

## Minerals Plan Consultation; Policy M3 – Cholsey comments Part 1

ID No (& name of org)	Comment/issue raised
7	<p>I live right opposite the proposed sites SG57 and SG33 on the corner of Caps Lane and Wallingford Road. We bought the house 12yrs ago because of the beautiful views from the front windows of farmland and trees.</p> <p>Every morning my 8yr old son wakes and looks out of the window to see the kites nesting in the trees and the farmer feeding his sheep. He often tells me he loves our house because of the view from his bedroom. He cried when I sat him down and told him what the council were proposing.</p> <p>Apart from the ultimate destruction of Cholsey and Wallingford that this site would cause, other areas of concern are as follows:</p> <p>Cholsey is already having to adapt to enormous change in the next few years with the development of Cholsey Meadows on the old Fairmile Hospital site. You cannot expect this development to work when new families are put off from moving to the village because of a nearby gravel pit.</p> <p>The dust and noise created by the gravel site will be severe to all residents of Cholsey.</p> <p>What is the council's intention for Brook House (currently slap bang in the middle of the proposed site)?</p> <p>Do the council want to keep the tourist attraction of the old Cholsey / Wallingford Railway? I cannot imagine any tourist wanting to use this in the future.</p> <p>The council's plans will ultimately drive away anyone wishing to settle in Cholsey and its surrounding areas including Wallingford which struggles enough to keep businesses open. This plan will kill our village of Cholsey and our town of Wallingford.</p>
441 (DIO)	<p>It is evident from Background Paper No 3 that MOD safeguarding interests are clearly identified within the draft plan. Chapter 5 outlines the potential birdstrike risk associated with restoration schemes within an MOD safeguarding consultation zone and acknowledges that mitigation will be necessary to reduce the birdstrike risk.</p> <p>I can therefore confirm that the MOD has no objections to the draft plan however it is crucial that the MOD is invited to comment further once specific sites have been allocated to ensure that the birdstrike risk is appropriately addressed.</p>
8	<p>I am completely against the construction of any gravel extraction pits between Cholsey and Wallingford. From the proposed sites it is clear that they would completely destroy the natural landscape, outlook, footpaths and wildlife which are currently in abundance in this area. It would also cause an increase in heavy traffic along the Wallingford to Cholsey road which would increase pollution and the danger for pedestrians and cyclists using this road. The current rural landscape would be completely obliterated and I believe it is completely unacceptable. I have lived in Cholsey for 20 years and I most strongly protest against this proposal.</p> <p>Adam Mills.</p>
9	<p>As a long term resident of Cholsey I have been horrified to learn of the proposed sites for gravel pits in this area. There has been no direct consultation from the council on this matter, which I have only learnt about through a local opposition group.</p> <p>This is an area of great beauty, which I have always felt privileged to live in. I have been proud of how SODC has made its decisions with the environment and local needs firmly in mind. I hope your organisation will continue to be respectful of both the needs of the community and value of the area to wildlife, and put these considerations in front of all others.</p>

10	<p>I would like to register my objection to the three proposed sites for gravel pits between Wallingford and Cholsey. In addition to the range of negative environmental impacts of the proposed site (such as on local flora and fauna) I believe that the pits will also disturb the enjoyment of the area currently experienced by locals and visitors (such as the Agatha Christie trail from Winterbrook to Cholsey). An increase in the volume of traffic associated with the pits would present a major disturbance to the Cholsey community in terms of noise and pollution and in increased delays and risk of accidents.</p> <p>Introduction of the pits would represent a major change in the landscape associated with the area and its aesthetic appeal. It would be an unfair imposition on a community who chose to live in the area for its beauty and peacefulness. Please don't build pits here.</p>
11	<p>We were all horrified to read about the proposed gravel pit sites, bordering Cholsey and Wallingford. To ruin this beautiful part of Oxfordshire, is something that can never be regained, shame on all who are trying to do this. Please reconsider and do not vandalise this beautiful part of England.</p>
73	<p>My comments relate specifically to the inclusion of Cholsey as the only new proposed within the county. I am a long term Cholsey resident and feel very strongly about the issue as it significantly affects our community and our historic and rural landscape.</p> <p>With respect to your policies C3 - C6 my comments are as follows:</p> <p>"Safeguarding the character, amenity and setting...." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey Map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses and field patterns - which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area of the Wallingford Road must be deemed a 'Heritage Asset' within the definition of your plan. It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, together with a thriving village with historical character and importance.</p> <p>Other "Heritage Assets" which are severely affected by the proposed gravel extraction sites include St Mary's Church (founded 986 A.D.), the Agatha Christie Trail (Agatha Christie is buried in St Mary's Church graveyard), and the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through 'noise, dust and odour'.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity, and other sensitive receptors...." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>The proposed site alongside the river is of significant archaeological and historic importance (see "Change at Cholsey - again!" &lt; Cholsey's history book). In addition, the Thames riverbank has significant leisure and wildlife importance which would be completely destroyed by the proposed gravel extraction.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention of within the consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>I am enclosing a copy of our most recent Cholsey magazine (The Forty) which expands on many of the issues outlined above.</p> <p>I would be grateful to be kept informed about the progress of this consultation.</p>
13	<p>I would like to state my clear objections to all 3 of the proposed mineral extraction sites on the edges of Cholsey. These objections are: The disruption /safety issues caused by road traffic servicing the sites, the extended period of time with a degraded environment (25 years), the harm caused to wildlife in the streams, marshes, fields and river. I am already bitterly disappointed that Cholsey has not received its cycle path for the children of Cholsey and other users to travel safely to Wallingford. I find it incredible that there is a proposal for the whole environment to be swept away like</p>

	<p>this when in the past a cycle path has been deemed too difficult or too expensive. Has this been in the plans all along then? The village needs time to adjust to the population changes the new housing at Cholsey Meadows will bring and get used to the idea that the school has been short changed by the developer. I am very concerned that the people of Cholsey will be let down, again because their opinions are asked for but their voices are falling on deaf ears.</p>
14	<p>Re: new proposed area of sharp sand and gravel extraction working at Cholsey.</p> <p>As a long standing resident of Cholsey I oppose, and strongly object to the idea of Cholsey/Wallingford being the site of any gravel extraction plans by OCC, because:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A gravel extraction pit at Cholsey is an environmental threat to the well-being of villagers and the village as a whole. In my opinion, gravel extraction at Cholsey would cause many health issues (physical and mental health) from noise, dust and HGV traffic pollution, because the proposed site would be right up to housing on the Wallingford Road and into Cholsey, and seriously affect a combined population of 10,000 people in Wallingford &amp; Cholsey.</li> <li>- The proposed site will also sit opposite a children's nursery at the top of Reading Road at Cholsey and back down onto the Thames. Again, health issues could affect children, parents and staff at the children's nursery with the gravel site being so close.</li> <li>- Traffic would come to a standstill in the area; heavy HGVs around on local roads would be a danger to children, families, cyclists, pedestrians and everyone in the area.</li> <li>- Cholsey house values will suffer, peoples' lives will suffer, and the village will see lots of outward migration as people sell to move out of the village to avoid the gravel workings and the pollution it would bring. Inward migration would not happen because of the gravel extraction. In short, the local economy would be hugely affected. A once thriving Cholsey village of 3000 people would stagnate and die over time.</li> <li>- Cholsey as a village will be damaged for at least 25 years, and beyond, especially if a landfill site replaces the gravel pit blight once it had finished, or it is left as "depression" in the ground which has then to be fenced off because of the danger that is left - what a scar on the landscape of South Oxfordshire this will be, so close to the Chilterns and Downs AONB. An absolute disgrace, from an environmental point of view, if gravel extraction is allowed to happen at Cholsey/Wallingford - a Saxon town of international and archaeological significance.</li> <li>- For all these reasons, and more (see below) as a long standing resident of Cholsey, who will be directly affected by OCCs gravel extraction plans, I absolutely oppose the idea of Cholsey being the site of any gravel extraction.</li> </ul> <p>Cholsey is adjacent to a huge AONB - which must be protected, and preserved. The siting of a gravel pit here will be a scar on the AONB landscape that will be seen here and for miles around.</p> <p>Even the environmental report (Sept 2010) on the OCC web site, by Scott Wilson, says Cholsey is "constrained" by AONB . See <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/wasteandrecycling/planning/strategy/SASEARevisedMineralsSpatialStrategyOptions.pdf">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/wasteandrecycling/planning/strategy/SASEARevisedMineralsSpatialStrategyOptions.pdf</a></p> <p>In short, it says in that report: AONB constraints - Warborough, Cholsey and Dorchester.</p> <p>So, when the OCC minerals strategy team say there are "no constraints associated with Cholsey" this is at odds with the Scott Wilson report which says there are constraints (i.e. the AONB) and the road system around Cholsey.</p> <p>The Wallingford Road (where I understand HGV Lorries will exit and enter the proposed gravel site) is already an accident black spot with a number of fatalities over the years. It's the main road in and out of Cholsey village, cyclists use it, pedestrians use it (there is only one side of the road with a narrow foot path, and that's on the side of the road that would run parallel with the proposed gravel site). Mixing all this up: village vehicle flows in and out of the village, pedestrians, cyclists with HGV gravel traffic would be an act of complete highway planning madness - to say the least.</p>

In addition, after the Wallingford by-pass the road to Didcot which presumably HGV gravel traffic would take, is narrow and winding - another accident black spot - with many fatalities along that road over the years. It's a road that is just too narrow for the passing of HGV gravel Lorries loaded with gravel. This is all a big accident waiting to happen. I have seen articulated HGV trucks trying to pass each other on the road to Didcot and they find it very difficult to get past each other because the road is so narrow and twisty.

I understand the preserved railway (Cholsey Wallingford Railway (locally known as the "bunk line") would have to close if this gravel site goes ahead - because tourists would not want to pay to travel past a gravel pit (most of the preserved railway runs right alongside the edge of the proposed gravel site). After 40 years and much money raised and spent on its preservation by local volunteers, the "bunk line" it is now a local and national leisure facility that brings tourism into Cholsey Village and Wallingford Town - who will compensate the preservation society and all the volunteers who have worked so hard on this preserved railway for so long, if it has to go out of business because of the gravel pit? This would be a massive loss for local tourism, Oxfordshire tourism and a local amenity in the area, should it close on account of the gravel pit.

The internationally famous crime author - Agatha Christie - is buried in Cholsey Church yard and many from all over the world come to Cholsey and Wallingford to see the house where she lived in Winterbrook (which is adjacent to the proposed gravel site) and the church yard where she is buried in Cholsey and travel the "Agatha Christie Trail" of local footpaths and rights of way which run alongside and across the proposed gravel site. That international tourist trade will be lost to South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire, in general, on account of a gravel site in Cholsey.

There are many small and medium size brooks and rivers flowing from the Thames across large parts of the proposed gravel site which are on zone 2 flood sites - as I understand it - any gravel extraction could upset the river flows around the area, not to mention any contaminations leaching to and from the local sewage works which also borders the proposed gravel site.

In my opinion, there are many "constraints" on Cholsey as a gravel site:

- Proposed Cholsey gravel site borders an AONB
- Local roads are not "up to the job" of constant HGV traffic
- Local roads would be narrow and dangerous with the mix of HGV traffic, cyclists, pedestrians, cars etc.
- The Wallingford by-pass will become congested as people find an alternative route, to avoid getting stuck behind HGV gravel Lorries. No doubt they will go through Wallingford Town. The Wallingford by pass was constructed by OCC to take traffic away from Wallingford - the gravel site at Cholsey will ensure that the by-pass is no longer used for the purpose it was intended, as people go through Wallingford town to avoid the HGV gravel Lorries and not use the by-pass.
- Cholsey site is too close to so called "sensitive receptors" - such as housing on the Wallingford Road, right on top of the village of Cholsey and town of Wallingford, and it's associated housing and right opposite the Nursery School on the Reading Road
- This site will damage local tourism - with the almost certain closure of Cholsey Wallingford ("Bunk Line") preserved railway
- Agatha Christie tourism connection would be damaged with much loss of tourism income in the local economy
- Wildlife and flora and fauna on the site will be damaged for ever - brooks and streams cross the proposed site and have Otters in them. A rare sight indeed. This will be lost.
- One of the proposed sites goes right down onto the Thames and the Thames path would be cut at that point.

A gravel extraction pit at the village of Cholsey and edge of Wallingford, right up to housing in Cholsey and the River Thames, is, in my opinion, an environmental and planning disaster that will blight the area of Cholsey, Winterbrook and Wallingford now and for generations to come.

The proposed Cholsey gravel site is flawed on so many fronts and I strongly oppose the site of gravel extraction on land between Cholsey village and Wallingford town.

40	<p>I wish to object to the three proposed sites for gravel pits between Cholsey and Wallingford. Not only will it affect adversely the lives of 10,000 people living in the area and obliterate the current rural landscape, it will also:</p> <p>Pollute the busy road between Cholsey and Wallingford with dirt and other hazards for motorists, cyclists and pedestrian;</p> <p>Greatly damage the large variety of wildlife in that area of farmland;</p> <p>Blight the future of Cholsey &amp; Wallingford Railway which gets most of its funding from paying enthusiasts who will not enjoy the change to the landscape;</p> <p>Impede the historical and archaeological possibilities;</p> <p>Ruin the District Council's Core Strategy to improve the attraction of Wallingford to visitors by supporting schemes which enhance the town's environment.</p> <p>We are already struggling with proposed unwanted building developments and if these sites for gravel pits are approved the area will not be worth living in. Please, please re-consider,</p>
19	<p>I wish to register that I am completely outraged by the proposals regarding gravel pits between Cholsey / Wallingford and feel betrayed by the SODC who are supposed to be looking out for our interests. I am particularly horrified that this project seems to have been extended to include vandalism of a whole section alongside a beautiful part of the Thames.</p> <p>In addition to this complaint, I have also sent an email to the Thames Environment Agency bringing their attention to the possibility of waste being used to infill these pits. In particular the one close by the bank of the Thames just east of the Wallingford Bypass bridge could pose a significant risk of seepage into the Thames of contaminants from (unspecified) waste infill.</p> <p>I also note a complete disregard for the interest and health (dust contamination) of a number of lovely houses that adjoin or are surrounded by these gravel pits, leaving me with a feeling of utter contempt for the councillors responsible for this decision. No doubt these councillors live miles away from this outrage in comfy homes and as long as their own personal interest is not compromised, have no regard for anyone else's welfare. In fact this whole episode stinks of corruption and jobs for the boys as the SODC seems to be actively promoting these pits.</p>
20	<p>I wish to object to the three proposed sites for mineral extraction in Wallingford/Cholsey. These will have a detrimental effect on the local environment, and the resulting heavy lorry traffic will pose dangers for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians on roads totally unsuitable for such use.</p>
24	<p>I am writing to oppose the siting of gravel pits in Cholsey at SG33, SG57 and SG60 for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) SG60 is opposite Mongewell Park Nursery, which is an 'Outstanding' rated nursery by Ofsted. To site a pit opposite a nursery would be detrimental to the health of all 178 children who currently attend through the excessive dust and noise a pit would create. Mothers push buggies along the road between Cholsey and Wallingford and to have lorries frequently travelling on this road would be very dangerous to the children as the footpath is very narrow.</li> <li>2) SG33/SG57 is located along the Cholsey &amp; Wallingford Railway. This is a very popular tourist railway which brings joy to thousands of people each year, which has existed since 1861. To have a gravel pit adjacent to this, would be disastrous to the railway. Who wants to look at a pit rather than the picturesque countryside? A pit could cause the collapse of such a unique attraction to the local area.</li> <li>3) The roads cannot cope with an increase in volume in large lorries. I would want assurances from the Council that NO lorries would be permitted to enter Cholsey village via the Wallingford Road and use the surrounding roads as a short-cut, as this is a rural village. To have the vibration and road noise from trucks coming through the village would be detrimental to the houses and their foundations; also be unsafe for cyclists and people in mobility vehicles. Also the dust and mud created by the lorries would be unhealthy to all. The A4130 is already very congested in the mornings and evenings. Further lorry traffic would compound the issue.</li> </ol>

	<p>4) The area is adjacent to an AONB. There are only 38 AONB in the whole country and to lose such a valuable natural resource would be detrimental to the environment. The views across the countryside from the River Thames are uninterrupted and a pleasure. To have a pit on this landscape would be awful. This is already a floodplain and should remain as such.</p> <p>5) Wallingford will be having 350 houses built opposite the proposed pit (from the A4130). This in itself will bring at least 300 additional cars to the area on the already congested roads, following the increase in construction traffic. How would the developer be able to market and sell the new houses with a gravel pit opposite (then a possible waste/landfill site)?</p> <p>6) The siting of SG33/57 is adjacent and opposite a number of properties in Cholsey. The residents of these properties would see a huge loss in property value, dust, noise and would be opposite a complete eye-sore. People in Cholsey frequently walk along the Wallingford Road into Wallingford, with buggies and dogs along a very narrow footpath. Their health and safety would be in danger if the pit was the other side of the hedgerow. It is already a danger with cars, buses and lorries thundering past on the road.</p> <p>I moved to Cholsey to appreciate the quiet village atmosphere and to raise my family in a safe and healthy environment. I did not ever expect a gravel pit to be located on my doorstep and hope that the Council discounts these sites as completely inappropriate.</p>
25	<p>I do not believe that extracting minerals from the proposed site in Cholsey is right, the best location and will have an adverse impact on Wallingford and Cholsey.</p>
31 (Cllr Patrick Greene)	<p>I refer to the minutes of a meeting held on 12th September 2011 between Peter Day and Lois Partidge representing Oxfordshire County Council and a group for 'Cholsey Against Gravel Extraction' (CAGE) comprising of Henry Thornton (CAGE), Alec Hayton (Wallingford Town Council/CAGE), Mark Gray (Cholsey Parish Council Chairman/CAGE, Suzi Coyne (CAGE's Minerals Consultant and I wish as the local Divisional County Councillor to make the following observations:</p> <p>In the minutes CAGE have made many relevant points and facts as to why gravel extraction should not take place in site SG33 at Cholsey that I fully support. From the minutes it is clear that many points raised have not been answered and as I understand will not be till after the consultation is closed. These points are:</p> <p>Quality of material from SG33 may be poor.</p> <p>Archaeology has not been taken into account for SG33 but had been for site SG13. why not?</p> <p>Many constraints about site SG33 would reduce OCC's estimated material tonnage from 4 million to 3.5 million tonnes, is this true?</p> <p>Why had the Radley site SG41 been discounted on the grounds of not being deliverable in ten years when it is very unlikely that SG33 would have been required in the same timescale?</p> <p>Many other good points were made such as the close proximity to the AONB, Listed Building, the Ecology of the area, Tourism and the Economic and Amenity value of this area that would be jeopardized by a quarry.</p> <p>The threat to the Wallingford/Cholsey Railway, the threat to the proposed cycle path between Wallingford and Cholsey that is already part funded and due further developments in future years be totally funded from 106 development payments.</p> <p>The undermining of the Agatha Christie Trail from where she lived in Winterbrook to her grave in Cholsey Church that the route borders the proposed quarry edges. The correct identification of the agricultural land.</p> <p>Should the quarry area at site SG33 become a water carrier then surely there would be MOD/RAF objection due the possibility of bird strikes.</p> <p>CAGE have proposed an alternative site to SG33 namely SG17. This possibility should be further investigated.</p> <p>SODC's Core Strategy covers sites SG33/57/60. Why then has OCC been site specific re SG33?</p> <p>For councillors to have a chance to properly evaluate and support their divisional areas, they should be given every opportunity to attend discussion</p>

	groups that are related to such matters of importance such as the one proposed for 'A Draft Minerals Strategy Discussion' to be held in the Oxford Town Hall' on 29th September 2011 10.00am to 12.45pm. CAGE have been invited to send a representative but relevant councillors have been excluded!
26	<p>We are seriously concerned about the effect the proposed gravel pits will have on the quality of life in Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>Our concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proximity of site to residential property in Cholsey and Winterbrook</li> <li>* The threat to wildlife in the area</li> <li>* Noise, pollution and dirt</li> <li>* Road safety and traffic congestion</li> <li>* Loss of the proposed cycle path by the Wallingford Road</li> <li>* Loss of tourism in Wallingford</li> </ul> <p>We have lived in Cholsey for over 40 years and have always enjoyed and taken advantage of the many walks around the village enjoying the rich variety of wildlife.</p> <p>We will therefore be very grateful if you will reconsider your plans and find a more suitable site for extraction.</p>
30	<p>I think it is disgusting behaviour that you are willing to put others in danger for health and safety reasons just so you can have a gravel pit! we are in the country side this is meant to be nice and healthy i'm a well educated 14 year old girl and for me having to write you and email i think it is ridiculous. There is no way on earth i'm letting this happen, this is where i live and have done for ages, the field is like a back garden so many of us and so many houses have windows placed so that you can see out onto the beautiful countryside landscapes, this is disgusting behaviour and you should be really ashamed that you have got a 14 year old girl so involved she is having to write you an email, this is council, your meant to help the people live healthy safe life's and putting a gravel pit into a small country village is unacceptable!</p>
29	<p>Having just found out about the gravel plan extraction between Cholsey and Wallingford I would like to formally lodge our objection about this in the strongest terms. This area is one of outstanding beauty and is a place we take the children to enjoy, currently unspoilt, countryside. Our visits through his area have discovered abundant wildlife along with interesting flora and fauna. Destroying this with a gravel extraction site would be a disaster. As a resident of Wallingford for 2 years, I cannot think of a worse way to devastate the surrounding countryside, and this before we even consider traffic, noise and dust pollution.</p> <p>Please listen to residents and CAGE before making the irreversible decision to destroy this area for ever.</p>
166	<p>I read with some alarm about the proposed gravel and sand workings along the Wallingford Road.</p> <p>Surely it cannot be your aim to turn a quiet residential area into a bomb site for 25 years. The large, heavy traffic which such excavations would entail would be a nightmare on this road which connects Wallingford and Cholsey with its mainline station. Wallingford has difficulty dealing with its traffic problems as it is and one of its tourist attractions, the Agatha Christie trail, would be destroyed.</p> <p>The third site along the Thames river bank is also quite unsustainable. There are so many tourists, walkers and boaters, who bring prosperity to the town. They come for the peace and tranquillity of the river. This will be completely lost with gravel pits along the towpath.</p> <p>There must be other, less populated and less important places than Wallingford with its ancient history, where you can extract your gravel.</p>
74	<p>I am writing to add my voice to those opposing the plans to extract gravel from areas between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>Whilst I do agree that materials would be essential for much needed new homes, nevertheless the effect of such extraction on the air quality of nearby homes, road congestion and repairs because of heavy loads, to say nothing of the loss of precious wildlife habitat and ancient landscape, is a lot to contend with. I'm sure the gravel near to the Thames will be of excellent quality and easy to extract, but such pits often leave very ugly scars on</p>

