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1 Minerals

1.1 Summary

Minerals such as china clay and granite are an important resource for the Cornish economy and need to be managed carefully and used efficiently. Minerals from Cornwall have a variety of important uses and the economic benefits of their extraction need to be balanced with the environmental and social impacts.

Minerals policies are now being developed as part of the Cornwall Local Development Framework with issues of strategic importance being included in the Core Strategy and other issues being addressed in a Minerals Development Plan Document which will follow on from the Core Strategy. These will replace the policies in the Cornwall Minerals Local Plan 1997 and those included in the emergent Cornwall Minerals Development Framework.

The main spatial minerals issues for the Cornwall Core Strategy are:

Issue M1 - To safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure (processing, storage, handling and transport) for future use and prevent their direct and indirect sterilisation ⁽¹⁾ by other development.

Issue M2 - To maintain a sustainable and efficient supply of minerals, and to encourage the sustainable use of minerals including the exploitation of Cornwall's secondary aggregate resources.

1.2 Purpose

This is one in a series of papers dealing with a specific theme. Each can be read in isolation or together with other papers to gain a wider understanding of issues facing Cornwall. This paper sets out the evidence base and the policy context for minerals and describes how the issues that need to be addressed in relation to minerals could be taken forward in the Core Strategy. These papers will form the first stage of the development of options for Core Strategy policy. Other issues papers available in this series include:

- *Housing*
- *Economy*
- *Tourism*
- *Retail & town centres*
- *Education & skills*
- *Social inclusion*
- *Crime & anti-social behaviour*
- *Sport recreation & open space*

¹ Sterilisation can occur directly, for example when development takes place above the underlying mineral, or indirectly by introducing sensitive receptors, such as housing, in such close proximity to a mineral resource that the future extraction of the mineral is impracticable.

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- *Health*
- *Transport & accessibility*
- *Energy*
- *Climate change*
- *Soil, air & water quality*
- *Flooding, drought & water consumption*
- *Biodiversity & geodiversity*
- *Landscape & seascape*
- *Historic environment*
- *Design & efficient use of resources*
- *Agriculture & food*
- *Coast & maritime*
- *Waste*

This series of papers is closely linked to the topics of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report. The SA scoping report identifies the sustainability objectives, decision making criteria and indicators against which the LDF and other plans in Cornwall should be tested, to examine whether plans are sustainable. The SA scoping report also identifies key messages from national, regional and local plans for the Cornwall LDF, a baseline and sustainability issues for each topic. These Core Strategy issue papers largely build on the SA scoping report and start to examine in greater detail the messages from evidence and research, the opportunities and threats and planning issues that need to be considered in the Core Strategy (the SA scoping report can be found at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=17394>).

1.3 What are Mineral Resources?

Primary mineral resources are rocks and minerals which are naturally occurring substances resulting from a range of geological, earth forming processes and which are useful to mankind: they are essential to the manufacturing and construction industries which provide our homes and buildings, our means of transport and the artefacts we use in our daily lives. In addition, minerals can be derived from secondary sources as a by product when extracting other minerals, and from recycling minerals.

In summary, these resources fall into the following geological groups: igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks and unconsolidated materials such as sands and gravels occurring through the erosion, transportation and deposition of materials, derived originally from solid rocks.

1.4 Minerals 'portrait' of Cornwall

Minerals and the extraction of minerals have historically shaped the Cornish landscape, natural environment, economy, settlement pattern and transport routes. (Five percent of the County is now designated as the Cornwall and West Devon Mining World Landscape World Heritage Site.) Minerals were, and still are, an important resource for the Cornish economy and need to be managed carefully and used efficiently. Minerals from Cornwall have a variety of uses, from aggregates and building stone for the construction industry, to china clay for the paper, ceramics

