important resources in the county for long term preservation/ conservation for future generations, to identify areas where long term storage of minerals can take place for future use and to allow Warwickshire to be self-sufficient in its future mineral needs. After that to take a sequential approach of removing as much material as possible either for use in the development itself or for the general market, then partial removal followed by incidental and finally sterilisation.

Mineral Assessment Reports (MARs)

A mineral assessment report (also referred to as a Mineral Resource Assessment) is a technical document that evaluates the potential presence and value of mineral resources. It assesses the quantity and quality of minerals, the impact of the non-mineral development on mineral resources and the feasibility of extracting the minerals before the development begins.

Mineral Assessment Reports help ensure that mineral resources are considered in land use planning and that valuable resources are not unnecessarily lost due to non-mineral development. They can provide the local planning authority and WCC with technical information needed to make balanced decisions.

The justification for the preparation of a mineral assessment report (MAR) is set out in policy DM 10 paragraph 9.177 in the adopted minerals local plan.

These notes can be used to help prepare a MAR for both local plans and planning applications. Where there is the potential for mineral sites and waste management infrastructure to be impacted then a separate report should be prepared referred to as a “Minerals/Waste Infrastructure Assessment.”

The main difference between a document prepared for a local plan and for a planning application is the level of information and evidence required. At the planning application stage detailed evidence will be required to be submitted such as on the development impact, feasibility and viability of resource removal and site-specific investigations of the mineral deposits. **For a local plan, a short desk top report can be used based on the proposed development, available published geological information/data and planning policy and guidance together with the application of appropriate development considerations and professional judgement. More information and suggestions for elements and contents in a MAR can be found in the guidance notes below.**

The notes should help in ensuring there is a consistent approach taken in the preparation of MARs and that any subsequent local planning authority Assessment can be carried out in a constant, fair, and logical manner.

Guidance Notes

Suggested Elements to be addressed	Suggested Contents
Proposed Development	Provide a detailed written description of the proposed development supported by a location plan of the proposed development allocation and any concept/layout plans submitted in support.
Site Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide details of existing uses and development on the site/land. - Provide an Indication of contours and key landscape feature. - Size of the site
Planning History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide details of any relevant planning history – previous planning applications/appeals and decisions, permissions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any previous views of WCC on minerals and waste matters.
Policy and Technical Assessment Tools to be Used	<p>The following examples can be used but the list is not exhaustive, nor will they be relevant in all cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Planning Policy Framework - Online planning practice guidance - Adopted Minerals Local Plans - MPA POS Minerals Safeguarding Guidance April 2019 - Site Planning History - Previous Planning Application and/or Appeals - Minerals Data/Information
Mineral Planning Policy Overview	Set out any relevant national and local planning policies for mineral safeguarding and mineral extraction
Minerals Resource Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and characterise the types and extent of mineral deposits present including quantity and quality. - Provide details of data and information used to review and inform the preparation of the report such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing geological data, maps and reports including the BGS Borehole Data archive - planning register – past and existing quarries - sites rejected in the preparation of the adopted MLP - allocations not carried forward from the 1995 MLP. - any site-specific investigations, trial pits, archaeological investigations etc.
Type of Mineral Deposits	List and explain those resources likely to be affected.
Site-specific Intrusive Data	Provide details of any previous borehole drilling, trial pits or other methods used to gather data about the mineral deposits.
Past and/or Current Mineral Workings	Provide details of any past and/or current mineral working affecting the site which would have implications for the resource assessment. If the site were worked previously then any resource may be absent and hence sterilisation would not occur.
Mineral Quality	Provide details of any assessment made by a mineral operator on the quality of the resource or

	the views/opinions of a competent person (Paragraph 9.180 in the adopted MLP).
Mineral Resource Assessment	Analyse the data to determine quantity, quality, and potential economic value. See paragraph 9.177 in the adopted minerals local plan.
Estimated Tonnage Economic Value	To help understand the possible extent/amount of the resource likely to be sterilised you could use the equation below: <i>Volume of Resources = Resource Area x Estimated depth Divided by 2</i>
Development Impact Constraints and Viability	Identify and assess any planning, legal, technical, or environmental constraints affecting the site and determine if it is feasible and viable to extract the mineral resources before or during the development. Planning Considerations (see MLP policy DM 10 b) Development Considerations (see MLP policy DM 10 e)
Development Impact Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can the site be developed in such a way to avoid needless sterilisation? – Land can be excluded from the development and/or can changes be made to the design and layout of the development? - Can mitigation be provided through full, partial, and incidental prior extraction? (see paragraphs 9.179 and 9.187 in the adopted MLP)? SUDS, BNG, Attenuation ponds etc - Can the development be phased to allow early extraction? - Can the extracted resource be used in the development to reduce the need to import materials and reduce construction costs?
Conclusions/Recommendations	
References	A list of the publications, documents or reports referred to would be helpful
Appendices	This can include any drawings, maps, or data.

Additional NOTES

1.	The MAR needs to be prepared by a competent person.
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2.	These are guidance notes produced to help interested parties prepare a document with the right level of information and evidence on the potential impact on mineral safeguarding of proposed allocations for development in Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Districts.
3.	MSA boundaries have been drawn based on the extent of the known geological resource plus a buffer. It does not take into account resources which have already been removed or sterilised by existing or approved development. While Appendix 3 to the adopted MLP lists a number of exempted development types in MSAs none of these currently apply for the preparation of a local plan. However, should a site go forward for inclusion as an allocation in the adopted local plan then the subsequent planning application required to develop the allocation will be exempt from further consideration as a result of Exemption 3.
4.	Information gathered and reported in the MAR can form part of any assessment required (ground conditions, soils, minerals, materials, and waste) in an Environmental Assessment to accompany a planning application for development.
5.	The more detailed the information and evidence gathered at this stage to prepare a MAR the easier it will be to judge whether the sterilisation of mineral resources in the site can be justified.