	<p>the landscape to which the public will not have access when trails are disturbed. Wallingford and Cholsey struggle to improve their tourist attractions and need this trade to boost their failing local economies. The gravel extraction will not be a draw and will in fact be a positive turn off, in my opinion, for several years to come.</p>
34	<p>I am a resident of Wallingford and I wish to object strenuously to the above proposal on the following grounds:</p> <p>The open countryside around Wallingford and Cholsey is a valuable landscape and would be seriously damaged by such a development. The impact on the local flora and fauna would be potentially catastrophic, disrupting the balance that has endured there for many years. In addition, the visual impact would be overwhelmingly negative, disrupting the views over the landscape that has remained unchanged for centuries. This is something that should not be taken lightly</p> <p>The Impact of the communities will be equally damaging, with the importation and installation of heavy machinery to both build the plant and process its output. This would seriously compromise the local environment with the increasing passage of heavy goods vehicles on roads that are already congested and which are unable to handle the increase in Commercial vehicle traffic that this would cause. The transportation of the finished product as well as the spoilage from the works will add excessive dust to the area, polluting streams, rivers and other waterways, whilst airborne particles will be carried great distances to settle on woodland, trees and fields, as well as schools, homes and gardens where children will be less able to enjoy playing outside. In poor weather (we have had 2 severe winters recently) this will create additional Traffic hazards, as mud and water borne fall out will be impossible to prevent, and will be carried for miles by the increased traffic. This is not only unsightly, but is also dangerous, restricting visibility and reducing grip on the road surface. This is before any increase in traffic through the residential parts of both towns.</p> <p>Gravel extraction and cement works are not the quietest processes to begin with and neither are the lorries that will be used by contractors and hauliers. Neither do they operate exclusively during office hours. The peace of towns such Wallingford and Cholsey would be disturbed by both the significant increase in ambient noise from the factory as well as the additional road noise of HGV's pounding through residential areas at all hours of the day and night. Past experience suggests that any assurances about this being restricted by "Best Practise" from the contractors engaged will be unfounded and ineffectual.</p> <p>Coupled with the proposed development of Residential housing in the area, this will turn Wallingford and Cholsey into one big construction site should all these projects go ahead. The infrastructure of this rural area simply is not able to cope with this increase in construction.</p> <p>I am sure that I am not the only one to share these views.</p>
32	<p>I think it is an appalling idea to plan gravel extraction at Cholsey near Wallingford. The proposed site affects nearly a mile of country side separating Cholsey and Wallingford , part of which runs alongside the river Thames and part of which will ruin the Agatha Christie Trail between Winterbrook and Cholsey. The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway will also be affected as it is difficult to envisage that people will pay to go on steam trains that run past a gravel pit. In addition to this Wallingford is a town that markets itself as as historical with the castle and ancient buildings and proximity to the river Thames. Industrial gravel extraction in the green approach to Wallingford town will adversely affect this. I would ask you to rethink your plans for gravel extraction in Cholsey.</p>
44	<p>I am very saddened by the proposal for a gravel extraction site between Wallingford and Cholsey. Such a destructive industry would have profoundly negative consequences for the local community for an entire generation. Local footpaths, the Agatha Christie Trail and potentially the Bunk Line would be destroyed or be unusable due to the noise and pollution caused by such a site. On top of this the effects of site traffic on local roads would turn a road system that currently flows well with few problems into a dangerous, dirty system with heavy traffic. Furthermore, the abundance of wildlife found throughout the proposed three sites would be lost. Finally the health implications of gravel dust perpetually covering the town, particularly respiratory problems do not bear thinking about. This coupled with the above points would have a devastating impact upon the tourist industry in the area as well as lessening the quality of life enjoyed by all who live here.</p>



75	<p>I have lived in Cholsey for 10 years and object strongly to the planned gravel extraction site.</p> <p>I cycle into work along the Wallingford Road and was looking forward to my route being made safer by a cycle path. I would not be able to cycle safely with increased traffic from gravel pits. There is no safe alternative cycle access to Wallingford since the Fairmile Road (A329) has busy traffic which is set to increase with the building of 350 houses.</p> <p>The area is one of natural beauty over which I walk and run regularly. I have spotted otters and birds of prey (including Hobby) on several occasions here. The air is fresh and the views of the surrounding countryside wonderful. All this will be destroyed by the gravel extraction and I would not be able to enjoy walking or running from my own front door.</p> <p>A large number of my friends and neighbours in the village are completely unaware of the plans for a new gravel extraction site on our doorstep. The proposal appears to be rushed through on the quiet by the Council. My parents who live in Roke have had 18 months to consider the plans extract gravel in their community, whereas we have been given just one month to respond.</p> <p>Why is there no alternative site to Cholsey suggested - where is the fairness in that?</p> <p>I sincerely hope that the Council will act responsibly and consider the views of the 10,000 local residents of Cholsey and Wallingford who are to be affected by this blight on our rural community.</p>
72	<p>Regarding the proposed gravel pit at Cholsey I find it amazing that anyone could ever consider putting an excavation such as this less than half a mile from the village centre. Cholsey is a growing village with several housing developments taking place in and around it. Who in their right mind would want to buy property on the edge of this excavation: it is just unbelievable.</p> <p>There is no doubt that Cholsey is an area of outstanding natural beauty, surrounded by working farms along with the wildlife that they attract, much of which would be destroyed by such development.</p> <p>After many years the Cholsey and Wallingford cycle path finally looks like it is coming to fruition. This is a very necessary development for the safety of the many cyclists young and old who use the Wallingford Road, which is a very narrow road and most certainly unsuitable for the hundreds of large lorries that a gravel pit would have visiting every day.</p> <p>There are several villages in the immediate area and Wallingford town that would suffer from the pit. The dust produced obviously would have a detrimental effect on air quality, which would affect the health of people living in the vicinity.</p> <p>Wallingford and Cholsey attract visitors from all over to visit the charming market town and the Cholsey and Wallingford railway that runs alongside the proposed pit. The Agatha Christie Trail which runs from Winterbrook to St Mary's Church graveyard where she is buried would be destroyed by this pit. People come from many parts of the globe to see her resting place.</p> <p>I have been told from a number of sources that the material found in the proposed site is of poor quality. The poor quality is one of the reasons why the previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered 20 years ago.</p> <p>I must say again that I find it unbelievable that anyone with any respect for the environment and the welfare of local communities, schools etc would ever consider for one moment a plan such as proposed.</p>
291	<p>I am writing to you in order to register my strong objections to the above proposal. It is my understanding that there must be a public consultation before such a proposal is submitted. Neither my husband nor I have been made aware in any way or form by the county council that such a development could be happening in the future.</p> <p>Cholsey is a popular, vibrant and rural South Oxfordshire village with a very strong sense of community. To propose land within Cholsey as a potential mineral extraction site is flawed.</p> <p>The communities of both Cholsey and Wallingford, around 10,000 people, would all be affected by such a development. For those closest to such a site, there would be an increase in traffic, noise, dust and potentially dangerous road conditions caused by the constant daily movement of vehicles</p>

	<p>and their loads. Those further from the site would also be affected by the traffic and air pollution.</p> <p>There has been in the pipeline for some time a plan for a cycle path between Cholsey and Wallingford, which would run alongside the proposed site. When this is in place and if the proposed site goes ahead, the conditions would be very dangerous for adult cyclists, children cycling to and from school and other pathway users. I have two small school age children, who will be potential users of a cycle path in ten years in order to get to their secondary school. If the gravel extraction site goes ahead, I would be extremely concerned about their safety, in fact, I know that many parents would resort to taking children by car instead, adding to the potential traffic chaos on an already busy route.</p> <p>Cholsey is proud of its reputation of being a popular place to live for all sectors of the community. In my experience, many families choose to move here not only for the good school and pre-school, playgroups and other activities, but because it offers a rural and peaceful setting in which families can grow and flourish.</p> <p>As a family, we currently enjoy walks together following the route of the 'Bunk line' train, which runs from Cholsey to Wallingford and forms part of the proposed extraction site. It is wonderful to be able to reach such beautiful countryside by walking from our house. If the extraction site goes ahead, we will no longer want to walk along this lovely footpath and valuable wildlife will be lost. It is my concern that an extraction site will severely damage the perception of Cholsey as a quiet, rural place to live for families.</p> <p>The development will potentially also sound the death knell for the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway, a wholly volunteer run steam railway, which is very well supported by those who enjoy the countryside views along its length. It would be a sad loss for the communities of Cholsey and Wallingford should the 'Bunk line' cease to exist because of a loss of passengers.</p> <p>Many tourists who visit the area enjoy both the steam train and paying a visit to the grave of Agatha Christie, in Cholsey churchyard. My fear is that people will no longer wish to walk the 'Agatha Christie trail' past an industrial site and that we will suffer as a result with a lack of visitors. Equally they will also be discouraged from visiting and exploring further points of historical interest and landscape close to Cholsey due to noise, pollution and traffic.</p> <p>It is my understanding that the proposed extraction site will provide materials for building locally, however, much of the planned new housing, particularly in Cholsey is already underway, and will be completed long before the ten year commencement of such a facility. It is hard to understand how it will be useful to have such a site in an area where there is no longer any need for it. I am also deeply worried about the long term plans for such a site would be when the extraction has ceased. To leave it empty, as a depression, will surely render it a potentially dangerous and unstable site.</p> <p>In conclusion, I believe that a proposal for a mineral extraction site in Cholsey is completely inappropriate. It would affect thousands of people already living in Cholsey and Wallingford and could severely damage our communities by reducing the number of people who desire to visit or live here. I urge you to strongly re-consider this proposal and instead investigate sites which could run such operations away from thriving communities.</p>
293	<p>I am writing to share my objections to the County Councils proposal of a gravel pit site at Cholsey Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Firstly, where the gravel pit sites are proposed to be situated would disturb an area of natural beauty and upspoilt countryside. It is impossible to visualise how the proposed site of the gravel pit can safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of this large area of undeveloped natural landscape.</p> <p>Many people come into the Cholsey and Wallingford area just to be able to escape to the countryside for some peace and quiet, I have known people to visit Cholsey from towns and cities such as High Wycombe and London and comment on how tranquil the village is whilst visiting sites such as Agatha Christie's grave and taking trips on the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway. I am sure this won't be the case if a gravel pit is sited at the proposed site between Wallingford and Cholsey, why would anyone want to come into an area which is dirty and polluted?</p> <p>Secondly, the proposed sites are situated right in the centre of two large communities, the idea of having a gravel pit so close to a near 10,000 people</p>

	<p>is absurd, and it is obvious that the County Council have not taken into account how it will affect people's lives around these communities and the surrounding areas. Not only will the gravel pits be an eyesore on the natural landscape, but it will create dust, noise, and generate pollution in the local area and again very close to so many people's homes. I am also sure that there will be medical repercussions from the dust that will be created from the gravel pit.</p> <p>Finally, the majority of the work is to be carried out along the main road into Cholsey (Wallingford Road), where it is understood that an access point to the gravel pit could be situated, this road is narrow and unsuitable for the vast number of lorry movements expected. This idea in my mind is crazy, ill-considered and a potential hazard to motorists, cyclist and the many children that travel this route daily to and from their schools, can we know which councillor will be held accountable should deaths occur?</p> <p>I hope my views will be taken into consideration.</p>
250	<p>I am writing to you on the subject of Cholsey/Wallingford being proposed as the site for gravel pits.</p> <p>I am very concerned about this proposal on several counts. The proposed site is an area which has a significant history which has, thus far, been protected by the fact that this area has remained unchanged, and intact, for hundreds of years. This lack of intervention has, of itself, been adequate protection for the area's archaeological, environmental, cultural, geological, ecological features and attributes. To maintain this self-sustaining area, one has to do absolutely nothing! The nature of the area even has economic benefits in terms of the ever-increasing interest in Wallingford's castle site, the Agatha Christie interest, the river Thames and beautiful countryside.</p> <p>The best thing possible would be to leave things alone. The gravel pit proposal will not enhance any of these natural assets, it will only harm them. The noise, air pollution, increased traffic congestion, the threat of upsetting the ecology, archaeology, geology, and historical merits of the area. Tourism can only suffer. House values will suffer. Will the proposed building developments be that popular, with a gravel pit in the offing? Will developers see the area as attractive, as lucrative?</p> <p>I fail to see any benefits of any kind. I fail to see how OCC can be confident that there are any benefits.</p> <p>I would like to see OCC give up this proposal, and remember instead the optimistic and supportive, comments for this exact same area in its core strategy - a document which had no difficulty in identifying this areas numerous important assets.</p> <p>This area has been, and will continue to be, sustainable in all respects. It costs nothing to keep it that way. It is an example of how successful sustainability is. We must not lose it!</p>
249	<p>I have been horrified to learn that there is a proposal to site a gravel pit in Cholsey along the Wallingford Road. I am writing to express my deep objection and concern regarding the proposal.</p> <p>My husband and I have been residents of Cholsey for ten years and greatly value its historical rural location. We have recently started a family having chosen Cholsey to be a wonderful location for family life like a lot of other families in the village. We have three small boys and I spend a great deal of my week using the village amenities and walking around the safe rural perimeters of the village with the children. We value the quiet, natural habitat that allows us to enjoy the wildlife and feel safe. I dread to think what mess, disruption, noise and traffic you propose to bring to our community which will not only greatly impact on the residents but the wildlife as well.</p> <p>In seven years time our children will start to attend Wallingford Secondary School. From my understanding, the timing of this is now likely to coincide with the proposed disruption. They will then have to pass the noise and disruption everyday to and from school. Not only this but they would be unable to use their bikes along the Cholsey to Wallingford cycle path which is a proposal fully costed and part funded by the County Council and an amenity much looked forward to.</p> <p>Our boys particularly enjoy the branch line railway service which runs between Cholsey and Wallingford . Having the facility in the village is a wonderful asset to the many families who live in and around the area. It brings in much needed tourist trade to Wallingford and Cholsey and has a</p>

	<p>beautiful footpath running alongside which has recently become part of the Agatha Christie trail. However, with this gravel pit proposal I fear that you will not only pollute our environment in many ways but also threaten to lose these amenities that we and our children value so dear. Instead, you will create an unsightly, noisy and dangerous environment very close to residential housing. This gravel pit will be a magnet for youngsters who will naturally want to explore and you will be inadvertently providing a potentially lethal hazard which even after the extraction has finished will be left for generations to come.</p> <p>Surely there must be another potential site, situated outside of a residential area that would not cause so much disruption and objection. Ultimately it is our children who know Cholsey to be their home who will suffer over the years if this proposal is accepted. Please leave Cholsey untouched.</p>
244	<p>In your briefing document you refer to 'safeguarding the character, amenity and setting...' Cholsey is a parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986AD. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water courses and field patterns which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a 'Heritage Asset' within the definition of your plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</b>  It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.  The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and much older houses such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is a potentially disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local environment</b>  In terms of 'unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..' The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water courses and field patters, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based on largely recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p><b>Likely Impact on Local Economy</b>  A large number are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the minerals planning strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than 40 years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area is. In</p>

	<p>addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community</p> <p>It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.</p> <p>This site is the only new site proposed within the minerals strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council. It has no support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.</p> <p>Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG-33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>Transport Issues</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from west Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries onto roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no other local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the county</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates</p> <p>The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the surrounding area</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
174	<p>Where would one choose to dig for gravel?</p> <p>Somewhere where it was available, obviously.</p> <p>Then, one would look for a place that would create minimum visual impact from the workings that are required.</p> <p>Next, a location well clear of settlements that would be affected by both the works and the transportation that is required would be a high priority.</p> <p>If one had an historic railway as an asset in one's area, I imagine one would want to preserve the rural landscape that visitors to that railway view as they take their journey.</p> <p>So why does the proposal to extract at Cholsey only meet one of these criteria? It is unbelievable that you are considering an area which is in direct</p>

	<p>sightline of both the Chilterns AONB and Wittenham Clumps AONB. And to choose a location that directly abuts two large local settlements, which would both be directly and adversely affected by this scheme, is ill-thought-through. The heavy transport that would be required to serve the gravel pit would be a significant disruption to both those communities. The local roads are already dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists - they will become deathtraps if this proposal is approved. It is also very disappointing that the significant progress that Wallingford has made in publicising the heritage of Agatha Christie is being totally ignored - the trail that has been carefully thought out to attract visitors to the area would be ruined by the gravel extraction. It is also interesting that a number of planning inspectors in recent planning enquiries have recognised the rural nature of Winterbook Lane and its importance to the footpath that runs along it. It is the same footpath that continues alongside the railway to Cholsey and that footpath would be very badly affected by this action. Likewise the railway.</p> <p>Gravel extraction must not be permitted in the proposed area, because of the serious harm it would do to the local area.</p>
345	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people . A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>Destruction of the local Environment:</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>Likely Impact on Local Economy:</p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.</p> <p>Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's</p>

	<p>Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:</p> <p>It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.</p> <p>This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.</p> <p>It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.</p> <p>Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.</p> <p>The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.</p> <p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
347	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</p>

It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

**Destruction of the local Environment:**

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors...." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

**Likely Impact on Local Economy:**

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

**Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:**

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years



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825	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</b></p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local Environment</b></p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourse are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p><b>Likely Impact on local Economy</b></p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and</p>

attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Poor Economic Decision - A Poor decision for the Community

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road

I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.

Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term.

We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.

It is not the best site in the County.

It has low grade aggregates.

The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.

The community has not been adequately consulted.

It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.

It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.

