# South East – Mineral Planning Authorities

Soft Sand Position Statement (2023)

## Introduction

1.1 Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out a "duty to cooperate" in relation to planning of sustainable development, under which planning authorities are required to engage constructively, actively, and on an ongoing basis in any process where there are significant cross-boundary issues or impacts. This includes the preparation of development plan documents so far as relating to "strategic matters", such as the supply of minerals. The Duty to Cooperate therefore applies to the preparation of minerals local plans[1].

1.2 The purpose of this Position Statement is to provide an agreed source of evidence and current policy on the issue of soft sand supply in the South East. The Position Statement underpins effective cooperation and collaboration between the Minerals Planning Authorities of the South East of England in addressing the strategic cross-boundary matter of soft sand supply. It is, however, not intended to be legally binding or to create legal rights. This revised Position Statement is an update to the one prepared in 2019.

1.3 The Position Statement is intended to form the basis of any Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) to be produced by the parties and agreed by the different Mineral Planning Authorities. Any SoCGs between individual Mineral Planning Authorities will consider, in more detail, the implications of evidence provided in this Position Statement and seek to address issues on soft sand supply, and its coordination between those areas.

1.4 The Position Statement, as a statement of fact, has been agreed by officers. SoCGs will, dependent on content, be agreed at either officer or Council Member level.

[1] It is noted that the Duty to Cooperate will be removed under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. This Position Statement will be updated to reflect this change once implemented.

1.5 The Minerals Planning Authorities of the South East of England comprise the following authorities:

Bracknell Forest Council
Brighton & Hove City Council
Buckinghamshire Council
East Sussex County Council
Hampshire County Council
Isle of Wight Council
Kent County Council
Medway Council
Milton Keynes City Council
New Forest National Park Authority
Oxfordshire County Council
Portsmouth City Council
Reading Borough Council
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Slough Borough Council
South Downs National Park Authority
Southampton City Council
Surrey County Council
West Berkshire Council
West Sussex County Council
Wokingham Borough Council

1.6 These authorities are all members of the South East England Aggregate Working Party (SEEAWP) and each is responsible for planning for the supply of minerals in their areas, through the preparation of minerals local plans. Figure 1 shows the location of each of the above authorities within the South East.

1.7 A minerals local plan can cover the area of a single Mineral Planning Authority, or a larger area administered by more than one Mineral Planning Authority where they decide to act together to prepare joint plans. The following Mineral Planning Authorities have prepared or are preparing Joint Plans:

- Bracknell Forest, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham;
- Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and South Downs National Park;
- Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton, New Forest National Park and South Downs National Park;
- West Sussex and South Downs National Park.

1.8 Soft sands are commonly deposited in marine environments, where constant

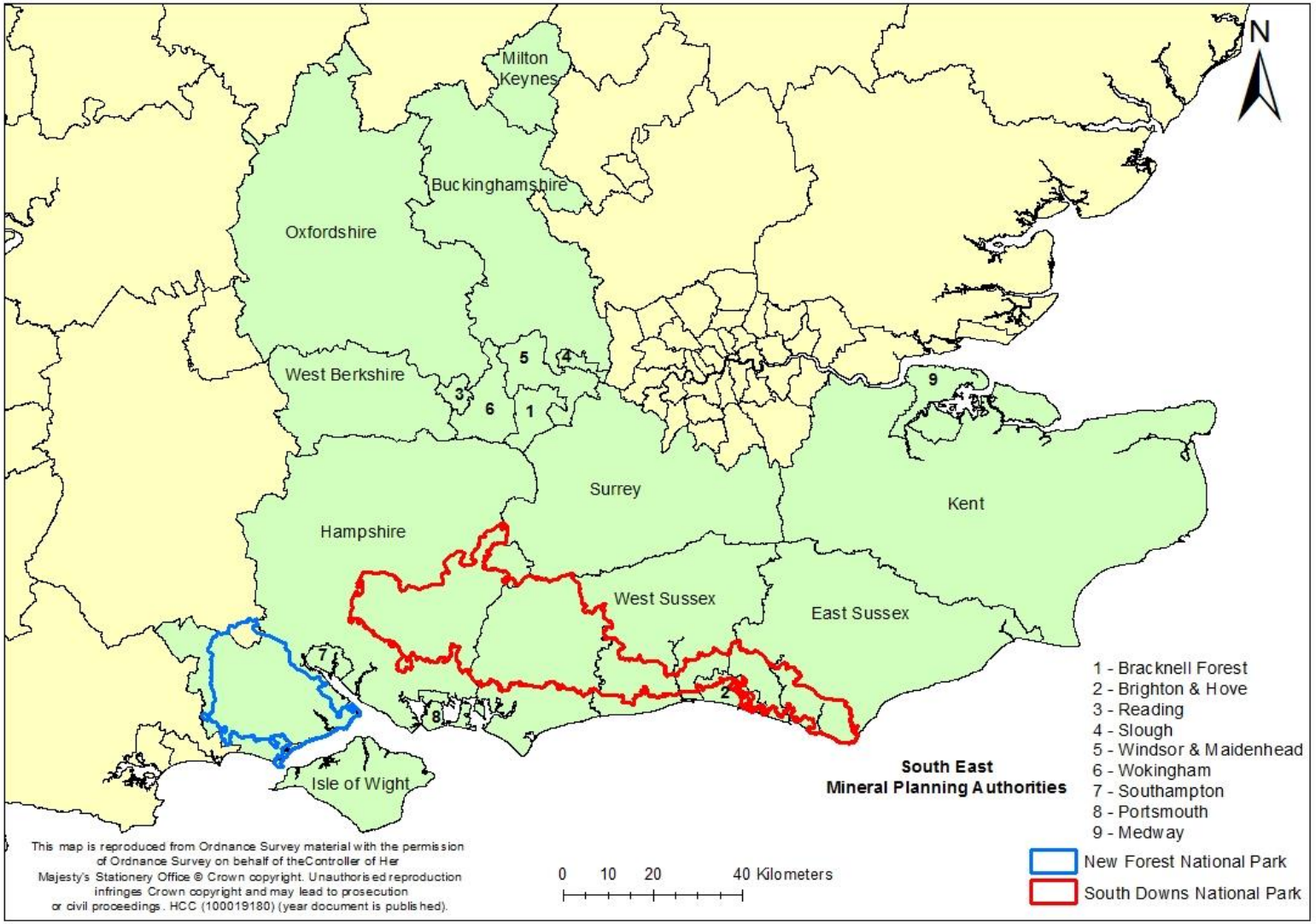
movement results in the rounding, polishing and sorting of the grains. The fine, smooth, characteristics of soft sand lend it to be used in building mortar and asphalt by the construction industry.

1.9 Land-won soft sand in south east England is an important aggregate mineral that, for certain end uses such as mortar, cannot be easily substituted by other materials (artificial substitutes are not apparently available). However, for more wider uses of soft sand, alternatives are available such as sharp sand, marine sand, secondary aggregates and recycled materials but these require additional additives, processing and in some cases transport costs which can remove the competitive advantage of natural, local soft sand.

1.10 Soft sand in the South East is generally fine-grained and has a limited grain size distribution within the deposits. The individual grains (silicon dioxide [SiO2]) are smooth and well-rounded thus imparting a relatively soft texture and free-flowing nature. These properties are different to those associated with sharp sand, which is rough, angular, and used predominantly in concrete production.

1.11 Soft sand (often known as building sand) has historically been extracted in the south east of England given that the geology of this area includes soft sand bearing deposits. However, not all Mineral Planning Authority areas contain soft sand resources, and, in some areas, the resources are constrained by landscape and environmental designations.

## Figure 1: Location of South East Mineral Planning Authorities



# Policy Background

2.1 This section sets out the existing policy frameworks in place for planning for soft sand supply.

## National Policy

2.2 National policy for minerals is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework[2]. The relevant paragraphs are set out in Appendix A including Para. 213 (h):

"Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:
…
(h) calculating and maintaining separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market."

2.3 Further guidance on the implementation of the National Planning Policy Framework is set out in the Planning Practice Guidance[3].

## Local Policy

2.4 Many of the South East Mineral Planning Authorities have adopted policies relating to the supply and safeguarding of soft sand (see Appendix B).

[2] National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (Section 17: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals) - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf

[3] Planning Practice Guidance (Minerals) - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/minerals

# Issues

3.1 This section outlines the issues known to impact the supply of soft sand in the South East.

## Soft sand geology in the South East

3.2 Soft sand has historically been extracted in the south east of England and is sourced from the following geological formations (see Figure 2 and Figure 3):

- the Folkestone Formation (the Folkestone Beds) in Kent, Surrey, Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex;
- the Corallian Group, in Oxfordshire;
- the 'Reading Beds' in the Unitary Authorities that make up the former County of Berkshire; and
- the Lower Greensand Group of the Isle of Wight.