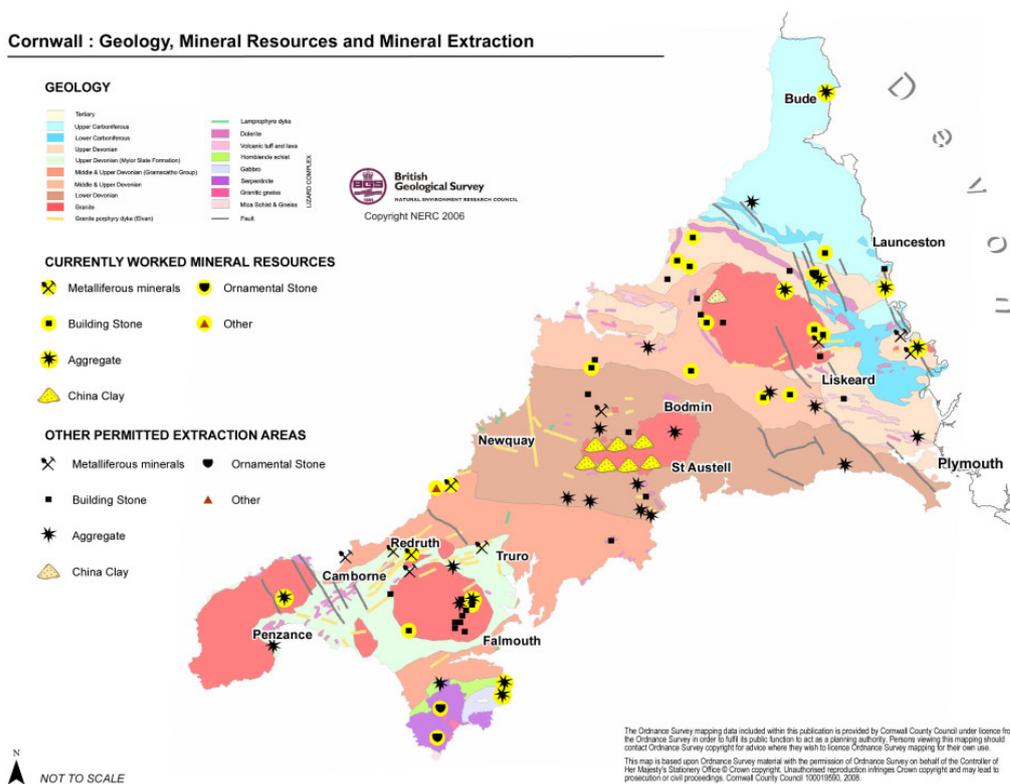
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and health/beauty industry, to tin for plating, solder and chemical compounds. Their extraction provides jobs and other economic benefits which need to be balanced with environmental and social impacts.

Cornwall has a complex and diverse geology which has allowed many different rock types to be exploited as a resource for hundreds of years. The main minerals currently exploited in the county are granite (for aggregates and building stones), china clay, slate and sandstone. Secondary aggregates, derived mainly from china clay waste, make a significant contribution to the construction industry. In the past, extraction of metal ores was important to Cornwall's economy. South Crofty, Cornwall's last tin mine, closed in 1998. However, there is now a renewed interest in mining metals, including plans to re-open South Crofty Mine.

Cornwall's geology and active and dormant permitted mineral resource sites are shown on the illustrative map below.

Mineral Resources



1.5 What is the role of the Core Strategy?

It has been decided that the Cornwall Local Development Framework, including the Cornwall Core Strategy and a following Minerals Development Plan Document will now provide all the local policies specific to mineral resources for Cornwall. These will eventually replace those saved policies previously included in the Cornwall Minerals Local Plan and the emergent Cornwall Minerals Development Framework. Although the Minerals Development Framework Core Strategy - Revised

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Report on Preferred Options was at a very advanced stage of development, acknowledged by the Government Office for the South West, there are advantages arising from including the minerals policies within the Cornwall Local Development Framework:

- Resources will be saved by combining the respective Sustainability Appraisals, Appropriate Assessments, consultations and Independent Examinations.
- Duplication of cross-cutting policies on mainstream environmental, economic and social issues and background evidence and documentation will be avoided.

Only those mineral specific policies which are considered to be of strategic importance will be included in the Cornwall Core Strategy. The remainder will be included in the Minerals Development Plan Document.

The predicted timescale for the delivery of the Core Strategy is for adoption in Spring 2013 This will be followed closely by the “Design Operation and Reclamation of Mineral Sites in Cornwall” Supplementary Planning Document and the Minerals Development Plan Document.