827	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</b></p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local Environment</b></p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourse are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p><b>Likely Impact on local Economy</b></p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.</p> <p>Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p><b>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor decision for the Community</b></p> <p>It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.</p> <p>This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence</p>
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	<p>that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.  It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.  Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.  The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.  Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road  I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.  It is not the best site in the County.  It has low grade aggregates.  The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.  The community has not been adequately consulted.  It will blight the local economy of wallingford.  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
68	<p>I am writing to protest in the strongest possible terms about the council's plans to allow the development of 3 gravel pits between Cholsey and Wallingford. I firmly believe that this plan is a mistake as it will blight the area by permanently ruining the environment, reducing tourism and forcing many local businesses and services to close. I have lived in Cholsey with my family for 20 years and part of its attraction is its setting which, if these plans are accepted will be completely obliterated.  In your briefing document you refer to "Safeguarding the character, amenity and setting....." There is considerable historical significance in teh Parish of Cholsey with its beginnings in 986 and its mention in the Domesday Book. The 1695 map of Cholsey shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses and field patterns which remain largely unchanged today. As such this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a Heritage Asset as defined in your plan.  Given this, it is quite impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, environment and setting of a largely unspoilt landscape sited on the outskirts and bounded on one side by the major access road to the village of Cholsey.  The Agatha Christie trail runs from her former home in Winterbrook, where she lived for more than 40 years, to her grave in St Mary's Church in Cholsey. A recent letter in the Wallingford Herald cited that the association with Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of this area. Agatha Christie is the world's best-selling author and currently attracts visitors to Cholsey from around the world. The Agatha Christie trail would be completely destroyed if the construction of the gravel pits were to go ahead. This surely is an act of wanton cultural vandalism.</p>

	<p>There is also a steam railway running between Cholsey and Wallingford run entirely by volunteers which again attracts large numbers of visitors. The operators of this railway have said that it is unlikely they would be able to continue to run as the gravel workings would cover more than half of their operating area. This would inevitably lead to the railway's closure after more than 30 years of voluntary work. The railway was recently featured in a television programme about war time evacuees as it was the route that a number of them, including the actress Sheila Hancock, travelled along to their temporary war time residence.</p> <p>The gravel sites would have a completely negative impact on nearly all aspects of life in Cholsey and Wallingford. It will be an eye sore visible from many miles around and there will be increased pollution from dust, noise and light in winter.</p> <p>The choice of this site put forward by the OCC is puzzling and seems to take absolutely no account of the distance between a disruptive, dangerous, noisy eye sore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn from either end of the proposed zone encompasses the whole of Cholsey and two-thirds of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the 2 settlements and the imposition of these workings can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>Please would you tell me how it is possible for the County Council to put forward just one site for the location of these pits? Selection from a choice of one is bizarre to say the least. I would like to think our elected leaders, using the resources from the taxes which we all pay, would seek out sites in advance and subject these to a proper appraisal before offering them up for long-term mining operations. Please would you explain to me the process by which this site was chosen and what other sites were considered in this case?</p> <p>Also, what would happen if this site is found to be unsuitable? Please would you tell me how the selection of this site fits with the County Council's minerals strategy?</p> <p>This site was in fact previously considered and withdrawn 20 years ago and one of the reasons was due to the poor quality of the gravel. Please would you tell me why, given this, the site is being considered again?</p> <p>The proposed site would also completely preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey cycle path, an amenity for which both communities have long campaigned and which is now fully costed and part-funded by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, narrow and dangerous. There have been a number of cycle deaths along this stretch of road over the past few years. Please would you tell me how the introduction of a large number of lorries travelling to and from the site will improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists? I understand that the council needs to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will be used but the proposed site will not start operating for 10 years by which time most of the new housing developments in the area will have been completed.</p> <p>Finally, I am also concerned that there is no plan for the final use and restoration of the site once extraction has finished. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to its proximity to the river and cannot be used as landfill for the same reason. It appears that we will simply be left with a dangerous depression that will need to be fenced off and which will fill with water in winter and become a dustbowl in summer.</p> <p>I firmly believe these proposals are wrong. They would bring no benefit to any of the local communities and would severely damage local tourism, trade and business.</p> <p>I would urge you not to select this site for these extraction pits and I look forward to your reply.</p>
61	<p>I am writing with regard to the public consultation on the Oxfordshire minerals strategy report. I was concerned to see the plan to extract much of the minerals from the reserve between Cholsey and Wallingford. This decision does not seem to reflect the policy objectives laid out for the plan in several important ways. First it is not near any of the proposed development areas except perhaps Science vale although Wantage remains a long distance from the proposed site. Both Bicester and Oxford are much closer to the Abingdon reserve. The pressure on road infrastructure is already large and there are no roads able to handle the heavy traffic imposed by the plan. In contrast the Abingdon reserve although slightly smaller is adjacent to the A34 and links all the major development sites with a major dual carriageway. The choice of Cholsey seems at odds with the objectives of the</p>

	<p>plan.</p> <p>Second the Thames valley remains a key asset in terms of natural beauty and tourism for the region. These new proposals will blemish a key part of this region with quarries. I find it hard to believe that any of the other sites would lead to such damage to the rural environment and the unique features as seen in the Thames valley.</p> <p>Finally if you are trying to avoid disruptions to natural water runoff and flooding due to these disruptions I can think of no worse area than next to the Thames wher flooding with serious consequences already occurs each winter.</p> <p>I strongly object to the current plans and suggest the planners reconsider other sources of gravel and sand both within and outside the county.</p>
70	<p>I would like to state that I strongly object to the proposed Gravel Extraction Site in Cholsey.</p> <p>My objections include negative ecological and environmental impacts; negative visual and local landscape impacts; increased air and noise pollution from the extraction site and the additional HGV movements; increased traffic congestion; increased Green House Gas emissions and negative impacts on the water system.</p> <p>Cholsey is adjacent to an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the proposed site is extremely close to the Nature REserve. These reasons alone should be enough grounds for the rejection of the Cholsey site.</p> <p>According to some of the original investigations into the Cholsey site, the mineral that would be extracted here is not suited for purpose and of poor quality. Why then, is Cholsey even being considered? This is another strong case for rejection as it cannot possibly be economically viable.</p> <p>According to the available documentation, all but one of the proposed sites are existing minerals working areas, with the exception of Cholsey. It was also accepted that the introduction of a new development site would have significant adverse effects on the local community of Cholsey. It was also stated that there is also potential for negative impacts on the surface water quality of the River Thames from the sharp sand and gravel extraction in Cholsey.</p> <p>The proposed site is currently undisturbed and supports a wide array of bird species and other flora and fauna. Introducing an extraction site would have a significant negative impact on the local wildlife, and the pictureque aspect of this rural habitat will be lost forever.</p> <p>There will be a negative impact on tourism in the area and destroy the local community. The Cholsey and Wallingford railway runs adjacent to the proposed site. The Agatha Christie Trail also currently operates directly past the proposed site. This is only going to have a negative visual impact and will destroy these local businesses. The local pubs, shops and riverfacilities would all suffer as the noisy machinery and unsightly quarry would create an eyesore and detract from people coming to the area.</p> <p>There will be a large increase in traffic on the Wallingford Road and this increase in traffic presents a significant hazard to the local community. The Wallingford Road is the main thoroughfare into and out of Cholsey, and an additional volume of HGVs coming in and out would make the area far more dangerous. There are a number of pedestrians, especially young children, cyclists and regular commuters who rely on the use of this road and the increase in traffic not only presents a danger, but will significantly impact on the lives of the local residents.</p> <p>There is also potential for negative transport impacts along the A4130 and A4074 associated with the site traffic from Cholsey.</p> <p>The proposed exit and entrance route to the site is already under strain. The Wallingford Road already needs to be repaired at least once a year due to the icy conditions we currently experience in winter. The additional traffic is going to deteriorate the road to the extent that it's going to need to be repaired far more than once a year. We already have to put up with the extra traffic that the Fairmile development has brought - this is only going to make matters worse.</p> <p>There is a huge potential for noise pollution. There are houses and a Primary School nearby. The site would probably operate for 10 hours a day and introduce significant industrial noise into an area that is regarded locally as tranquil. The area would be disrupted by noise and dust from the extraction sites and processing machinery for a period of 20 years or more, and impact on an entire generation.</p>

	<p>In addition, there will be a negative impact on the value and potential re-sale value of property in the area. Once the site has been excavated - what is to stop new developments being allowed on the land?</p> <p>The long term negative impact on Cholsey is significant. Not only would we have to put up with the side effects of extraction for 20 years - there is a potential that the impact would never let up - especially if Developers are allowed to build on the site.</p> <p>We have been promised infrastructure improvements by the SODC - including a cycle track between Cholsey and Wallingford. Does this mean that these improvements will be put on hold for 20 years while the extraction is taking place?</p> <p>In conclusion, I find it hard to believe that earlier this year we were disregarded as a potential site for various reasons, only to find that we are now at the top of the list. This fact alone suggests that an investigation into the motives of the planned site is needed. The secrecy surrounding the planning is also of great concern. public faith in the planning process has, as a result, seriously deteriorated. Are our concerns going to be taken into account or are they going to be shoved aside due to an ulterior, hidden agenda?</p> <p>I imagine you will receive many similar objections from other residents living nearby and I trust you will refuse this application on the basis that they not only most definitely contravene the interests of the public, but that they defy logic.</p> <p>Please can you inform me that you have received this letter and have logged it as an official objection and keep me informed as to the outcome?</p>
252	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed gravel pit in Cholsey as part of the Minerals Strategy Consultation.</p> <p>I firstly object to the actual consultation process. Within your document 'Development of Draft Minerals Planning Strategy' dated September 2011, there are inaccuracies. Point 8.1 states that Stakeholders were consulted over the revised options. Cholsey residents and local Parish Councillors were NOT consulted over this, which goes against the 'Statement of Community Involvement'. Item 13.1 states the Minerals and Waste Plan Working Group met in January 2011 and reported to the Cabinet on 16 February 2011 that the agreed strategy plan includes Cholsey based on the Atkins report. There has been NO local consultation with Cholsey residents and no one in the local Parish Council was advised of this decision, which is appalling.</p> <p>I believe that Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale has failed in her role as being responsible for the Minerals Strategy and representative of SODC by not advising the Parish Council nor Cholsey and Wallingford residents of such a decision. This is surely against the code of practice for public consultations and therefore should not go ahead without proper consideration. The residents of Cholsey and Wallingford have been given insufficient time and notice to prepare a properly considered argument against the site which is completely unfair to all 10,000 residents. How has this site been singled out by the OCC as the core site when there are others more suitable, when this site has been rejected in the past?</p> <p>The 'Minerals Sites Proposals and Policies: Issues and Options' paper dated 2007 lists vast numbers of reasons why the sites SG-33 (page 53 of the report) and SG-60 are totally unsuitable.</p> <p>It contradicts many of the objectives within the SODC Core Strategy Document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Objective 1 Settlements: To support the character and distinctiveness of Cholsey village and enhance Wallingford as a local market town.</li> <li>b) Objective 3 Environment and Design: Item 3.10 states SODC will protect areas of green belt and AONB. Cholsey sits on the edge of an AONB.</li> <li>c) Objective 6: Encourage improvements to make cycling and walking safer and more attractive. Cholsey has managed to obtain the funding after 20 years for a cycle path between Cholsey and Wallingford. Should the pit go ahead, this path would not be built and the pedestrian users and cyclists on Wallingford Road would remain in danger from the traffic. Over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on the Wallingford Road.</li> <li>d) Objective 6: To enable people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Not only would the pit cause noise and dust pollution to the residents around the pit, but the prevailing wind across Wallingford would carry dust. Mud on the road caused by the trucks using the pit would deter people from walking and cycling.</li> </ul>

	<p>e) Policy CSS1 The Overall Strategy states 'supporting the roles of Wallingford by regenerating their town centres through measures that include environmental improvements' and 'supporting and enhancing Cholsey'. How can a gravel pit enhance a village and improve the environment?</p> <p>f) Policy CSM1 Transport item v states 'promote and support traffic movement measures and environmental improvements which increase safety, improve air quality, encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and/or make our towns and villages more attractive.' The pit would decrease air quality through the vast number of trucks being added to the roads and stop the cycle path being constructed along the Wallingford Road, therefore not encouraging people to travel to Wallingford by 'greener' means.</p> <p>g) Table 5.1 identifies roads predicted to experience increased pressure. The A4130 is identified between Wallingford and Didcot. Should the pit go ahead in Cholsey, it is predicted that between 80-250 additional truck movements per day are required. This would clearly exacerbate this increased pressure on this stretch of road which is unsuitable for such transport, hence the 40 mph speed limit near Hadden Hill.</p> <p>h) Policy CSWAL1 The strategy for Wallingford includes (iv) 'support measures which improve the attraction of Wallingford for visitors with particular emphasis on the River Thames; (v) improve accessibility, car parking, pedestrian and cycle links and local air quality; and (vi) support schemes which enhance the town's environment.' Clearly the gravel pit would make this historic town unattractive, with view from the Thames spoilt. The cycle links would not be improved and the air quality diminished further through the creation of dust.</p> <p>i) Policy CSEN1 Landscape: The district's distinct landscape character and key features will be protected against inappropriate development and where possible enhanced and (ii) High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and planning decisions will have regard to their setting. This clearly contradicts the positioning of the gravel pit in Cholsey, whereby it is adjacent to an AONB as identified on the map shown in 14.1.</p> <p>This is a very ill thought out plan whereby the infrastructure is completely unsuitable to cope with the logistics of running a pit. Within the next few years, following the housing development at Winterbrook and Carmel College there will be around 13,500 residents in Cholsey and Wallingford who will be living within a mile of this site, with many hundreds living ground it. To subject so many people to the constant noise and dust is unacceptable. Within ten years, all the new local housing in Wallingford and Didcot will be completed, by which time the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production. There is nothing to stop the developers of the pit moving the gravel to Reading, Oxford or further afield.</p> <p>I trust you will not rush into this plan without considerable consultation regarding the environmental, archaeological and community impact this will have.</p>
307	<p>Re: Proposed Gravel Extraction Site - Cholsey, Wallingford</p> <p>You will see from our postal address that we are not residents of Cholsey Village. However, we are currently in the later stages of purchasing a house near the centre of the village and of a close proximity to the proposed extraction site, known as SG57 and SG33.</p> <p>There are a number of concerns that we have regarding this proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On a personal note, it has made us think seriously about whether we wish to continue with the purchase of a house in Cholsey. Indeed, if we are having doubts about investing our life and money in a village that has a strong community and is a lovely place to live, then clearly there will be other prospective purchasers that may think twice about living in/near the village. This will have an inevitable effect on the value of property in the proximity, which may even extend to an economic impact on Wallingford town itself.</li> <li>- The location of the site has not been thought through. At present the only land that separates the settlements of Cholsey and Wallingford is a small area of farmland. The imposition of any large scale excavation would have enormous, far reaching socio-economical; ecological and environmental impacts on the immediate area, which over time will inevitably intrude on outlying villages and towns.</li> </ul> <p>This area is already under stress from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noise pollution from RAF Benson, which itself will increase with the introduction of the Chinook Helicopters over the next few years.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional 250 houses at the Cholsey Meadow development.</li> <li>- Additional 400 houses at the Slade Farm development (Wallingford).</li> <li>- Additional housing proposed at the CABI site, Crowmarsh Gifford - the numbers have not yet been confirmed.</li> </ul> <p>The additional housing will put further strain on the road infrastructure that is already in place. However, with the additional ~200 construction lorries turning each day turning in and out of Wallingford Road, Cholsey and onto the by-pass is, in truth, going to be disastrous. Notwithstanding the additional noise and atmospheric pollution cause by the road itself over the years.</p> <p>We trust that before the Council makes its decision, it thinks seriously about its credibility within the community and the future of the South Oxfordshire communities.</p>
69	<p>We are writing in respect of the briefing document you have issued in relation to the proposed quarry between Wallingford and Cholsey. We note that the County Council has given residents until the end of this month to respond to the consultation.</p> <p>Whilst this will inevitably come across as being nimbysm, and we are sure any source of additional revenue to the council would be welcome in these austere times, we believe there are clear reasons why the quarry should not go ahead.</p> <p>Our primary concern relates to the substantial and dangerous increase in traffic that will be prompted by the quarry on roads that cannot realistically cope with the additional traffic - particularly as they will become increasingly busy as a result of the significant expansion of Wallingford and didcot anyway.</p> <p>We are also concerned about the impact on the surroundings, which is largely unspoilt and comprises areas of outstanding natural beauty. Equally, historic properties, the bedrock of our characterful community, would be blighted by the eyesore of the quarry, the noise and potential dust that would result from the works.</p> <p>The local community is a major beneficiary of tourism and it seems extraordinary that the council would permit the destruction of the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail.</p> <p>We would urge the Council to revisit the proposals which appear to ride roughshod over the concerns of the residents of this area.</p>
298	<p>It is with almost disbelief that I hear about the proposed gravel extraction just to the southwest of where we live in the middle of Wallingford. We have lived here for over 30 years, and our life near the river and surrounding countryside is based on daily walks south along the river, our access to Reading/London and Oxford, and the peace, beauty, history and tranquility of the area. Recently a silver shilling from 1586 was found in our garden by a dig carried out by the Wallingford historical group, and we are proud of the increasingly obvious historical importance of the area. And as a writer myself, I enjoy showing visiting friends the local connections with Agatha Christie who lived near us and is buried at Cholsey.</p> <p>To think that the prevailing winds would carry the noise and dust of gravel extraction over us 6 days a week, our often congested roads to the south would be clogged with dozens of gravel lorries daily, our daily walk would be a dusty eyesore, ruining our stretch of river to the south for us inhabitants and for river users, our historical setting and understanding cut off before properly understood, and the character of the whole area irrevocably ruined, is unacceptable. And I understand the gravel is not even of good quality.</p> <p>Surely there are other areas near the A34 or M40 that have gravel extraction possibilities that would not affect 10,000 people so closely, and indeed places where the gravel is of quality worth the effort. The impact on so many people would be great, in health, environment, history, ecology, and have you thought of the tourism and local market town impact?</p> <p>Wallingford has been working hard to be more welcoming to visitors, and there has been a 50% rise in visitors to the local museum, whose findings have been seen to be of national importance, proving to be an area as intriguing as Silchester or Winchester, and set in an area that has not changed overmuch for thousands of years. Also, the new moorings mean more boats are coming upstream and staying overnight in Wallingford, and the town has new visitor signs, new walks commemorating the connections with Agatha Christie, Midsomer Murders, and other films, and there are specialist</p>

	<p>shops, good restaurants, and other attractions. The Wallingford Bunk trains bring a huge number of visitors to the town and to Cholsey, and all their good work would be ruined. Who would want a specialist train ride along a working gravel pit? A cycle route is promised for the area south of the town, and its fragile success is based on attracting people from a wide area. With a gravel extraction business going on, the roads would be congested, the environs to the south would be forbidding, the air and noise quality would deteriorate, and people would understandably go elsewhere. They would also not be tempted to move here, and already I wonder where the jobs are going to be for the people moving into proposed housing in the area. Most would commute elsewhere, and the roads are not up to the increase in traffic with the gravel extraction. It would also spill more traffic into the town and onto unsuitable roads, making further difficulties and delays.</p> <p>I know Wallingford and Cholsey are on the fringes of Oxfordshire and once used to be in Berkshire, but surely this is no way to treat this area. It seems badly chosen, poorly thought out, going against all the area has worked to achieve over the years I have lived here, and there is not even any plan to restore the site some time in the distant future. And all this for gravel which is not even of good quality. I must admit I will be absolutely furious and disenchanted with Oxfordshire County Council if this goes ahead.</p> <p>Please keep me advised on proceedings.</p>
52	<p>You never cease to amaze me, the best bit of Wallingford and you want to have a gravel extraction site, how could you. Not only the amount of lorries going too and forth, the mud when raining, and dust when dry, but the dust that will be blown all over not only my property but everyones property. If i want to sell my property the market value will drop considerable, and please do not say "Market forces" you are mad. NO NO NO NO NO NO i object very strongly.</p>
211	<p>I am appalled by the proposal to permit gravel extraction from the 3 sites highlighted between Cholsey and Wallingford. Even a cursory examination of the alternative sites listed on the County Council web-site clearly shows that, unless there are unpublished parameters being applied, that Cholsey is one of the least suitable options under the normal criteria. It is very disturbing to believe that the Cholsey/Wallingford sites could be seen as the either the preferred or even the only option.</p> <p><b>TRANSPORT CONSIDERATIONS</b></p> <p>The commuter traffic in the Cholsey/Wallingford area has increased appreciably in the last 5 years and this position is bound to worsen markedly on completion of the additional housing at Cholsey Meadows and with the development at Carmell College. The increased facilities in Didcot and TESCO's, in addition to work commuting mean that the Wallingford Didcot road is already very busy and is not a road that facilitates safe over-taking opportunities.</p> <p>The HGVs required to remove the gravel, and possibly bring in rubble will cause considerable disruption to traffic in the vicinity and regardless of any local building requirements it is likely that such traffic will often be going toward the A34 as the best artery. This will clearly impede the movement of South Oxfordshire residents and I believe significantly increase the danger of accidents.</p> <p>This proposal also completely undermines the Wallingford/Cholsey cycle path, and particularly if there is a site exit on the Wallingford Cholsey road creates a genuine danger to those cycling between Cholsey station and Wallingford. Discouraging commuting by bicycle is hardly in line with current thinking, and should also be borne in mind that youngsters regularly cycle to Wallingford for school, sport and other social activities. As you will be aware most cyclist fatalities involve accidents with buses and HGVs because of blind spots and weight of metal and placing such a facility in a heavily populated area flies in the face of any risk assessment.</p> <p><b>PROXIMITY TO POPULATION</b></p> <p>Unless there is an unpublished objective to maximise the number of residents negatively impacted, it is difficult to see how Cholsey has become the favoured option. The numbers already significant, being the existing populations of Brightwell, Cholsey, Wallingford and Crowmarsh but as you are</p>

