This Guidance has been prepared and endorsed jointly by the Planning Officers Society and the Mineral Products Association.

The purpose of this Guidance is to provide mineral planning authorities (mpas) with advice on good practice in producing Local Aggregate Assessments (LAAs) and to appraise Aggregate Working Parties (AWPs) and the mineral industry of what can be expected to be included in an LAA. LAAs should be relatively simple in style (possibly 20/30 pages long), with clear data and consistent terminology. An Executive Summary of key statistics and conclusions assists a quick understanding of the document. Year on year roll forwards could be via track changes to enable easy comparison with previous year’s data, if there are not substantial changes to the text.

This Guidance includes two appendices. Appendix 1 sets out a checklist of potential questions that may be appropriate for consideration by mpas and AWPs in the preparation and consideration of LAAs. Appendix 2 includes examples of LAAs that illustrate different approaches used by mpas in the preparation of LAAs but these are included for information and not necessarily as an indication of good practice. This appendix will be revised and added to as practice in the preparation of LAAs develops.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) (NPPF) the Government reaffirmed their view that “Minerals are essential to support sustainable economic growth and our quality of life” (para. 142) and accordingly that “Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates...” (para. 145).

1.2 The NPPF also states that mpas should “so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously” (para. 143 second bullet).

1.3 The NPPF identifies that mpas should prepare Mineral Local Plans (MLPs) that make provision and include policies for the extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance, define safeguarding areas, and set out environmental criteria against which planning applications will be assessed. A contribution to this plan making will be the preparation of an annual LAA. The LAA will facilitate the monitoring of supply and demand which will input into the provision needed in MLPs. This
provision should take the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria.

1.4 It should be noted that there is a requirement that every mpa, whether they have aggregate extraction in their area or not, should produce an LAA (see points 2.1 and 2.2 below).

1.5 This Guidance aims to assist mpas in producing their LAAs. It should be read alongside national policy for aggregates which is set out in the NPPF. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)\(^1\) provides more detail on the purpose, production and content of LAAs. This Guidance seeks not to duplicate this advice but to build on it, drawing on practice since LAAs were introduced.

1.6 LAAs serve a number of functions, principally as:

- Monitoring reports;
- Supporting evidence for preparation or review of Minerals Local Plans;
- Supporting evidence for calculation of landbanks.

2. PRODUCING A LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Every mpa should prepare an LAA. Even if there is no aggregate extraction, all areas contribute towards the overall supply of aggregates. For example, they could include marine aggregate landing points, rail depots, be a producer of recycled aggregates and/or a source of secondary aggregate.

2.2 LAAs can be produced jointly by agreement with one or more other mpas. Those mpas with no primary extraction could either prepare an LAA which reports on need and consumption of primary aggregates and any alternative supplies or prepare a full joint LAA with neighbouring producing mpas. The AWP should be informed of any such arrangement.

2.3 The LAA should include an estimate of what will constitute a steady and adequate supply of aggregates for a particular mpa. The LAA should be used as a basis for the provision for aggregate supply made in an MLP. The LAA also provides a basis for assessing the need for minerals supply infrastructure such as marine aggregate wharves, recycling facilities and rail depots.

2.4 The PPG advises that an LAA should contain three elements:

- a forecast of demand for aggregates based on both the rolling average of 10 years sales data and other relevant local information;
- an analysis of all aggregate supply options as indicated by landbanks, plan allocations and capacity data; and
- an assessment of the balance between demand and supply.

\(^1\) [http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/minerals/planning-for-aggregate-minerals/local-aggregate-assessments/]
2.5 LAAs should be produced annually.