3.3 The primary source of soft sand is the Folkestone Formation of the Lower Greensand Group. The Folkestone Formation extends from north west of Lewes in East Sussex, across West Sussex and into Hampshire to Petersfield, where it swings around to the north east and then continues east across Surrey and Kent, meeting the coast at Folkestone (see Figure 2).

3.4 The Folkestone Formation has traditionally been regarded as a source of 'soft sand' used for construction purposes, such as mortar manufacturing, and has also been a source of specialist 'silica sand' (an industrial mineral), especially in Surrey and Kent (see Figure 2). It should be noted that 'soft sand' notation around Canterbury in Figure 3 is the Thanet Sand which is not of equal quality to that of the Folkestone Formation and is for general use such as backfilling and sub-soil.

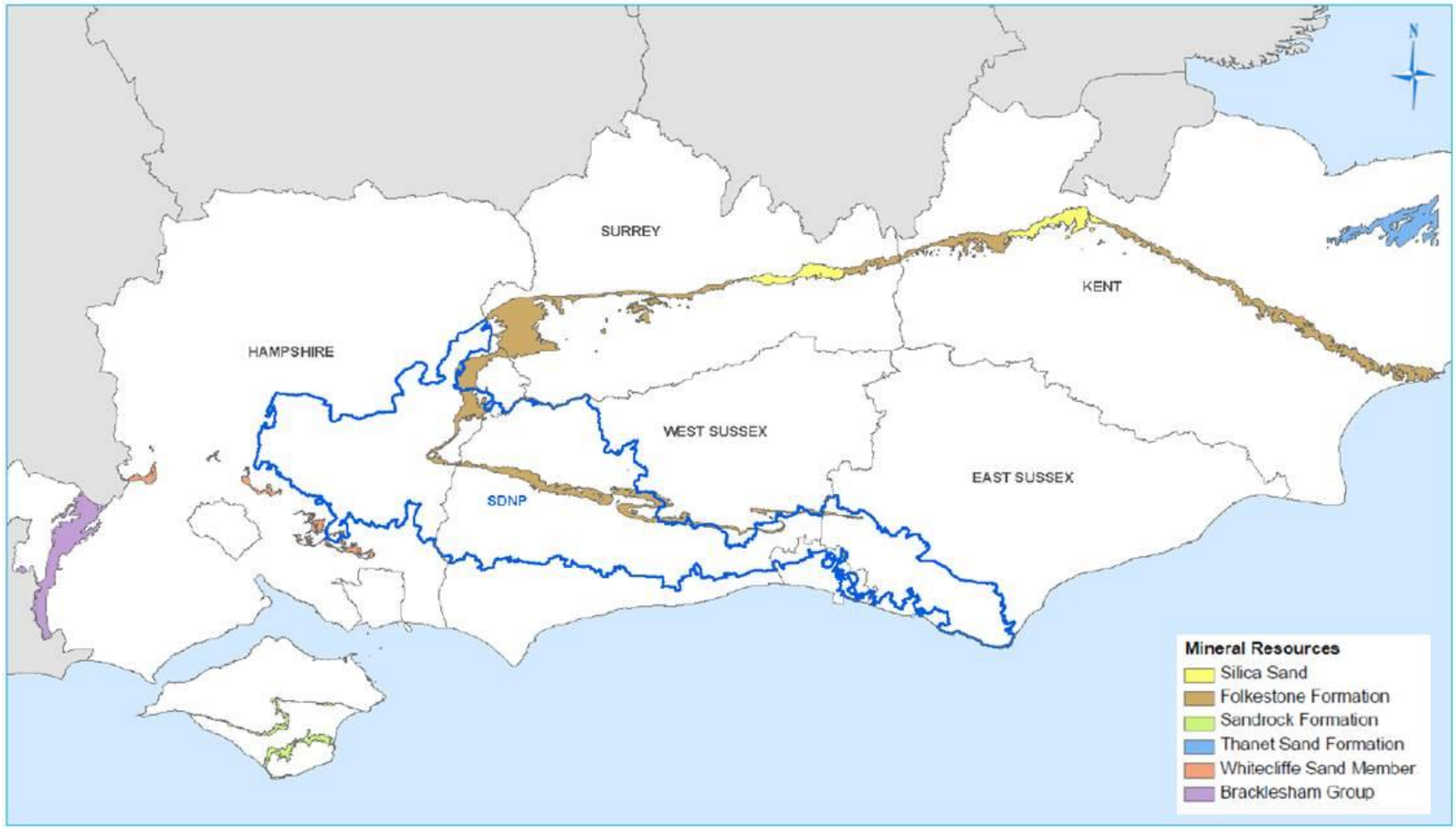
3.5 In Oxfordshire, soft sand resources are limited to the Corallian Ridge area between Oxford and Faringdon and a small area around Duns Tew in northern Oxfordshire. In West Berkshire, soft sand is associated with the 'Reading Beds' formation. The Reading Beds extend into Central and Eastern Berkshire[4] although there have been no significant excavations from the formation in this area since the early part of the century.

3.6 The Sandrock Formation within the Lower Greensand Group runs east to west across the south of the Isle of Wight. Whilst the Solent creates a physical

[4] Bracknell Forest, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham.

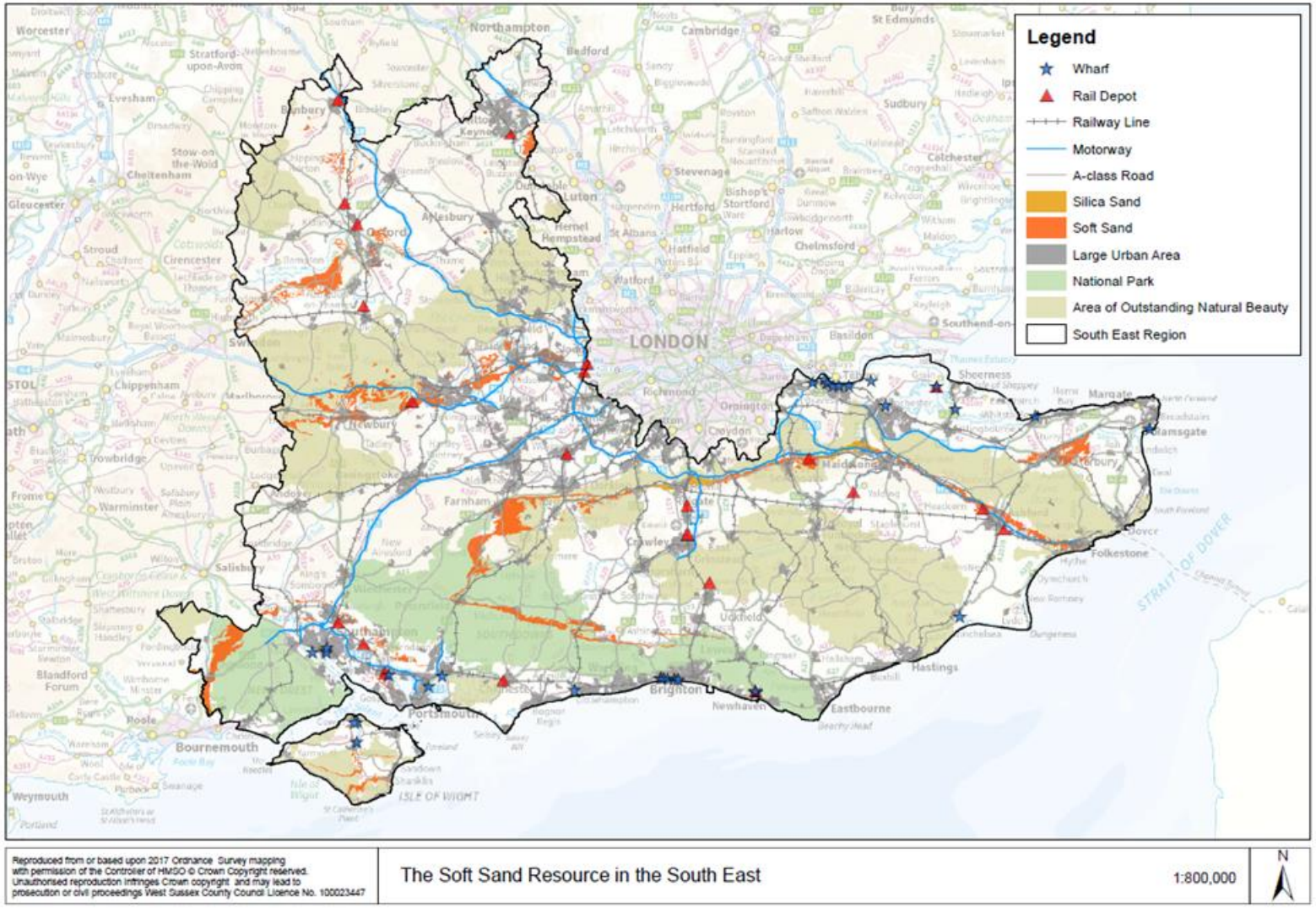
barrier in terms of movements, the Island has active quarries which provide a degree of self-sufficiency in relation to soft sand resources.

