

Mineral resources maps from the BGS

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Although most of us would accept that minerals are essential to our quality of life, we are often unwilling to support a proposal to work minerals in our own backyard. Nevertheless, minerals can be worked only where they occur, and there are few parts of our islands where any new development can take place without disturbing some other legitimate and understandable interest in the land.

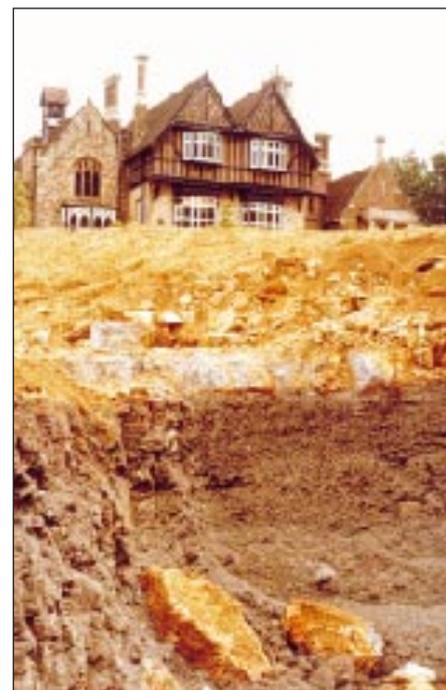
Minerals in your backyard

Achieving the right balance between protection of the environment and wealth creation through mineral development is one of the major issues facing

“... achieving the right balance between protection of the environment and wealth creation through mineral development is one of the major issues facing the minerals industry and planning process today ...”

the minerals industry and planning process today. Responsible resource management is becoming of increasing importance, particularly since many of the easier options for mineral development have already been taken. Access to reliable information on the extent, quality and potential of our indigenous mineral resources is an essential element of effective decision-making in the fields of resource management and land-use planning. This includes safeguarding resources against sterilisation by the use of land for other forms of development.

Balancing the demand for minerals and the need to protect the environment is the task of the land-use planning system. As a society, we require an adequate supply of minerals, and we also require that the environment should be well cared for. This means that the regulatory planning system must provide the minerals necessary to

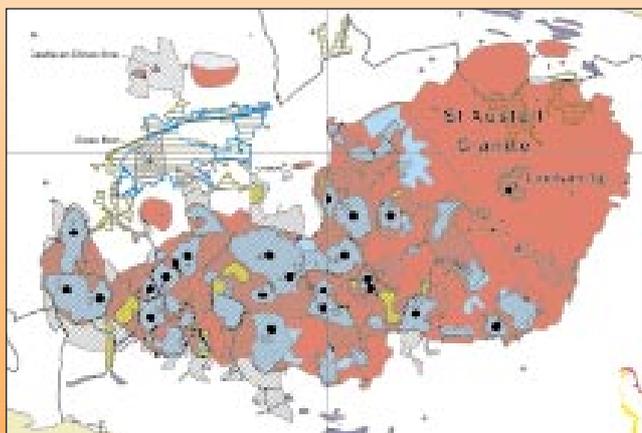


Fuller's earth quarry in Surrey.

sustain economic growth as well as to control mineral development to ensure that the environment is protected.

Although the planning system operates within a national framework, it is local authorities, usually at county level, who must produce a mineral planning policy in the form of a development plan. To assist in the preparation of these plans, the BGS is developing systems for the display of information on mineral resources, and the environmental constraints that may affect their extraction, for selected areas in England and Wales. Output is as mineral resource maps, with accompanying reports. All the data collected are in digital form, enabling easy revision and customisation to meet individual user needs.

The project, entitled *Mineral Resource Information for Development Plans*, is funded by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR). A primary objective is to provide baseline information on mineral resources in a consistent format for the long term, allowing issues such as ‘minerals in your backyard’ to be considered in context. The maps and associated reports are available from the BGS.



Part of the Cornwall Mineral Resources Map, showing resources, planning permissions and planning constraints in the St Austell china clay area.