	<p>well aware most of the communities are expected to increase substantially in the next 10 years - just in time to suffer from your proposal. In addition Site 33 is less than 0.5 kilometre from a primary school and an old persons home on the Cholsey side and the edge of 57 is less than 1 kilometre from these facilities and an old persons home on the Wallingford site. The gravel extraction and associated processes will reduce the air quality in the surrounding area and these are vulnerable groups.</p> <p><b>ADHERENCE TO POLICY</b></p> <p>I appreciate that policies have developed since 1996, but based on your web site and the apparently extant considerations regarding transport and ecological considerations I remain very puzzled as to how this situation has arisen. Whilst policies may have changed the geological content of the ground has not and your own assessment of the gravel in 1996 indicates it is not the best quality and is unsuitable without processing.</p> <p>At this stage I am unaware of what proposals exist for the land following this process, which also appears to be an integral part of any consideration. I enclose extracts from the Government's codes of practice on consultation for your information. I assume these apply to both local and central government and in that most of the population of Cholsey/Wallingford have only become aware of the extent of the risk within the last few weeks I find it difficult to accept the 31st October deadline, particularly as the minimum recommended consultation period is 12 weeks with a view that this should be extended if it includes in the Summer holiday period.</p> <p>It is clear the recommended planning process envisages transparency so perhaps the Council should publish 'scored' impacts for each of the sites to cover population impacted/ecological damage/transport impact including proximity to motorways and the various factors that are meant to be considered.</p> <p><b>COUNCIL PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>It seems clear to me that any transparent balanced enquiry will not permit this proposal to succeed. As a rate payer and local voter I find it unforgivable that an elected body will bury its collective head in the sand and gravel, resulting in a waste of Council funds on a clearly unsustainable proposition.</p> <p>I suggest you undertake a transparent balanced impact exercise across the sites immediately. Getting a correct, fair solution now that can be openly evidenced to all will give the Council credibility and save tax payer money and Council time spent on dealing with each site consecutively over the next 5 years.</p>
304	<p>Re: Proposed Quarry Site in Cholsey</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</b></p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people . A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two</p>

settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

**Destruction of the local Environment:**

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

**Likely Impact on Local Economy:**

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

**Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:**

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

**Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:**

I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.

If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in

	<p>Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
179	<p>I feel I need to write to you with regards to the above proposition. This proposed site for Gravel Extraction, in such close proximity to a soon to be thriving village and Town seems preposterous and illogical.</p> <p>All small towns are currently suffering due to the recession and large out of town commercial developments. Wallingford has perhaps weathered this storm better than other towns in the same position due to its strong and faithful supporters in the local community and its beautiful location close to the river Thames.</p> <p>We have been told that the current proposals for so many hundred houses over the next few years in Wallingford and Cholsey will boost the town and keep it alive. This will only be so, if the area continues to be a beautiful place for people to come and settle here in the first place. The idea of allowing a huge gravel extraction site between the village of Cholsey and its neighbouring town would therefore just kill off any potential commercial growth in the town.</p> <p>I also fail to understand how such a site could be allowed, so close to a residential area such as the Wallingford Road in Cholsey.</p> <p>Surely in the summer this could be a health hazard for people with respiratory problems? I also understand that after the extraction is over we will be left with a huge dangerous crater, which, due to the low lying water table would regularly fill with water.</p> <p>Sir, I understand that gravel sites need to exist and of course we are all nimbys at heart, but surely there are much better suited sites situated much further away from busy residential areas.</p>
329	<p>I understand that you are considering siting a new gravel pit on land between Wallingford and Cholsey and I am writing to register my very strong opposition to this proposal. More than 10,000 people live within one mile of the proposed site. How can it be deemed a suitable site so close to so many people? It will mean ten years of economic blight followed by ten more years of disruption - lorry movements, dust, noise etc.</p> <p>We are told that tourism is important for our local economy. Tourist attractions here include the Agatha Christie trail between her house in Winterbrook and her grave in Cholsey which will be destroyed. I have personally shown this to interested visitors both from the UK and abroad. We also have the very special Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway which will be under threat.</p> <p>The proposed site is surrounded by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the impact on our local environment and its ecology will be enormous. Many walkers, birdwatchers, etc will surely be put off from visiting the area. These proposals will even preclude the development of the Chosley to Wallingford Cycle Path for which we have long campaigned and for which a fully costed, part-funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. I understand the need for gravel extraction but surely the County Council can find another site more suitable for all the reasons listed above and many others I have not mentioned. Please reject this proposal.</p>

784	<p>I attended a meeting at Cholsey School on 6th October and was horrified to hear of OCC plans to turn this area into gravel pits. This site is totally wrong for many reasons.</p> <p>As a family we have farmed here at Manor Farm for 99 years. The farm consists of 850 acres to the west of the site and in parts our boundary will abut the pits. On this boundary we have put in place (with government encouragement) environment features to attract wild life which will be completely nullified if this project goes ahead. We are just beginning to reap success in the form of many different species of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects.</p> <p>We employ two members of staff who are very much involved with the running and upkeep of the Wallingford and Cholsey Railway. This enterprise provides an excellent and well supported facility for the area. The railway provides the experience of travelling on the old coaches pulled by steam or otherwise through the local countryside. This countryside is picturesque, traditional farming land. If these gravel pits were to come into production the landscape would be forever scarred.</p> <p>At present Cholsey and Wallingford are split by farm land and this forms a natural divide between these two largish communities. A sustainable link between these two communities was to be a cycle path not a gravel pit. We are always being encouraged by OCC to utilise and promote carbon neutral transport ... there is nothing carbon neutral about a gravel pit. Not to mention the dust that will fly into Wallingford in the prevailing winds during the dry periods, which seem to be much of the year if the last few years weather are the trend.</p> <p>I have many other concerns with gravel extraction in this area of largely unspoilt natural landscape but this letter is to register my immediate concern with regards to this project.</p>
996	<p>Re: Proposed Gravel Pit locations on Wallingford Road and Reading Road, Cholsey, Oxfordshire</p> <p>I would like to register my complaint at the location of the above gravel pits proposed between Wallingford and Cholsey. As a resident of Cholsey, the impact of this plan on this large thriving community in my opinion will be devastating for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The increase in lorry traffic. Wallingford Road is frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians travelling to and from Wallingford and Cholsey. As Cholsey train station has a direct link to London, this is an important route for commuters and also for children travelling to and from school. The hugely increased lorry traffic, likely to be exiting on Wallingford Road will be extremely dangerous to these individuals and unfortunately in my view, this is likely to increase the risk of road traffic accidents in the area. This may also deter people from cycling altogether and could in fact increase the use of cars on this road also. The impact to all motorists travelling the route to Didcot will also be greatly affected with this increased flow of traffic and the mud and gravel on the road surface.</li> <li>- The effect on the local environment. The proposed area is a rich, unspoilt habitat home to a diverse selection of wildlife including foxes and roe deer, red kits, stoats and otters to name a few. This area is enjoyed by locals and tourist alike. I understand that given time constraints, a full survey and review of wildlife in the area has not been performed, I believe that if a review did take place then it would be clear that this environment would not be suitable for such a development.</li> <li>- Wallingford to Cholsey railway. If this development is granted planning permission then this will see the demise of the Cholsey, Wallingford railway which runs on the edge of the proposed gravel pit. This will be a great loss to all the surrounding local communities and will be a blow to the tourism in the area.</li> <li>- Agatha Christie Trail. This runs from her home in Winterbrook to her burial site at St Mary's Church graveyard. The gravel pit will destroy this trail and also the tourism that accompanies it. I believe that there would be a knock on effect on tourism generally in the area which would have devastating effects on this industry.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above, I would like to know why Cholsey is now the only option for this gravel pit location when initial plans stated 68 different locations. Have all of these locations been discounted for better reasons than those stated above? Why is Cholsey the only option before a full</p>

	consultation has taken place and on what grounds was this decision made? These gravel pits will be surrounded by residential housing and a number of large villages and a town. Why situate this development in a region that will have an adverse impact on such a large number of people?
652	<p>I am writing to protest most strongly about the proposal to site a gravel pit in Cholsey Village.</p> <p>I am astonished that Cholsey could be considered suitable for such a site. It is a Saxon village of great historical significance, older than most of the surrounding villages having been founded in 986 A.D. and is mentioned in the Doms Day book. The area marked for the site of the pit contains reed beds, water courses and field patterns which surely brings this area into the category of a Heritage Asset.</p> <p>Cholsey is now a thriving village with many young families and the environment for these people will be totally destroyed by the gravel site, not just for a few years but for decades to come. The Council proposes that the site will be simply abandoned after extraction finishes as a scar on the land, filled with weeds, flooding each winter, and a magnet for every fly-tipper around. A beautiful area which supports a large variety of wildlife will be blasted away forever.</p> <p>The proposed pit would destroy both the Agatha Christie Trail which runs right across the site and is a noted tourist attraction, and the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway, the board of which feel it would be impossible to run this tourist attraction when most of the view from the train windows would be of a huge gravel working. The site would also destroy the approach to Wallingford for tourism, in a place of great natural beauty and where tourism is a major industry.</p> <p>I am sure it is tempting to the County Council to take the large profits they would accrue from gravel extraction. However they have a clear duty to the people of Cholsey and Wallingford, all of whom will be seriously affected by this site. I have always believed I was lucky to live in an area where the Council paid so much attention to the needs of both people and the conservation of wildlife. This plan appears to ride rough-shod over both, and the only advantage is money.</p> <p>I am disgusted by the way this proposal has been pushed through in an underhand manner and will certainly be supporting the legal challenge Cholsey and Wallingford will mount against the County Council should the Council decide to ignore the wishes of the people of this area and press ahead with this proposal against all the evidence that this is a poor choice.</p> <p>Please stand up against a financially driven project and consider what you are about to destroy.</p>
471	<p>I am strongly against gravel extraction in Cholsey and district, it would be right in the middle of a rural area with narrow roads, most without footpaths, how can you possibly think of allowing the movement of traffic i.e. lorries onto these roads. Most of all, the noise and dust doesn't bare thinking of.</p> <p>There are so many things I could list against your decision. I hope my feelings have come across in this letter.</p>
528	<p>I should like to express my very many concerns about the unsuitability of the proposed areas between Cholsey and Winterbrook as sites for gravel extraction.</p> <p>The sites are within a mile of both Wallingford and Cholsey. Quarry operations will inevitably subject people living nearby to noise and dust pollution, and the many lorries will disrupt the traffic. There is no sense in allowing a gravel pit so close to so many people's houses.</p> <p>The economic development of the Wallingford area is relying on tourism to a significant extent. At present emphasis is being made on the Agatha Christie trail, linking her former home in Winterbrook through the countryside to her grave at Cholsey parish church. This trail would be destroyed by the proposed gravel pits. Another major tourist draw is the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway; this enables visitors and enthusiasts to travel on a preserved train along a branch line through unspoilt countryside, with attractive views along both sides of the line. This would be destroyed by the proposed gravel pits, as more than half the line would now pass by an industrial area - who would want to visit such a line?</p> <p>Wallingford is an old country market town, with a heritage back to Saxon times; it has been surprisingly well preserved, and maintains its market town</p>

	<p>atmosphere. The town is linked to the surrounding countryside by roads and several footpaths, so it is a good area for walking, and the area for the proposed quarries is an integral part of the town's immediate surroundings. There are indeed footpaths across or alongside both of the proposed quarry sites. The quarries would have a severely detrimental impact on the environment, and would be destructive of people's enjoyment of those paths. That will have a detrimental effect on tourism and so the local economy.</p> <p>I understand that these proposed sites have been selected as gravel quarries on the grounds that the landowner has proposed it. That is not an adequate justification for wreaking such damage on the neighbourhood, and disrupting and disturbing so many people's lives. That may suit the long-term interests of a gravel extraction company, but not that of the 10,000 or so people who live in the immediate area. Surely the role of the Council should be to carry out investigation and appraisal of all parts of the county in which gravel is to be found, and to make an objective assessment as to the most suitable sites - taking all facts into consideration - before reaching a recommendation as to which sites would be most suitable.</p> <p>I understand that previous borehole investigations on these sites have shown that the gravel is of poor quality, having a high proportion of carbonate (chalk or limestone). The quality of the gravel must be a consideration.</p> <p>I am also concerned that there appears to be no long-term plan for site restoration. It has been suggested that the proximity to the Thames make the sites unsuitable for landfill, and also unsuitable as lakes.</p> <p>The proposed gravel quarries are also likely to preclude the construction of the Wallingford to Cholsey cycle path, as the proposed route for the cycle path is mostly along the side of the larger gravel quarry site, adjacent to the Wallingford road. That is a straight fast road, potentially dangerous for cycles; but it is the route for commuters from Wallingford who want to use Cholsey station to get to work. As a regular cyclist myself, the cycle path would be a real asset to the area (unlike the gravel quarries).</p> <p>It will also be very sad to see the destruction of the existing landscape, which is primarily permanent grazing, with extensive mature hedges. Such mature countryside features can take a hundred years or more to develop, although they can be destroyed in days! It is a quiet and undisturbed area, with considerable wildlife interest. I live and work in Wallingford, and I often go for a walk along the path beside the preserved railway, and sometimes along Green Lane too. The peace and tranquility, and the wildlife, will be irrevocably destroyed by the quarries.</p> <p>For all the above reasons, these proposed gravel quarry sites are totally unsuitable. I object to them in the strongest possible terms. I therefore request the Council to think again, and to find a more suitable site for gravel extraction.</p>
561	<p>I write to register my objection to the proposed gravel extraction at sites reference SG-33, SG576, and SG-60, all within the parish of Cholsey.</p> <p>My objections are based on the following:</p> <p>Core Strategy flawed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The strategy sets guidelines for agencies seeking to exploit possible sites, it is not site-specific. Cholsey is the only nominated site and if approved will be so without adequate analysis of its merits or shortcomings.</li> <li>- Sites are proposed by agencies wishing to profit from the extraction, no consideration is given to local people.</li> </ul> <p>I question the morality of this action and suspect political motives.</p> <p>Procedures not followed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The residents of Cholsey were informed that Cholsey was not under consideration as a site, as the proposed site had been rejected as unsuitable ten years ago. This was changed in March of this year without adequate notification and allowing insufficient time to gather evidence in support of the continued unsuitability of the site.</li> </ul> <p>I question the legality of this action.</p> <p>Proximity to housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An arc drawn one mile from the site boundary includes all of Cholsey and 2/3 of Wallingford.</li> </ul>



- 10,000 people affected within this area and many thousands more in the local vicinity.

All these people would be adversely affected if the proposal goes ahead.

#### Heritage

- Cholsey and Wallingford's historical importance is undeniable with proof of Stone and Iron Age settlements. Roman settlements, Saxon remains and the best preserved medieval town in the country.

- The archaeology of the site has yet to be investigated.

- The Agatha Christie connection draws worldwide interest.

- The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway is a national tourist attraction.

These sites of historical and archaeological importance and cultural interest would be destroyed.

#### Character

- The site is in the middle of unspoilt countryside and farmland affording perfect habitat for numerous flora and fauna.

- This site has been largely the same for over 1000 years.

The character of the site and surrounding countryside would be changed forever. This is in direct contradiction to stated aims of the Council to 'safeguard the character' of the area.

#### Tourism

- The benefits to few would be heavily outweighed by the loss to the many:

: Saxon and medieval site blighted by dust, its reputation as an unspoilt piece of England destroyed;

: Agatha Christie trail destroyed;

: Cholsey & Wallingford Steam Railway discontinued;

: Walkers discouraged with the Ridgeway and Thames path directly affected.

For Wallingford to survive as a town it must attract tourism and new investment in keeping with its character.

#### Environment

- Gravel extraction should be close to the point of its use but by the time the site would be operational, proposed housing development in the local area would be completed.

- Estimates of 200 lorry movements per day to and from the site.

- No guarantee as to the routes taken by these lorries.

- Consequent congestion of all surrounding roads.

- The 'advantage' of the proximity of the by-pass is a false one:

: Direct access to the by-pass from the site is unlikely to be sanctioned by the Highways agencies;

: Access via the Cholsey to Wallingford Road would prove dangerous to other users;

: The by-pass does not connect to Didcot; this route would put heavy lorries on a country road past Brightwell and Haddon Hill.

- The proposed cycle path between Cholsey and Wallingford would not be possible.

- The site cannot be restored as a lake for local amenity due to its proximity to the river Thames. We will be left with a pit, unusable, unsightly and dangerous.

- What other industry will be permitted on the site?