**Figure 2: The Folkestone Formation and other soft sand resources in South East England.**




Source: South Downs National Park - Soft Sand Study (Capita Symonds, August 2012)

## Figure 3: The soft sand resource in the South East




Source: Draft Statement of Common Ground – West Sussex County Council (2017) http://www2.westsussex.gov.uk/mlp/osd027.pdf

3.7 It should be noted that there can be a lack of clarity in geology between soft sand and silica sand as they occur in the deposit. This may have implications for meeting soft sand supply requirements as its potential to be used as silica sand in higher value applications is increasingly being considered by the industry. Silica sand is essentially the same deposit but with fewer impurities. The difference lies in the relative lack of 'impurities' such as iron oxide minerals adhering to the surface of the sand grains of the silica sands and other mineralogical rock fragments making these deposits lighter in colour and of high silica content (a silica content of 95% is classed as silica sand). It is generally lighter in colour and more commonly used for specialist end-uses, for example glass manufacture, sports pitches, golf courses and equestrian uses.

## Constraints

3.8 A significant proportion of the soft sand resource within the Folkestone Bed is located within and adjacent to the following protected areas (see Figure 3):

- South Downs National Park (Hampshire, West Sussex, and East Sussex)
- Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Surrey)
- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Kent)

3.9 In addition, historically most of the soft sand deposits from the Reading Bed Formation in West Berkshire that have been worked have been those found in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, most notably, an outcrop found around Junction 13 of the M4. Soft sand is also located in the New Forest National Park in the south west of Hampshire.

3.10 The Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers half of the land area of the Island.

3.11 Consideration of how development may impact National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a statutory requirement as provided for in Section11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (National Parks) and Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (AONBs). Moreover, Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 also states that all relevant authorities are required to have regard to the Purposes of a National Park. For the avoidance of doubt, the Purposes are:

- Purpose 1 – To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and
- Purpose 2 – To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

3.12 The National Park Authorities (NPAs) also have a Duty, when carrying out the above Purposes, to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Parks. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the Purposes, statute requires the "Sandford Principle" to be applied whereby Purpose 1 is given priority.

3.13 This legal obligation is addressed in Paragraph 176 of the NPPF which states:

> "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads[5]. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."

3.14 Paragraph 177 of the NPPF sets out the considerations for decision-making:

> "When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development(*) other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
> a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
> b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
> c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated."

3.15 The footnote (*) accompanying Paragraph 177 defines major development:

> "For the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined".

3.16 Other constraints to the extraction of land-won soft sand resources include International designations such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special

[5] *English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010* provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

Areas of Conservation (SACs), and nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Ancient Woodland. Urban areas and major infrastructure are also a constraint (although prior extraction during redevelopment is a possibility).

3.17 Consideration of development which may impact International and national environmental designations is addressed within the NPPF. Paragraph 170 (a) of the NPPF states:

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);"

3.18 Paragraph 175 of the NPPF also states:

"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework[6]; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

3.19 Paragraph 211(a) of the NPPF makes specific reference to the protection of designated areas:

"When determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy. In considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should:

a) as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas;"

3.20 Figure 3 shows the distribution of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the South East. These and other environmental designations may impact on the supply of soft sand within the South East.

[6] Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.

## Present and future supply

3.21 This section sets out the data regarding soft sand supply outlining sales, trends and known reserves.

### Present

3.22 Table 1 shows that the overall trend in total land-won sand and gravel sales in the south east of England decreased from 2012 to 2013, but then gradually increased until the end of the period. In 2021, land-won sand and gravel sales were at 6.6 Mt and 19% higher than the previous year and similarly higher than average sales. The downturn in sales (approx. 300k tonnes) in 2020 due to Covid lockdowns was reversed in 2021 following projects coming back online.

**Table 1: Sales of land-won sand and gravel 2012-2021 (Thousand tonnes (Tt))**

| Year | Land-won Sand and Gravel Sales (Tt) | Total Primary Aggregate Sales | % Total Sales |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2012** | 5,514 | 12,039 | 46% |
| **2013** | 5,399 | 12,319 | 44% |
| **2014** | 5,889 | 14,485 | 41% |
| **2015** | 5,857 | 14,468 | 40% |
| **2016** | 5,900 | 14,895 | 40% |
| **2017** | 6,181 | 14,167 | 44% |
| **2018** | 6,400 | 12,990 | 49% |
| **2019** | 6,317 | 14,128 | 45% |
| **2020** | 5,594 | 14,648 | 38% |
| **2021** | 6,644 | 14,531 | 46% |
| **10-year average** | 5,969 | 13,919 | 43% |
| **3-year average** | 6,185 | 14,611 | 43% |

Source: South East England Aggregates Working Party Annual Report 2021[7]

3.23 Within the overall sand and gravel sales pattern there are differences for soft sand and sharp sand and gravel. Table 2 shows that in 2021 soft sand sales were 2 Mt with growth compared to 2020 at 36%.

3.24 In 2021, the mineral planning authorities with the most significant soft sand sales included:

- Kent (0.594 Mt);
- Surrey (0.466 Mt);
- West Sussex (0.314 Mt);
- Oxfordshire (0.264 Mt); and

[7] SEEAWP Annual Report 2021 - https://documents.hants.gov.uk/see-awp/SEEAWP-annual-report-2021.pdf

- Hampshire (0.126 Mt).

East Sussex, Medway, Milton Keynes and West Berkshire had no soft sand sales.

**Table 2: Sales of land-won soft sand 2012-2021 (Thousand tonnes (Tt))**

| Year | Sales (Tt) | % change on previous year | Reserves at end of year (Tt) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2012** | 1,539 | - | 32,666 |
| **2013** | 1,560 | 1% | 28,401 |
| **2014** | 1,506 | -3% | 23,126 |
| **2015** | 1,632 | 8% | 23,110 |
| **2016** | 1,829 | 12% | 23,456 |
| **2017** | 1,759 | -4% | 25,756 |
| **2018** | 1,819 | 3% | 24,115 |
| **2019** | 1,904 | 5% | 21,737 |
| **2020** | 1,454 | -24% | 22,378 |
| **2021** | 1,979 | 36% | 18,547 |
| **10-year average** | 1,698 | - | - |
| **3-year average** | 1,779 | - | - |

Source: South East England Aggregates Working Party Annual Report 2021 (Appendix 4)

3.25 A total of 50,710 tonnes of marine 'soft' sand was sold at wharves in 2017 with the majority (46,695 tonnes) sold at West Sussex wharves and the rest from the Isle of Wight and Hampshire. This represents 3% of total soft sand sales from quarries and wharves in the South East in 2017. More recent data is not available.

3.26 Sharp sand and gravel are more generally landed at wharves in the South East and is currently not known to be substituting for land-won soft sand to any significant extent.

## Future

3.27 Table 3 shows the distribution of permitted reserves in 2021. Kent and Surrey have the highest level of reserves which combined account for 68% of overall provision. West Sussex and Oxfordshire account for a further 25%. The highest sales were recorded in Surrey but the only permission during 2021 was granted in Oxfordshire.

**Table 3: South East Soft Sand Reserves and Sales (Thousand tonnes), 2021**

| Area | Reserves at start of 2021* | Sales during 2021** | Permissions during 2021** | Reserves at end of 2021** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Buckingham | c | c | 0 | c |
| Central & Eastern Berkshire | 0 | c | 0 | - |
| East Sussex | 250 | 0 | 0 | 250 |
| Hampshire | 167 | 126 | 0 | 167 |
| Isle of Wight | c | c | 0 | c |
| Kent | 9,341 | 594 | 0 | 6,225 |
| Medway | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Milton Keynes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oxfordshire | 3,914 | 264 | 130 | 3,824 |
| Slough | - | - | - | - |
| Surrey | 5,966 | 466 | 0 | 5,528 |
| West Berkshire | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| West Sussex | 1,736 | 314 | 0 | 1,451 |
| **Total** | 22,378 | 1,979 | 130 | **18,457** |

Source:
* South East England Aggregates Working Party Annual Report 2020 (Table 10)
**South East England Aggregates Working Party Annual Report 2021 (Table 9 and Appendix 4)
c = confidential figure

3.28 The LAA rate (also referred to as the Annual Provision Rate (APR)), for the South East as a collective is 1,911[8] thousand tonnes. The landbank, based on the collective APR is 10 years for 2021 (which was estimated to be 12 years in 2020).

3.29 It is expected that the reserves will be bolstered over time from planning permissions being granted for soft sand allocations and windfall sites within the South East. Soft sand allocations in South East mineral local plans are set out in Appendix C. Allocations for soft sand are provided for in Hampshire, Kent, Surrey, West Berkshire, and West Sussex and the remaining unpermitted allocations could provide around at least a further 10 million tonnes. Based on the 2021 sales figures, this would potentially provide an additional 5 years of supply.

