Economy & Environment
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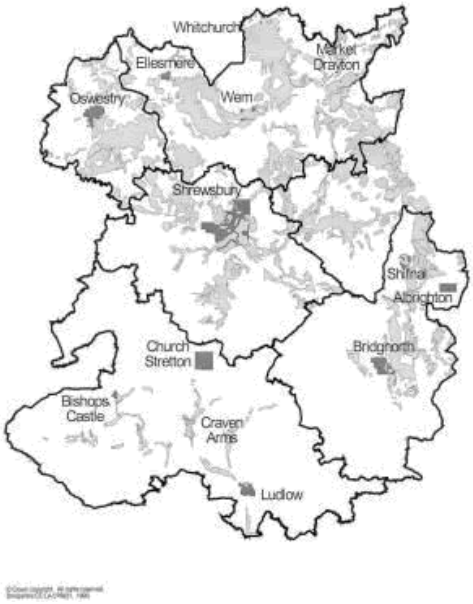
MINERAL RESOURCES IN SHROPSHIRE

The main mineral resource currently worked in Shropshire are sand and gravel, roadstone and coal and clay. The main areas containing these deposits are indicated below:



Sand and Gravel

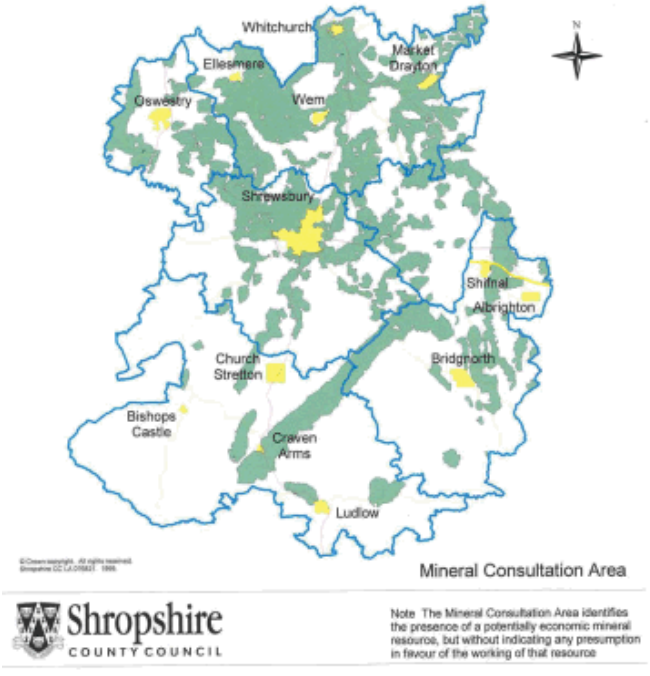
There are three main types of sand and gravel in Shropshire. Glacial sand and gravel occurs extensively in the northern half of the county and is quarried at Ellesmere and around Shrewsbury. Alluvial sand and gravel occurs throughout the county associated with the major river valleys and is quarried at Bromfield north of Ludlow. A band of sand and gravel bearing strata of Permo-Triassic age occurs on the eastern side of the county and is worked at Tern Hill near Market Drayton. Planning permission was granted to work Permo-Triassic sand and gravel at Barnsley Lane east of Bridgnorth in July 2004 and a further site at Woodcote Wood near Newport on the border with Telford & Wrekin is identified in the Shropshire Telford & Wrekin Minerals Local Plan (1996-2006) as potentially suitable for sand and gravel extraction.

Roadstone

The diversity of Shropshire's geology yields a wide variety of roadstone resources and the county is a major producer of roadstone in the West Midlands. Pre-Cambrian gritstones produce specialist high quality roadstone at Shrewsbury, Ordovician flagstones are worked at Minsterley, Silurian limestones are worked near Much Wenlock, Carboniferous igneous rocks are worked at Clee Hill east of Ludlow, and Carboniferous dolomitic limestones are worked south of Oswestry.

