

Rutland County Council

Briefing Note: Minerals Provision

**Rutland Local Plan
2021-2041**

July 2023

Introduction

1. The Rutland Local Plan (RLP) needs to identify the quantum of provision for crushed rock to be produced in the county. This has to be achieved in a way that is compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any other national guidance, particularly the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). It has to take account of the longstanding Managed Aggregate Supply System (or MASS) and in particular how this relates to the preparation of Local Plans and Local Aggregates Assessments (LAA) and the direct relationship between them.
2. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:
preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment, either individually or jointly by agreement with another or other mineral planning authorities, based on a rolling average of 10 years sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources).
3. The NPPG states that the LAA must also consider other relevant local information in addition to the ten-year rolling supply, which seeks to look ahead at possible future demand, rather than rely solely on past sales. Such information may include, for example, levels of planned construction and house building in their area. Minerals Planning Authorities (MPAs) should also look at average sales over the last three years in particular to identify the general trend of demand as part of the consideration of whether it might be appropriate to increase supply. These LAA matters are also directly relevant to the preparation of the RLP.

Context to the Draft Plan provision

4. The Rutland Minerals Core Strategy (MCS), adopted in 2010, was prepared under the former system for identifying provision where a regional figure was provided by government and then apportioned to the MPA areas in that region. Rutland has historically been linked with Leicestershire for the apportionment of crushed rock and received a joint apportionment of 25.6 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) to be provided over the period 2001 to 2016. Based on average sales over the period 1997 - 2001 (the period used to calculate the sub-regional apportionment figures), Rutland provided 19% of the combined total for limestone used for aggregate purposes from Leicestershire and Rutland which equates to an annual requirement of 0.30 Mtpa. The sub-regional apportionment only covers the period 2001 to 2016 which did not tie in with the end of the MCS period (2026). The 2001 - 2016 apportionment was therefore rolled forward to 2026 by assuming the requirements after 2016 continue at the same average rate.

Background to provision in the Draft Plan

5. The total crushed rock sales in Rutland during the ten-year period 2013 – 2022, 10-year average sales for the period 2013 – 2022 and 3-year average sales for the period 2020 – 2022, are set out in Table 1 below. To protect commercial confidentiality annual sales figures cannot be published.

Table 1: Total crushed rock sales in Rutland 2013 – 2022

Year	Limestone (million tonnes)
Total sales 2013 – 2022	2.82
10-year average 2013 – 2022	0.283
3-year average 2020 – 2022	0.267

6. If the annual provision for crushed rock in the Draft RLP is to be based solely on a ten-year annual average sales provision it would therefore be 0.28 Mtpa. This would assume that there is no compelling case for any adjustment either upwards or downwards.
7. In relation to any potential upward adjustment, it is not likely that the demand for crushed rock in Rutland will be any greater than that experienced previously. There are indications of future growth in construction activity in Rutland for which a continued supply of crushed rock will be needed, however, due the rural nature and size of the county, the amount of planned construction is relatively small compared to other areas. There are no major construction projects planned that would result in a significant increase in demand for mineral resources although it is likely that some national infrastructure projects, identified outside the county, may be supported by mineral products from the county. Castle Cement Works in Ketton for example uses locally quarried limestone at Ketton Quarry to produce cement that is distributed nationally.
8. In relation to significant constraints on crushed rock resources that could possibly justify a lower than ten-year figure, these are not present in Rutland to an extent that they could significantly affect availability of sites. Minerals can only be extracted where they are found, as such, available resources are constrained in terms of where they can be acceptably worked. Limestone resources largely occur in the eastern half of the county and workings to date for crushed rock have been concentrated in the north-east of the county. The RLP identifies an Area of Search (AoS) for limestone for aggregate and building stone (LABS) purposes within the north-east of the county (referred to as the LABS AoS). The LABS AoS focuses on areas of inferred mineral resources (Lincolnshire Limestone) from which extraction has previously, and currently, occurs and so is known to be viable (though it is acknowledged that economic viability may vary within the resource area).
9. The crushed rock resources in the LABS AoS are free of constraint from international environmental designations, however there are some national and local designations in this resource area to consider when assessing the suitability of potential future sites. Where potential adverse impacts do arise from extraction, they need not automatically prevent development as such impacts may be able to be avoided and/or mitigated in order to reduce potentially adverse impacts to an acceptable level. An important site for biodiversity in Rutland is Rutland Water reservoir. It is an internationally designated wetland site designated as an EU Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Ramsar site. However, it is not likely that the reservoir's designations will restrict crushed rock extraction as it is located away from the north-east.
10. Furthermore, over the last ten years there have always been a steady production of crushed rock in Rutland (landbank consistently/well above ten years), even during times of economic recession. Interest from the industry continues to be strong, with recently submitted and approved applications for mineral extraction at Clipsham Southern Extension, Greetham Quarry North Western extension and Hooby Lane (scoping opinion). An application for crushed rock extraction at Land North of Stretton Road, Greetham has also been submitted, but is yet to be determined, again signalling that there are no particular issues in relation to providing sites thus necessitating a lower than ten-year figure.
11. The other element to look at is whether the three-year annual average sales figure is showing a higher figure trajectory than the ten-year figure. However, it does not, the

most recent three-year period of sales for which data is available (2020 – 2022) is 0.27 Mtpa which is slightly lower than the ten-year average sales figure.

