

Sand and Gravel in Hertfordshire Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

November 2018 (version 4)

Q1. What is Sand and Gravel?

Sand and gravel are the most commonly worked minerals in Hertfordshire and are usually worked together. There are various types of sand; soft sand is finer grained sand and is used for mortar for bricklaying, wall building and pointing of paving. Sharp sand is not as fine or uniform as soft sand and is characterised by rougher, graded sand with a higher percentage of larger grain sizes. Sand which is taken directly from the ground as unprocessed material, is known as sand 'as dug'. Ballast is a mixture of sand and gravel that is used to make concrete. Sand, wherever it is found, is mostly quartz (silicon dioxide, SiO₂) grains and is formed as a result of the weathering of rocks by the elements. The sand and gravel in Hertfordshire was formed as a result of millions of years of river activity in the area.

Gravels are normally composed of flint rocks and determined by their size. The term gravel is used for material that is coarser than 5mm, with a maximum size of 40mm.

Q2. What are the uses of Sand and Gravel?

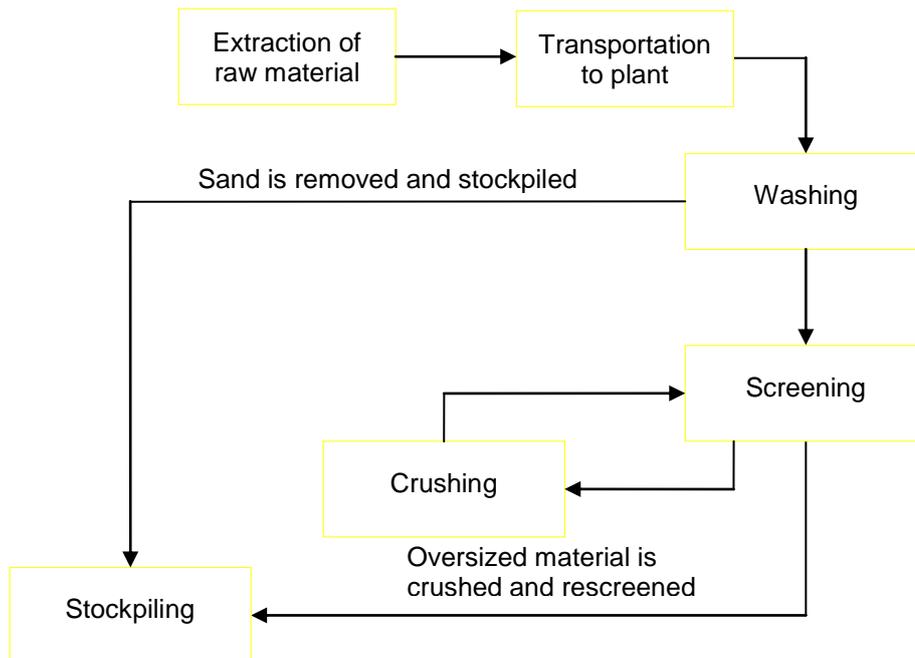
Sharp sand and gravel are mainly used in building and to produce construction materials such as concrete.

Soft Sand tends to be used to create materials such as plaster, mortar and asphalt.

Q3. How is Sand and Gravel extracted and processed?

Sand and gravel are resources dug from the ground through an open quarry. Sand and gravel quarries are much shallower than rock quarries and are usually worked and restored in progressive phases. Soils (top-soil and sub-soil) and material that is not processed by the plant is placed to one side as 'spoil' (this will be placed back during the restoration of the site).

Extracted raw material is taken to the processing plant (either fixed or mobile plant machinery) via internal haul road or conveyor, where it is washed to remove clay and separate the sand from the gravel. The sand is stockpiled separately, while the remaining material is screened and then separated into various sized stones. Larger oversized stones are crushed and screened again. The different sizes are sorted into stockpiles before being taken off site for delivery by trucks.