## Alternative supply

3.30 This section outlines the options for alternative soft sand supply.

[8] South-East England Aggregates Annual Report (2021) - Appendix 4

## Marine-won soft sand

3.31 Some marine sand deposits have mechanical, chemical and physical properties, identical to high quality land-based sands, therefore the end uses are no different. The main differences between the majority of land-based sand and marine sands are the chloride and shell content[9].

3.32 In England, marine sands are either directly or through blending, used in the production of:

- Mortar for bricklaying and blockmaking
- Screeds
- External renders
- Internal rendering
- Masonry blocks
- Paving blocks

3.33 Marine won sand with properties akin to land-won soft sand is currently sourced from the Bristol Channel as there are extensive deposits of mobile sand across the upper Severn Estuary. The resource has been exploited as the terrestrial alternatives in South Wales are constrained and the depositional environment favours finer sand resources to be available. The resource is as a partial substitute of land-won soft sand and is blended in dry-silo mortar production[10].

3.34 Research[11] carried out by the Crown Estate shows the extent of the potential sand and gravel resource in the English Channel and Thames Estuary. The report shows that there are likely to be areas of fine sand within the area, but that the 'economic potential of individual sites can only be proved by a detailed evaluation programme'.

3.35 According to British Marine Aggregate Producers Association (BMAPA), marine deposits off the coast of the Netherlands are dominated by fine to medium sand[12]. The UK exports some coarse sand and gravel to the Netherlands, and it is possible that this fine to medium sand could be imported into the UK.

3.36 Important considerations include:

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[9] Marine sands in mortar and screeds (BMAPA) - https://www.bmapa.org/documents/marine_building.pdf

[10] Some marine soft sand is not always a direct substitute for land-won soft sand and requires blending to make a partial substitution for soft sand in mortar production or concrete manufacture. Blending of this nature is not known to currently take place in the South East.

[11] The Mineral Resources of the English Channel and Thames Estuary (BGS) (2013)

[12] The strategic importance of the marine aggregate industry to the UK (BGS) (2007) - https://www.bmapa.org/documents/BMAPA_download.pdf

- Customer product acceptance (ability to meet colour and grading expectations);
- logistics of onshore handling and/or processing;
- retention of fine sands during dredging operations;
- constraints on wharf and fleet capacity.

## Outer regional supply opportunities

3.37 The South East Region is abutted by several other Mineral Planning Authority areas: Dorset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire (South West), Warwickshire (West Midlands), Northamptonshire (East Midlands), Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire (East) and London.

3.38 A review of the most recent Local Aggregate Assessments (LAA) (or BGS information, where required) for these areas and their ability to supply soft sand is provided below:

- Dorset: Poole formation sands mentioned in LAA[13]. BGS report[14] mentions that these can be used as a soft sand mainly as a silica sand.
- Wiltshire: Two quarries with soft sand planning permission in 2021. LAA[15] describes theoretically containing extensive deposits of soft sand. Data is however confidential.
- Gloucestershire: Small amount of soft sand described, no other information[16].
- Warwickshire: No mention of soft sand. BGS 2009 report[17] mentions soft sand in some bedrock formations. However, at the time of writing these were not worked. The Warwickshire Minerals Local Plan (2022)[18] notes the presence of two mortar plants in the county producing dry silo mortar (see below).
- Northamptonshire: There are some deposits of soft sand in the county but the most recent working of a solely soft sand site (at a site to the south-west of Northampton in the Milton Keynes belt) ceased in 2005[19]. There is a soft sand allocation in the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

[13] Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset – Local Aggregate Assessment (2009-2018): https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/283263/DC+and+BCP+LAA+2018_February2020.pdf/5dd34979-841c-b22c-bf35-86385fb409db

[14] BGS Report: http://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/10759/1/CR01138N.pdf

[15] Wiltshire and Swindon Local Aggregate Assessment 2021 [incorporating data from 2012 to 2021] (published Nov 2022): https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/10550/wiltshire-and-swindon-local-aggregate-assessment-2021/pdf/Wiltshire_and_Swindon_Local_Aggregate_Assessment_2021.pdf?m=638053198217370000

[16] https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2116277/10th-laa-for-gloucestershire-july-2022.pdf

[17] BGS Report: http://nora.nerc.ac.uk/id/eprint/7858/1/OR08065.pdf

[18] Warwickshire County Council - Warwickshire Minerals Plan Examination Website (objective.co.uk)

[19] Microsoft Word - Northamptonshire 2022 LAA

- Bedfordshire: The area contains Woburn sands formation which has soft sand in the form of silica sand. The LAA for the period 2020 identifies active sites producing silica[20]. However, the LAA does not report soft sand separately from sharp sand and gravel.
- Hertfordshire: Mainly imports soft sand.
- London: Mainly imports soft sand.

## Transportation

3.39 The Aggregate Monitoring survey in 2019 recorded the imports and exports of primary aggregates. Whilst the movement of sand and gravel is recorded, separate soft sand data is not available. Figure 5 shows the South East imports and exports of sand and gravel which suggests that in 2019, London was the source of the highest import tonnage levels to the South East.

3.40 Major projects can require intensive levels of aggregate and therefore can also influence movements. It is for this reason that major projects are considered as future demand factors in Local Aggregate Assessments. The South East has a number of National Significant Infrastructure Projects in progress of being considered which will have an impact on demand including (but not limited to) High Speed Rail (HS) 2, Heathrow Expansion, Lower Thames Crossing/Thames Gateway, Southampton Airport Expansion, Gatwick Airport Expansion, Rampion 2, and A27 Arundel Bypass. However, the impact will be mainly on demand for sharp sand and gravel rather than soft sand.

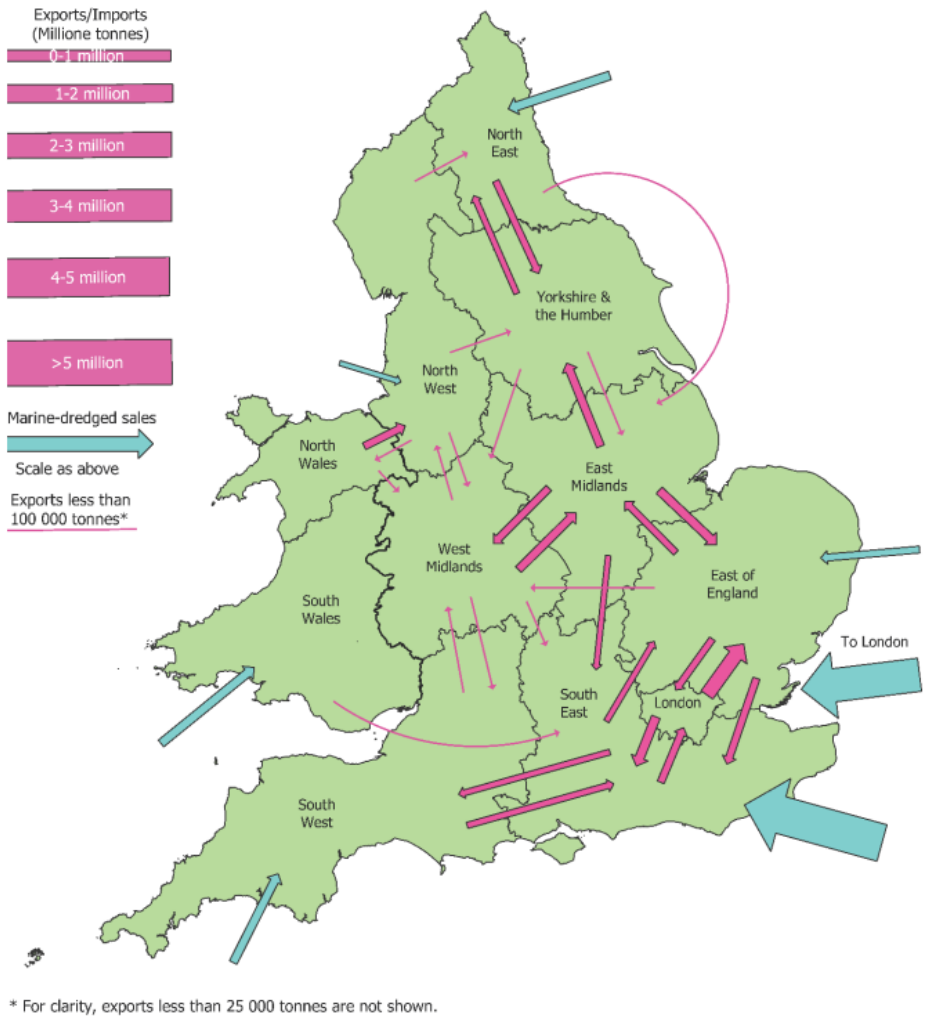
3.41 Monitoring undertaken by the Mineral Products Association indicates that the average road delivery distance for aggregates has varied between 26 and 35 miles in recent years[21]. The radius of economic transportation of sand and gravel is often stated to be generally less than 30 miles. However, soft sand in the South East can travel over greater distances, depending on circumstances.