2.6 Information should be presented annually, as simply as possible, and should include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land won sand and gravel and crushed rock</th>
<th>Annual sales</th>
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<td>10 year rolling average of sales</td>
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<td>3 year rolling average of sales</td>
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<td>Reserves – tonnage and sites</td>
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<td>Landbanks (based on 10 year average and, if relevant, alternative figure in LAA or adopted Plan)</td>
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<td>Estimated resources in allocated sites (if available – to provide indication of potential future supply)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recycled and secondary</th>
<th>Annual sales</th>
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<td>Average of past sales (if data available)</td>
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<td>Recycling facilities – changes to sites and throughputs</td>
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<th>Marine dredged aggregate</th>
<th>Annual sales</th>
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<td>Wharves – changes to sites and capacity</td>
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<th>Imports</th>
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<td>Exports</td>
<td>Tonnage and destination</td>
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<td>(By rail and road, if data available)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Aggregates infrastructure</th>
<th>Rail depots – changes to sites and capacity</th>
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| Planned development                     | Planned housing, infrastructure projects |

2.7 To assist interpretation, the data should be easily compared to that contained in the previous year’s LAA. Graphs and charts should be used where possible to illustrate trends. Updates to text may be best presented as tracked or highlighted changes. The implications of any trends or changes for the mpa area and its Plan, or the wider AWP area, should be considered.

3. DEMAND

10 YEAR ROLLING SALES AVERAGE

3.1 The starting point for an LAA, is the rolling average tonnage of the latest available 10 years of aggregate sales from the area of jurisdiction of the mpa. Where joint LAAs are produced by two or more authorities, they should be based on sales from their combined areas.

3.2 The required sales data will be provided each year through the appropriate AWP. Each AWP, through its constituent mpas, will collect and collate data from aggregate producers, as it has done for many years. The mpas need to issue survey forms promptly and the Mineral Products Association members and other mineral operators
can assist the programme for the production of an LAA by the timely return of survey forms (see Section 9). Meeting these deadlines is important to the overall aggregate planning process, to ensure information is up to date and accurate. The data will be reported as a collation of totals for each mpa area, as is the established practice.

3.3 In cases where sales data has not been submitted within the required timescale for the LAA (and the AWP Annual Report) to be produced, then the mpa should estimate the sales from any missing sites. Where it is necessary to use an estimate, the mpa should make it clear how it has been arrived at and allow the operator(s) concerned an opportunity to comment on the figures.

3.4 Whilst the 10 year rolling sales average may be considered the starting point for an LAA, LAAs must also be based on "other relevant local information.

OTHER RELEVANT LOCAL INFORMATION

3.5 Other relevant information should be considered in estimating possible future demand, in addition to the 10 year rolling average of past sales. This may include levels of planned construction, including major infrastructure projects, and planned housebuilding in the mpa area and beyond. In addition, mpas should also look at average sales over the previous three years to identify if there is a general trend of demand that needs to be considered in relation to forthcoming supply in the consideration of whether it might be appropriate to increase supply. Where possible, planned levels of growth should be compared to actual growth over the previous ten years, to provide an indication of relative scale; and therefore of potential implications for aggregates demand and supply.

3.6 The PPG lists some potential sources of information to use in LAAs. Other potential factors / data that could be considered include:

- geological resources being exhausted within the following MLP period;
- trends and forecasts of population change;
- validated data on aggregate use in construction provided by the Mineral Products Association;
- planned house building, major infrastructure projects or other indicators of significant change in demand for construction materials, within the LAA area and in adjoining authorities;
- local, regional and national economic forecasts;
- changes in the availability of marine materials and the wharf capacity to handle them;
- major new sources of recycled or secondary material becoming available; and
- new significant environmental constraints being identified in aggregate producing areas, or in proximity to them, for example designation of Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites.

3.7 Some mpas have utilised other relevant information in the preparation of LAAs. Examples of LAAs which have done so are included in Appendix 2.

3.8 There are limitations on how far specific future demand from various factors can be translated into direct aggregates demand. Further work on this aspect is being undertaken by a number of mpas and lessons learnt will be incorporated in future versions of this Guidance.

3.9 There will need to be sufficiently robust information to justify deviation from the starting point of the 10 years rolling sales average. The use of other relevant local information needs to be based on sound evidence that is not only relevant but is adequate, proportionate and up to date.

4. SUPPLY OPTIONS

4.1 The PPG advises that LAAs should contain an analysis of all aggregate supply options. Those supply options are set out in the PPG (paragraph 063) and are considered below.