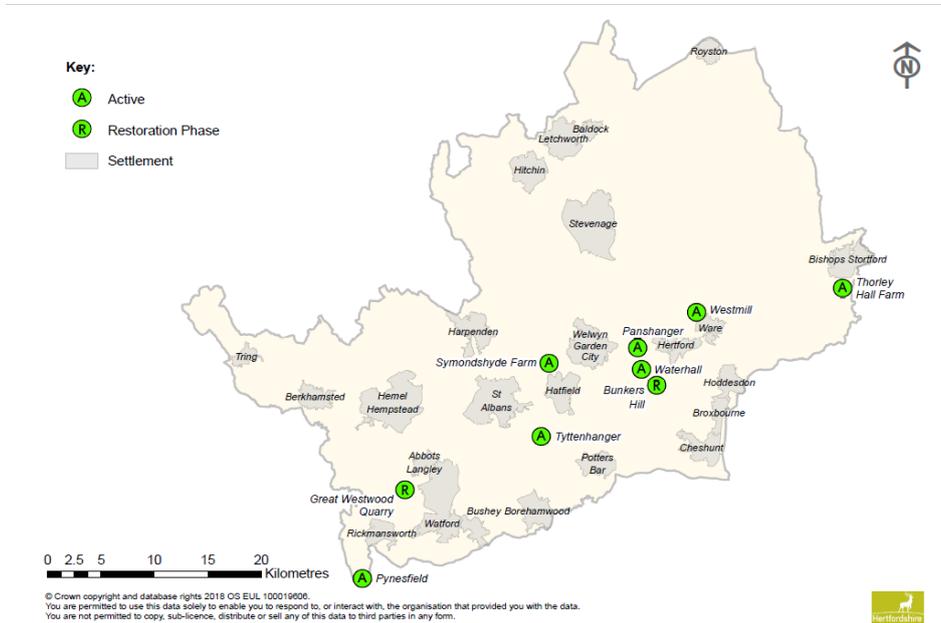


Q4. Sand and Gravel in Hertfordshire

Sand and gravel is an important mineral for Hertfordshire and the wider south-east. The sand and gravel in Hertfordshire is only extracted on land (land-won) and deposits can vary in thickness. Land-won sand and gravel provides the only source of soft sand (building sand), as well as sharp sand (used in concrete production). Soft sand is a relatively scarce resource which is

concentrated in only a small number of areas (generally imported into the county), whereas sharp sand and gravel are more widely distributed.

The map below shows the locations of Hertfordshire's existing sand and gravel quarries.



Map of Permitted sand and gravel sites

Q5. Current planning policy in Hertfordshire

It is vital to ensure that there is a steady and adequate supply of aggregate to contribute to the local, sub-national and national markets. The amount of mineral Hertfordshire needs to provide to support industry and growth within England was historically set by the Government and sub divided into sub-national areas (via the Aggregates Working Parties) and is called an apportionment.

The existing sand and gravel extraction sites in Hertfordshire make a contribution to the supply to meet demand. The sites which already have permitted reserves (resources which have planning permission for extraction) contribute to the aggregate landbank. The landbank is the amount of permitted sand and gravel reserves which are still to be extracted. The figure calculated indicates the length of time (in years) that the permitted reserves will last for at the level of the apportionment. Hertfordshire's current landbank is set out in the Local Aggregate Assessment (2018) which is available to view on the Hertfordshire County Council website at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/minerals-and-waste-planning/minerals-planning/minerals-planning.aspx>

This document is updated annually and taken to the County Council meeting in November.

Planning for sand and gravel ensures a steady supply but also ensures that minerals development does not adversely affect the environment.

Sand and gravel policies in the adopted Minerals Local Plan ensure a steady supply feeding markets and give preference to the preferred areas for mineral extraction.

The following policies are in the adopted Minerals Local Plan:

MINERALS POLICY 1 ~ AGGREGATES SUPPLY

Planning permission for the extraction of proven economic mineral reserves will only be granted where it is necessary to ensure that adequate supplies are available to meet the county's agreed apportionment of regional supply.

The County Council will seek to maintain an appropriate landbank of sand and gravel reserves in accordance with government guidance, throughout the Plan period, consistent with the above apportionment, to enable an appropriate contribution to be made to meet the region's varying needs.