3.42 Reasons for wider distribution may include:

- For national operators, the aggregates are transported to the nearest mortar or asphalt plant, which can often be up to 45 miles (or further) where the end product is made, before onward travel to the end user.
- For the smaller operators, the sand is often used more locally.

[20] Communications - Bedfordshire Authorities LAA 2021.pdf - All Documents (sharepoint.com)
[21] Sustainable Development Report (MPA, 2018) - https://mineralproducts.org/documents/MPA_SD_Report_2018.pdf

**Figure 5: Sand and gravel inter-regional flows of primary aggregates, 2019**




Source: Collation of the results of the 2019 Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales (BGS, 2021): [Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales, 2019 (publishing.service.gov.uk)]

## Dry Silo Mortar

3.43 Dry mortar is a combination of mixed raw materials such as sand and cement in dry form. This can also contain additives as well as polymers. It is supplied to construction sites in silos.

3.44 The benefits of using dry silo mortar (DSM) include the ability to obtain consistent quality and colour as well as creating less waste. It allows for easier compliance with specifications. Currently, over 80% of mortars used in UK are factory produced rather than mixed on site.

3.45 The first DSM plant opened in Northfleet, Kent in 1997. There are now also plants in Southampton, Essex, and Buckinghamshire. It is considered that the southeast is currently saturated in terms of plants.

3.46 In 2019, national sales of soft (building) sand were 5.3 Mt[22]. Anecdotal evidence[23] suggests approximately 1.9 Mt went into building mortar. The remaining soft sand was used in block manufacture, asphalt and recreational purposes (bunkers). It is suggested that less than half of soft sand consumption is going to house building.

3.47 Both DSM and "ready to use" mortar only travel approx. 20 miles from the plant which is a shorter distance than soft sand travels (approx. 45 miles). All the main producers can get into London. Plants will not encroach on other plant areas.

3.48 Local supplies are preferred for carbon footprint purposes but also aesthetics – linked to colour. Colours can be matched but this is not considered ideal.

3.49 Marine dredged fine sands can be used as an alternative to land-won, but this will be based on the shell content which needs to be low. Products can be blended but "as raised" is the preferred product. Marine used sand is used in the Bristol Channel but there are operational issues with landing the product.

3.50 It is considered that the mortar industry has levelled as the housing market is not currently growing. The highest point of DSM production was linked to the highest point in house building.

3.51 Table 4 shows mortar sales figures from the MPA members for the period 2012-2021. Sales were generally increasing from 2012 to 2018 but dropped in 2019 and 2020. 2021 shows an element of recovery in sales.

**Table 4: Great Britain mortar sales, 2012-2021**

| Year | Mortar Sales (Tonnes) | % change on previous year |
|---|---|---|
| 2012 | 1,389,453 | - |
| 2013 | 1,610,799 | 16 |
| 2014 | 1,923,655 | 19 |
| 2015 | 2,013,710 | 5 |
| 2016 | 2,157,447 | 7 |
| 2017 | 2,393,143 | 11 |
| 2018 | 2,766,322 | 16 |
| 2019 | 2,703,270 | -2 |

[22] Collation of the results of the 2019 Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales (Appendix A) (BGS, 2021): Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales, 2019 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

[23] Presentation by Mick Russell, MPA to SEEAWP on 18.10.2022

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2020 | 2,069,236 | -23 |
| 2021 | 2,574,908 | 24 |

Source: Mineral Products Association

## Conclusion

4.1 This Position Statement sets out technical information with respect to soft sand supply in the South East. The Statement is supported by the South East Mineral Planning Authorities and will be used as a basis for any relevant Statements of Common Ground.

4.2 The Statement highlights that the spatial distribution of soft sand is varied and that some of the areas where extraction has historically taken place, or currently takes place, are constrained by landscape and environmental designations.

4.3 The Statement indicates that additional sites need to be allocated in minerals plans and permitted by Mineral Planning Authorities to ensure that a steady and adequate supply of soft sand can be maintained in the South East by the process of local plan formulation, adoption and periodic review over any respective plan period. Due to geology, soft sand resource is focused within a few counties – particularly Surrey, Kent, and West Sussex – and the need for future supply will likely need to balance conflict with significant landscape, environmental and recreational constraints.

4.4 DSM sales are increasing and therefore, the production of DSM should continue to be monitored as this may influence soft sand supplies more significantly in the future and the data may be required to inform future policy preparation.

4.5 Lastly, the Statement recognises that there are alternatives to land-won supply within the South East, in particular supply from land-won soft sand from surrounding regions and the partial substitution of alternative materials such as marine sands in some applications. However, it is recognised, these alternatives are currently limited and will also have constraints such as the availability of suitable dredgers and dedicated wharf space which would impact the long-term supply of soft sand. Any reliance on them would need to be in line with national policy and justified through evidence and agreements with other authorities (if reliance is on areas outside of the South East).

# Appendix A: Relevant National Planning Policy Framework (2023) Soft Sand Supply Paragraphs

Paragraph 209 outlines the requirement for minerals:

> "It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation."

Paragraph 210 provides the framework for mineral policies:

> "Planning policies should:
> a) provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;
> b) so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously;
> c) safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas[24]; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);
> d) set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place;
> e) safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material;
> f) set out criteria or requirements to ensure that permitted and proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, taking into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;

[24] Primarily in two tier areas as stated in Annex 2: Glossary

g) when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction; and
h) ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place."

Paragraph 211 outlines the framework for determining applications:

"When determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy[25]. In considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should:
a) as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas;
b) ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality;
c) ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source[26], and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties;
d) not grant planning permission for peat extraction from new or extended sites;
e) provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Bonds or other financial guarantees to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances;
f) consider how to meet any demand for the extraction of building stone needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; and
g) recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites."

Paragraph 212 outlines the requirement to protect mineral resources:

"Local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working."

[25] Except in relation to the extraction of coal, where the policy at paragraph 217 of this Framework applies
[26] National planning guidance on minerals sets out how these policies should be implemented.

Paragraph 213 provides the framework for mineral supply:

> "Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:
> a) preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment, either individually or jointly, to forecast future demand, 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);
> b) participating in the operation of an Aggregate Working Party and taking the advice of that party into account when preparing their Local Aggregate Assessment;
> c) making provision for the land-won and other elements of their Local Aggregate Assessment in their mineral plans, taking account of the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties and the National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group as appropriate. Such provision should take the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria as appropriate;
> d) taking account of any published National and Sub National Guidelines on future provision which should be used as a guideline when planning for the future demand for and supply of aggregates;
> e) using landbanks of aggregate minerals reserves principally as an indicator of the security of aggregate minerals supply, and to indicate the additional provision that needs to be made for new aggregate extraction and alternative supplies in mineral plans;
> f) maintaining landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock, whilst ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is not compromised[27];
> g) ensuring that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition; and
> h) calculating and maintaining separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market.

[27] Longer periods may be appropriate to take account of the need to supply a range of types of aggregates, locations of permitted reserves relative to markets, and productive capacity of permitted sites.

# Appendix B: Adopted Soft Sand Policies in the South East (where applicable)

*Buckinghamshire*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Buckinghamshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2016-2036<br><br>[Adopted July 2019] | None | Policy 1: Safeguarding Mineral Resources<br><br>Minerals are a finite natural resource; in order to secure their long-term conservation Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) have been defined within Buckinghamshire to prevent mineral resources of local and national importance from being needlessly sterilised by non-minerals development. Mineral resources of local and national importance identified within Buckinghamshire include: sand and gravel deposits of the Thames Valley (situated in the southern half of the county), the Great Ouse Valley east of Buckingham, the sand and gravel deposits in the north of the county, clay-with-flints around Bellingdon and white limestone in the far north of the county.<br><br>Proposals for development within MSAs, other than that which constitutes exempt development, must demonstrate that:<br>– prior extraction of the mineral resource is practicable and environmentally feasible and does not harm the viability of the proposed development; or<br>– the mineral concerned is not of any value or potential value; or<br>– the proposed development is of a temporary nature and can be completed with the site restored to a condition that does not inhibit extraction within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed; or<br>– there is an overriding need for the development. |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | | A Mineral Assessment will be required to accompany the planning application for the proposed non-minerals development, detailing:<br>– the size, nature and need for the (non-minerals) development,<br>– the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to the site,<br>– site-specific geological survey data (in addition to the MSAs and BGS mapping data) to establish the existence or otherwise of a mineral resource (detailing resource type, quality, estimated quantity and overburden to reserve ratio),<br>– whether it is feasible and viable to extract the mineral resource ahead of the proposed development to prevent sterilisation and the potential for use (of the mineral resource) in the proposed development, and<br>– where prior extraction can be undertaken how this will be carried out as part of the overall development scheme, with reference to the proposed phasing of operations and construction of the non-mineral development.<br><br>In the event that the non-mineral development is delayed or not implemented the site must be restored to a stable landform and appropriate after-use. |

