

New Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan 2045

DRAFT SITE SELECTION METHODOLOGY

OCTOBER 2026



Dorket Head Quarry, taken by the County Council (2023)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. As set out in our Notice of Intention of Commence Plan preparation, published on the 31st of July 2026, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council are preparing a new joint Minerals Local Plan.
- 1.2. The Councils are now taking the first steps in the Plans preparation as identified in our [Local Plan timetable](#), which is to undertake a scoping consultation.
- 1.3. As set out in the regulations, the scoping consultation is inviting you to make representations on:
 - Matters relevant to the preparation of the minerals plan as the Councils consider appropriate, including what the document should contain
 - How the authority should engage with stakeholders in the preparation of the minerals plan
- 1.4. The Councils are therefore seeking views on both points in this scoping consultation and have published the following documents for consultation, each of which address a key topic:



Scoping document on Plan matters

Seeks views on key matters for the Plan and outlines what the Plan is likely to contain



Engagement strategy

Outlines the Councils proposed approach and seeks views on how we intend to engage and consult you at the consultation stages



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening report

This screening assessment considers whether the Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether a SEA is required.



Draft Local Aggregates Assessment (containing 2025 sales)

A key background document which will inform the future demand and need for minerals in Nottinghamshire



Draft site selection methodology (this document)

Outlines and seeks views on the proposed site selection methodology which will be used to assess sites for allocations.

- 1.5. We are keen to seek your views on the above documents and encourage you to respond to the questions asked within the scoping document, consultation strategy and draft site selection methodology.
- 1.6. To assist the Councils in analysing responses in a timely manner, the questions are within each document.
- 1.7. **Please note that the scoping consultation will run from the 12th of October 2026 until the 9th of November 2026.**

Draft Site Selection Methodology document

- 1.8. A key element of any Local Plan is to allocate sites for development where needed to ensure supply of appropriate sites and which helps to deliver a distribution of future development which matches the spatial strategy of the Plan.
- 1.9. In terms of the Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan, the main choices in terms of allocations relates to the number and distribution of sites for aggregate minerals (principally sand and gravel).
- 1.10. To help us determine which sites put forward through the call for sites, which we anticipate taking place in early 2027, should be allocated we have drafted a site selection methodology. Your response will help inform the final site selection methodology.

How to respond

- 1.11. We want to hear from you and gain your views. The best way to submit your responses to the questions is by responding via our [online consultation portal](#). You will need to create an account but by using the portal, you will be able to directly respond to the questions. It will also reduce time taken to process responses and aid the Councils in analysing responses in a timely manner and move onto the next stages.
- 1.12. Alternatively, you can submit responses via



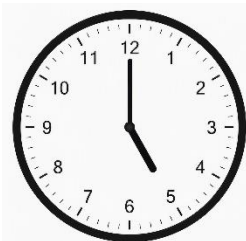
Email to: MineralsLocalPlan@nottscc.gov.uk



Post to: FAO Planning Policy Team, Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, NG2 7QP

1.13. If you choose to submit responses via email or post, you must include within your response:

- Your name, and if representing an organisation, the name of the organisation and your position
- Contact point (email or postal address)
- The document you are responding to
- The question number you are responding to



RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED BY 17:00 ON MONDAY THE 9TH OF NOVEMBER 2026.

RESPONSES RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED NOR TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

1.14. Please note that your comments and name will be publicly published on our website. Any personal information that you provide will be used by the Councils for the purpose of the Minerals Local Plan only. Please see our [privacy notice](#) on the County Councils website under Transport, environment and economy.

1.15. By submitting a representation or choosing the new Minerals Local Plan as a topic of interest on our consultation portal, you will be automatically added to our contact database. You will therefore be notified of when the Plans progress hits key milestones at the registered email or postal address provided to us.

1.16. If you wish to be removed from this database and no longer receive these notifications, this can be requested at any time by contacting us via emailing MineralsLocalPlan@nottscc.gov.uk.

Any questions?

