

OXFORD GREEN BELT NETWORK

NOTE

Mineral Working and Its Impact on the Oxford Green Belt

The County Council has recently produced a Minerals Site Proposals and Policies Document. It takes the form of a Consultation on possible future sites for mineral working in the County and it arises in connection with the County's work in producing a new Minerals and Waste Plan. Some of the sites are identified by the County itself; many are put forward by landowners in response to the County's request for suggestions. Some of the sites suggested are extensions to existing workings; others are new ones. The County is not committed to any of them at this stage but it is clearly an important step towards identifying sites that might be developed in the future in response to government demands for increased mineral production to support house building and other forms of construction.

The Consultation covers Sharp Sand and Gravel, Soft Sand, Crushed Rock, Sites for Production of Recycled Aggregate, Rail Depot Sites. Thirteen sites for possible Sharp Sand and Gravel production are in the Oxford Green Belt, covering between them over 2,000 hectares. The parishes most affected are:

Yarnton/Cassington/Hanborough/Eynsham

North and South Hinksey

Radley

**Culham/Clifton Hampden/Berinsfield/Drayton St Leonard/Warborough
Stadhampton/Little Milton**

For Soft Sand (four sites in the Green Belt) the parishes most affected are: **Fyfield and Tubney, Besselsleigh and Marcham**; for Crushed Rock: **Shipton-on-Cherwell**; for Aggregates: **Besselsleigh, Bletchington and Cassington**; for a possible Rail Depot: **Radley, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Gosford and Water Eaton**.

There are, of course, many sites outside the Green Belt, but we have concentrated only on those within the Oxford Green Belt.

It may be that the County has already consulted the Parish Councils that would be most affected if development were to take place. But we nevertheless felt that it was worthwhile alerting Parish Councils and Parish Meetings to what is taking place because the possible future consequences are so far reaching. The Consultation is published by Minerals and Waste Policy (SPED) at the Environment and Economy Department of the County Council, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE (email: minerals.wasteplan@oxfordshire.gov.uk). The relevant website is <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/links/public/mineralsandwastepolicy>.

The Consultation invites comments about individual sites, in particular what the issues affecting the site are, what the impacts of development would be, how impacts could be mitigated, and the potential for restoration. The Oxford Green Belt Network

will respond to the Consultation but is not in a position to comment in detail on individual sites, hence our sending this Note to the Parish Councils and Meetings most likely to be affected (we are sending it by email where we can).

The Consultation ends on 15th June and comment forms can be downloaded from the website.

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As you will be aware from our recent Newsletter a similar Consultation on possible sites for Waste recycling facilities took place earlier in the year.