12. It is noted that the ten-year provision figure of 0.28 Mtpa is less than that identified in the MCS (0.30 Mtpa). However, it is pertinent to note that the ten-year derived figure in minerals local plans is supported by the minerals industry as a whole and that objections cannot be justified simply because it is a lesser figure than in previous documents. Furthermore, for the majority of time during the last ten-year period the annual sales figure has been below the ten-year average figure of 0.28 Mtpa.

Provision in the Draft Plan

Aggregates - crushed rock (limestone)

13. In order to provide a steady and adequate supply of minerals over the plan period, an annual provision figure of 0.28 million tonnes (Mt) for crushed rock is recommended to be included in the RLP.
14. To further help to identify a provision figure, the proposed annual extraction rates (taken from planning applications), permission end dates, together with data on remaining reserves, for permitted crushed rock quarries in Rutland were assessed. There are currently four sites permitted for crushed rock extraction in the county, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Permitted sites in Rutland for the extraction of crushed rock

Site	Status as of 31/12/2022	Permitted reserves / extraction rate	Permission end date
Clipsham Quarry**	Active	5 Mt of limestone reserves* Working over 33 years with an annual extraction rate of 175,000 t	2061
Greetham Quarry North Western extension	Permitted in February 2023, permission yet to be implemented	3 Mt of limestone reserves Working over 23 years with an annual extraction rate of 150,000 t	23 years from start date – will likely start within the next 3 years before the permission expires
Woolfox	Active	1.8 Mt limestone reserves* (limited reserves remaining) Working over 2 years with an annual extraction rate of 70,000 t	2024
Thistleton	Inactive	6.4 Mt limestone reserves* Annual extraction rate unknown	2042

* Permission also includes reserves of non-aggregate limestone

** A southern extension to Clipsham Quarry was permitted in 2020 however both the original quarry and southern extension are classified as one site due to both sites being worked simultaneously by the same operator and combined reporting of reserve and sales figures.

15. Thistleton Quarry is considered by industry and site owners/prospective operators, the Heritage Quarry Group (HQG), to be undeliverable on the basis the site is not economically viable due to the costs involved of developing the associated haul road and annual limit on sales. A scoping assessment has been submitted to Rutland County Council by the HQG proposing in essence an exchange of Thistleton Quarry for an alternative, deliverable and viable site, at New Road, Hooby Lane (also in their

ownership) which would primarily be for building stone extraction. Therefore, excluding the Thistleton site, and also Woolfox which is near exhaustion, if the remaining two sites Clipsham and Greetham North Western extension, are operational and meeting the expected output set out in their planning applications, the annual sales figure would be approximately 0.30 Mt which is the same as the 0.30 Mtpa apportionment figure in the MCS, and slightly higher than the emerging RLP provision figure of 0.28 Mtpa. A provision figure of 0.28 mtpa would, in broad terms, be based on two sites (from existing operations /commitments) generally being operational at any one time throughout the plan period. Working on the basis of two to three operational sites at any one time in the County is a realistic proposition for the RLP and has been the case over the last ten years.

16. Some sites have extraction limited through the HGV movements permitted but where this isn't the case, the RLP outlines its expectation that operators will complete extraction in the number of years specified in the determined application so to not inflate annual extraction rates above those which have been allowed for in the projections. For example, if a site is approved on the basis of completing extraction in 15 years, then it should not be completed sooner.
17. Due to the limited number of quarries in the county the total output of crushed rock can be significantly affected if just one site either ceases or significantly reduces production. For this reason, the situation will be closely monitored to make sure that maintaining historical annual output levels remains viable. Where monitoring indicates that a steady supply of aggregates cannot be guaranteed then the RLP would require revision. However, it should be noted that the requirement to maintain an up-to-date plan should mean that a review or partial review of the RLP will take place before any potential supply shortage becomes an issue. Furthermore, it is also the case that Policy MIN2, which allows unallocated sites to come forward, can also be utilised if considered necessary.
18. The Call for Sites in February 2022 resulted in no sites for crushed rock being put forward. Further, no sites for crushed rock have been allocated in the RLP as the existing commitments, excluding the 6.4 Mt reserve at Thistleton, provide crushed rock surplus to requirements over the entire plan period.