Coal and Clay

Shropshire has a number of small coalfields, all of which have been subject to extensive historical mining activity. From north-west to south-east these are the Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Leebotwood, Coalbrookdale, Broseley, Clee Hill and Wyre Forest Coalfields. Most coal mining had ceased by the 1950's and by the 1970's the emphasis had changed to opencast extraction of coal and associated fireclay with a focus on the Coalbrookdale and Broseley Coalfields where the thickest and best seams occur. Opencast activity was quite widespread in the area south-west of Telford (now Telford & Wrekin) in the 1980's and early 90's. The sites supplied the nearby Ironbridge Power Station and the workings provided a number of opportunities to reclaim areas of historical mining activity. Just one opencast site is currently operational. This is located south of Broseley and works fireclay for brick / ceramic manufacture with recovery of incidental coal. In addition, Upper Carboniferous brickclays are worked to the south of Bridgnorth and at two quarries in central and east Telford (Telford & Wrekin).



Mineral Consultation Area

It is important to prevent valuable mineral resources in Shropshire from being sterilised by other forms of development. The Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) identifies where potentially economic mineral resources (excluding coal) are located within the county, but without establishing any presumption in favour of the working of such potential resources. Planning applications falling within the MCA are referred by the District Councils to Shropshire County Council for comment as the Mineral Planning Authority.

Table 1 THE MAIN MINERAL DEPOSITS IN SHROPSHIRE

HOLOCENE (youngest) **Peat**. Formerly worked commercially at Whixall Moss North Shropshire.
Alluvial Raised Terrace Deposits. Worked near Ludlow and formerly south of Bridgnorth.

PLEISTOCENE **Sand and Gravel**. Important resource occurring widely in Shropshire. Best developed in North Shropshire plain. Worked at Ellesmere and South of Shrewsbury.

TERTIARY
No economic mineral deposits.

CRETACEOUS
Absent in Shropshire.

JURASSIC
No known economic mineral resource. Limited outcrop around Prees in North Shropshire

PERMO-TRIASSIC
Brick clay Mercia Mudstone outcrops south-west from Market Drayton and north east of Albrighton. Formerly worked locally for brick clay.
Building stone Sandstone is worked for good quality dimension stone at Grinshill/Myddle north of Shrewsbury.
Sand and gravel Sherwood Sandstone and Kidderminster Conglomerate. Main outcrop in east of county where previously worked for sand and gravel. Also present in North Shropshire, normally beneath thick glacial deposits. Worked at Tern Hill near Market Drayton. Important aquifer.

CARBONIFEROUS
Roadstone. Dolerite, an igneous rock is locally intruded into Carboniferous strata. Worked at Clee Hill Quarry in South Shropshire.
Carboniferous Limestone including Dolomitic limestones worked at Llynclys near Oswestry. Outcrops mainly around Oswestry.
Brick clay The Upper Coal Measures are worked for brick clay south of Bridgnorth and in Telford & Wrekin. Strata of this age outcrop widely around Oswestry, south of Shrewsbury and in east Shropshire.
Coal Lower and Middle coal measures (Coal and Fire clay). Worked for opencast coal and fire clay in Telford / Broseley area. Formerly mined for coal in all areas of surface outcrop in Shropshire. Previously also mined for clay and ironstone in Telford & Wrekin.

DEVONIAN
Old Red Sandstone. Wide outcrop in south eastern Shropshire. Former local source of building stone.

SILURIAN
Building stone The Aymestry Group and Upper Ludlow Shales are quarried on small scale for building stone at Diddlebury in South Shropshire.
Roadstone Wenlock Limestone worked at Wenlock Edge near Much Wenlock.

ORDOVICIAN
Vein Minerals (Lead, Zinc, Barytes) Occurs and formerly widely worked in West Shropshire Mining District.
Roadstone Ordovician Igneous rocks. Permitted reserves at Blodwel west of Oswestry. Formerly worked near Bishop's Castle (South Shropshire), also occurs locally in West Shropshire and Church Stretton Valley.
Mytton and Tankerville beds. Outcrop west of the Longmynd. Worked at Minsterley near Shrewsbury.
Stiperstones Quartzite. Outcrops west of the Longmynd. Formerly worked at Pontesbury near Shrewsbury.

CAMBRIAN
Roadstone . Wrekin Quartzite. Occurs and formerly worked at The Wrekin near Telford.

PRE-CAMBRIAN (oldest)
Roadstone. Longmyndian gritstone occurs between the Longmynd and Shrewsbury. Worked at Bayston Hill and Haughmond Quarries, Shrewsbury. Uriconian volcanic tuffs are worked at Leaton near Wellington (Telford & Wrekin).