1.6 Relevant policy context

When preparing the Core Strategy, the Council has to take into account the influence of policies at the national level upon the special features of Cornwall although these policies should not be duplicated. The Core Strategy needs to be prepared within the framework set by national and European legislation and national guidance. This section focuses on the most relevant published legislation, plans and strategies influencing the planning for extraction of minerals in Cornwall and draws out their key messages for the Core Strategy. The key directives, acts, plans and strategies identified and used are:

International / European

- Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from the extractive industries (The Mining Waste Directive)

National

- Town and Country Planning (Minerals) Act 1981
- The Planning and Compensation Act 1991
- Environment Act 1995
- The Quarry Regulations 1999
- Pollution Prevention Control Act 1999 and Pollution Control Regulations 2000
- MPS1: Planning and minerals (November 2006) including the accompanying Practice Guide.(Annex 1 Aggregates and Annex 3 Natural Building and Roofing Stone of MPS1 are of direct relevance to Cornwall)
- A Guide to mineral safeguarding in England, British Geological Survey (October 2007)
- MPS2: Controlling and mitigating the environmental effects of mineral extraction in England (March 2005)
- MPG5: Stability in surface mineral workings and tips (January 2000)
- MPG7: The reclamation of mineral workings (November 1996)
- PPS1:Delivering Sustainable Development (January 2005)

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- PPS1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change (December 2007)
- PPS1 Supplement: Eco-towns (July 2009)
- Planning for mineral extraction and archaeology: Practice Guide, Minerals and Historic Environment Forum (May 2008)
<http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Mineral-Archaeology.pdf?1245105644> Adaptations of this document have been published reflecting the content PPS 5
<http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Using-MEAPG-PPS5.Pdf>
- Nature After Minerals 2007 www.afterminerals.com

Regional

- Annual Report, South West Regional Aggregates Working Party, 2008
- 'Our environment: our future' – the regional strategy for the south west environment 2004 – 2014

Local

- Cornwall Minerals Local Plan (1997)
- Cornwall Minerals Development Framework: Core Strategy – Revised Report on Preferred Options (2008)
- Geodiversity Action Plan - Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (2005)
- Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site management plan 2005 - 2010

1.7 Relevant evidence and research

The extraction of minerals in Cornwall makes an important and vital contribution to the local economy and ensures that essential raw materials are produced to meet local building and manufacturing needs, and for the production of specialist products such as dimension stone. This subject is documented in the BGS Mineral Resource information for Development Plans, Cornwall: Resources and Constraints 1997. Further information is also available in the Cornwall Minerals Local Plan 1997 and the Cornwall Minerals Development Framework - Report on Preferred Options 2006 and the Core Strategy – Revised Preferred Options 2008.

Cornwall has over 110 sites permitted for mineral working. There are 66 sites with legally active mineral planning permissions within the county including some that are not currently worked. There are 11 operational aggregate quarries, 13 operational building stone quarries, 1 deep mine scheduled to re-open, extensive areas of active china clay workings and some small scale specialist mineral extraction sites. In addition, the county has vast areas of past mineral activity including areas used for tin mining and quarrying of building stone.

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In 2009 Cornwall produced 2.44 million tonnes of aggregates (cf 3.46 million tonnes in 2008). The 2009 total was made up of 1.19 million tonnes of primary aggregates (sourced from 11 quarries) and 1.25 million tonnes of secondary or recycled aggregates⁽²⁾ (sourced predominantly from china clay waste). Secondary aggregates were 51.2% of all aggregates produced in the county. Since 1993, generally, the proportion of secondary aggregates has risen, reflecting the priority placed by government on the use of secondary and recycled aggregates, which are exempt from the Aggregates Levy (a tax on the sale of primary aggregates, set to increase (by 10p) to £2.10 per tonne in April 2011).

Nationally, there has been a trend of declining permitted aggregate reserves, with shortages in certain parts of the country. (Government advises that each mineral planning authority should have a “land bank” of permitted aggregate reserves which are equivalent to over 10 years supply of crushed rock reserves and over 7 years of sand and gravel reserves). The matter is considered in “Reasons for the Decline in Aggregate Reserves in England, Report to the Mineral Industry Research Organisation, Capita Symonds, 2008”.
<http://www.british-aggregates.co.uk/documentation/doc88.pdf>

At the end of 2008, Cornwall’s permitted primary aggregates reserves stood at an estimated 91 million tonnes of crushed rock (or supply for over 60 years). In addition, reserves of secondary aggregates derived from china clay waste (which include both sand and gravel and crushed rock) are estimated to be over 150 million tonnes (and increasing each year). Cornwall therefore has an adequate supply of aggregates to meet its own needs for “mainstream” construction aggregates. There may be opportunities to significantly increase secondary aggregate exports from Cornwall to meet shortfalls in aggregates in other regions, particularly London and the South East. Consignments have been sent to the Olympics site over the past few years.