1.17. If you have any questions regarding any of the documents, the consultation or the new Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan in general, please contact us via:



Email: MineralsLocalPlan@nottscc.gov.uk



Phone: 0300 500 8080

2. Background information

2.1. To enable the Councils to decide which sites should be allocated in the Plan, a site selection methodology is required. Before running the call for sites exercise, which we anticipate occurring in early 2027, we wish to seek your views on a draft site selection methodology we have developed.

2.2. This draft methodology has been based upon:

- The adopted Nottinghamshire Minerals local Plan site selection methodology
- Guidance on site selection¹

2.3. How these have both shaped this draft methodology is detailed below.

Adopted Minerals Local Plan site selection methodology

2.4. The approach used for the adopted Plan was based on five stages:

- Stage 1: Identifying the level of need for minerals over plan period
- Stage 2: Issuing a call for sites
- Stage 3: Testing the deliverability of sites
- Stage 4: Strategic assessments, consultees and technical studies of sites
- Stage 5: Ensuring a geographic spread of sites
- Stage 6: Overall assessment and decision.

2.5. The Councils consider that the methodology worked well to identify sites but recognise it should be updated to reflect the new Plan Making system.

Guidance on identifying, assessing and selecting sites

2.6. Guidance issued by the MHCLG outlines how authorities can identify and assess sites for allocation. It ensures that authorities are then taking a robust approach to site selection and provides advice on the four stages of allocating sites:

- Stage 1 – identifying sites
- Stage 2 – assessing sites
- Stage 3 - determining draft allocations
- Stage 4 - confirming draft allocations and recording your decisions

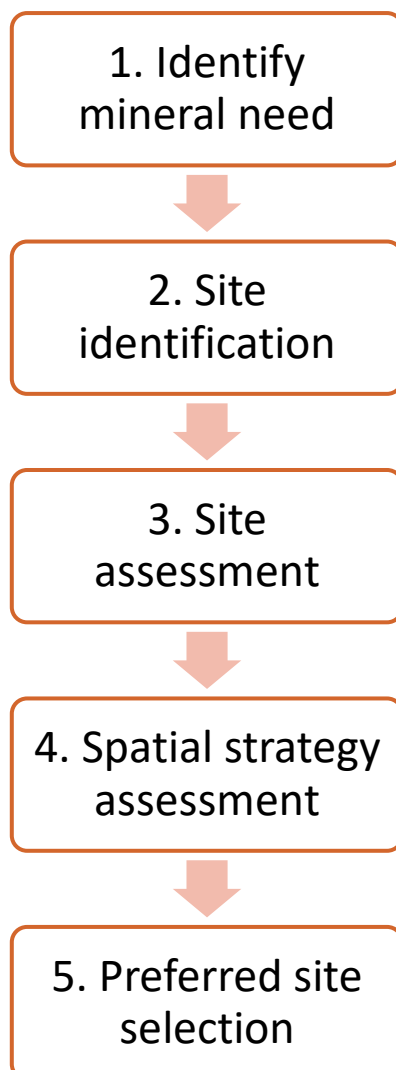
¹ [Introduction to identifying, assessing and selecting sites](#) guidance published by MHCLG on the 26th of March 2026

- 2.7. The guidance does note that it has been prepared for assessing sites for housing and employment, but similar principles can be used to identify, assess and select sites for other purposes, including minerals and waste.
- 2.8. We have therefore sought to use similar principles within our own draft site selection methodology where appropriate.

Draft site selection methodology for Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan

- 2.9. Considering the adopted Plans approach and the latest guidance, we have drafted a potential site selection methodology to be used to identify and allocate sites.
- 2.10. The methodology comprises of five stages, with each stage acting as a filter to sift through sites until a decision is reached. A summary of this is shown in Figure 1, with further detail on each stage provided below.