: Rock crushing;

: Cement manufacture;

	<p>: Landfill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The site will yield a very poor return (the reason it was rejected last time) as surveys show that only a low percentage of what would be extracted would be of use. Though (presumably) financially economic, its carbon footprint will be significant.</li> <li>- What precedent would this site set for others in the area?</li> </ul> <p>To these direct objections add the concerns of the effect the site will have on the health and safety of local inhabitants. Objections of this nature are often referred to as NIMBYesk and yes I am a Cholsey resident but I think I have catalogued a whole range of reasons why this proposal is wrong for this site. It is unacceptable that no other site is even considered. I urge you to reconsider. Please do not destroy this part of England.</p>
868	<p>I am writing to register my great disapproval for the proposed gravel pit in Cholsey.</p> <p>Over 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>There are also a number of new housing developments which will put additional strain on our local infrastructure and do not need more pressures in the shape of hundreds of lorries collecting and delivering gravel.</p> <p>In addition to this there is a significant amount of wildlife that inhabit this area. Foxes, roe deer and hares are often seen here as well as weasels and stoats are there have been sightings of Otters in recent years. Also, buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>Please reconsider this site and find one that will have less impact on the local population.</p>
455	<p>We are writing to you to appeal against your plans for a gravel pit site in Cholsey, South Oxfordshire. There are numerous reasons why Cholsey should not be chosen as the preferred site in South Oxfordshire, the foremost reason being the close proximity to residents of Cholsey's houses.</p> <p>We live on the corner of Caps Lane and Wallingford Road in Cholsey. Our house is positioned right opposite the proposed site. We bought the house 13 years ago primarily because of the beautiful views out of every window. It was our dream house in the country. We never considered that this area of beauty which separates the parish of Cholsey and the nearby market town of Wallingford would be destroyed one day. It seems unimaginable that anyone would consider ruining this patch of countryside separating the two areas. Every morning our 8 yr old son looks out of his bedroom window to see the Red Kites nesting in the trees on the proposed site. He loves to watch them circling low over our house and often tells us how lucky he is to live here.</p> <p>If the gravel pit goes ahead then the village of Cholsey will be ruined. We've already had to put up with a huge development of houses on the old Fairmile Hospital site. The gravel pit will deter future housebuyers completely. Residents of Cholsey and Wallingford will see their house prices plummet. Cholsey will no longer be a preferred commuter village.</p> <p>We cannot believe that you can consider a site that is so close to residents' dwellings. We've visited the current Sutton Courtenay gravel site which is nowhere near any houses. A gravel pit will be both noisy and dusty for residents and the possible health affects to children and the elderly cannot be ignored. Asthma can easily be brought on by dust particles in the air.</p> <p>The proposed Cholsey site will also impact heavily on tourism to the beautiful market town of Wallingford. The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway would have to close and the beautiful Agatha Christie Trail will be ruined forever.</p> <p>We urge you to rethink your strategy and to review alternative sites away from residential areas.</p>

457	<p>We would like to object most strongly to the proposed extraction of gravel at Wallingford Road, Cholsey. It is an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, of great historical importance, important water courses, field patterns and reed beds and unchanged for centuries, which should not be lost forever.</p> <p>The great tourist attraction of the 'Bunk line' attracts 30,000 visitors a year. Seriously depleted if huge banks and dust resulted!</p> <p>Devaluation of nearby properties, in fact, Cholsey, Wallingford and Winterbrook.</p> <p>Noise and pollution - can you imagine the amount all those lorries would create! About 10,000 people would be affected.</p> <p>Wallingford road is already a fast, busy, dangerous road.</p> <p>Poor, dangerous access for lorries.</p> <p>A very much needed cycle track has been promised by the council for years. Would this be 'swept under the carpet'?</p> <p>Devastation to wildlife.</p> <p>Blight on tourist attraction, notably the Agatha Christie trail.</p> <p>We understand that the gravel is believed to be of poor quality and cannot be made into a lake, because of the proximity of the River Thames. Would we be left with an unsightly marshy, dangerous bog? An eyesore! What about the quality of life for our children and grandchildren?</p> <p>To blight the lives of 10,000 people by removing this green belt seems very ill conceived to say the least!</p>
468	<p>I wish to object to the proposal to include the above site in your mineral plan.</p> <p>It is in a totally unsuitable location for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cholsey and Wallingford are effectively a single community. The parish of Cholsey would be divided in two by the proposals.</li> <li>2. It is not a case of NOT IN MY BACK YARD - but NOT IN MY FRONT GARDEN.</li> <li>3. Property devaluations in the area would be significant and should be weighed against the net value of the minerals extracted.</li> <li>4. The noise, dust and mess would be totally unacceptable and any individual creating this nuisance in their community should rightly expect to receive an ASBO.</li> <li>5. Much is made of the south Oxfordshire countryside, the AONB, the views from the surrounding hill-sides, the history of Wallingford and its immediate surroundings and the bunk railway, all of which seem to be forgotten.</li> <li>6. The site itself contains a number of watercourses, particularly the one receiving effluent from the adjacent sewage works which would have to be carefully and expensively dealt with.</li> <li>7. Reduction of the water table will result in subsidence of properties in the vicinity and a total change to the ecology of the locality.</li> <li>8. There are many other sites much more able to accommodate gravel extraction without the major affect this would have on a settled community.</li> </ol> <p>I trust these points will be taken into account when recommendations are being prepared.</p>
305	<p>On Thursday 6th October I attended a public meeting in Cholsey and Wednesday 12th October I attended another public meeting this time in Wallingford regarding the above Consultation process concerning the proposed gravel works between Cholsey and Wallingford. I was immediately struck how incensed people were at the way and timescale this project was being steamrollered over the inhabitants of Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>I was alarmed to hear that this site was at one stage just one of 60 sites for gravel works but is now the only single site being proposed. How can you have a consultation period when there is only one site put forward? What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, as it surely will be, is found lacking? The County Council will be left not with just no site, but no mineral strategy either.</p> <p>In my opinion, this current proposal is fundamentally flawed. The timescale of consultation ending 31st October is totally unacceptable as the vast majority of people in Cholsey and Wallingford are only just waking up to what is going on.</p> <p>Needless to say I am totally opposed to the proposed gravel works. It is not right that in excess of 10,000 people who live within a mile of this site,</p>

	<p>and many who will live around it, can be subjected to the constant noise, disruption and dust that goes with such a site. With so many sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel works that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape set between the town of Wallingford and the village of Cholsey.</p>
46	<p>I would like to begin by recording my surprise, shock and anger at the proposals from the County Council to site three gravel pits on the outskirts of Cholsey and, furthermore, at the completely inadequate, now hurried, consultation process. Until the middle of last week, I was alone amongst my immediate neighbours in being aware of these proposals.</p> <p>I am sure you will receive a great deal of feedback on the generalities of this scheme and so I will confine my comments to the proposals for Site SG60.</p> <p>As the owner of the property immediately adjacent to, and due south of, this site, I anticipate a major impact, not least on hydrology and on wildlife, both of which I am in a position to observe rather closely.</p> <p>First of all, based on observations of a very large pond on our property, it would be foolhardy and environmentally hazardous to excavate so close to the river. Groundwater is no more than 10' to 1' down and, as we can directly observe, intimately linked to the rise and fall of the Thames. Even a relatively shallow gravel pit would fill with water and have a direct interaction with, and contaminate, the river. Note also that several houses in the area - ours amongst them - extract their drinking water via a well.</p> <p>Secondly, the woods and river bank immediately to the south of SG60 are teeming with wildlife, most notably red kites, buzzards, herons and kingfishers but also roe deer, munchjack, badgers, rabbits, hares, robins etc.</p> <p>Next, as a professional geoscientist (my CV is attached), I have examined the publically available data from boreholes in the area. The gravel in this area, especially SG60, is of low economic quality and I doubt that any geologists who value their reputations would declare it suitable for development.</p> <p>Finally, Council's plans seem contradictory, having given permission for housing developments at Carmel College - which would directly overlook a gravel pit at SG60 - and Fairmile Hospital - where the developers' promise of a rural idyll would come to naught.</p>
47	<p>This document is essentially concerned only with supporting gravel extraction at Cholsey. I am not at all convinced that OCC has investigated all other sites prior to proposing Cholsey as a site. Additionally:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secondary and recycled aggregates - OCC admit that they do not know the level of production. This is potentially a major source of material obviating the need for gravel extraction (Particularly where the gravel concerned appears to be rather low grade.)</li> <li>2. The Cholsey site is the smallest of those featured in the plan, and is farther from the Science Vale than those North of Didcot.</li> <li>3. The roads surrounding Cholsey are small and windy. Putting hundreds of huge lorries on them will be totally destructive to the amenity of the surrounding area.</li> <li>4. There will be a huge visual impact within the small space between Wallingford and Cholsey.</li> <li>5. Whatever the claims about restoring habitat, it is abundantly clear that habitats will be destroyed first, and will disrupt fauna and flora at and near the riverside for many many years.</li> <li>6. I consider the Cholsey proposal to be ill-thought out and potentially destructive to the way of life of animals and humans in this part of South Oxfordshire.</li> </ol>

<p>48 (Ed Vaizey MP)</p>	<p>I understand that the Council is currently consulting local residents about the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Plan Development Framework, including recommendations on locations within the county from which gravel will be extracted.</p> <p>As one of the areas affected, Cholsey, is within my constituency and has been added very late to the list of proposed extraction sites, I am concerned to ensure that you are fully informed of the consequences of digging gravel there. I understand from constituents that it was clear at a recent meeting between some of your officers and local residents that some aspects of the site, which would indicate how unsuitable it is as a location for gravel extraction, had apparently not been fully appreciated.</p> <p>The location in the midst of the settlements of Wallingford and Cholsey - within a mile of over 10,000 people. This impacts dramatically on the economic future of Wallingford and the surrounding area which, as set out in both the District and Town Councils vision for the future, must be very dependent upon tourism and visitors to the area attracted by the history, riverside setting and landscape setting. One of the proposed sites runs down to the river on a particularly important and attractive stretch of the Thames.</p> <p>The County Council appears to demonstrate a lack of appreciation or a disregard of many factors associated with the site such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Wallingford and Cholsey Railway (the Bunkline), a tourist attraction, which would almost certainly not survive if running beside a gravel extraction site for ten years;</li> <li>- The Agatha Christie trail alongside the site;</li> <li>- Listed buildings on and adjacent to the site;</li> <li>- The County Council's own proposal for a cycleway along the Wallingford Road and inside the proposed site. An important link to Cholsey station, which is a key element in future plans for local transport in the area;</li> <li>- The various footpaths and watercourses across the site.</li> </ul> <p>There is also a conflict between the proposals in your strategy paper and the emerging SODC Core Strategy. There is no apparent link between the strategies, so the impact on traffic with approximately 70, twenty ton lorry movements leaving the site daily plus empty lorries returning and a similar number of movements bringing in fill material has not been considered. This will become an increasingly significant issue as the proposed strategic housing sites are on the southern boundary of Wallingford immediately adjacent to the road along which all this traffic will have to travel.</p> <p>I would be grateful for your assurance that these points will be properly considered and addressed as the draft strategy is finalised, and that the future of an important area within my constituency will be protected as it deserves.</p>
<p>63</p>	<p>I would like to state my objection to the proposed gravel extraction sites to the south of Wallingford, between Wallingford and the village of Cholsey. My objections are based on the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Wallingford is an ancient town with many historical buildings and a large conservation area, the scale of this development would not be in keeping with the size of the town and would detract from the visual appeal of what is a beautiful part of the countryside. It would impact upon the number of tourists that visit our town, those that come to see the castle, the river, the riverside pools, the steam railway and on our proposed cyclepath link between the town and the railway station at Cholsey.</li> <li>2) The proposed sites are extremely close to two centres of population and due to the prevailing winds, the associated dust from the process of gravel extraction would descend upon the town on a daily basis. The level of dust would have an effect on our homes in terms of covering them with continual layers of dust. I would like to know whether the impact on the health of local people has been investigated, particularly those with respiratory problems such as asthma, as I understand from a recent public meeting that it is highly unusual to suggest such a development so close to a large population.</li> <li>3) There would be a marked increase in the volume of traffic using the by-pass, in particular lorry movements. I am concerned about the environmental impact of the lorries and their fumes, as well as the impact of more traffic through the town when the by-pass is too busy due to lorry</li> </ol>

	<p>movements.</p> <p>I am quite confused as to why the Council has chosen this site, when it appears to be so out of keeping with the local environment and so close to a historic town, I would be grateful if in your response you could clarify the decision making process that was undertaken when selecting sites and demonstrate why this site was chosen over other sites away from centres of population.</p>
64	<p>I am writing to object to the proposal for Sand and Gravel extraction pits to be sited around Wallingford. The situation for Wallingford is far worse than it appears. We are not only threatened for 20 - 25 years with the Cholsey gravel pits South of Wallingford (SG33, SG57 and SG60 on County Council Plans), but also an enormous piece of land just north of Wallingford. Plan SG47 shows an enormous pit stretching from the roundabout on Wantage Road, very close to housing, across the fields above housing on Wilding Road - just a field away - and then across the Shillingford Road taking in the land next to Rushcourt Nursing Home and stopping a field short of the river near Benson weir.</p> <p>To site a gravel pit next to a nursing home is appalling. Furthermore Wallingford will have gravel pits North and South of it, and whichever way the wind is blowing will be subject to dust and noise. As for traffic movements, roughly 4 a minute from the Cholsey pits alone we're told, we don't have the infrastructure to cope with them. These heavy lorries, possibly 8 a minute, will be using the Shillingford Road, the Wantage Road and the Wallingford by-pass, possibly Shillingford Bridge, all too narrow to cope with so much extra traffic all day from these enormous pits. There will also be increased traffic noise surrounding Wallingford - these lorries aren't quiet.</p> <p>These are pernicious schemes. None of this should be happening so close to residential areas.</p>
67	<p>I live at swan cottage on the main road running through cholsey.</p> <p>Traffic has increased significantly recently because of housing developments. There has always been through-traffic at a high level of large lorries. We have resisted complaining to date.</p> <p>However, with the prospect of traffic increasing for a very long time from the gravel pit works you can be certain there will be much opposition.</p> <p>If you wish to have a successful outcome:</p> <p>As a first measure, you will need to bar gravel pit traffic through the village.</p> <p>You will need to bring detailed plans of the extraction process to the full knowledge of the village.</p> <p>I was chief adviser on groundwater to the ODA/DFID for many years and i would be very surprised if very large extraction devices will not be necessary with all the environmental nuisance that implies.</p>
131	<p>I am most unhappy about the proposed gravel site between Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>It will have a huge impact on both W and C, it will ruin wildlife, tourist and will be a huge health hazard not to mention the added amount of traffic on the roads. There are endless reasons why it should not be here, please listen to the people of Wallingford and Cholsey. Thanks</p>
45	<p>I would like to register my concerns (which I understand you share) regarding the above proposal, on the following grounds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proximity to two fairly substantial settlements: Wallingford and Cholsey. Particularly the proximity of some housing along Wallingford Road should be considered. I understand that 10,000 people at the moment (with more projected) live within a mile of the area to be affected by the works.</li> <li>2. The dust generation into this area. With new projected housing, there will be a significant increase in young families with small children who will be exposed to excavation dust - particularly if the Wallingford B site and the Carmel College housing sites go ahead. I understand that with the prevailing wind, dust will affect my own settlement of Crowmarsh.</li> <li>3. Effects of economic blight on both settlements for housing sales during the interim waiting period and the actual 25 years' excavation</li> <li>4. Unsettled access arrangements for heavy traffic - neither the fast and narrow Wallingford Road, the Wallingford Bypass, nor its dual roundabouts</li> </ol>

are suitable for incoming and outgoing traffic. Wallingford Road is particularly unsuitable for such a concern.

5. The effects of heavy lorries exiting onto the:
  - a) Wallingford-Didcot route - which passes the Brightwell village access points and has to traverse the dangerous Hadden Hill narrow stretch, as well as going through the busy Didcot ringroad / Broadway accesses onto the A34
  - b) alternative routes out will pass the already busy Crowmarsh By-Pass roundabouts. The immediate routes from this either via Wallingford Bridge, the road towards Henley or those towards Reading or Oxford are not designed for the type and level of traffic generated.
6. If, as I, understand a significant determinative for the selection of this site is because the gravel is needed for the Didcot and Wallingford housing developments. With a projected eight year delay before extraction commences, these developments will have been completed before this local gravel is available, necessitating it selling elsewhere and negating the main rationale for the Cholsey location.
7. Effect on the developing tourism strategy of Wallingford which relies on the whole and complete historic landscape environment of Wallingford (which includes the designated sites), as well as the Agatha Christie trail and the Midsomer Murders' connection - Wallingford will not be a welcoming environment with heavy excavation noise and traffic.
8. The environment and amenities of Cholsey as a village within an established rural setting could not be safeguarded by a development of this nature and scale. Of particular concern is the setting of several listed buildings.
9. The development will lead to the closure of the 30-year old Wallingford-Cholsey Steam Railway, and the loss of the volunteer effort already input, and the loss of c. 10,000 visitors to the area annually.
10. The selection of this site was rejected by enquiry in the 1980's. With increased housing settlement and domestic traffic in the area, the site is even more unsuitable.
11. I understand that the quality of the gravel is low, and could require the addition of crushed stone to render it suitable for sale - heavily increasing incoming lorry traffic with the stone and outgoing traffic with the higher-volume stone and gravel mix.
12. There are no assurances offered that the gravel extraction will stop with the three designated sites - in similar situations the extraction process has expanded over neighbouring areas, increasing the size of the excavation pit and the timescale of extraction works.
13. There are no indications of the future of the gravel pit created. I gather that due to the proximity of the River Thames and the Cholsey Sewage Plant, it will not become a recreational lake.

It is unlikely that it will become a repository for hardcore-type rubble as this is now recrushed onsite and used for foundation deposit, as in the Wilder site development in Crowmarsh; it is now too expensive a material to throw away. Such a use would also extend the traffic problems to a further period of years.

I am told that the County has declared it an unsuitable site for landfill - which would similarly increase the timescale of the site. It will be left as a 25' deep marshy pit - not a safe or suitable exchange for acres of farmland.

14. Any archaeology on the site would require full excavation.
15. Field studies have revealed that this is a valuable habitat for various birds, bats an assorted wildlife, including a new small population of otters. Established hedgerows will also be lost.
16. The consultation period since the re-designation of these areas has not been adequately published by the County Council; if it were not for the actions of the most affected Cholsey residents, this high-impact development would have been approved with no public consultation.
17. Why has the local authority only been able to designate one site (a site it itself rejected in the 1980s) within its Core Strategy for such extraction? If this site is again held to be unsuitable - given the above comments and previous decision - it leaves the Council - of which I am a ratepayer - with an empty strategy, which does call into question the effectiveness of those writing and deciding the strategy. If only the one site remains designated,

	<p>there is no opportunity for a full evaluation of any proposals.</p> <p>18. It is invidious that the personal financial gain of the extraction firms and the landowners in question are given weighting above the future and wellbeing of the two communities who will be affected for over a quarter of a century.</p> <p>I would have thought that any Minerals Planning Strategy would include a consideration of the social, economic and environmental effects of any such proposals. Apparently not.</p>
132	<p>I wish to protest against the decision to nominate Cholsey/Wallingford as a site for proposed gravel extraction. There are other sites more suitable (being less populated). The decision was made high-handedly without notifying the local parish council. The criterion that there should be main roads nearby is not a valid one: the human rights and health of local residents are more important than the commercial viability of a developer's scheme (let him incur costs in building a road on a more appropriate less populated site elsewhere). As an ex-BBC news manager I know from experience that communist dictatorships used to take decisions the way this one was taken!</p>
251	<p>I write to express my dismay that the grim spectre of gravel extraction in Cholsey has been resurrected. Not only is every spare piece of ground inside the village being 'infilled' with housing, not only are we to be surrounded by new housing developments at 'Cholsey Meadows' and in Winterbrook but now our lovely way to and from Wallingford is to be permanently defaced. What price rural England!</p> <p>The proposed planning guidelines (if that is what your briefing documents purports to be) are likely to have a disproportionate impact on our most cherished village features. Meeting the needs of commerce, national objectives and the local population requires 'smart planning' and balance. Your document lacks these prime requirements. Before writing, I considered (objectively) what the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal were and, unsurprisingly, I came up with only 1 advantage and a plethora of disadvantages.</p> <p>The only advantage is that the company carrying out the extraction and those owning the land make a profit. The disadvantages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not safeguarding the character and amenity of Cholsey village</li> <li>The possible destruction of the historically important Agatha Christie Trail</li> <li>Extraction of gravel that is known to be of inferior quality and is not 'fit for purpose'</li> <li>The destruction of listed buildings</li> <li>The loss, forever, of important reed beds, watercourse and flora and fauna</li> <li>The destruction of important and as yet untapped medieval settlements awaiting archaeological investigation</li> <li>A horrendous increase in heavy traffic not just in the parish but in all the surrounding areas</li> <li>The residual eyesore of a ravaged countryside that cannot be returned to its former glory nor turned into a lakeside environment.</li> </ul> <p>I could continue to expound the disadvantages attaching to this proposal but if I did I would probably run out of paper and you would probably not bother to read it. However, I will say that consultation does not exist where there are no other options. No other site for extraction is proposed in your document, so we must assume that our 'representatives' are already minded to approve the development and are selling us down the river. I cannot see how the Council and you as their agency can agree a development that will cause serious and significant harm to an important heritage asset without the most stringent of investigative work beforehand. In short, you seem to be planning to support commercial interests at the expense of long-term consequences for our community's quality of life.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that you do not, as it would appear, pay lip service to this 'consultation' process. For our part, we will continue to challenge this proposal vigorously. We trust that our elected representatives will truly represent our wishes and not those with commercial interests. Please do not allow this travesty to happen.</p>