MINERALS POLICY 3 ~ SITES FOR SAND AND GRAVEL EXTRACTION AND THE WORKING OF PREFERRED AREAS

Specific Sites for sand and gravel extraction are identified on the Proposals Map and listed at Appendix 5. These are:

- i) sites which have a valid planning permission for mineral extraction including active sites with unworked permitted reserves and sites on which extraction has not commenced; and**
- ii) sites which are subject to a resolution of the County Council to grant planning permission.**

The following sites as defined on the Proposals and Inset Maps are identified as Preferred Areas for future mineral working:

Preferred Area 1: Land at former British Aerospace, Hatfield

Preferred Area 2: Land adjoining Rickneys Quarry, near Hertford

Preferred Area 3: Land at Coursers Road, near London Colney

Proposed mineral working within the Preferred Areas defined in this Plan will be permitted only when:

- a) they contribute to maintaining the County's appropriate contribution to local, regional and national aggregate needs, including the maintenance of a landbank in accordance with Mineral Policy 1; and**

b) the application satisfactorily fulfils the requirements of the Proposals for that Preferred Area as identified with the Inset Maps.

Minerals Local Plan Review

The County Council is currently reviewing the adopted Minerals Local Plan 2002-2016. As the Minerals Planning Authority for Hertfordshire, the County Council is required to plan for future minerals supply and maintain an up to date document, which reflects the existing opportunities for mineral development within the County.

Whilst the adopted Minerals Local Plan is under review, it will continue to be used to determine minerals applications until the adoption of the updated document has taken place. Each of the policies within the Plan have been 'saved' by a Direction under the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 of the Secretary of State in March 2010 and therefore remain part of the Development Plan for Hertfordshire.

Taking the document forward in the review, the county council as Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) is required within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates to support sustainable economic growth. To provide for future sand and gravel requirements, Hertfordshire is planning to meet the sub-national apportionment figure which has been allocated to the county covering the period of 2005-2020. This figure has had much work undertaken to justify it and factors a proportion of secondary and recycled aggregate into its model. This apportionment ensures that Mineral Planning Authorities make an appropriate contribution to national as well as local aggregate supply.

The NPPF requires that a landbank of at least seven years of land-won sand and gravel is planned for. The review document plans to provide at least seven years' worth of permitted mineral reserves at any time during the Plan with an additional seven years beyond the plan period.

The sites selected to help achieve a steady and adequate supply of minerals feature in Policy 4 (Working of Specific Sites or Preferred Areas) of the review document. To ensure that there are minerals available in the future Policy 8 (Mineral Safeguarding) of the review document is also critical for a steady and adequate supply.

Q6. Monitoring and enforcement: If planning permission were to be granted for sand and gravel extraction, how would it be monitored?

Any planning permissions for sand and gravel extraction granted by Hertfordshire County Council will be subject to monitoring. Monitoring helps to ensure that all development is compliant with any planning permissions (and associated conditions or legal agreements) granted. If required, the County

Council has powers to take enforcement action to ensure compliance with planning permissions granted by the County Council.

Q7. Where can I find more information?

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has information on the geology of Hertfordshire as well as specific documents about sand and gravel resource.
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/>

The Minerals Products Association is the national trade association for the aggregates industry
<http://www.mineralproducts.org/index.php>

For more information regarding the review process of the Minerals Local Plan 2002-2016, follow the link below, which takes you to the Minerals Local Plan Review page on Hertfordshire County Council's Website:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/minerals-and-waste-planning/minerals-planning/minerals-local-plan-review/minerals-local-plan-review.aspx>

Other County Council documents include:

Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (2018)
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/planning/minerals-and-waste-development-scheme-november-2018.pdf>

The Local Aggregates Assessment (2018)
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-in-hertfordshire/minerals-planning/hcc-laa-2018-final.pdf>

Authority Monitoring Report (2017/18)
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/planning/amr-2017-2018-final.pdf>

Contact Information

The Minerals and Waste Planning Policy Team are also available to answer any specific queries you may have, our contact details can be seen below:

Minerals and Waste Planning Policy Team
CHN 21
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford, Hertfordshire
SG13 8DF

Email: minerals.planning@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01992 556 227