Figure 1: The five stages identified for the site selection methodology



3. Stage 1: Identifying mineral need

- 3.1. Understanding the need for minerals over the Plan period is fundamental to the site selection process, with need ultimately informing the number of sites required to be allocated.
- 3.2. For aggregates, which include sand and gravel, Sherwood Sandstone and Crushed Rock, the Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) (containing 2025 sales data) will be the key evidence piece to determine the current reserves and forecast the expected future demand for aggregates over the plan period. A draft LAA has been published as part of the scoping consultation.
- 3.3. Chapter 6 of the scoping document goes into further detail on how the need for aggregates over the Plan period could be calculated. It provides options for each aggregate to calculate demand to ensure the Plan is positive and able to accommodate any future growth in demand.
- 3.4. To help identify the need for non-aggregate minerals, including brick clay, gypsum, silica sand and industrial dolomite, we will liaise with operators to discuss current reserve levels and future requirements. We will ensure that landbanks for non-aggregate minerals will meet the required levels as set out by Policy M1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2026).
- 3.5. Once the amount of mineral required is set, we will then consider permitted reserves for this mineral and calculate how much more is required to be allocated to meet demand.
- 3.6. This provides the starting point for understanding what the Plan needs to allocate and will help with the following stages of the site selection process.

4. Stage 2: Site identification

- 4.1. This stage is about identifying potential sites for mineral development to enable a wide range of sites in which to assess and filter down from. This should enable sufficient sites to be allocated to meet the identified need over the Plan period.
- 4.2. As per the guidance, we propose that we identify potential sites by considering sites:
- With planning permission
 - That are currently allocated and not yet permitted
 - Submitted in a call for sites exercise
- 4.3. Whilst sites with planning permission are likely to be still suitable for development, there is a need to ensure that they are assessed in terms of other factors such as availability and deliverability. This can sometimes change over time for numerous reasons, for example a change in operator working on the site or priorities or economics changing for the operator.
- 4.4. This is also true for current allocated sites that have not yet received planning permission. Again, whether circumstances for the site have changed since they were allocated will need to be considered to understand whether they remain available and achievable.
- 4.5. By the end of this stage, we should have a range of potential sites to consider and assess through stage 3.

Question 1: Is there any other methods we should use to identify potential sites for mineral development?

5. Stage 3: Site assessment

- 5.1. After identifying a range of sites in stage 2, these then need to be categorised and assessed to understand their suitability, availability and achievability. These assessments are all part of stage 3 of the draft site selection methodology.

Categorising sites

- 5.2. Before we can begin to assess sites, we need to categorise sites to understand what type and amount of development is available in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham. This will also help shape the spatial strategy for the Plan to ensure that mineral need can be met.
- 5.3. As we need to meet the need for each mineral type found in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, the first step will be to categorise sites by mineral type.
- 5.4. Once categorised by mineral type, the following categories are proposed to be applied:
- Permitted sites
 - Extension to existing site
 - Greenfield/ new site
 - Sustainable transport available (river, rail or pipeline)
 - Scale of extraction based on reserves available
 - Small: Less than 500,000 tonnes
 - Medium: Between 500,000 tonnes and 3 million tonnes
 - Large: Over 3 million tonnes
 - Lead in time to extraction
 - Beginning of Plan period – 2029 – 2034
 - Middle of Plan period – 2034 – 2039
 - End of Plan period – 2039 – 2045
 - Beyond Plan period – Beyond 2045
- 5.5. Sites will likely fall into multiple categories, and these may be revised based upon your feedback and further information and evidence as the Plan develops. Once categorised, the sites can then be sifted through to filter out unsuitable sites.

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed categories? Are there any others we should consider at this stage?

Initial sift

- 5.6. At this stage, sites will be initially sifted to discard any obvious sites which would be unsuitable due to significant constraints. Such significant constraints in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would include:
- The South Muskham Archaeological Resource Area
 - Potentially the Holbeck/ Creswell Archaeological Resource Area, depending on feedback gained from the scoping consultation
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve or Special Area of Nature Conservation
 - The possible potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) for Sherwood Forest. This is a site of European importance which is being considered for such designation by Natural England.
- 5.7. It may be that some sites, whilst constrained, could be made suitable through mitigations. Where this is the case, this will be noted and sites taken forward into the detailed assessment stage.