78	<p>Re the proposed new gravel pits in Cholsey and Wallingford. I wish to express my strong objections to this proposal, on 2 grounds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Destroying this area of natural beauty would be criminal.</li> <li>2. The gravel would have to be moved. This means huge numbers of destructive heavy vehicles through country lanes, past dwellings and school routes. Not wise.</li> </ol> <p>I live in Crowmarsh Gifford, and would be indirectly involved, especially as regards the traffic issue, but this is a simple money-making venture, which is not needed.</p>
51	<p>May I register my strong opposition to extracting minerals from the Cholsey site. My reasons for this opposition include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The destruction of a beautiful part of South Oxfordshire</li> <li>2. The proximity of the workings to an AONB - in effect the workings would be within a salient surrounded on all sides by ANOB and could only detract from it</li> <li>3. The workings are too close to existing settlement of Wallingford and Cholsey. These settlements are expected to expand over the next decade or two bringing people very close to the dangerous, dusty and noisy workings</li> <li>4. The current roads are already busy and adding a large number of polluting lorries will increase congestion and create both noise and atmospheric pollution.</li> </ol>
56	<p>In County Council briefing document they refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p>
306	<p>I am writing to express my very strong objection to the above proposal. I cannot believe that you are seriously considering such a huge activity so near to urban areas. Dust would be blown over both Cholsey and Wallingford, there would be a noise nuisance, the roads would be congested by all the heavy lorries, and if it were the same as where I used to live in the Lea Valley, the lorry drivers were paid per load, which encouraged them to drive as fast as they could, often using narrow roads, and spilling some of their gravel as they cornered too fast. The roads were soon in a terrible state unable to take the weight of these very heavy vehicles. There was because of all these factors a fall in the value of houses nearby and many businesses suffered. I feel sure the same would happen in this location. I am really concerned that if this scheme were passed it would destroy what is at present a lovely town and village surrounded by beautiful countryside and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>
213	<p>I am writing to bring your attention to a proposal to excavate gravel from fields in close proximity to our lovely village Cholsey. In fact the plans are, to butt against the sewerage farm and private houses. Most gravel pits that I know of are in the open countryside. Also in Cholsey we have been subjected to 500 new homes being built. The impact on village life would be horrendous if gravel was extracted as well as the above. Noise -dust pollution - 240 lorries daily and to be left with a scar on the landscape of huge magnitudes. Wildlife and a wonderful natural habitat will be destroyed. The road to Wallingford is used daily by a considerable number of cyclists and is the main route out of Cholsey. Please monitor this before deciding to choose our village.</p>

214	<p>I am writing to you because I am very much concerned about the proposal to create a large GRAVEL PIT which will be sited right on the edge of Cholsey. This will completely disrupt our community life of the village. It will cause a great amount of unwanted traffic, noise and dirt, it will also be a very unpleasant outlook for the local inhabitants.</p> <p>The consequences to the wildlife in the area will be devastating.</p> <p>The value of our property will also be affected.</p> <p>It seems that most of the people in Cholsey are opposed to this scheme.</p> <p>I intend to oppose this project in any way I can.</p>
215	<p>I am greatly shocked and amazed that it has been proposed to put a GRAVEL PIT in our village and within a mile of our historic town of Wallingford. A GRAVEL PIT will completely destroy two beautiful Oxfordshire places.</p> <p>The proposed site will run along the 'THAMES PATH' ruining the Flora and Fauna along it, spoiling the enjoyment of all the walkers who have come from far and wide to enjoy this beautiful stretch of the Thames. It is also proposed to run along the Wallingford and Cholsey railway line which has been lovingly cared for by volunteers for the past 30 years which offers so much pleasure to many people, local and visitors to our area.</p> <p>The dirt and dust which will be created by the work at the PIT will destroy our local wildlife and all our plants and trees in our village.</p> <p>It will also affect many people who have chest and lung problems, the last thing they need is to breath in all that dust, there will be no escape from it as the PIT will be in our village.</p> <p>The amount of BIG LORRIES on our narrow roads will be a great threat to our safety. I ride my bike from Cholsey to Wallingford daily, with normal traffic on the roads it is tricky but with 80+ lorries every day it will be impossible.</p> <p>I understand that one reason for the site is so the gravel can be used for local building projects. Well I think that is a bit late as Cholsey Meadows is now almost complete and there is not much more land for more houses in this area to warrant this PIT. PLEASE, PLEASE STOP THE GRAVEL PIT.</p>
469	<p>I have only recently heard of your proposals for the extraction of 5 million tons of gravel from the area between Cholsey and Wallingford, over a twenty year period. This is devastating news for the 10,000 residents of the area.</p> <p>A COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF THE AREA, I CANNOT COMPREHEND HOW ANYONE CAN PROPOSE SUCH A PROJECT.</p> <p>The S.O.D.C. Core strategy published this year has made a decision to build the largest housing estate in Wallingford at Slade End Farm, just half a mile, as the crow flies, from your proposed gravel extraction site, how can you blight these new 555 home owners. There are many alternative sites of good quality gravel that would be a minimum disruption to local residents.</p> <p>COMPLETELY OUTRAGEOUS!!!</p> <p>Your proposals are not acceptable.</p>
459	<p>I am writing to you to express my objection to plans for a gravel extraction near Cholsey. My reasons for objecting are briefly as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The proposed site is very close to 2 settlements i.e. Cholsey and Wallingford. These settlements will be badly affected by noise, traffic movements, and wind-blown dust.</li> <li>b) Geologically the gravel is not of the best quality.</li> <li>c) Wallingford and Cholsey are both settlements with considerable archaeological remains and, in the case of Wallingford, are in the process of being studied for important remains of Saxon origin.</li> <li>d) There are housing developments planned in Cholsey and Wallingford, these are likely to be affected by the proximity of a dusty site and constant movements of heavy vehicles.</li> <li>e) The proposed route for most vehicles will be along the Didcot road which is already congested and is very narrow at certain points.</li> </ol>

	<p>f) The site of the works would completely damage a special site for flowers, birds, insects and mammals.</p> <p>g) Ancient rights of way will be removed.</p> <p>h) The site is in near proximity to 2 areas of outstanding natural beauty i.e. the Chilterns and the Sinodun Hills.</p> <p>i) The peace of the river Thames will be shattered by the works proposed so close to it.</p> <p>j) Any development/change of use will alter the already unstable water table.</p> <p>k) House prices in the immediate vicinity will be depressed.</p> <p>l) Wallingford will be particularly affected by dust as the prevailing wind is from a south-westerly direction.</p> <p>m) The development of the area's tourist facilities will be badly affected.</p> <p>For all these reasons I consider the plans for gravel extraction to be wholly unacceptable.</p>
387	<p>I regret I must protest at the proposition of gravel extraction and the concomitant activities in the centre of our community. Cholsey, Wallingford and Brightwell cum Sotwell are closely linked by family and business ties and have each others interest for the whole area to prosper. After hard work by local business groups and voluntary groups, the area is funding and investing in its strengths. These include tourism - especially related to history. The noise, dust, odour and traffic from this proposed project would cast a pall over this community. The imposition of an increase of the number of new houses was rough enough, the proposed gravel pits would be a double whamee. The tourism aspects would be hit very hard and nullify much of our local efforts, I do not believe that the social, economic or environmental effects have even been thought of let alone considered. I understand the quality of gravel on this first terrace is such that it would need further work and "supplements" - more traffic than has been estimated, and more equipment on site both increasing noise and dust pollution. I do not know if any thought has been given to the effects on the local brooks and water table, but to those who live close to them and the Thames and have been close to flooding - this is a concern that has not been allayed. The Natural History/Heritage aspect is obvious to me having walked and ridden through it for years. It would be destroyed. There appears to be no long term plans. The "mechanism" whereby this so called plan was released after excluding the site some time ago, was to say the least opaque and underhand and to us smells of corruption. We cannot think of anyone in this community apart from the landowners, the developer and a cleaning hire company, who would benefit, even the carbon footprint argument is flawed. The proposal should be jettisoned.</p>
698	<p>With regard to the proposed sitting of enormous gravel extraction pits, obliterating the green fields which now exist, and stretching the whole length of the road from Wallingford to Cholsey: I wish to object strongly to this desecration of our environment. The track of the Cholsey and Wallingford Preservation Railway, run and maintained by enthusiastic volunteers, which is much appreciated by local people and visitors, runs the whole length of the proposed gravel pit, and instead of acres of farmland and country views, would enjoy a mile of industrial desecration. I fear it would probably close. There is a recently-established Agatha Christie trail from her house in Winterbrook, on the edge of Wallingford, to her grave at St Mary's Church, Cholsey. How many tourists would trudge alongside a gravel pit? Heavy lorry traffic, (eighty movements a day are predicted), dust, noise, and the destruction of our countryside are not to be tolerated. Why must gravel extraction take place next to a thriving village? Is this not ridiculous planning? Vast gravel pits on the edge of a thriving village, struggling to retain some semblance of rural tranquillity are not to be tolerated.</p>

540	<p>I am writing to convey my severe objections to the proposed gravel pit in Cholsey, Oxfordshire. Having been a resident on Wallingford Road for over 8 years I feel strongly that it would be deeply insensitive for Oxfordshire County Council to grant permission for such an invasive proposal which would destroy the heart of the thriving communities of Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed gravel pit could possibly benefit the local region, let alone the local community. During my time in Cholsey the village has lost its Community Hall and has had virtually no additional infrastructure improvements at all. To allow this gravel extraction to go ahead will enforce even further suffering on the local parishioners by way of noise pollution, increased traffic congestion, pot-holes, dust, health issues and obviously the horrendous eye-sore which the site would inevitably become! That's not to mention the impact on tourism, local businesses, local heritage, flora, fauna, ecology, archaeology, impact on house prices etc, etc, etc, etc! This site lies at the geographical heart of the ever-expanding population of 10,000+ people of Wallingford and Cholsey and will grossly affect the lives of each and every resident.</p> <p>As a parent with young children I am faced daily with the dangers of excessively speeding traffic on the 30mph road outside my house. This is a known issue but seemingly one which no council is willing to do anything about. The Cholsey Parish Council have turned a blind eye to it and have only merely offered me their "sympathies". I will not allow my children to cycle to the local Primary School for fear of them falling into the road and being run-over. However, I have been enthused over the past few years at the prospect of a cycle path leading from Cholsey to Wallingford along my road, something which would benefit me and my family immensely. I now understand though that this glimmer-of-hope for an improvement to my family's lives will also be destroyed by the proposed gravel pit. The speeding traffic will become even more dangerous to the local residents when, inevitably, cars will be encouraged to overtake lumbering lorries on narrow roads, in order to hasten their increasingly delayed journeys.</p> <p>My house overlooks tranquil green fields which my children love to watch-over from their bedroom window. They see lambs in spring, sheep, deer, geese, pheasants, partridges, herons, rabbits, hares, foxes, lapwing, red kites, fieldfares etc, and also the ever-changing environment throughout the year. As a parent I feel this is of immense importance to their education and appreciation of life in the countryside. I walk the dog on a daily basis along the bunk line and gain immense pleasure from the flora, fauna and peaceful environment that the area provides. Again all these benefits will be destroyed by the gravel pit.</p> <p>I understand that the planning process which has led to this proposal reeks of dirty politics, which I am disgusted to have been informed about. For the Cholsey Parish Council to be told in October 2010 that the Cholsey site was no longer in the running for gravel extraction, and then subsequently find out a few months later that Cholsey was suddenly the only site in the running, beggar's belief. Oxfordshire County Council should hang their heads in shame if the un-democratic nature of their decision making process is indeed true.</p> <p>The Cholsey site clearly does not have the best quality gravel in this region either and therefore I would hope that the County Council have the decency to study alternative extraction sites which will not have such a major impact on their immediate surroundings.</p>
578	<p>It is somewhat difficult to extend one's comprehension of the crass stupidity of the abovementioned proposal. On the one hand the County Authority surely has a duty of responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing of the population it serves? It would appear that, by its very nature, this proposal indicates a blatant and cynical ignorance of that responsibility. On the other hand, could there be a more sinister reason for such a plan, involving private financial gain at the expense of the wilful destruction of a largely unspoiled natural landscape and the long term blight of the quality of life for the local populace. Clearly, very little, if any, thought has been aimed in either direction.</p> <p>It is a known fact that any work to extract gravel from either of the proposed sites will have an adverse effect on the locality, its population, and their residential environment for decades to come. A number of local organisations have already indicated that your proposal will, if brought to action, effectively destroy all of the work they have successfully committed themselves to for at least the past 30 to 40 years. This can never be allowed to happen. For instance, it is known, from personal experience, that the Cholsey &amp; Wallingford Steam Railway enjoys national recognition, thanks to the dedication of staff and volunteers over many years. Its probable demise as a result of your proposal is positively shameful. Likewise would be the</p>

	<p>destruction of the recently opened Agatha Christie Trail, whose death would be your direct responsibility. These are just two of several such features in which many people have got themselves involved, and are achieving much success in attracting tourism to the area, thus making a positive contribution to the improvement of the local economy. Should your proposal go ahead, can you say the same? I think not.</p> <p>It is a known fact that your proposal would have a positively detrimental effect on the local flora and fauna whose residence you intend to disturb, then ultimately destroy. Your apparently callous disregard for such a scenario is deplorable, and should be remedied.</p> <p>It is a known fact that the Parish of Cholsey and the Borough of Wallingford have been in existence for many hundreds of years. To think that a stroke of a bureaucratic pen at the foot of a bureaucratic decision could effectively put an end to such an illustrious history, not to mention the ecological and archaeological value of the whole area, must surely add to the shame placed at the door of Oxfordshire County Council for even considering such an ill-found notion.</p> <p>Additionally, the adverse effect on the local road network by the inevitable fleet of heavy goods vehicles involved in the proposed gravel extraction defies description. With the possible exception of the Wallingford Bypass, it is neither fair, nor practicable to expect local roads to cope with such an unnecessary increase in traffic as described. The Authority responsible for maintenance of those roads can hardly keep pace with their ongoing 'wear and tear' as it is. Any increase of such heavy usage would undoubtedly lead to many more problems in the long term future, and the quality of our local roads in that context does not bear thinking about.</p> <p>One salient question remains to be answered, preferably honestly. I am given to understand that, approximately 20 years ago, a similar proposal regarding the same area was dismissed for among other reasons, that the gravel to be extracted was 'of a doubtful quality'. What, in the ensuing 20 years, has changed??</p> <p>You will, having read so far, gathered that I can find nothing at all to write in favour of this preposterous proposal, and can only think that Oxfordshire County Council ought to seek to recover at least some of the respect of the population it is paid to serve by reversing this dire proposal, the sooner the better.</p>
938	<p>I am writing to you about Oxfordshire County Council's proposal to extract gravel from the centre of the tight community of Cholsey, Wallingford and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. These are linked by family and business ties, as I'm sure you are aware.</p> <p>The area is finding its strengths in tourism, especially related to history. Business and volunteer groups have invested much time effort and money in this. A gravel pit would cause a noisy, dusty pall over this area destroying all this work.</p> <p>Apart from the landowner, the "developer" and a local cleaning equipment company no-one is going to benefit.</p> <p>Issues of gravel quality, augmentation, further large machinery, water levels in this area, environmental, natural history, destruction of amenities, eventual closure of the Wallingford/Cholsey Railway line, have been addressed to the County Council; but I would like to raise with you concerns over the way this information was released. The extraction sites were considered some time ago; the Cholsey site was excluded. The proposal that Cholsey might be the preferred and indeed only option only surfaced in a sentence in a document on "waste". This is to say the least opaque and underhand and smells of corruption. The communication with the Town Council by the extraction company since the revelation has done nothing to allay these fears.</p> <p>We hope you will take an interest.</p>
998	<p>Ref: Proposal to extract gravel from sits located at Cholsey.</p> <p>We write to register our objection to the proposal to establish sites in Cholsey for the purpose of extracting gravel. The major reasons being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proximity to our hose. The proposed sites are approximately within a quarter of a mile.</li> <li>2. Invasion of dust and noise from the site workings.</li> <li>3. Local roads inadequate for the heavy load bearing vehicles used for transportation to and from the sites.</li> </ol>

	<p>4. The proposed sites are in close proximity to many private houses and within a mile of both Wallingford and Cholsey creating major environment and health threats to thousands of residents.</p> <p>It is our opinion that insufficient opportunities have been offered to members of the public for consultation over this matter and that the Council should have given consideration to other sites that are not in such close proximity to housing.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed sites will have a major detrimental impact on the proposed cycle route between Wallingford and Cholsey, significant adverse impact on the workings of the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway and will destroy the Agatha Christie Trail as an attraction to tourists with subsequent loss of income to our region.</p> <p>We strongly urge the Council to review their decision on the siting for gravel extraction and look at more suitable sites.</p>
470	<p>I write out of concern that the proposed siting of gravel pits between Cholsey and Wallingford would have bad consequences for the people and wild life of both places.</p> <p>Some of these would result from transportation of heavy materials by lorry on the surrounding roads - with the probable abandonment of the much-needed cycle track between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>I also understand from geologists that the gravel, once extracted, is likely to be of poor quality.</p> <p>For these and many other environmental reasons I would urge you to reconsider obtaining gravel from this site.</p>
81	<p>We would like to object to the planned gravel extraction in the Cholsey area because</p> <p>The geologists (of which there are quite a few in Cholsey) assure me there are many areas in the Thames valley where gravel can be extracted with out the traffic and pollution being so close to a village or town. Why do you have to destroy a beautiful area along the bank of the Thames? Why do you have to have a noisy &amp; dirty gravel extraction pit so close to a rural village?</p>
82	<p>I would like to register the concerns I have with relation to the proposed development of Gravel Pits in the Cholsey &amp; Wallingford area.</p> <p>I feel that this would destroy the Green Belt environment that we residents so much enjoy, which is one of the reasons as to why I chose to live in Wallingford.</p> <p>The second concern with this proposed development would be the perpetual dust fallout (as a result of the prevailing westerly winds) over Wallingford polluting the air that we breathe and also affecting clothes that would be drying in the gardens.</p> <p>The third concern is with the resulting increase in heavy truck traffic on the surrounding country roads within this area.</p>
65	<p>I object vehemently to the proposal to create three gravel extraction sites between Wallingford and Cholsey. They will permanently ruin the area and destroy the quality of life in both communities. It is an essential feature of the area that that two communities are separated by agricultural land, and each is distinct in character from the other. To link them by an industrial development of this type and on this scale will destroy this in a way that cannot and will not ever be restored. The dirt and noise of the creation and operation of these sites will make life intolerable for those in the vicinity. Property values will be diminished never to be restored. The visual and wildlife amenity will disappear for ever.</p> <p>I write not as a resident of the area (I live east of Wallingford) but as one concerned to protect the natural environment from this kind of exploitation and destruction.</p>
253	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the proposed gravel pit plan between Wallingford and Cholsey that has recently been announced.</p> <p>The site of the proposed plan, next to the River Thames, is an area of outstanding natural beauty. This is enjoyed by many thousands of people each year; not only the residents but the very many tourists who come by boat and by road to experience the Chilterns and the riverside setting.</p> <p>Maintaining Oxfordshire's historic market towns is vital for the county. Oxford itself, for example, is already heavily congested and has limited transport infrastructure to accommodate additional residents. There is considerable need to attract people to live in the surrounding towns and</p>

	<p>villages in order to preserve the economic viability of the whole county, particularly in times of recession. The location of the proposed gravel pit and the associated noise, dust, heavy traffic impact will be a major detractor for people considering setting up home in Wallingford, Cholsey and many of the surrounding areas.</p> <p>The viability of the town is not just dependent on its residents but on the thousands of tourists who come from far and wide and recognise the tranquillity of the Thames, Chilterns, Ridgeway and entire surrounding region. Both the town and county councils have made substantial investments in the regions to attract this tourist population, most recently creating additional moorings and preserving the Riverside recreation area and swimming pools. Other features of the town attract them too - we are aware of many American visitors who return year after year to visit the antiques shops in the town as well as enjoying the natural beauty of the area. There is no question that a gravel pit within easy walking distance of the town, which would be an eyesore as well as creating unpleasant noise and dust, will be a major detractor to those visitors and the Town and County Council will remain wondering why the shops can't be leased and why the character of this town is destroyed forever - their legacy to Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Not only will people's lives be affected forever. The natural environment which successive governments claim to be interested in protecting is constantly being eroded by development. A wide range of wildlife is frequently being seen here - blue-grey herons, kingfishers, deer, owls, foxes to name just a few. We teach our children in schools to value their environments, to focus on recycling and then we have to try to explain to them why the County Council, in all its ignorance, has decided to decimate these precious areas.</p> <p>It is hard to imagine that there aren't alternative solutions to the gravel problem. The UK has many areas of outstanding natural ugliness that have already been blighted by planners and developers, which have ready transport links to major arteries such as the A34 (which the Wallingford/Cholsey area certainly does not) and other appropriate infrastructure, which are closer to the area of deployment. Costs of gravel transport from out of area are trivial in terms of the cost to the region of loss of economic viability, human and wildlife costs in the region.</p> <p>It is clear that this proposal from the County Council has not been subject to a clear feasibility study of the correct scale to properly assess the impact of this gravel pit. I am one of thousands of people who object to more unnecessary destruction of this area of outstanding natural beauty in the Thames Valley. The County Council needs to listen to reason and be known as the council that values people and their quality of life not just the pound signs in front of developers' eyes.</p>
66	<p>We object to the proposed sites SG33, SG57, and SG60 for the following reasons</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mile of open and peaceful countryside made up of arable and grazing farmland would be ruined for ever.</li> <li>2. The road between Cholsey and Wallingford is an important route which would be affected by heavy lorry traffic, though in reality this road is not wide enough for heavy vehicles.</li> <li>3. The dust and noise from a gravel site would affect all of Cholsey and much of Wallingford in a 2km radius. (The affected areas would vary according to the wind direction.)</li> <li>4. The future of the Cholsey and Wallingford railway and the Agatha Christie trail between the two places would be at risk.</li> </ol>
85	<p>As a local resident, I am disgusted to discover that our historic local town and small rural community is going to be blighted for two generations by a proposed gravel pit at the locations mentioned above. I have seen an overview of the proposals and would like to offer the following comments :</p> <p>b. Local transport links</p> <p>Cholsey is situated close to Wallingford and both share a new by-pass and new river crossing. Over the next ten years, some 2,000 additional residents are planned, from new housing around the area. Cholsey Meadows has already begun and the site of the old Carmel College is also ear-marked for development. They will share the by-pass and the associated links to the nearby towns and villages. What is extra-ordinary is the view that the local road networks can cope with huge lorries transporting waste and rock to the proposed site for processing and transporting gravel from the site to its final location. Beyond the new by-pass, roads are small and traffic moves slowly. Congestion is a major feature of the road to Didcot and many local</p>