4.2 Estimating the supply of recycled and secondary aggregate within an mpa area continues to be difficult. The 2005 national survey of arisings and use of construction, demolition and excavation waste\(^2\) as aggregate provides figures for whole regions but is not considered to be reliable enough as a basis for deriving data for individual mpas. Some Waste and Minerals Local Plans have targets for increased recycling of construction and demolition waste but it can be difficult then to calculate with any certainty how much additional material will be produced. Some Waste and Mineral Planning Authorities are applying methodologies to estimate construction excavation and demolition waste arisings and potential supply of recycled aggregates that consider construction activity, waste generation per unit of activity and waste composition\(^3\).

4.3 Marine aggregate landing figures are reported by port regionally. Using information from sources other than surveys can also give a useful picture of overall trends. Detailed statistics on delivery of marine dredged aggregates are contained in the Annual Reports produced by the Crown Estate and the British Marine Aggregate Producers Association. Indications of future scenarios for marine sources are also emerging in the Marine Plans being produced by the Marine Management Organisation. The Marine Policy Statement (MPS) is used as the overarching UK policy

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\(^3\) For example, Surrey CC
framework for the production of marine plans and in the absence of an adopted marine plan the MPS will inform decisions in the UK marine area. Marine resources are unlikely to be particularly constrained. The capacity of wharves to receive, store and process marine aggregates (reflecting berth area, water depth and tidal regime) and the future availability of capacity and individual wharf sites are issues to be considered in an LAA and MLP, particularly where assumptions are made about this material making an increasing contribution to supply.

4.4 LAAs should consider **imports** into and **exports** out of the mpa area. The only readily available source of this information at present is the Government Aggregate Monitoring Surveys which have been undertaken and published in collated form every four years. Mpas may have to consider conducting their own survey. Individual mineral operators may be able to give more detailed import/export information but will only do so if it is not commercially sensitive or contrary to competition legislation.

4.5 The availability of **land-won resources** (in terms of amount of permitted reserves) is reflected in the landbanks in each authority area which are reported in the annual AWP reports. Guidance on how to calculate aggregate landbanks is given in paragraph 83 of the PPG. It is important to note that the length of the landbank (in years) will be dependent on the figures in the latest LAA that are used to calculate it. It is also essential that the LAA should consider the productive capacity of sites collectively to supply material in the quantities required (as set out in the annual rates of provision expected in the LAA and/or MLP) and for the need for materials of a particular specification to be met. Mpas should have access to this information from their own assessments and from annual survey returns for individual sites but they should check with individual operators before revealing any information other than in the collated form appearing in annual AWP reports.

5. **BALANCE BETWEEN DEMAND AND SUPPLY OPTIONS**

5.1 While the 10 year average of sales provides the starting point, the factors listed above under ‘other relevant information’ will all be relevant in considering demand, and the balance with supply. In particular it will be necessary to consider whether future levels of growth differ substantially from those of the previous 10 years and so support deviation from the 10 year average of sales as a basis for future demand. The LAA may also consider whether the amount and proportion of demand that may be met by different sources is likely to change.

5.2 The potential constraints on the ability to supply from different sources should also be considered, and include those posed by geological resources, protective designations, policy requirements and practical limitations.

5.3 Some mpas have undertaken this assessment in different ways and examples of LAAs that use different approaches are included in Appendix 2. As practice develops, and approaches are tested at Examination, there will be a need to review and if necessary update this Guidance.
6. CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENTS BY THE AGGREGATE WORKING PARTIES

6.1 Each mpa is obliged to participate in the operation of an AWP (NPPF paragraph 145 bullet point 2). One of the roles of the AWP is to consider, scrutinise and provide advice on the LAA of each mpa. There is no statutory provision for consultation on LAAs but the NPPF requires that the advice of the AWP is taken into account.

6.2 The AWP within whose area an LAA is prepared generally consults other AWPs on draft LAAs. The AWPs provide an efficient consultation mechanism and will help mpas demonstrate compliance with the Duty to Co-operate under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) but this is not sufficient in itself to fulfil the Duty.

6.3 It is for AWPs to determine how best to consider LAAs but it may be efficient and effective to receive short presentations of key information from each mpa at a designated AWP meeting followed by discussion and conclusion.

