# 8. Other Non-Aggregate Minerals

## 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 In addition to the aggregate and energy minerals considered in Chapters 5 to 7, North Yorkshire contains a number of specialist or less frequently occurring economic minerals. These include building stone, limestone worked for agricultural purposes, clay, industrial and silica sands, gypsum and vein minerals. The following paragraphs consider those minerals which are currently either worked or processed in the Plan Area.

8.1.2 It is not considered necessary to formulate distinct policies or to make specific land allocations for any of these minerals. Any proposals received will be subject to the general policies of the development plan, in particular those set out in Chapters 3 and 4 of this Plan.

## 8.2 Building Stone

8.2.1 There is concern over the availability of supplies of building stone to maintain the traditional built environment of North Yorkshire which is recognised as being of outstanding merit. It is desirable to ensure a good supply of building stone to provide for both maintenance and new building using traditional stone materials. A source of traditional roofing slate would also be welcome as this material is not presently worked in the Plan area.

8.2.2 Only one quarry within the County specialises in the production of building stone. At a number of other quarries a proportion of the stone quarried on site, together with salvaged stone brought onto site from other sources, is cut to supply building stone.

8.2.3 Repair work often relies on the salvage of local materials. There appears to be a shortfall of sites supplying building stone for new development. Stone is imported from quarries outside the County to meet demand.

8.2.4 The scale of demand is limited and output is very small in comparison to the demand for aggregates. Subject to local impact the County Council will support the production of building stone in the interests of ensuring the proper maintenance of the traditional built environment.

## 8.3 Agricultural Lime

8.3.1 A number of sites within the County working the Permian and Jurassic limestones produce agricultural lime. The output is modest in comparison with the production of aggregate material. Production is affected by the seasonal nature of demand and serves a predominantly local market. Demand may well decrease if the trend towards less intensive agricultural production continues. The application of lime will counteract the natural increase over time in the acidity of soils which in many areas results in a reduction in soil fertility.

## 8.4 Clay

8.4.1 Lowland parts of North Yorkshire contain numerous pits, often flooded, which have, in the past, yielded clay for brick and tile making. Currently only three sites retain productive capacity - at Alne, Escrick and Littlethorpe. At the Alne and Escrick sites the clay extraction voids are used for landfill schemes. It is anticipated that landfill gas will eventually be utilised to generate electricity for heating the kilns. Brick making has seen a significant concentration of manufacturing output over recent years and tile making has been subject to substitution by plastic and concrete based products. It is unlikely that there will be a large scale demand for additional reserves.

## *8.5 Industrial and Silica Sand*

8.5.1 Current national production of industrial and silica sand for use in the glass and foundry industries is approximately 3.4 million tonnes, although this figure is declining due to the increasing popularity of glass recycling schemes and the substitution of plastics. North Yorkshire has two sites - Burythorpe Quarry, south of Malton and Blubberhouses, west of Harrogate. The Blubberhouses site is currently mothballed due to market conditions.

8.5.2 Deposits of mineral capable of yielding suitable reserves of silica sand are much more site specific than for aggregate minerals. A draft MPG "Provision of silica sand in England" was published in 1994. This draft MPG requires landbanks of at least 10 years production to be maintained for each individual site in order to ensure an adequate and steady supply of silica sand. Both of the sites in the County have substantial permitted reserves to satisfy the landbank requirement. Any proposals for future working of silica sand will be determined on their merits having regard to the policies of the development plan and the context of any final published guidance on the provision of silica sand.

## *8.6 Gypsum (Calcium Sulphate)*

8.6.1 Natural gypsum is no longer produced in North Yorkshire. The manufacturing plant at Sherburn-in-Elmet which used the output of the former mine now imports its raw material from elsewhere.

8.6.2 Increasingly the interest in calcium sulphate lies in desulphogypsum (DSG) which is produced as a commercial grade by-product from the Flue Gas Desulphurisation process at Drax Power Station. This is expected to be fully operational in 1996. In a full year, dependent on generating hours, the chemical characteristics of the coal burned and the limestone used, the process is expected to produce between 0.8 and 1.0 million tonnes of DSG per year. Most of this will be transported to manufacturing plants outside North Yorkshire.