Detailed assessment

- 5.8. Following the initial sift of sites, the remaining sites will then be subjected to a detailed assessment, which will assess:
- Suitability;
 - Availability; and
 - Achievability
- 5.9. Sites will then be compared and given a score in terms of suitability, availability and achievability. As per the guidance for site selection, the scoring method will not be a quantitative but a red, amber, green (RAG) approach. The score will reflect the constraints and issues identified as well if these can be mitigated.
- 5.10. Below details each assessment stage and the proposed RAG scoring for each assessment criteria. For each assessment, we will be relying upon information provided by:
- The operator/ proposer for the site
 - Overall assessment work for sites, including:
 - SEA
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
 - Transport Assessment
 - Habitats Regulation Assessment
 - Landscape Impact and Visual Assessment

Assessment of suitability

- 5.11. This assessment seeks to determine whether the site is an appropriate location for mineral development when considered against relevant constraints. We have identified the following constraints below after reviewing the NPPF (2026) and local baseline information.
- 5.12. As noted earlier, whether adequate mitigations can be applied to make the site suitable will form part of the assessment as shown in the proposed red, amber, green scoring matrix in Table 1.



Biodiversity and nature conservation

Designated ecological sites, including:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Local Geological Sites (LGS)
- Green Space Sites
- Ancient Woodland

The ppSPA at Sherwood Forest, which is not currently designated.

Areas identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including:

- Mapped measures
- Areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIBs)

We will also consider any opportunity restoration could contribute to local nature recovery, Areas that could become of particular importance (ACBs) and significant biodiversity improvements



Heritage assets

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)
 - Listed buildings and their settings
 - Conservation areas
 - Registered parks, gardens and battlefields
 - Other designated and non-designated heritage assets shown in the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record
 - The South Muskham archaeological resource area
 - Potentially the Holbeck/ Cresswell archaeological resource area
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Landscape

Landscape character areas including:

- Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Coalfields
- East Nottinghamshire Sandlands
- Idle Lowland
- Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds
- Magnesian Limestone
- Mid Nottinghamshire Farmland
- Sherwood
- South Nottinghamshire Farmlands
- Trent Valley
- Trent Washlands
- Vale of Belvoir

Land designated as green belt, noting that mineral development is not inappropriate development and it is the impact on openness and that there is not significant conflict with the green belt purposes that needs to be considered



Land use

- Areas of higher quality agricultural land
- Airfield safeguarding areas
- Allocated open spaces
- Allocated land for other development



Transport and highways

- Effects on highway network capacity
- Safe and suitable access

We will also consider opportunities for alternative sustainable methods of transport (e.g. rail, barge and pipelines).



Residential amenity

Proximity to sensitive users in terms of:

- Noise
- Air quality
- Dust
- Light
- Vibration

Opportunities to improve access to recreational areas and green spaces through restoration will also be considered.



Water resources

- Flood zones (recognising that minerals working are classified as less vulnerable development and sand and gravel working is classified as water – compatible development)
- Groundwater Source Protection Zones

Opportunities for restoration reducing flood risk or providing additional flood storage capacity will also be considered.



Climate change

- Areas vulnerable to effects of climate change

Opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve carbon storage, support nature recovery and resilience through restoration will also be considered.



Infrastructure

- Public rights of way (with consideration that temporary diversions can be a potential mitigation where appropriate)
- Presence and proximity to utilities (for example gas pipelines, pylons), including buffer zones

Question 3: Do you agree with the identified constraints that should be used to assess sites listed above? Are there any constraints we are missing?

- 5.13. Considering the constraints outlined above, sites will then be graded using the RAG system detailed in Table 1 to assess the impact the constraints may have on the sites suitability.

Table 1: RAG grading system for assessment of suitability

Grade	Description
Red	Constraints present and mineral development would cause unacceptable effects, with mitigations unable to make these acceptable.
Amber 1	Constraints present and mineral development would cause adverse effects, which would need to be mitigated.
Amber 2	Constraints present and mineral development would cause minor adverse effects, which would need to be mitigated.
Green	No constraints present or constraints are present but mineral development will not have any adverse effects.