6.4 Mpas do not have to accept the advice of the AWP, but the views of the AWP are capable of being a material consideration in the preparation of MLPs and in making decisions on planning applications. A robust, well-argued and well-presented LAA will assist debate at the AWP. The aim should be to produce an LAA which the AWP is happy to support and in the majority of cases it is anticipated that the AWP’s support for an LAA will be achieved. However, where that does not happen, the mpa is still free to use their LAA as a basis for plan making but should be prepared for the fact that any objection from the AWP may be a material consideration at the Public Examination of their Plan.

6.5 A checklist included as Appendix 1 to this Guidance may assist mpas in the preparation of the LAA and may help AWPs in considering and advising on LAAs. The purpose of the checklist is to give all parties an indication of some of the potential questions that in particular circumstances may be worthy of consideration.

6.6 It is for AWPs to determine how the view of the AWP on an LAA is to be determined. Whilst there are no voting arrangements in place, AWPs should attempt to reach a consensus on their view on any LAA and a formal letter should be sent to the mpa outlining this view. If consensus cannot be reached, the different views should be recorded and included in the letter to the mpa.

6.7 The AWP should provide an assessment on the position of overall demand and supply for the AWP area, based on the LAAs and informed by other data. The assessment should also investigate emerging trends in the area and consider whether the AWP area is making a full contribution towards national and regional aggregate needs, which should be reported in its Annual Monitoring Report.

4 For example, as practiced by the East of England and South East England AWPs
6.8 The National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group (NACG) will monitor the overall provision that is made for aggregates in England. The NACG will not generally provide advice on the production of individual LAAs but will monitor the annual reports produced by each AWP with particular appraisal of landbanks. NACG consider whether there are any areas of concern in ensuring the steady supply of aggregates and advise AWPs and Government accordingly.

7. CONSULTATION ON LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENTS

7.1 There are no formal requirements on consultation and this has been approached in widely different ways by mpas. Consultation could be carried out prior to or at the same time as consideration by the AWP but it will be important that the AWP considers the final version of the LAA, particularly where this provides the basis for provision in an MLP. Engagement with other mpas and relevant prescribed bodies on an LAA is likely to contribute towards demonstrating compliance with the Duty to Co-operate.

7.2 Consultation needs to be balanced against the tight timescale for preparing LAAs on an annual basis following completion of the annual monitoring survey. It could be advantageous to seek the advice of the AWP early on in the preparation of the LAA, especially if the LAA is to have public consultation and Member endorsement. This would also be the case if a significantly different figure to the 10 year rolling sales average was going to be proposed and/or where it forms part of the evidence base underpinning an MLP.

8. FINALISING A LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENT

8.1 There is no statutory mechanism for the adoption or approval of a LAA by an mpa. It is for individual mpas to consider whether or not an LAA should be subject to Council Member approval (e.g. Cabinet Member or Full Cabinet). The LAA is essentially a technical and factual document, rather than a policy document, and so does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

8.2 It has previously been indicated by Government that mpas are strongly encouraged to include LAAs within Authorities’ Monitoring Reports. Mpas are therefore likely to publish their LAAs on their websites.
9. **POSSIBLE ANNUAL LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME/TIMING**

9.1 The following programme shows a desirable timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early January</td>
<td>AWP Aggregate Monitoring Survey forms issued by mpas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of March</td>
<td>Completed AWP Survey forms returned to the mpas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Mpas consult operators on any estimates in lieu of non-returns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of April</td>
<td>Collated survey data sent by mpas to AWP Secretary for inclusion in AWP Annual Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – July</td>
<td>Initial draft LAA produced by mpa and consultation held with other mpas, mineral operators and/or associations and environmental bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Draft LAA submitted to AWP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Formal comments and advice of AWP conveyed to mpa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>LAA approved by mpa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of December</td>
<td>LAA published on mpa website and/or in the Authority’s Monitoring Report.</td>
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9.2 This typical programme would mean that the Annual Report of the AWP, which is required to be published by the end of June each year, would include LAAs of its constituent mpas that were concluded in the year prior to the publication of the report, based on information from the AWP survey for the year prior to that.

