

### Definition and rationale

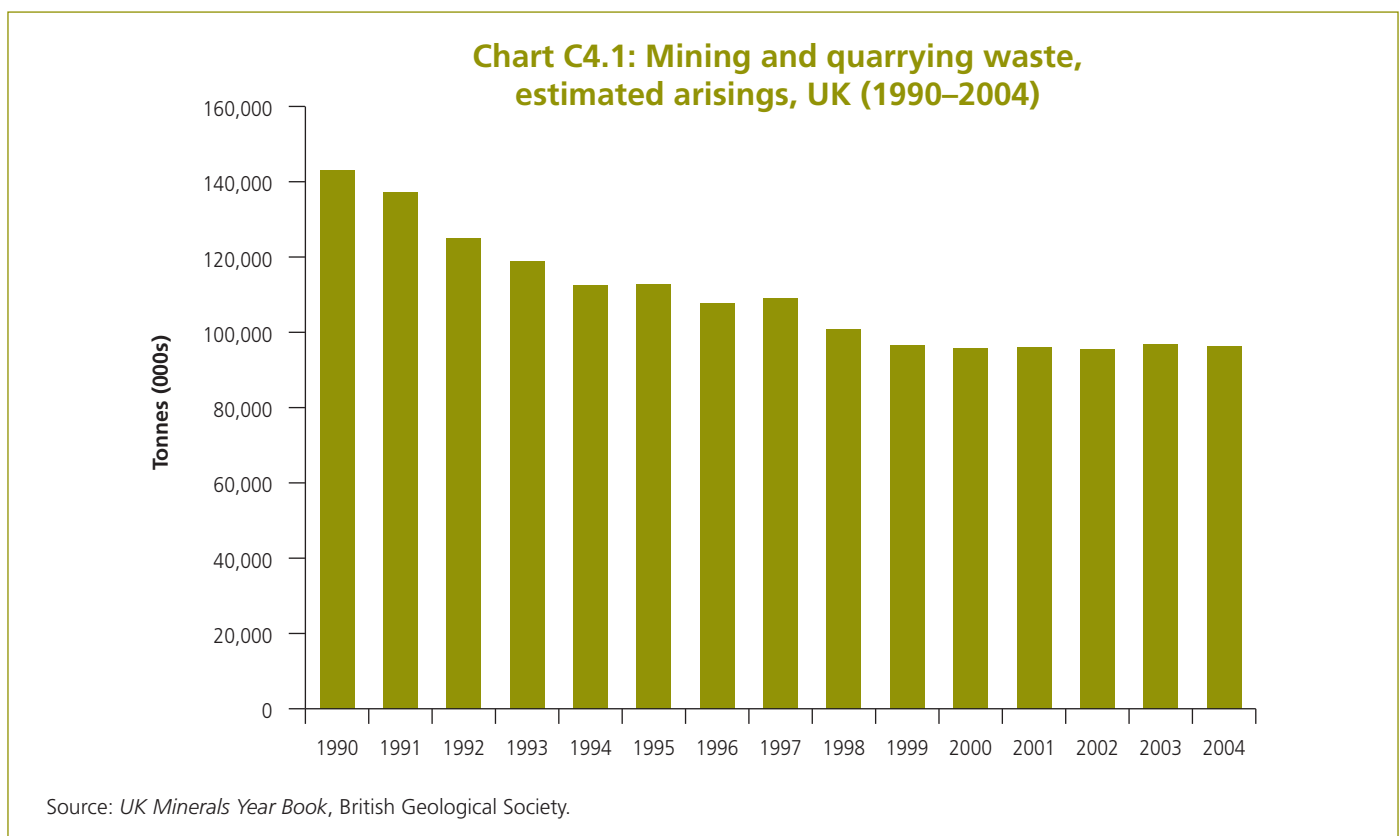
1. Production of mineral waste from UK mines and quarries is connected, in particular, to the extraction of coal, slate, china clay and ball clay because of high amounts of waste per tonne of mineral extracted, and with extraction of aggregates because of the scale of that sector of the industry. It includes material that is moved to gain access to the mineral resource, as well as mineral deposits that are uneconomic and processing wastes remaining after primary processing of minerals.

2. Following the entry into force of the EU Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from the extractive industries (the Mining Waste Directive) on 1 May 2006, mineral waste will have to be defined by reference to, and regulated in accordance with, this Directive.

### Arisings, trends and projections

3. The quantity of mineral waste produced by the extractive industry in the UK fluctuates yearly, depending on the level of activity in the various sectors. There are no definitive statistics available regarding mineral waste management, as individual mines and quarries will manage wastes according to local conditions.

4. It was estimated that 96.4 million tonnes of mining and quarrying waste was produced in 2004 in the UK (see Chart C4.1). This was a small decrease from 96.9 million tonnes in 2003. Estimates are based on the production data in the UK Minerals Year Book, published by British Geological Survey. Ratios are then applied to specific mineral types to establish waste estimates.



### Management routes

5. The vast majority of these materials are non-hazardous and inert, and are managed by the operator at the place of production.

6. For sound economic reasons, operators aim to recover the maximum possible amount of economic mineral and any saleable by-products at each site, and to minimise the amount of non-economic extractive material that needs to be handled. In some cases, low value minerals may not be immediately saleable but may be placed into temporary stockpiles for possible future use.

7. Other extractive material may be:

- returned to the extraction void as an essential part of the restoration of the site to subsequent beneficial uses;
- if essentially dry, placed in temporary, or landscaped permanent, tips; or
- if wet, and essentially in the form of a slurry, emplaced behind dams in 'tailings lagoons'.

8. Following the entry into force of the Mining Waste Directive, there is an obligation on Member States to ensure that all mineral waste is managed in a way which does not undermine the implementation of the Directive's objectives, i.e. to prevent or reduce any adverse effects on the environment and human health brought about as a result of the management of extractive waste.

### Policies and targets

9. Mineral waste will be subject to the specific legal framework introduced by the Mining Waste Directive. The provisions introduced by the Directive will deal with the planning, permitting, construction and operation, closure and after-care of waste facilities.

10. A number of economic instruments have been used to promote the use of alternatives to primary aggregates, including some major mineral wastes. These are:

- the Landfill Tax to stimulate use rather than disposal of suitable, including inert mineral, wastes;
- the Aggregates Levy, partly to stimulate the use of alternatives to newly quarried aggregates, including making better use of mineral wastes;
- the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF), which has addressed some of the barriers to use mainly through Defra's Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). In addition, the part of the ALSF disbursed by the Department for Transport may help to address some of the issues of transportation of mineral wastes from relatively remote extractive sites to the main areas of demand; and
- CLG's target for use of alternatives of primary aggregates is 60 million tonnes per annum by 2011, which includes mineral wastes as well as construction and demolition wastes and other suitable alternatives. The target is subject to annual monitoring and review, and to revision when necessary.

11. The use of the economic instruments and the adoption of the Mining Waste Directive should provide incentives to operators to find novel uses for mineral wastes.

### **Implementation and timescales**

12. The Mining Waste Directive will be transposed into national law by 1 May 2008. Mine waste facilities would be subject to the new provisions by 2012.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

13. The Government is considering options for transposing the Mining Waste Directive alongside the development of an Impact Assessment. The Government aims to consult on these options later in spring 2007. The consultation will include proposals on the role of the key stakeholders involved (including local authorities, the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive).

### **References and other information**

EU Eur-lex

[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l\\_102/l\\_10220060411en00150033.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_102/l_10220060411en00150033.pdf)

ODPM EU Directive information page

<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1148108>

ODPM's Mineral Planning Policy

<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143802>