However, Cornwall has a limited number of operating quarries which produce high quality skid resistant aggregates suitable for road surfacing. The county is a net importer of these aggregates.

Building stone⁽³⁾ production in Cornwall in 2008 amounted to just over 36 thousand tonnes. For the past 7 years production of building stone has remained between 30,000 and 44,000 tonnes. There was, however, a decrease in production between 2007 and 2008.

China clay production contributes around £100 million to the UK balance of payments and makes a significant contribution to Cornwall’s local economy each year. In 2008, UK sales of china clay (from Cornwall and Devon) were estimated to be in the region of 1.36 million tonnes dry weight, of which approximately 1.19 million tonnes were exported⁽⁴⁾. Production of china clay in the UK has been steadily declining from a peak of 3.28 million tonnes in 1998, mainly as result of changes in global markets. In 2008 employment in the china clay industry in Cornwall had fallen to approximately 1,000 people.

2 Secondary aggregate is material sourced from waste products such as china clay waste.

3 Cornwall Annual Minerals & Waste Monitoring Report data 2008

4 British Geological Survey – UK Minerals Yearbook 2008

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The total area of land occupied by mineral workings was approximately 6,907 hectares in 2008/09 with china clay operations accounting for more than 80% of the total area. There is often conflict between mineral workings and areas designated for their environmental quality. For example over 528 hectares of mineral workings lie within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) ⁽⁵⁾.

Cornwall has some of the most varied geology in the British Isles and contains a large number of sites already designated for, or worthy of, conservation for biodiversity or geodiversity. Many of these sites are associated with sites previously or currently worked for minerals. More information can be found in the biodiversity and geodiversity paper in this series.

1.8 Emerging Evidence and Policy

The gathering of evidence is an iterative process and must be continued throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy. Additional evidence should be considered right up to the 'submission' stage in the process. The following paragraphs describe some emerging relevant guidance and studies which are intended to be taken into account if available before the submission of the Core Strategy.

Studies relating to the safeguarding of mineral resources and infrastructure

Under the current adopted minerals policies there are provisions to safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure from sterilisation from other development. These are being reviewed and updated through the development framework process. Government guidance places a great emphasis upon safeguarding minerals-related infrastructure such as railheads, port and wharves as well as concrete batching and road-stone coating plants and information has been gathered to inform decision making on this subject.

Additional research about Cornwall's important mine shafts and adits and their relationship to underground resources has been undertaken in partnership with the Cornish Chamber of Mines and Minerals.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has assisted Cornwall Council by digitising and making available some key information about metalliferous mineral resources in Cornwall from the Minerals Reconnaissance Programme (MRP) and the Mineral Exploration and Investment Grants Act 1972 (MEIGA) projects from the 1970's and 1980's. Companies receiving government grants for mineral exploration work under these programmes were required at the time to deposit borehole logs and other information with the BGS.

Professor Colin Bristow compiled a report for Cornwall (County) Council: "The Building Stones of Cornwall, Heritage Quarry Analysis, Cornwall Minerals Development Framework, Safeguarding of important Building Stone Quarries in Cornwall", 2006. This was used to identify Heritage Quarries for safeguarding in the Cornwall Minerals Development Framework, Report on Preferred Options,

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and “Reasons for the decline in aggregates reserves in England” 2008 <http://www.british-aggregates.co.uk/documentation/doc88.pdf> provide useful contextual information. They illustrate the potential for Cornwall’s Secondary Aggregate Reserves to serve markets in “shortfall areas” elsewhere in the South West Region and beyond.

The Fowey / Par Bulk Transport Study 2009 by MDS Transmodal, was commissioned by Cornwall (County) Council to guide decision making about the continued need to safeguard land to accommodate infrastructure and storage for transporting minerals at these ports. It assesses the potential future markets for exporting china clay resources from Cornwall, and the capacity of the rail and port networks to meet the projected long term estimates for secondary aggregate exports from Cornwall (as well as 3 larger exporting scenarios).

The above work will be used in the Core Strategy and the Minerals Development Plan Document to update and identify sites to be safeguarded for mineral resources and infrastructure.