10. **MONITORING OF MINERAL LOCAL PLANS**

10.1 Assessment of the aggregate landbank, other provisions in an MLP, and the latest LAA contribute towards judging whether or not the MLP needs reviewing. The length of the landbank in years should be calculated by dividing the total estimated tonnage of aggregate reserves with permission in an mpa area by the estimated annual demand as indicated by the latest LAA. An LAA is a material consideration in determining any relevant planning application for future extraction of primary minerals or provision of capacity for recycled aggregate.
APPENDIX 1

CHECKLIST FOR CONSIDERATION BY MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES AND AGGREGATE WORKING PARTIES IN ASSESSING THE ADEQUACY OF LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENTS

1. Is the draft LAA comprehensive in assessing all supply options:
   a) Recycled and secondary aggregates?
   b) Marine dredged aggregate?
   c) Imports and exports by sea, rail and road?
   d) Land-won resources of rock and sand and gravel?

2. Are the assessments realistic and supported by evidence:
   a) Has the mpa used sales returns from and capacity at sites with extant permission?
   b) Has the mpa used AM data and Crown Estate landing figures and data on licensed reserves?
   c) Is there reliable evidence on the maintenance of supply, and is there adequate capacity at wharves and rail depots to handle the LAA figure for landings and imports?
   d) Has the mpa considered a ten year sales average? If it is proposing an alternative figure to this, is there adequate justification?
   e) Is it necessary to carry out a separate assessment for different types of aggregate?
   f) Are the assumed and planned contributions from the different sources feasible?

3. Does the draft LAA suitably assess the changes likely to impact on supply and demand over the plan period – has it:
   a) Given consideration of the planned levels of development and infrastructure, including relevant major construction projects outside the mpa area and how these compare to previous years?
   b) Considered the constraints on resources, production and capacity to supply?
   c) Taken into account economic and environmental considerations?
   d) Assessed the implications of such considerations in other authority areas that supply the mineral planning authority?
   e) Identified a shortage of supply (based on forecast of demand, reserves and capacity)? If so, has this been suitably addressed?

4. In preparing the LAA has the mpa consulted with (to contribute to meeting the Duty to Cooperate, especially if the LAA is being used as evidence to support preparation of an MLP):
   a) Other relevant mpas including those from/to whom supplies are imported/exported?
   b) The aggregate industry?
c) Environmental bodies?
d) Other organisations such as Local Enterprise Partnerships?

5. **What are the implications of the draft LAA figures for the AWP area:**

a) On planned provision in the AWP area?
b) On the overall contribution of the AWP to national & local supply, compared with the current Guidelines (or the London Plan)?
APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL AGGREGATE ASSESSMENTS
(This appendix will be revised and added to over time)

Links are provided below to some examples of Local Aggregates Assessments. These represent alternative approaches to balancing demand and supply or utilising other relevant information. They are included for information and do not necessarily represent good practice. Best practice will emerge over time and this Guidance will be reviewed and added to over time.

Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and the Peak District National Park Local Aggregates Assessment 2014

10 years sales figure are used with a reduction of 10% for the Peak District National Park area and the addition of this to the Derbyshire area, to compensate for the progressive loss of production from the National Park and provide flexibility for any increase in demand.

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/planning_policy/minerals_waste_development_framework/minerals_plan/

Oxfordshire Local Aggregate Assessment 2014, November 2014

A steeper decline in sales during the recession was identified for Oxfordshire than for England as a whole, due to some quarries being mothballed and imports being increased. To compensate for this, an adjusted 10 years sales average was developed using the pre-recession Oxfordshire proportion of England sales.

https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/minerals-and-waste-core-strategy

2nd Devon Local Aggregate Assessment 2003-2012, March 2014

A weighting system was used. Most recent sales figures were given a factor of 10, declining to most distant by a factor of 1. Weighted figures were totalled and divided by the sum of weightings to provide “weighted” 10 years sales. Figures were lower than actual sales. (The 3rd Devon LAA 2004-2013, December 2014 does not use this weighting method.)

http://www.devon.gov.uk/laa
East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Local Aggregate Assessment, December 2013

10 year sales for land won aggregate sales are highly volatile due to there being only 2 active quarries which had intermittent extraction. A substitute figure is used from the previous Regional Plan apportionment, as used in the Adopted Waste and Minerals Plan.

http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/development/mineralsandwaste/amr1.htm

West Berkshire Local Aggregates Assessment, December 2014

Appraisal found that population growth predictions are not suitable as a proxy to indicate future level of demand for land won minerals.