Non-aggregates – limestone and clay

19. Limestone for building stone purposes is currently produced from three quarries: Clipsham, Woolfox and Hooby Lane. Clipsham and Woolfox quarries also produce limestone for use as agricultural lime in addition to crushed rock. During the Call for Sites three sites were put forward for non-aggregate extraction, either for the primary purpose of building stone provision, or use in cement manufacture. Following policy development and assessments of these sites, one site is allocated in the RLP: New Road, Hooby Lane, primarily for building stone extraction. The yield is unknown however building stone extraction is typically a small-scale operation of <5,000 tpa. The site would be an exchange site to Thistleton Quarry and is actively supported by the landowner and minerals industry. If permitted, it is expected to commence operations early on in the plan period. Its extraction life is unknown, but building stone extraction tends to have a relatively long-term nature.
20. A further site was put forward during the Call for Sites however it was discounted on the basis that the intention was for the mineral extracted to be used for on-site construction purposes only and not sold to market. The minerals extracted would therefore not contribute towards maintaining a supply of materials in Rutland or the wider area.

21. Annual provision figures for building / roofing stone and clay are not identified in the Plan given the relatively low level of output and that there is no requirement to identify a rate.
22. The Plan will seek to maintain a sufficient stock of permitted reserves for limestone and clay in order to supply the Cement Works at Ketton at an output of around 1.4 Mt. Recent production levels have been around 1.4 Mt or just below which indicates there is no need to increase the output further. No sites for the supply of limestone and clay, required to support Ketton Cement Works, have been identified - the identification of the cement AoS and Policy MIN1 enables sites to come forward where in line with relevant Local Plan policies.
23. A specific provision figure for brickclay is not identified. The existing permission for brickclay extraction at Little Casterton expires around the beginning of the plan period and hence additional reserves may be required. Any new proposals for brickclay extraction will need to demonstrate they are in compliance with relevant Local Plan policies.

Provision and landbanks

24. The Government requires MPAs to have landbanks for aggregates and raw industrial minerals such as limestone and clay for cement manufacture. A landbank is a stock of planning permissions for mineral extraction and is calculated by dividing the permitted reserves by the provision rate. They are principally a monitoring tool to provide an early indication of possible disruption to the provision of an adequate and steady supply of mineral in the county and indicate when new permissions are likely to be needed. The RLP will therefore seek to ensure there are the necessary planning permissions to meet a landbank of at least ten years for crushed rock and a stock of permitted reserves of at least 15 years for cement primary and secondary materials (limestone and clay).
25. Based on a 0.28 Mtpa provision rate for crushed rock, the maintenance of crushed rock landbanks at the end of the plan period equates to an additional 2.8 Mt. At the commencement of the plan period the crushed rock landbank for Rutland is approximately 39 years. Rutland therefore has sufficient reserves to provide a ten-year landbank.
26. Ketton Cement Works has an annual output of around 1.4 Mt of cement and at this rate there are sufficient permitted reserves to carry operations through to around the middle of the plan period, but not up to 15 years. It is likely therefore that the cement works will need to secure additional reserves before the plan period ends. The need to secure additional reserves is recognised and encouraged in the Plan through Policy MIN2.
27. Planning applications for crushed rock extraction in the county are currently judged on meeting the landbank figure through the latest LAA due to the apportionment figure in the MCS being out of date and superseded by the 'provision' approach as outlined in the NPPF. What having a figure in policy will mean is that the driver for the landbank will be through the local plan policy rather than the LAA, although the latest LAA will still need to be taken into consideration in the overall determination of applications.
28. It is important to recognise that the aggregates system introduced by the NPPF is not meant to be a constraint on production. This is why there is a requirement to produce an LAA annually and also to specifically consider the last three years annual average supply if this is showing an upward trajectory compared to the ten-year figure and the provision figure set out in policy.

Provision and the plan period

29. The total provision to be met in the RLP is the annual provision figure multiplied by the number of years from the start of plan period to the end of the plan period in 2041. In the case of the RLP this will be 0.28 Mtpa multiplied by 20 years (1 January 2021 to 31 December 2041), equating to a total provision of 5.6 Mt of crushed rock. However, some minerals local plans add a further ten years provision, equating to a notional ten-year landbank, at the end of the plan period for their total figure. The RLP has not done this on the basis that the plan will be reviewed and the new one adopted before 2031 (that is to say 2041 minus ten years).

Sand and gravel provision

30. No provision has been made in the RLP for sand and gravel production. There are currently no sand and gravel quarries in Rutland and historically there is no evidence that this material has ever been worked. Further, no sites for sand and gravel were put forward during the call for sites process. If the unexpected occurs and one or more proposals for sand and gravel come forward, then they will need to prove compliance with the appropriate Local Plan policies.