*Central & Eastern Berkshire (Bracknell, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Central and Eastern Berkshire – Joint Minerals & Waste Plan<br><br>**(Adopted November 2022 (RBMW) & January 2023 (Bracknell Forest, Reading & Wokingham))** | None. | Policy M2 Safeguarding sand and gravel resources<br><br>1. Sharp sand and gravel and soft sand resources of economic importance, and around active mineral workings, are safeguarded against unnecessary sterilisation by non-minerals development.<br><br>2. Safeguarded mineral resources are defined by the Minerals Safeguarding Area illustrated on the Policies Map.<br><br>3. Non-minerals development in the Minerals Safeguarding Area may be permitted if it can be demonstrated through the preparation of a Mineral Resources Assessment, that the option of prior extraction has been fully considered as part of an application, and:<br>a. Prior extraction, where practical and environmentally feasible, is maximised, taking into account site constraints and phasing of development; or<br>b. It can be demonstrated that the mineral resources will not be permanently sterilised; or<br>c. It would be inappropriate to extract mineral resources in that location, with regard to other policies in the wider Local Plans. |

*East Sussex (incl. Brighton & Hove and the South Downs National Park)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (2013) | Policy WMP2: Minerals and waste development affecting the South Downs National Park<br>"a) Minerals and waste development in the South Downs National Park should demonstrate that it contributes to the sustainable development of the area.<br>b) Major minerals and waste development in the South Downs National Park should not take place except in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest[(23)] . In this respect, consideration will be given to:<br>i. the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations; and<br>ii. the impact of permitting or refusing the development upon the local economy; and<br>iii. the cost of and scope for developing outside the designated area or meeting the need in another way; and<br>iv. any detrimental effect on the environment, landscape and/or recreational opportunities and the extent to which it could be satisfactorily mitigated.<br>Development will only be in the public interest if the outcomes of i-iv above gives sufficient reason/s to override the potential damage to the natural beauty, cultural heritage, wildlife or quiet enjoyment of the National Park.<br>c) Extensions to existing soft sand quarries or new quarry proposals in the National Park need to conform with (b) above and additionally demonstrate that the need could not be practically achieved by extraction in adjoining Counties | Policy WMP: 14 Safeguarding Mineral Resources<br>"The Authorities will safeguard areas for land-won resource to ensure viable resources are not sterilised. The Authorities will identify Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas in the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan, and expect to be consulted on any proposal for major development that would have a significant impact on current or future operations.<br>In addition, other non-strategic mineral resources that might need protection will be identified through the Plan review process and in the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan. This will allow a viability assessment to be made around additional resource need over the plan period." |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Emerging Plan (Submission Version):<br>East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan | d) Small-scale waste management facilities for local needs should not be precluded from the National Park and should meet the requirements of Policy WMP 7a.<br>e) Proposals for the backfilling of redundant quarries within the National Park need to conform with (b) above and additionally demonstrate net long term benefits to the National Park and that they meet Policy WMP 8b criteria (a) to (e).<br>Policy RV1 Minerals and waste development affecting the South Downs National Park and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty<br>a) Minerals and waste development in the South Downs National Park and the High Weald AONB will have regard to the relevant Management Plan.<br><br>b) Major minerals and waste development in the South Downs National Park or High Weald AONB will be refused other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest(3) . In this respect, consideration will be given relevant information, including:<br>i. the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations; and<br>ii. the impact of permitting or refusing the development upon the local economy; and<br>iii. the cost of and scope for developing outside the designated area or meeting the need in another way; and | Policy RM3 Minerals Safeguarding Areas<br><br>Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs), as shown on the Policies Map, identify potentially viable land-won mineral resources and sites.<br><br>Proposals for non-minerals development on or near the MSA that would sterilise or prejudice the extraction of the mineral resource, or result in incompatible development, should not be permitted.<br><br>Development proposals within areas shown as Mineral Safeguarding Areas on the Policies Map or that may affect a mineral operation or resource, must demonstrate that mineral resources will not be sterilised and the development is not incompatible with any permitted minerals operations.<br><br>The Authorities will periodically review and update Mineral Safeguarding Areas as required.<br><br>[*Policy SP8 (see below) is also superseded by Policy RM3*] |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | iv. any detrimental effect on the environment, landscape and/or recreational opportunities and the extent to which it could be moderated.<br><br>c) Small-scale waste management facilities for local needs are not precluded from the National Park or AONB where they meet the requirements of Policy RD1.<br><br>d) Proposals for the backfilling of redundant quarries within the National Park or AONB need to conform with (b) above and additionally demonstrate net long term benefits to the National Park or AONB and that they meet Policy WMP 8b criteria (a) to (e). | |
| East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Sites Plan (2017) | | Policy SP 8 Mineral Safeguarding Areas for land-won minerals resources within the Plan Area;<br>The following land-won minerals resources are identified as Mineral Safeguarding Areas …….including Stanton's Farm, Novington<br><br>[*Policy SP8 is also superseded by Policy RM3 (see above)*] |

*Hampshire (incl. New Forest National Park, Portsmouth, Southampton, and the South Downs National Park)*

| **Adopted Plan** | **Soft Sand Supply Policy** | **Safeguarding Policy** |
|---|---|---|
| Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan (adopted 2013) | Policy 17: Aggregate supply – capacity and source<br>"An adequate and steady supply of aggregates until 2030 will be provided for Hampshire and surrounding areas from local sand and gravel sites at a rate of 1.56mpta, of which 0.28mpta will be soft sand.<br><br>That supply will also be augmented by safeguarding and developing infrastructure capacity so that alternative sources of aggregate could be provided at the following rates:<br>• 1.0mpta of recycled and secondary aggregates;<br>• 2.0mpta of marine-won aggregates; and<br>• 1.0mpta of limestone delivered by rail." | Policy 15: Safeguarding – mineral resources<br>"Hampshire's sand and gravel (sharp sand and gravel and soft sand), silica sand and brick-making clay resources are safeguarded against needless sterilisation by non-minerals development, unless 'prior extraction' takes place.<br>Safeguarded mineral resources are defined by a Minerals Safeguarding Area illustrated on the Policies Map. Development without the prior extraction of mineral resources in the Minerals Safeguarding Area may be permitted if:<br>a. It can be demonstrated that the sterilisation of minerals resources will not occur; or<br>b. It would be inappropriate to extract mineral resources at that location, with regards to the other policies in the Plan; or the development would not pose a serious hindrance to mineral development in the vicinity; or<br>c. The merits of the development outweigh the safeguarding of the mineral.<br>The soft sand / potential silica resources at Whitehill & Bordon (Inset Map 5), further illustrated on the Policies Map are included within the MSA and are specifically identified for safeguarding under this policy. |
| Emerging Plan (Draft Plan): Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan: Partial Update (2022) | Policy 17: Aggregate supply – capacity and source<br><br>A steady and adequate supply of aggregates until 2040 will be provided for Hampshire and surrounding areas from local sand and gravel | [*Policy 15 remains unchanged in the Draft Plan*] |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | sites at a rate of 1.15mtpa, of which 0.23mtpa will be soft sand.<br><br>The supply will also be augmented by safeguarding and enabling the development of infrastructure capacity so that alternative sources of aggregate could be provided at the following rates:<br>• 1.8mtpa of recycled and secondary aggregates; and<br>• 2.0mtpa of marine-won aggregates; and<br>• 1.0mtpa of limestone delivered by rail. | |

*Isle of Wight*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Island Plan<br>Isle of Wight Core Strategy (including Waste and Minerals) and Development Management Development Plan Document (March 2012) | None. | None. |