Assessment of availability

- 5.14. Sites will also be assessed in terms of their availability, ensuring there is a reasonable prospect, based on current information, that the site will be available for development at a particular point in time.
- 5.15. Issues that will be considered include:
- Lead in times for planning permission to be obtained
 - Land ownership
 - Securing appropriate mineral rights
 - Production rates
- 5.16. We will request this information as part of the call for sites exercise. Table 2 shows the RAG grading system that will be used to score the assessment of availability.

Table 2: RAG grading system for assessment of availability

Grade	Description
Red	Site is not available for mineral development during the Plan period due to issues identified
Amber	Site should be available for mineral development during the Plan period but there are issues which can be resolved.
Green	Site is available for mineral development during the Plan period, with no issues identified in terms of availability

Assessment of achievability

- 5.17. This part of the detailed assessment will seek to ensure, based on information available, that there is a reasonable prospect that a site is capable of being developed at a particular point in time. This will include whether the site is likely to be viable and so achievable of delivering to meet mineral need.
- 5.18. Within this part of the assessment, we will consider the site reserves, production capacity which will inform us of how much mineral the site could deliver each year over the Plan period.
- 5.19. We will use information collected from operators but also our local knowledge of sites to understand whether the site will be able to contribute to mineral production.
- 5.20. Table 3 below shows the RAG grading system that will be used to score sites on their achievability.

Table 3: RAG grading system for assessment of achievability

Grade	Description
Red	Mineral development at the site seems unlikely based upon viability or known issues with extracting mineral.
Amber	Mineral development at the site may be achievable, though there is some uncertainty whether it is viable and/ or achievable
Green	Mineral development at the site has shown or can show that extraction is achievable and viable

Final scoring

- 5.21. Once each site has been assessed and given a RAG status for each criterion, an overall RAG score will be given to the sites. This will be done through comparing sites and so that it is clear which sites scored better at the time of assessment.

Table 4: Final RAG grading system for detailed assessment

Grade	Description
Red	Due to constraints and assessment findings, the site is not currently a candidate for allocation
Amber	Site is a potential candidate for allocation but has constraints which will need to be mitigated or further assessment on availability and achievability is required
Green	Site is a strong candidate for allocation with few or no constraints that need mitigating and is available and achievable at a particular point in time

Question 4: Do you have any comments on the detailed assessment, including the proposed RAG grading system?

6. Stage 4: Spatial strategy assessment

- 6.1. Following the detailed assessment of sites in terms of suitability, availability and achievability, we then want to ensure that the sites allocated in the Plan match our spatial strategy. This stage will be of particular importance to narrow down the final sites to be allocated within the Plan.
- 6.2. Sites will therefore be considered against the chosen spatial strategy, with a proposed approach outlined within the Scoping document. This includes highlighting three potential themes the spatial strategy could follow or prioritise.
- 6.3. We would appreciate your views on the spatial strategy, and you can provide feedback on this through the scoping document questions.

7. Stage 5: Preferred site selection

- 7.1. From the above four stages, we will then select the preferred sites for allocation. This is a planning balance and requires professional judgement to be made to arrive at a decision on future sites which reflects both the strategy of the Plan and evidence of suitability, availability and achievability.
- 7.2. Like the previous adopted plan, we will need to ensure flexibility and sufficient sites to meet future mineral demand. Where there are not sufficient sites to meet demand, we will re-run the assessments and could potentially run a further call for sites. If neither yield any further sites, a flexible approach in policy to allow sites to come forward will need to be taken.
- 7.3. You will be able to comment on the sites proposed for allocation at the proposed plan document consultation stage. We may be able to indicate at the content and evidence consultation on potential draft allocation sites, however this will be dependent on the level of assessment which has been undertaken at this stage. We will aim to keep you as informed as possible.

Question 5: Do you have any other comments on the draft site selection methodology?

8. Next steps

- 8.1. Following collation of feedback on the draft site selection methodology, we will analyse responses and finalise the site selection methodology.
- 8.2. We anticipate to potentially publish the final site selection methodology prior to the call for sites exercise. This is to increase transparency to promoters and operators and other interested parties on how sites will be assessed.
- 8.3. Once sites are submitted, the Councils will apply the methodology to the sites and publish any findings with future consultations.