1.9 Gaps in Evidence

Studies relating to the St Austell China Clay Area

A review of the findings of the adopted (2000) and updated (2003) St Austell China Clay Area Tipping and Restoration Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance is planned. This includes a review of the buffer zones, the china clay resource areas (incorporating information provided by the china clay companies) and the potential to introduce measures to safeguard secondary aggregate resources and micaceous residues within the china clay tips and mica dams. This information will form an important part of the evidence.

Independent assessment of the china clay and related mineral resources in those parts of the St Austell China Clay Area affected by the recent Eco-communities proposals (as described on the Eco-bos web site <http://ecobos.co.uk/>) is being undertaken in phases. The first phase of the study relates to the Baal and West Carclaze area .

Further analysis of reports and borehole logs from the Mineral Reconnaissance (MRP) and the Mineral Exploration and Investment Grants Act 1972 (MEIGA) project information acquired from the BGS is being proposed, and will be undertaken subject to the resources being available.

Other Studies

An analysis of scenarios seeking to meet the South West’s Sub – Regional Apportionment for Aggregates was undertaken by Capita Symonds (together with Sustainability Appraisals by Land Use Consultants) steered by the Minerals Review Group for South West Councils prior to the abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies. It is expected that the individual mineral planning authorities will draw upon this work when considering their sub-regional apportionments.

1.10 Key Messages from the Evidence Review

A number of key messages and issues were drawn out from the evidence review and an analysis issues, problems and challenges which are documented in Chapter 6 of the Minerals Development Framework – Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options, 2008.

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The table below identifies the messages deemed most relevant and the source documents.

Table 1.1

Message	Relevant Document(s)
<p>To maintain a sustainable and efficient supply of minerals, including encouraging the exploitation of Cornwall's secondary aggregate resources. Government directs that each county should maintain a "Landbank" of at least 10 years permitted reserves for crushed rock, and at least 7 years permitted reserves for sand and gravel for Primary Aggregate Resources (based upon national and regional apportionments). Cornwall's Landbank for Primary Aggregates currently exceeds 60 years. There is no need to allocate additional sites for mainstream Primary Aggregate provision (either as Preferred Sites, Preferred Areas or Areas of Search). It may be necessary to allocate sites for specialist aggregates within the Minerals Development Plan Document.</p>	<p>MPS1, especially Annex 1</p> <p>SWRAWP Annual Report 2008</p> <p>"Reasons for the decline in aggregates reserves in England" Capita Symonds, 2008</p>
<p>To safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure for future use and prevent their sterilisation by other development. A careful consideration of the Eco-town proposals relative to the distribution of china clay resources and related infrastructure in the St Austell China Clay area and at Par is required.</p>	<p>MPS1</p> <p>PPS: Eco-towns - A supplement to PPS 1</p> <p>Eco-town information http://ecobos.co.uk/</p>
<p>To encourage the sustainable transport of minerals. This is considered to be a strategically important issue which should be addressed in the Core Strategy</p>	<p>MPS1</p> <p>Fowey/Par Bulk Transport Study, MDS Transmodal</p>
<p>To protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site from those impacts of mineral operations which may be considered detrimental to the Outstanding Universal Value. This should be addressed by generic policy on the Historic Environment within the Core Strategy</p>	<p>MPS1</p> <p>The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan</p>

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1.11 SWOT analysis

Table 1.2

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of both rare and widely available minerals • Skilled local work force in mining and ancillary sectors • An established higher and further education sector specific to the Minerals industry within Cornwall • Large secondary aggregate resource embodied within the china clay waste tips • Availability of convenient, safeguarded ports and access to the national rail network suited to the transportation of bulky minerals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low in suitable road surfacing stone – need to import • Transport on narrow, winding roads difficult • Distances to national and international markets • No smelters in England for metal ores • Oversupply of existing primary aggregate planning permissions, many which are located within the AONB or other sensitive areas • Reduced employment in the minerals industry, particularly since Imerys' restructuring which reduced their workforce significantly
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential expansion of secondary aggregate exports to the South East of England and beyond • More transport of minerals to distant markets by sea and rail is possible – sustainable transport • New metalliferous resources may be found and exploited • Employment opportunities as a result of the re-opening and planned recommencement of production at South Crofty Mine, Pool • Rise in prices of commodities may lead to new opportunities for exploiting metals such as lithium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sterilisation of important mineral resources and infrastructure (including ports and rail links) by other forms of development (eg proposals for an Eco-town in the China Clay Area and at Par Docks) • Rising sea levels affecting wharves • Deposits become uneconomic (e.g. china clay - resulting redundancies and closures) • Potential expansion or re-opening of primary aggregate workings within the AONB or other sensitive areas