*Kent*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Kent Minerals and waste Local Plan 2013-30 adopted September 2020 (as amended by Early Partial Review) | Policy CSM 2<br>Supply of Land-won Minerals in Kent<br><br>Mineral working will be granted planning permission at sites identified in the Minerals Sites Plan[60] subject to meeting the requirements set out in the relevant site schedule in the Mineral Sites Plan and the development plan.<br><br>1. Aggregates<br>Provision will be made for the supply of land-won aggregates as follows:<br>• Sharp sand and gravel: At least 10.08mt and a landbank of at least seven years supply (5.46mt) will be maintained while resources allow. The rate of supply will decline through the Plan period from a supply of a 10-year average of around 0.78mtpa and resources will be progressively worked out (unless additional sites are brought forward which would be assessed against Policy CSM4). Demand will instead be met from other sources, principally a combination of recycled and secondary aggregates, landings of MDA, blended materials and imports of crushed rock through wharves and railheads. The actual proportions will be decided by the market.<br>• Soft sand: Rolling landbanks for the whole of the plan period and beyond of at least seven years equivalent to at least 15.6mt, | Policy CSM 5<br>Land-won Mineral Safeguarding<br><br>Economic mineral resources are safeguarded from being unnecessarily sterilised by other development by the identification of:<br><br>1. Mineral Safeguarding Areas for the areas of brickearth, sharp sand and gravel, soft sand (including silica sand), ragstone and building stone as defined on the Mineral Safeguarding Area Policies Maps in Chapter 9<br>2. Mineral Consultation Areas which cover the same area as the Minerals Safeguarding Areas and a separate area adjacent to the Strategic Site for Minerals at Medway Works, Holborough as shown in Figure 17<br>3. Sites for mineral working within the plan period identified in Appendix C and in the Mineral Sites Plan. |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | comprising 10.6mt from existing permitted sources and 5.0mt from sites allocated in the Minerals Sites Plan.<br>• Crushed rock: Rolling landbanks for the whole of the Plan period and beyond of at least ten years equivalent to at least 20.5mt, all from existing permitted sources.<br><br>Sites will be identified in the Mineral Sites Plan to support supplies of land-won aggregates at the stated levels above. A rolling average of ten years' sales data and other relevant information will be used to assess landbank requirements on an on-going basis, and this will be kept under review through the annual production of a Local Aggregates Assessment.<br><br>2. Brickearth and Clay for Brick and Tile Manufacture<br>The stock of existing planning permissions at Paradise Farm, Orchard Farm, Hempstead House and Claxfield Road for brickearth clay for brick and tile making is sufficient for the plan period. Applications for sites supplying brickearth and clay for brick and tile making will be dealt within in accordance with the policies of this Plan. The existence of a stock of permitted reserves of at least 25 years (as reported in the latest Annual Monitoring report) to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant and the maintenance and | |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | improvement of existing plant and equipment will be a material consideration.<br><br>3. Silica Sand<br>In response to planning applications, the Mineral Planning Authority will seek to permit sites for silica sand production sufficient to provide a stock of permitted reserves of at least 10 years for individual sites of 10 years and 15 years for sites where significant new capital is required, to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment.(61) Proposals will be considered on their own merits, having regard to the policies of the Development Plan as a whole subject to them demonstrating:<br>a. how the mineral resources meet technical specifications required for silica sand (industrial sand) end uses<br>b. how the mineral resources will be used efficiently so that high-grade sand deposits are reserved for industrial end uses<br><br>4. Chalk for Agriculture and Engineering Purposes<br>The stock of existing planning permissions for chalk is sufficient to supply Kent's requirements for agricultural and engineering chalk over the plan period. Applications for sites supplying chalk for agriculture and engineering purposes will be dealt with in accordance with the policies of this Plan. The need for additional supplies of chalk will be assessed based on the latest assessment of | |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | supply and demand set out in the Annual Monitoring Report.<br><br>5. Clay for Engineering Purposes<br>A site for the extraction of clay for engineering purposes will be identified at Norwood Quarry and Landfill Site in the Minerals Sites Plan. Other sites will be identified if required in order to enable clay extraction to continue through the Plan period to supply Kent's requirements.<br><br>Selection of Sites in the Minerals Sites Plan The criteria that will be taken into account for selecting and screening the suitability of sites for identification in the Minerals Sites Plan will include:<br>• the requirements for minerals set out above<br>• relevant policies set out in Chapter 7: Development Management Policies<br>• relevant policies in district local plans and neighbourhood plans<br>• strategic environmental information, including landscape assessment and HRA as appropriate<br>• their deliverability<br>• other relevant national planning policy and guidance | |

*Medway*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Medway Local Plan (2003)<br><br>Emerging Plan (Development Strategy): Medway Local Plan (2019 to 2040) | None.<br><br>[*see Policy approach: Minerals*] | None.<br><br>Policy approach: Minerals<br>The council will plan for the steady and adequate supply of minerals to meet local needs and contribute to regional requirements. It will seek to:<br>• Sustainably deliver a steady and adequate supply of land-won sand and gravel.<br>• Maintain a 7-year landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves.<br>• Support regional consideration and planning of aggregates through its membership of the South East England Aggregates Working Group<br>• Promote the transportation of minerals by water and rail for longer distance distribution.<br>• Safeguard identified areas of proven and unproven unconstrained reserves of river terrace sand and gravel reserves from development that may prevent their future extraction.<br>• Safeguard all existing mineral wharves, railheads, storage, handling and processing facilities from development that may prejudice their continued use for the importation of crushed rock, sand and gravel and other associated materials.<br>• Ensure that any new permitted quarry is returned to a suitable condition for reuse after operations have ceased.<br>• Promote the use of secondary aggregates, requiring the reclamation and reuse of materials on redevelopment sites. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Allocate sites for the processing, sorting and distribution of secondary aggregates displaced through planned redevelopment schemes. |

*Milton Keynes*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Milton Keynes Minerals Local Plan (July 2017) (Plan period 2013-2032) | None. | Policy 18: Mineral Safeguarding and Consultation Area<br><br>Mineral resources of local and national importance within Milton Keynes include sand and gravel and the White and Blisworth Limestone formations. These resources will be safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by other development through the designation of Mineral Safeguarding Areas.<br>• Planning permission will not be granted for non-mineral development that would lead to the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources within a Minerals Safeguarding Area unless it can be demonstrated that:<br>• the mineral concerned is not of economic value or evidence confirms the absence of mineral resources, the proposed development is temporary or of a nature that would not sterilise the mineral resource or hinder future extraction,<br>• the proposed development is temporary and would not sterilise the mineral resource or hinder future extraction,<br>• prior extraction can occur where practicable and environmentally feasible and within a reasonable timescale,<br>• there is an over-riding need for the development, or<br>• the development is exempt. |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | | In determining whether prior extraction is feasible an assessment of the mineral resource including detailed site investigations should be undertaken to identify the quality, quantity and extent of the resource, the economic viability of prior extraction and the proportion of the mineral to be used on-site and saleable aggregate. The assessment should also take account of the size, nature and need for the (non-minerals) development as well as the proposed phasing of operations and construction of the non-mineral development.<br>In the event that the non-mineral development is delayed or not implemented the site must be restored to a stable landform and appropriate after-use." |

*Oxfordshire*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan – Part 1: Core Strategy (2017) | Policy M2: Provision for working aggregate minerals<br><br>Provision will be made through policies M3 and M4 to enable the supply of:<br>• sharp sand and gravel - 1.015 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 18.270 million tonnes<br>• soft sand - 0.189 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 3.402 million tonnes<br>• crushed rock - 0.584 mtpa giving a total provision requirement of 10.512 million tonnes from land-won sources within Oxfordshire for the period 2014 – 2031 inclusive. | Policy M8: Safeguarding mineral resources<br><br>Mineral resources in the Mineral Safeguarding Areas shown on the Policies Map are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:<br>• The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or<br>• The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or<br>• The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place. |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | Permission will be granted for aggregate mineral working under policy M5 to enable separate landbanks of reserves with planning permission to be maintained for the extraction of minerals of:<br>• at least 7 years for sharp sand and gravel;<br>• at least 7 years for soft sand;<br>• at least 10 years for crushed rock;<br>in accordance with the annual requirement rates in the most recent Local Aggregate Assessment, taking into account the need to maintain sufficient productive capacity to enable these rates to be realised. | Mineral Consultation Areas, based on the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, are shown on the Policies Map. Within these areas the District Councils will consult the County Council on planning applications for non-mineral development. |

*Slough*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (2001) | No saved policy | Saved policies:<br>Policy 2<br>The local planning authorities will oppose development proposal which would cause the sterilisation of mineral deposits in the proposed development site, or which would<br>prejudice the future working of minerals in adjacent sites, except where it is demonstrated that<br>(i) The mineral deposit is of no commercial interest, and is unlikely to be so in the future; or<br>(ii) Having regard to all relevant planning considerations, there is an overriding case in favour of allowing the proposed development to proceed without the prior extraction of mineral; or<br>(iii) Extraction of the mineral would be subject to such strong environmental or other objection that it would be highly unlikely that it would ever be permitted in any |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | | circumstances.<br><br>Policy 2A<br>In appropriate cases, the local planning authorities will encourage the extraction of mineral prior to other more permanent forms of development taking place. Planning permission will be granted on applications for prior extraction of minerals, provided that<br>(i) Mineral extraction and restoration to an appropriate standard can be completed within a timetable that would not reasonably prejudice the timetable for the subsequent development; and<br>(ii) Mineral extraction and restoration operations, or their associated traffic, would not cause unacceptable impacts on the environment or living conditions |

*Surrey*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Surrey Minerals Plan (2011) Core Strategy Development Plan Document and Surrey Minerals Plan (2011) Primary Aggregates Development Plan Document | None. | Policy MC6 – Safeguarding mineral resources and development.<br><br>Minerals safeguarding areas have been defined for resources of concreting aggregate, soft sand, silica sand, brick clay and fuller's earth. The mineral planning authority will seek to prevent sterilisation of these resources by other development.<br>Local planning authorities will be expected to consult the mineral planning authority on any proposals for development that would<br>i) prejudice the effective operation of sites that are currently in minerals use or permitted for such use, or<br>ii) sterilise mineral resources on preferred areas for future minerals extraction, or<br>iii) sterilise mineral resources within mineral safeguarding areas as shown on their proposals maps.<br>Infrastructure and sites used, or proposed to be used, for minerals development - rail aggregate depots and sites for production of recycled and secondary aggregate - will be safeguarded. Local planning authorities will be expected to consult the mineral planning authority on proposals for non-mineral development in the consultation area around such sites. |