	<p>roads are not suited to heavy goods traffic. This site is also very near a historic town location and a small rural community, traffic would be actively trying to AVOID using the by-pass (given the potential hazard of 100+ large lorries per day) turning the small local roads into rabbit runs and returning traffic through Wallingford's congestion-prone central area. Has a full feasibility study been undertaken, investigating the suitability of the transport links locally?</p> <p>c. The quality of local gravel and suitability for extraction  The local geological survey of these sites indicates the gravel is of poor quality, unsuited for construction and needing to be processed in order to be of significant use. Given the availability of other sites with better quality extractable gravel, it seems illogical that our community should be so disrupted for this product. I understand the poor quality of the gravel was one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. The quality of the gravel also has an additional consequence, meaning a contractor will need to transport rock and waste to this site to 'process' the final gravel product. This will create additional traffic congestion, add additional dust and pollutants to the local environment and make the whole site more of an eye-sore for the local community. Has a full environmental impact study been undertaken, considering the effect on the 10,000 local residents?</p> <p>d. Effects on the local community and economy  This is an area of real natural beauty. Wallingford is a local historic town and has been involved in a local government strategy to re-generate the local economies of small south Oxfordshire market towns. All of this local effort, the chance to use the heritage and character of the area to create real benefits for our economy will be lost when the gravel pit is known to be located here. This will have an impact on our local wildlife and is contrary to the aims of the local planning envelope, which has sought to protect and preserve the rural nature of the local area. Recent planned building proposals have been declined and SODC has been forced to defend its policy with appeals to the secretary of state, only for the County Council to arbitrarily decide this area is the preferred of a blight on the landscape. The proximity of the Thames and the possibility of waste water running into the local water-course is a real cause for concern. Have proper ecological surveys been done to establish the impact on the local ecology and water testing undertaken to establish the impact of run-off ?</p> <p>I would appreciate a direct response from the person responsible for this decision and I am prepared to attend County Council meetings and voice my protest to these outrageous proposals. I have copied Ed Vaisey into the letter, he will be interested in your comments, given the number of his constituents affected by this proposal. I am looking for the Council to stand up and be open about the way it made this decision and to decide if you feel your process has been sufficiently robust to withstand a legal challenge.</p>
86	<p>I am aware that the county council has listed Cholsey as the preferred location for the extraction of gravel, but this is news to this community. Local officials and elected representatives have made it clear that Cholsey WAS one of a number of the long list locations but that the village was not on the original shortlist of six sites. It NOW appears we are the preferred and ONLY site under consideration. There has been no consultation process regarding this proposal with local residents and we find ourselves with only a matter of weeks to raise our objections to this idea. I believe the process employed by OCC in the selection of Cholsey and the rejection of other sites is fundamentally flawed. It does not appear to have transparency and OCC has not provided residents with a satisfactory explanation as to HOW this final recommendation came about seemingly out of the blue? A local solicitor is seeking funds to launch a judicial review, if Cholsey is confirmed as the preferred location and with a potential £40,000 fall in the value of my property I can afford to support this legal action.</p>



87	<p>I am a local resident concerned about the proposals to locate a gravel pit between the village of Cholsey and the local town, Wallingford. I find it hard to believe that the County Council are showing a duty of care to its citizens by choosing to site the gravel pit in the proposed location. The chosen location will be near a combined population of nearly 10,000 which is growing to 12,000 + over the next few years. These residents will be subjected to traffic congestion, noise pollution, particle pollution and enduring a blight on the local landscape for years to come. I cannot understand how this fits with the duty of care OCC has for its communities? The council should surely find a site which has a minimal impact on the towns and villages under its care, instead it has chosen a site which will have a significant impact on a sizeable local community and affect them in terms of their health (pollution), economy in terms of the wider community, town of historical interest, tourism, local businesses and the immediate impact on residents (fall in local house prices); and quality of life ( increased congestion from lorries, noise pollution, destruction of the rural aspects of village life). Why has this site been chosen when it has such an immediate proximity to a large population?</p> <p>If the council are trying to find a location which will have a lower environmental impact, it has made a mistake in choosing Cholsey. It may appear to be closer to the A34 and other transport links, but beyond the local by-pass, the roads are small, they are slow moving and would be totally unsuited to large numbers of lorries transporting gravel and other materials. This is likely to cause more pollution, more accidents and more disruption to local communities, whose roads are filled with local traffic trying to avoid the gravel transporters. This is not showing due care for the local community and may even expose the local community to more danger, from the large increase in heavy traffic locally. This area is filled with local residents and families who will suffer from this decision, not just for 10 years but for 20 or more. Where is the evidence we have the infrastructure to support the increase in traffic and most appropriate transport links for this proposal?</p> <p>Another responsibility of the council must surely be safeguarding the local economy. The gravel pit may create half a dozen jobs locally, this would be tiny in comparison to the jobs lost in the local town, as people take their spending away from the town and to places away from the gravel pit. This will be in the face of SODC efforts and proposed corporate priorities to support the local community and create long term jobs, which has been hard in these small local market towns in South Oxfordshire. A gravel pit and processing works will make the area unattractive for tourism, it will destroy it's historical and geographical heritage and will deter tourists and Local residents will look to go elsewhere in their free time.!!</p> <p>This lack of care also extends to the local ecology, where it seems little thought has been given to how the gravel pit will affect the local wild life and ecology. This is an area of natural beauty, where the rural and river location attract a wide range of bird life, mammals and insects. This will genuinely be put under threat given the size of the proposed locations and the possibility of new sites being exploited, when the gravel in the proposed sites are exhausted. How can this be in the best interests of the community and must be contrary to the OCC's duty of care to the local environment. Where is the evidence supporting the choice of this site when local geology reports suggest the gravel is of poor quality?</p> <p>On the outskirts of Cholsey there is a sewage farm where in recent years numerous improvements have been made to lessen its impact on those living close by, to remove gravel in such close proximity to the vicinity of the sewage farm could have serious impact on the function of the farm and yet again impact on the local community.</p> <p>I know that in writing this letter that a large number of residents are astounded at the lack of transparency regarding this proposal and the negligible lack of thorough consultation and we would like our questions answered. At the very least we would like an open meeting where we can attend to listen to the facts, the presentation of your feasibility studies and the assurance that the site has been selected for the most appropriate reasons supported by substantiated evidence to justify your decision. In the meantime</p> <p>The questions to which I would like answers can be summarized as follows :</p> <p>Why has this site been chosen when it is in such a close proximity to a large population?</p> <p>Where is the evidence we have the most appropriate transport links for this proposal?</p> <p>Where is the feasibility study supporting the choice of this site?</p>
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	<p>Why have local residents not been fully consulted in an open and transparent manner?  Where is the evidence supporting the choice of this site when local geology reports suggest the gravel is of poor quality?  What impact will this have on the health of local residents?  What impact will the gravel pit have on the local economy?</p>
88	<p>I would also question whether the council have followed due process in making this decision. The council must have a duty to be open and forthcoming about the process for choosing a site, they are considering a decision which will impact greatly on a large number of people. The local community have NOT had an opportunity to be fully consulted and therefore the council have not properly exercised their duty of care to the residents affected. Where is the feasibility study supporting the choice of this site? It seems to lack appropriate transparency? Why have local residents not been fully consulted?</p>
436	<p>I am writing to express my horror and dismay at the proposed plan for gravel extraction on land between Cholsey and Wallingford. This reckless and destructive proposition would have an appalling effect on Cholsey and Wallingford - the increase in traffic alone, besides the destruction of the unique natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that any gravel would be of poor quality in any case, and certainly not worth the years of disruption and permanent damage to the environment - to say nothing of the damage to local economy and residential areas.</p> <p>It does seem wrong that such a short sighted and misguided eyesore should even be considered in an area of great natural beauty and antiquity. Please consider the long term damage and destruction in every sense that this scheme will cause.</p>
439	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposed gravel extraction site in Cholsey, Oxfordshire, my home for 18 years. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Firstly, in your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>The area is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing, golden</p>

plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

Secondly, the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.

Also the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

Another extremely important point is that the site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

Additionally, the site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

Due to the above a large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

It seems that the choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation has taken very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. It is extremely peculiar for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will not only be left with no site, but no minerals strategy either.

	<p>It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>Shockingly, the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality! The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. Surely this tells you something!!</p> <p>Finally, I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues prevent the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also really concerned that these proposals will rule out the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I understand the hope that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed! There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>Stop the gravel pit now - we do not want Cholsey destroyed by the County Council's ineffectiveness. Common sense needs to prevail.</p>
440	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposed gravel extraction site in Cholsey, Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Firstly, in your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." the proposed site along the</p>

Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

The area is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing, golden plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

Secondly, the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.

Also the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

Another extremely important point is that the site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

Additionally, the site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier

settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

Due to the above a large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

It seems that the choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation has taken very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. It is extremely peculiar for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will not only be left with no site, but no minerals strategy either.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

Astonishingly - as I understand it from a number of sources - the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality! The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

	<p>Finally, I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues prevent the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also really concerned that these proposals will rule out the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I understand the hope that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed! There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>This all needs to be thought about again. Cholsey is not the right place. Taking everything into consideration even the simplest of person can see it's not right.</p>
384	<p>The proximity to Wallingford and Cholsey is an unbelievable choice. As one who travels widely in Oxfordshire, as a Volunteer Driver and as a lover of the countryside, I have seen gravel pits in far more remote areas and feel sure that similar sites could be found the future. The intended housing expansion in Wallingford and Mongewell are near to the proposed gravel pit site and the new properties would be badly affected if extraction too place. Please accept this as a strong objection.</p>
605	<p>We wish to register our opposition to the proposals for extraction of gravel between Wallingford and Cholsey. In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. Why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people? It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies of those who stand to profit from hefty land sales. It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited so close to Wallingford and Cholsey.</p>

	<p>All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>We are very concerned, too, that there is no long-term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>We completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom commercial considerations will be foremost, selling the gravel in Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey/Wallingford is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>What other sites are potentially available and why are that not nominated?</p>
632	<p>I am writing to register my objections to the proposed gravel extraction site between Cholsey and Wallingford and I would be grateful if you would ensure that the opinions of the local residents are taken into account when this is considered.</p> <p>This proposed site is simply too close to a number of residential areas. More than 10,000 live within 1 mile of the site and hundreds of those live significantly closer. The proposed area is surrounded by historical buildings and goes right up to an existing residential development. This type of site generates noise, dust and not insignificant disruption and Oxfordshire County Council has a responsibility to those people. There are other more suitable sites within Oxfordshire that will NOT have this level of impact on residents of the county.</p> <p>As a parent with small children I am very concerned that a gravel pit will put an end to the possibility of a cycle path between Cholsey and Wallingford. The Wallingford Road is long and straight and can be dangerous (danger that WIL increase if you allow many lorries to use it on a daily basis to service the gravel pit). I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing developments in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction site can do anything but destroy a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>In terms of environment the site includes historic reed beds, water-course, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and it is not uncommon to see others including lapwing and grey herons. Little owls and barn owls can be seen.</p> <p>I understand that the consultation looking into possible sites has only nominates one location - Cholsey. Does this mean that irrespective of its suitability this is a foregone conclusion? One can only hope not.</p>



645	<p>We are writing to express our complete horror at your proposal to extract more than 5 million tons of gravel from the two identified sites at Cholsey. In your briefing document you refer to safeguarding the character, amenity and setting of this area. Your proposals clearly indicate you have no intention of achieving this objective.</p> <p>We object to these proposals for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This area is of considerable historical importance. The area concerned must be deemed to be a heritage Asset.</li> <li>2. The recently adopted Agatha Christie trail will be destroyed</li> <li>3. The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam railway will be unable to operate as the workings will cover more than half their operating area and this vital tourist attraction will have to close thereby throwing away the vast amount of hours that volunteers have given, free of charge, to this important visitor facility.</li> <li>4. The site will have major adverse impact on existing dwellings and those that are due to be built on land butting onto the bypass over the next 10 years.</li> <li>5. Much wildlife exists in these areas and their habitat will be destroyed forever</li> <li>6. The site lies immediately south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze and Iron ages and it is believed that significant archaeological material lies in this ground.</li> <li>7. The choice of this site takes virtually no account of the distance between it and existing homes and would cause massive disruption by dust, noise and general pollution to at least 10,000 people. This number is due to increase because of SODCV new house building plans.</li> <li>8. The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. This means that this site has been decided on without proper consideration of its merits, benefits and drawbacks.</li> <li>9. We believe that the quality of material found on these sites is of poor quality and could not be used without having other materials added to it. This will mean additional lorries transporting the additional material to site which will be in addition to those taking the finished material away. The poor quality of the material will probably mean that a stone crushing plant will have to be installed.</li> <li>10. There are no proposals for the long term use and restoration of these sites. They cannot be restored as lakes or for landfill because of the close proximity to the river Thames. Furthermore the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely because such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source.</li> <li>11. A cycle path has been proposed along this route and both communities have campaigned for this facility for a long time. The funds which will come from developers will be lost because they are time limited and would be lost and therefore the scheme would have to be abandoned.</li> </ol> <p>The proposal to extract gravel from these sites is not properly thought out in that they will not provide the requirement for this material in the longer term. There is no mention within the document of other possible sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term. We consider that these proposals are not properly thought out and they are almost identical to a study in 1987 conducted by OCC, which was rejected by OCC because the benefits of working these sites were not viable. So what has changed, nothing really.</p> <p>We would urge OCC to reconsider the proposals to extract gravel from these locations and look to find alternative viable locations to provide this material.</p>
614	<p>Please stop the gravel pit because it will destroy all of the animals homes. It makes me feel sad that it will be so close to my home. I am worried about riding my bike, will a lorry get too close to me or will the dust get in my eyes.</p>

746	<p>I am writing in protest of the proposed gravel pits in Cholsey.</p> <p>There are many reasons I dispute this, the main five being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The choice of site put forward by the Oxfordshire County Council for this consultation will affect approximately 10,000 residents with dust and noise.</li> <li>2. Commuters who use this road are going to be affected by up to 200 lorries using the Wallingford Road daily, not to mention the danger to children on bikes who use this road.</li> <li>3. The habitat of many wild animals will be destroyed by this, red kites included</li> <li>4. The Cholsey Wallingford Railway will most likely have to shut down as it runs right through this area, what a loss to Oxfordshire this would be. More than 30 years of voluntary work will disappear.</li> <li>5. Cholsey is a close community; residents move here and stay here. Their biggest investment is their home; these are going to devalue substantially if these plans go forward.</li> </ol> <p>I urge you to reconsider and find another site that will not impact on a community as negatively as this will.</p>
760	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposed gravel extraction site in Cholsey, Oxfordshire. I was born in Cholsey and love it. I do not want it ruined and turned into a dirty, noisy eyesore for years to come.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the station development requirements in the longer term. there is no mention within the consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Firstly, in your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, watercourses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, watercourses and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This area is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where weasels and stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>Secondly, the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one</p>

attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.

Also, the Cholsey and Wallingford steam railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

Another extremely important point is that the site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

Additionally, the site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The bypass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

Due to the above a large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.' It seems that the choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation has taken very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. It is extremely peculiar for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be not only left with no site, but no minerals strategy either.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay

	<p>for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>Shockingly, the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality! The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. Surely this tells you something!!</p> <p>Finally, I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues prevent the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also really concerned that these proposals will rule out the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous: over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I understand the hope that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed! There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>I want the County Council to see sense. do not destroy our village. Please.</p>
772	<p>I am writing to register my great disapproval for the proposed gravel pit in Cholsey.</p> <p>In excess of 10.000 people live within a mile of the site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>There are also a number of new housing developments which will put additional stain on our local infrastructure and do not need more pressure in the shape of hundreds of lorries collecting and delivering gravel.</p> <p>In addition to this there is a significant amount of wildlife that inhabit this area, Foxes, roe deer and hares are often seen here as well as weasels and stoats and the have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwings; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>I urge you to reconsider this site and find one that will have less impact on the local population.</p>

874	<p>I am writing to register my protest about the proposed gravel extraction site in Cholsey, Oxfordshire. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Firstly, in your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, watercourses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This area is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>Secondly, the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>Also the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>Another extremely important point is that the site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>Additionally, the site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The bypass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also</p>
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a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

Due to the above a large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals'. It seems that the choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation has taken very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. It is extremely bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the Council has left itself with no other options.

What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be not only left with no site, but no minerals strategy either.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

Astoundingly - as I understand it from a number of sources - the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality! The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. This therefore, is a no-brainer!

Finally, I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues prevent the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.

