

NEWS RELEASE

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Region's Mineral Supply Needs to be Safeguarded says The Assembly

How do we make sure there are enough mineral resources for construction now and in the future without damaging the environment? How can we safeguard essential minerals such as brick clay, sand and gravel from being built-over if we don't extract them now? These are just two of the issues up for debate in a seven-week consultation as part of the Phase Three Revision into the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.

Prepared by the Regional Assembly, and led by local government, the Strategy sets out targets for homes, the economy, infrastructure and the environment through to 2026. Amongst several other topics, views are being sought on what mineral extraction targets should be for each part of the Region.

"Minerals are essential to support economic activity in the West Midlands but are finite resources that need to be safeguarded" said Mark Middleton, Director of Policy at the Assembly.

"It takes 25 tonnes of clay to make the 8,500 bricks needed to build an average three bedroom house, for example. The challenge is therefore to make sure there are enough minerals to meet the current and future needs for both the construction industry and the maintenance of infrastructure without damaging the environment or compromising the future mineral supply. Regional Policies are essential to set sub-regional targets for mineral extraction and guidelines for local councils to assess the environmental impact."

The consultation is in its last week and will run until Friday 14th August, where the public will have the opportunity to submit their views via an online questionnaire or in writing. A Preferred Option is due to be drafted based on the consultation feedback later this year, and be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.

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You can read the Phase Three Options consultation document and fill in the Questionnaire at:
[http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Planning and Regional Spatial Strategy/RSS Revision/RSS Revision Phase 3.aspx](http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Planning_and_Regional_Spatial_Strategy/RSS_Revision/RSS_Revision_Phase_3.aspx)

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Notes to Editors

1. The West Midlands Regional Assembly ('the Assembly') represents a wide range of democratic, social and economic interests throughout the West Midlands Region.
2. The Assembly's membership consists of 100 nominated representatives, with 68 elected members representing the local authority, 16 representing the business sector and 16 representing other economic and social partners.
3. The Assembly provides a platform for organisations to consider matters of common concern including: regional planning, transport, economic prosperity, sustainability, culture and Europe. It also supports regional policy forums and task groups on social inclusion, faith, housing, life long learning/skills, health, rural and community safety/crime reduction.
4. The Assembly works in partnership with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) the regional development agency (RDA), the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) the West Midlands Leaders Board (WMLB) and other regional and local organisations from across the West Midlands Region.
5. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body.
6. For further information, visit our website www.wmra.gov.uk