*West Berkshire*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| West Berkshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan (Adopted December 2022) | Policy 2 Landbank and Need<br><br>The need for aggregate minerals to supply the construction market in West Berkshire should be met, where possible, from recycled and secondary aggregates in preference to primary aggregates to minimise the need to extract primary aggregates. Provision will be made for a minimum of 350,000 tonnes of recycled and secondary aggregate capacity.<br><br>In order to ensure a steady and adequate supply of primary construction aggregates (sand and gravel), the Council will seek to maintain landbanks of permitted reserves of sharp sand and gravel and soft sand of at least 7 years based on the latest Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA), and take into account the need to maintain sufficient productive capacity to enable the rates in the LAA to be realised.<br><br>The West Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will aim to deliver at least 1,630,000 tonnes of construction aggregates from primary sources to meet the identified needs of West Berkshire over the plan period to 2037, comprised of 840,000 tonnes of sharp sand and gravel and 790,000 tonnes of soft sand. The level of need for primary construction aggregates and state of the | Policy 9 Minerals Safeguarding<br><br>'Minerals Safeguarding Areas' (MSAs) have been defined which safeguard the following from sterilisation by non-mineral development:<br>• Known construction aggregate mineral deposits(29);<br>• Existing (including those with planning permission yet to be implemented) and allocated mineral extraction sites;<br><br>In addition, the following Minerals Infrastructure is safeguarded against development that would unnecessarily prevent or prejudice the operation of the infrastructure:<br>• Potential, planned and existing minerals associated infrastructure, including rail sites and mineral processing plant sites.<br><br>Non-mineral development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas or affecting Minerals Safeguarded Infrastructure may be considered acceptable in the following circumstances:<br>• The proposal would not prejudice or detrimentally affect the extraction of underlying mineral resources, or the operation of a planned or existing mineral extraction site, or the operation of potential, planned or existing minerals associated infrastructure; or |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | landbank will be kept under review through the production of a LAA on an annual basis. | • It can be demonstrated that the underlying mineral is of no economic, or potential economic value, or that the mineral could not be extracted from the site for other valid planning reasons; or<br>• Where a mineral resource underlies a prospective development site and prior extraction, or partial prior extraction of the mineral resources can be undertaken in advance of, or as part of, the proposed development; or<br>• It can be demonstrated that the need for the proposed development outweighs the need to conserve the mineral resources, or maintain the operational capability of the minerals associated infrastructure; or<br>• The proposed development is aligned with the specifications for a site allocated within an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan, and the allocation was considered in light of this safeguarding policy. |

*West Sussex (incl. the South Downs National Park)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) (Partial Review March 2021) | Policy M2: Soft Sand<br><br>(a) Proposals for land won soft sand extraction, including extensions of time and physical extensions to existing sites, will be permitted provided that:<br>(i) The proposal is needed to ensure a steady and adequate supply of soft sand and to maintain at least a seven-year land bank, as set out in the most recent Local Aggregates Assessment; and<br>(ii) The site is allocated within Policy M11 of this Plan, or if the proposal is on an unallocated site, it can be demonstrated that the need cannot be met through the site/s allocated for that purpose; and (iii) Where transportation by rail or water is not practicable or viable, the proposal is well-related to the Lorry Route Network.<br><br>(b) Proposals located outside the South Downs National Park that accord with part (a) must not adversely impact on its setting.<br><br>(c) Proposals located within the South Downs National Park that accord with part (a) and constitute major development will be refused other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. | Policy M9: Safeguarding Minerals<br><br>(a) Existing minerals extraction sites[33] will be safeguarded against non-mineral development that prejudices their ability to supply minerals in the manner associated with the permitted activities.<br>(b) Soft sand (including potential silica sand), sharp sand and gravel, brick-making clay, building stone resources and chalk reserves[34] are safeguarded against sterilisation. Proposals for non-minerals development within the Minerals Safeguarded Areas (as shown in maps in Appendix E) will not be permitted unless:<br>(i) Mineral sterilisation will not occur; or<br>(ii) it is appropriate and practicable to extract the mineral prior to the development taking place, having regards to the other policies in this Plan; or the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral and it has been demonstrated that prior extraction is not practicable or environmentally feasible. |

# Appendix C: Soft Sand Allocations in adopted or submitted Minerals Plans in the South East (where applicable)

*Buckinghamshire*

| Adopted Plan | Plan Status | Allocation (and status) |
|---|---|---|
| Buckinghamshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2016-2036 | Adopted July 2019. | No specific soft sand allocations although it is recognised that some sand and gravel allocations contain soft sand. |

*Central & Eastern Berkshire (Bracknell, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Central and Eastern Berkshire – Joint Minerals & Waste Plan | Adopted<br>- RBWM: November 2022<br>- Bracknell Forest, Reading, Wokingham: January 2023 | None. |

*East Sussex (incl. Brighton & Hove and the South Downs National Park)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (Sites Plan - 2017) | • Adopted 2017<br>• Currently being reviewed. | None. |

*Hampshire (incl. New Forest National Park, Portsmouth, Southampton, and the South Downs National Park)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan | • Adopted 2013<br>• Reviewed 2018 | • Forest Lodge Home Farm, Hythe (soft sand / sharp sand and gravel) – 0.57 million tonnes [permitted 2017]<br>• Purple Haze, Ringwood Forest (soft sand / sharp sand and gravel) – 4 million tonnes |

*Isle of Wight*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Island Plan<br>Isle of Wight Core Strategy (including Waste and Minerals) and Development Management Development Plan Document | Adopted 2012 | None. |

*Kent*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Kent Mineral Sites Plan 2013-30 | Adopted September 2020 | Chapel Farm (West), Lenham - a proposed new quarry (total yield 3,200,000 tonnes) |

*Medway*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Medway Local Plan | Adopted 2003 | None |

*Milton Keynes*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Milton Keynes Minerals Local Plan | Adopted July 2017 | None |

*Oxfordshire*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan – Part 1: Core Strategy | Adopted 2017 | [Allocations will be set out in the Part 2: Sites Allocations Document]<br><br>Policy M3: Principal locations for working aggregate minerals<br><br>The principal locations for aggregate minerals extraction will be within the following strategic resource areas, as shown on the Policies Map:<br><br>Sharp sand and gravel in northern Oxfordshire (Cherwell District and West Oxfordshire District):<br>• The Thames, Lower Windrush and Lower Evenlode Valleys area from Standlake to Yarnton; in southern Oxfordshire (South Oxfordshire District and Vale of White Horse District):<br>• The Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey;<br>• The Thames Valley area from Caversham to Shiplake.<br><br>Soft sand<br>• The Corallian Ridge area from Oxford to Faringdon;<br>• The Duns Tew area. Crushed rock<br>• The area north west of Bicester; |

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| | | • The Burford area south of the A40;<br>• The area east and south east of Faringdon.<br><br>Specific sites (new quarry sites and/or extensions to existing quarries) for working aggregate minerals within these strategic resource areas will be allocated in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document, in accordance with policy M4.<br><br>Specific sites for extensions to existing aggregate quarries (excluding ironstone) outside the strategic resource areas may also be allocated in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document provided they are in accordance with policy M4.<br><br>Sites allocated for sharp sand and gravel working (including both new quarry sites and extensions to existing quarries, including any extensions outside the strategic resource areas), to meet the requirement in policy M2 will be located such that approximately 25% of the additional tonnage requirement is in northern Oxfordshire and approximately 75% of the additional tonnage requirement is in southern Oxfordshire, to achieve an approximately equal split of production capacity for sharp sand and gravel between northern and southern Oxfordshire by 2031. |

*Slough*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (2001) | Adopted (with saved policies) | None. |

*Surrey*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| Surrey Minerals Plan (2011) Core Strategy Development Plan Document and Surrey Minerals Plan (2011) Primary Aggregates Development Plan Document | Adopted 2011 | Preferred Area P – Mercers Farm, Nutfield Marsh – Granted permission in 2013<br>Preferred Area R – Runfold South extension - Granted permission in 2007<br>Preferred Area O – Common Field, Betchworth - Granted permission in 2008 |

*West Berkshire*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| West Berkshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan | Adopted December 2022 | Policy 31: Chieveley Services - Extraction of between 400,000 and 670,000 tonnes of soft sand |

*West Sussex (incl. the South Downs National Park)*

| Adopted Plan | Soft Sand Supply Policy | Safeguarding Policy |
|---|---|---|
| West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) (Partial Review March 2021) | Adopted 2018 (Partial Review March 2021) | Policy M11: Strategic Minerals Site Allocations<br>• Ham Farm, Steyning (Policies Map 8) – 725,000 tonnes of soft sand<br>• East of West Heath Common (Extension) (Policies Map 9) – 950,000 tonnes of soft sand<br>• Chantry Lane Extension (Policies Map 10) – 1,000,000 tonnes of soft sand |