1.12 Climate Change Considerations

The main pressures on mineral workings and related activities from climate change are:

- rising sea levels which may impact on port use and the loss of coastal mineral resources whilst creating demand for armour stone/ beach replenishment material

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- flooding due to increased occurrence of rainstorms leading to rapid run-off from mineral working areas
- greater risk of slope instability in open pits and tips
- potential exacerbation of acid mine drainage

Climate change is further explored in a separate issues paper in this series, as well as in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. consult.cornwall.gov.uk/portal/. The scoping report sets out a series of sustainability objectives against which the Core Strategy and other parts of the LDF will be assessed, to gauge how far they will promote sustainable development. The relevant objective for minerals is:

“To minimise the consumption of mineral resources and ensure the sustainable management of these resources”

1.13 Main Spatial Planning Issues

Taking into account the key messages from the current evidence available, a number of spatial planning issues are listed below. Issues M1 and M2 are considered to be of strategic importance and should be addressed in the Minerals Core Strategy. Additional minerals policy issues will be covered later in the Minerals Development Plan Document.

Issue M 1

Issue M1 - To safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure (processing, storage, handling and transport) for future use and prevent their direct and indirect sterilisation by other development.

Issue M 2

Issue M2 - To maintain a sustainable and efficient supply of minerals, and to encourage the sustainable use of minerals including the exploitation of Cornwall’s secondary aggregate resources.

These issues will work towards achieving the following long term objectives for Cornwall as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy - 'Future Cornwall':

- To enhance and build a robust network of small and medium businesses to secure Cornwall’s economic stability
- To make the most of our environment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest in and promote sustainable use of natural resources

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This paper summarises the evidence on minerals brought together to inform the Cornwall Core Strategy. However, it will be added to and kept up-to-date as other relevant evidence becomes available. In updating these papers all previous versions will be archived to ensure it is clear what evidence was available at each stage.

1.14 Appendix A

Consultation to date:

The Issues papers were first published for stakeholder consultation in September 2009. The papers were amended to take into account consultee responses and were then circulated to Planning Policy Advisory Panel members in November 2009. They were also given to all Members at a series of three area based consultation events in March 2010.

Revisions to Issues Papers:

In writing the draft Issues and Options report in March 2010 it was clear that it was necessary to revise the issues identified in some of the topic based issues papers. Some issues were requirements under other legislation or procedural matters, and therefore options could not be set against them (e.g. *The Core Strategy should work with other plans and programmes...*) Others were in fact options and needed to be set as options under an overarching issue (e.g. *The Core Strategy has a role in supporting the growth and sustainability of the micro and small business economy*). There was also some repetition between different topics and these issues could be amalgamated. Further minor revisions were undertaken in January 2011.

Criteria for Changes:

The issues have been rationalised against the following criteria:

- Is this a Spatial Planning Issue?
- Is the issue covered by other legislation?
- Can options be generated against each issue?
- Is this an issue and not an option?
- Is the issue rooted in evidence?
- Is there potential to amalgamate issues?

Issues in Consultation Version:

Issue M1 - To safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure (processing, storage, handling and transport) for future use and prevent their direct and indirect sterilisation by other development.

Issue M2 - To maintain a sustainable and efficient supply of minerals, and to encourage the sustainable use of minerals including the exploitation of Cornwall's secondary aggregate resources.

Issue M3 - To encourage the phased and timely reclamation of mineral sites in accordance with the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study

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Issue M4 - To encourage the sustainable transport of minerals making use of ports and the rail network wherever feasible.

Issue M5 - To protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site from those impacts of mineral operations which may be considered detrimental to the Outstanding Universal Value.

Issue M6 - To develop spatial strategies and specialist policies for

- aggregates
- metals
- china clay
- building, roofing and ornamental stones

Revised Issues:

Issue M1 - To safeguard important mineral resources and infrastructure (processing, storage, handling and transport) for future use and prevent their direct and indirect sterilisation by other development.

Issue M2 - To maintain a sustainable and efficient supply of minerals, and to encourage the sustainable use of minerals including the exploitation of Cornwall's secondary aggregate resources.

The remaining issues will be considered through the ensuing Minerals Development Plan Document.