	<p>I am also really concerned that these proposals will rule out the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I understand the desire that the Council Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed! There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>This all needs to be thought about again. Cholsey is not the right place. Taking everything into consideration even the simplest of person can see its not right.</p> <p>As a tax payer and one of your electorate I suggest you rethink this proposal fully and immediately.</p>
736	<p>I write to object to Oxfordshire County Council's proposed plans to extract gravel and sand on land between Wallingford and Cholsey. I object on the following grounds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Destruction of Heritage of the area: The proposed extraction are on sites containing evidence of Bronze and Iron Age habitation. The sites are in the hinterland of a major Anglo Saxon and Medieval Town and a village with a history back to 986 AD. Destruction of this hinterland by gravel extraction and associated industry will be detrimental to both Wallingford and Cholsey.</li> <li>2. Destruction of Local Environment: The area of proposed extraction contain sites of historic reed beds, water courses and field patterns. The fields and streams are full of wildlife ranging from stoats, deer to bats and barn owls. Their natural habitat will be destroyed.</li> <li>3. Major impact on the local economy: The location of the gravel pits will impact on tourism in Wallingford. The historic town will be less attractive to visitors. The Agatha Christie Trail linking Wallingford and Cholsey will be destroyed. The Cholsey and Wallingford steam railway will cease to operate and the Thames Path will be adversely affected.</li> <li>4. Impact on Population: The proposed sites are surrounded by many houses and are within a mile of a population of 10,000 people expected to increase to 13,000 in 8 years. The impact of the movement of heavy lorries on local roads will have serious repercussions on traffic movements. The prevailing westerly wind will mean that Wallingford can expect to be covered with dust whenever there is more than a breeze.</li> </ol> <p>I have lived in Wallingford for 40 years, served on the Town Council and was Mayor in 1992. I took part in the "consultation" for gravel extraction in 1987 which was withdrawn partly due to the poor quality of gravel on the sites. I am very surprised that Oxfordshire County Council is considering this area again and astonished at the short consultation period. I sincerely hope that Councillors will reject gravel extraction at these sites.</p>

607	<p>I am writing to offer my objections to the proposed gravel pit in Cholsey. I have lived in the village for many years, I also have a hair Salon in the village, the reasons for my objections are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The area proposed is of outstanding national beauty.</li> <li>2. The wild life that lives there will be destroyed.</li> <li>3. The extra traffic of lorries noisily and dusty will spread beyond the surrounding area.</li> <li>4. The dust polluting the surrounding area over 25 years.</li> <li>5. The devaluation of property in the village, no one will want to live near a gravel pit.</li> </ol> <p>We will be housing enough extra traffic from the Fairmile site once finished. Please do not destroy our countryside.</p>
383	<p>I have lived in Cholsey for just over a year, and was shocked when I attended a meeting last week to hear about your proposed site for gravel extraction here. This plan was not revealed in the answers to enquiries made when we bought the house, yet it will cause many years' blight on house selling on properties here, followed by many further years' nuisance while the work goes on, then a great scar: we understand there are no plans to restore the site.</p> <p>Apparently we have three weeks to offer our comments and I am asking you to consider the impact on the natural and built environment and residential amenity which make this site totally unsuitable. Why has the normal 12 week consultation not been used?</p> <p>I believe until recently that there have been many candidate sites but suddenly only Cholsey is nominated. Why have the other proposed sites been reduced immediately to just one without any intervening consultation or evaluation? I would hope that our elective representatives and their officers would use the resources and expertise paid for by the public purse to identify several alternative sites in advance for proper evaluation before offering them for long-term mining.</p> <p>We understand that sites for mineral extraction are those nominated by gravel quarrying companies and landowners. We have also heard that over 40 people have had offers too large to refuse to use their land. There cannot have been any proper consideration of the issues around the nature of the Cholsey setting, and existing policies for the area. It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction site is consistent with the current character, amenity, and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape and its wildlife. The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. It would bring noise, pollution, and heavy traffic to the minor Wallingford Road between Cholsey and Wallingford and ruin people's lives in the area.</p> <p>Many people, both visitors and residents, are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which surround this site, the local railway and the Agatha Christie heritage. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development will destroy the beauty of the area and so the viability of the district.</p>
342	<p>Re: Proposed Quarry Site in Cholsey</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p>



The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people . A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

**Destruction of the local Environment:**

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

**Likely Impact on Local Economy:**

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

**Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:**

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

**Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:**

	<p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.</p> <p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
332	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed plan to create a gravel pit on countryside between Wallingford and Cholsey in South Oxfordshire. To be frank, I am astonished that this plan is being put forward.</p> <p>First, the area under consideration must surely be considered a "heritage asset" under the definition given in your plan. A 1965 map of Cholsey shows reed beds, water-courses and field patterns that remain today pretty much as they were then. Extracting gravel on this site will destroy that heritage. It's not something that can be "made good" afterwards: it needs protection now.</p> <p>Furthermore, this choice of site takes little account of the distance between the proposed works and the homes of the 10,000 people who live within a mile of the site, including the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of Wallingford. To subject so many people to constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>To make things worse, I understand that the material found in the site is of poor quality, which is why a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. Given this, it seems bizarre to choose the Cholsey site as the only option to be considered, when there must be higher-quality sites available that would have less local impact.</p>
344	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey: It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt</p>

neutral landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded on one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

**Destruction of the local Environment:**

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

**Likely Impact on Local Economy:**

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

**Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:**

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

	<p>Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:  I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.  It is not the best site in the County.  It has low grade aggregates.  The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.  The community has not been adequately consulted.  It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
425	<p>I am confident you will have thousands of objections to your suggested gravel pit on the road between Wallingford and Cholsey. I cannot imagine that anybody would want to increase the traffic along the Wallingford Road with more lorries. It is a long straight road where despite the speed limit signs, drivers, both commercial and private, still drive too fast. It is highly dangerous for cyclists on the road and pedestrians on the inadequate footpath. The footpath has become so overgrown and narrow over the years that it is only possible to walk in single file. People with a pushchair or a dog on a lead have many problems keeping a sufficient distance from the road. Nationally it has become quite a priority to get people out of their cars and walking or cycling both for the sake of the environment and for health reasons. But apparently this is a minor consideration when commercial considerations are involved in South Oxfordshire.  Wallingford Road is a busy commuter road with people going from or coming to the station and there is a fair amount of commercial traffic serving the shops in Cholsey and delivering to many houses in this large village. If it is intended to increase that traffic and the hazards which will follow then one wonders whether the people considering this plan for gravel have given any thought to the general public who live in the area.  It seems that the gravel extracted will be of poor quality and the site has already been turned down by a previous contractor. The proposal should be abandoned and an alternative more suitable site sought.</p>
428	<p>In 1946 I was at school at St Anthony's at Bucklands which backs onto the Wallingford road Cholsey and I have lived in the Wallingford Road for 43 years so I know it well. Over the years I have walked in the fields and paths and along the brook and enjoyed the wildlife and water courses and reed beds and scenery.  I am deeply saddened at the proposal to extract gravel in the fields to the west of the Wallingford Road. The noise and disruption, to say nothing of the lorries carrying away the gravel caused by such extraction would be seriously deleterious to the lives of the thousands of people who live in Cholsey and Wallingford.  I am appalled at the choice of this site (sic) for gravel extraction and the subsequent unsightly landscape and I therefore wish to protest strongly at such a proposal.</p>

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431	<p>I am writing in response to your public consultation on the location of a gravel pit between Wallingford and Cholsey in Oxfordshire. I wish to object to this plan for these reasons:</p> <p>The site is surrounded by listed buildings, including barns on the Wallingford Road, Cox's Farm, Brook House and other local landmarks. The pit will irrevocably alter their setting and thus affect their status as heritage buildings.</p> <p>There is no long term plan for restoring the site after the works have finished. It can't be turned into a lake or be used for landfill because it is so close to the river. There's little chance it will be used of to dispose of inert building waste as such waste tends to be recycled these days. So we are to be left with a hole in the ground that will flood in winter and be a wasteland in summer.</p> <p>10,000 people live within a mile of the site, including the whole of Cholsey and most of Wallingford. To subject so many people to constant noise, disruption and dust is unacceptable.</p> <p>The site represents an irreplaceable stretch of rural, unspoilt countryside that provides a sanctuary for a huge variety of wildlife, including different species of owls, hares, deer, kites, buzzards, stoats and even otters. Wildlife will be driven away during the 20 years of extraction and is unlikely to return for generations, given the wasteland that will be left after extraction has finished.</p> <p>I hope you will take these comments on board and reconsider this decision.</p>
454	<p>I want to protest most strongly against the proposed gravel extraction pit in Cholsey.</p> <p>We are told that we have a mere three weeks to make our objections and not the normal 12 week consultation period. Why such a short time? Until recently there have been several prospective sites but all of a sudden Cholsey is the only site nominated. Why have the other sites been dropped, without the correct consultation and evaluation period and why have reasons not been given for their exclusion? I think that these alternative sites need to be publicly revealed and assessed during the consultation period by our local representatives and officials, who are after all are paid via our taxes from the public purse, for a transparent evaluation of their suitability for long term extraction.</p> <p>We understand that over 40 people in this area who are joint owners of the proposed land have had monetary offers "too large to refuse", so that the gravel company can use their land. We further understand that should this development go ahead that there are no plans to compel the quarrying company, once the site is exhausted, so make good the site and landscape in a way which would provide an amenity in the form of a nature reserve, by planting trees and thus giving something back to the community, which a working gravel pit will, over the years, have decimated both economically and aesthetically. We will instead be left with a massive hole which cannot be turned into a lake due to the proximity of the River Thames, which will seasonally fill with water becoming a marshy boggy area, with the potential for flooding in autumn and spring whilst in the summer it will become a huge dust bowl.</p> <p>It is truly staggering that in an area with so rich an historical and archaeological heritage of a town like Wallingford whose charter was granted in 1155, and more recently home to best-selling author Agatha Christie, the ancient settlement of Cholsey, as well as the natural beauty and rich and diverse wild life of the countryside around could all become a potential eyesore for years to come should the proposed extraction site be allowed</p>

	<p>here.</p> <p>Countless numbers of residents and visitors come to this part of the Thames Valley just because of the outstanding, unspoilt natural beauty which surrounds the proposed site, the Ridgeway, the River Thames itself, the little privately run local railway, which would most likely have to cease trading should the proposals go ahead. These are all key attractions for both visitors and residents. Should the proposed extraction site proceed it will destroy both the aesthetic and economic viability of the district.</p> <p>It is difficult to see how the proposed site is compatible with the fact that the current area is surrounded by many houses, many of which are listed and are the homes of up to 10,000 people.</p> <p>The road between Cholsey and Wallingford has already had several fatalities and injuries and to add the increased traffic of heavily laden lorries thundering up and down that road many, many times a day would only increase that risk. As it stands the road is not built to withstand the sort of heavy traffic which a gravel extraction pit would produce, this is not to mention the hugely increased levels in noise and pollution for those residents living close to the proposed site.</p> <p>A number of sources have told me that the gravel from the site is of poor quality which I believe is one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site some twenty years ago.</p>
188	<p>I am writing to register my strong objection to the planned gravel pits at Cholsey. My husband and I move to Cholsey 5 years ago choosing the village to build our family life because of the beautiful tranquil setting in which the village stands. This peacefulness and beauty is now being threatened by the proposed gravel pits and I am stunned and dismayed that such a lovely location has been selected as a potential location for these pits.</p> <p>Prior to living in Cholsey we lived in Stanford in the Vale and so are fully aware of the real impact that having sand and gravel extraction on your doorstep has - terrible dust and dirt on the roads surrounding the pits, the rumble of lorries speeding to and from the pit and of course the visual eyesore too. This is not something that I want for our lovely village.</p> <p>Cholsey is currently a location in which I feel proud to live, happily showing visiting friends and family the beautiful surroundings including the footpath along the Cholsey &amp; Wallingford railway and the meadows adjacent to the Thames. Both of these areas will be ruined by the creation of the planned gravel pits and I am certain that the impression of visitors to the area will be a negative one. Indeed, Wallingford is currently a popular tourist destination and I'm sure these gravel pits would negatively affect the number of visitors to our area which would in turn damage the local economy.</p> <p>I urge you to reconsider the plans and not to locate these pits in the Cholsey/Wallingford area - what are currently lovely areas of South Oxfordshire are at threat of being ruined for current and future generations.</p>
190	<p>We are writing to register our strong objection to the planned gravel pits at Cholsey.</p> <p>We are 18 month old twins who very much enjoy living in the peaceful and beautiful setting of Cholsey. Our mummy and daddy often take us for walks along the Agatha Christie trail by the Wallingford Railway and also around the meadows near the Thames at Cholsey but with the introduction of the proposed gravel pits these settings will be ruined and where we live will be very much less beautiful.</p> <p>Cholsey is already a fast growing village and doubt with this growth will come more traffic too - this will only be made worse by noisy, dirt lorries rumbling to and from the planned pits. This will be a great shame and will not only make the village less attractive but also significantly more dangerous for us when we learn to cross the road or to cycle in future.</p>

	<p>Our mummy and daddy chose to live in Cholsey because it is a tranquil and pretty place for us to grow up. Please rethink your plans for the gravel pits in this area to allow us to grow up in an area without pollution, noise and traffic of gravel extraction on our doorstep.</p>
192	<p>I would like to register an objection to the above project. The basis for my objection is the non-sustainable character of the project. We are currently being encouraged to consider sustainability in all new things and, indeed, the recent and current national governments are creating additional expense for the tax payer in the name of sustainability in many areas of life. The goal of sustainability is "to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations".</p> <p>I cannot see how tearing up a large area of natural beauty, unspoiled for hundreds of years to leave a yawning gash upon the landscape to be suffered by generations to come can fulfil this definition. If we are to encourage future generations to value the ever reducing natural environment of a small island such as England then we too must take responsibility in our lifetime to show them how we valued it enough to keep it safe for them. I am sure others will object on the grounds of the historic legacy of the area with which I also fully concur. But who has given the gravel company the right to request that they should be able to deface this part of the countryside purely for profit. They are bringing no economic or environmental benefits to the area, this development is purely for private profit for a few at a much larger cost to the many. If this project is allowed to proceed a once unblemished part of a beautiful ancient rural landscape will be gone FOR EVER - you can never put back what you have taken away.</p> <p>I ask you to please give great consideration to mine and all the other objections, understand the damage this project would without question do to all areas of life: environmental, historical, natural, social, for current society and, far more importantly for our children and their children and refuse the permission needed.</p>
196	<p>I have written to my MP asking for a full public enquiry and for the names and addresses of all officials involved to be made public for purposes of transparency.</p> <p>Objection to Proposed Gravel Works in Cholsey/Wallingford:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communist dictatorships did it this way: When considering all the possible sites for a gravel extraction works, Oxfordshire County Council's choice of the few fields between Cholsey and Wallingford (an area of less than one mile with population centres to north and south) in preference to other less populated sites is akin to decisions taken in totalitarian states. It was done semi-secretly, without officially notifying the local authority most affected (Cholsey) that it was among sites being considered. Furthermore, it was done without considering the residents' Human Rights to peaceful enjoyment of their property. It was also done without considering the possible objections of those local residents (numbering about 10,000 in Cholsey and Wallingford), who have now been given just a period of weeks to react.</li> <li>2. Health Hazards: Many residents in Cholsey and Wallingford who would live near, be down-wind of and drive or walk past the gravel extraction workings would be severely affected: dust blown by prevailing winds towards both populated centres, lorries every 6 minutes adding to road congestion and diesel particulate pollution, despoilation of local natural amenities, fall in house values, to name a few factors. Dust in the quantities produced by such workings can be dangerous to health. To gauge the effects of such dust you just need to walk on the public footpaths near the current Radley gravel extraction works (be sure to cover your nose and mouth against the dust as the lorries go past).</li> <li>3. Illogical choice: The decision is allegedly based on expert mineral extraction information but another expert commissioned by local residents says that that information was flawed because the site is not in fact the best of the half dozen originally considered.</li> <li>4. Saving money for the company or council at the expense of residents: One of the criteria in the proposal was the availability and proximity of main roads in order to transport the extracted gravel. This criterion should play no part in the decision-making process because it is only a means of saving money for the gravel extraction company (or the council) which would otherwise have to build an access road if another site were to be chosen.</li> </ol>

	<p>Harming local residents in order to save money for a gravel company is not a proper consideration.</p> <p>5. No benefit: There is absolutely no benefit whatsoever for the residents of Cholsey and Wallingford: there would apparently not even be a lake left after 25 years (!) of gravel extraction but only a marshy area that would be subject to seasonal flooding. It is also being suggested that the site would be subject to waste landfill, itself a hazard due to the toxins often contained in such landfill.</p> <p>6. Suspicious motives: All this suggests that those officials who made this decision in the way they did - in an underhand way - should have their motives examined by a full public enquiry. For purposes of transparency their names and addresses should be revealed so that residents can make a judgement about their motives.</p>
197	<p>I wish to object most strongly to the proposed siting of a gravel extraction site attached to the outskirts of Cholsey village.</p> <p>The proposed location consists of unspoilt land of archaeological and ecological importance. In understand that the site after gravel extraction has ceased could not be restored to a lake and therefore we would be left with an unsightly depression.</p> <p>If it is assumed that much of the extracted gravel would be transported in the direction of Didcot, I would suggest that the 'ring road' would become far more dangerous with motorists becoming impatient with slow moving lorries resulting in accidents and possible loss of lives. At the end of 'my road' the lorries would travel on the A4130 to Didcot. This road is totally unsuitable for large, slow moving vehicles in the large numbers that would occur. The volume of traffic on the roads around Cholsey and Wallingford will, in any event, increase considerably due to the new homes already being built on the Fairmile site and possible future sites at present being considered.</p> <p>I understand that the gravel from the proposed area is of inferior quality. Therefore why Cholsey?</p>
194	<p>I am writing to register my utmost objection to the planned gravel pits at Cholsey. Having previously lived in Stanford in the Vale where there is an existing aggregates extraction site I fully appreciate the detriment that the creation of the planned pits will cause to the Cholsey area and I am incredibly disappointed that OCC would even consider ruining this lovely location with the introduction of these sites to the area.</p> <p>Whilst living in Stanford in the Vale we would witness on a daily basis the dust and dirt caused by lorries entering and exiting the pits - they would leave considerable amounts of debris on the roads surrounding the site and despite efforts of the pit management to clean up after themselves a dusty and unattractive environment was still caused. The lorries from the site were also noisy and often sped along the road having collected their load - this is something that I would hate to see in such an attractive and family friendly location as Cholsey.</p> <p>The area surrounding Cholsey and Wallingford is currently tranquil and picturesque and a great advertisement for modern community living within an unspoilt and beautiful location. It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village. I strongly urge you to reconsider your plans to introduce these pits and ruin this band of our precious countryside.</p>
212	<p>As a resident of Cholsey, I am horrified by your proposal to consider the above applications as suitable for development.</p> <p>My objections fall into two different types of concern.</p> <p>1) Procedural</p> <p>I have looked at your Mineral Site Selection Methodology document together with the list of nominated sites as at 30th January 2009. From these I cannot understand how the list has fallen from 48 sites to just one. I would expect my elected leaders to apply a transparent appraisal in the Consultation process to a selection of alternative sites. How does the consideration of just one site fulfil your own Key Principles of Consultation as outlined in Section 3.3 of your statement of Community Involvement 2006 that states that you must "keep an open mind and never decide the outcome before a consultation exercise". How can this be done if you are only proposing one site? As an aside I gather there are serious technical question marks against this site so if a public examination were to find it lacking what happens then and how much of tax-payers money would be wasted? Surely you would be accountable for such flawed decision making?</p>



	<p>2) Impact Assessments</p> <p>We all know that Market Towns face a particular set of problems. Businesses based in such towns are facing increasing commercial pressures when faced with competition from out of town shopping Malls. Despite this, Wallingford has managed to retain a selection of independant shops and businesses. This is largely thanks to the Core Market Town Strategy of SODC to help these towns. In Wallingford's case this relies largely on its development as a Tourist Area with its location by the river, proximity to an AONB and visitor attractions such as the historic castle, Agatha Christie Trail and the Cholsey/Wallingford Railway. What impact would the proposed development have on the economic future of Wallingford? Who would be held responsible for that decision?</p> <p>I have looked at the original list of proposed sites, before it was reduced to just one, and am struck by the fact that it would not have been possible to blight a higher number of lives with this decision. Upward of 10,000 people live within one mile of the proposed site and more are to arrive with the developments at CABI, Carmel and Fairmile. In addition you have an existing Nursing Home and Nursery situated on the very boundaries of the site. It must be possible to find a site in an area with a lower density of population; I am actually surprised that this would fulfil your obligations under the Planning Strategy Codes of Practice.</p> <p>There are so many other points that I could raise where this proposal is in direct conflict with your own Site Selection Methodology - PE4 Groundwater levels; PE5 Proximity to the River Thames etc, etc however, I would expect these to be raised in more detail by the experts with whom you will need to consult. In short your own briefing document refers to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting" of the unspoilt landscape between Cholsey and Wallingford. How can that be consistent with this proposal?</p> <p>As my elected representatives, I would expect you to come to a considered decision that relies upon transparent decision making and based on all the facts. In such a case you would surely find against this proposal.</p>
89	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</b></p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local Environment</b></p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also</p>

rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

#### Likely Impact on local Economy

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St. Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area is. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

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It is understood that this the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

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If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.

	<p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· It is not the best site in the County</li> <li>· It has low grade aggregates</li> <li>· The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area</li> <li>· The community has not been adequately consulted</li> <li>· It will blight the local economy of Wallingford</li> <li>· It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</li> </ul>
92	<p>I wish to register my strong objections to the proposal to put forward Cholsey village as the preferred option for gravel extraction. A gravel extraction plant should not be placed in this location rather it should be placed somewhere that minimises the impact on such a significant centre of population such as this area and not be allowed to destroy an area of historical environmental archaeological and rural importance. This site would be within a 1 mile radius of the population of Wallingford Cholsey village Brightwell cum Sotwell and Crowmarsh Gifford each of these settlements have a distinct individuality historical importance which would be destroyed if this proposal goes through.</p> <p>Cholsey is a parish of considerable interest stretching back to 986AD. This proposal is a threat to the heritage of this age old farming community replacing reed beds water courses age old field patterns and significant amounts of wild life with dust noise traffic and an eyesore sitting next to the main route into Cholsey village. The proposal is out of character with the amenity and setting of Choleseys largely unchanged and unspoilt natural landscape. The popular Agatha Christie trail from Winterbrook to St Marys Church would be lost and the long awaited Cholsey to Wallingford cycleway would not be completed.</p> <p>I object most strongly to the extreme change such a proposal would bring to where I live, replacing fields and fauna with dust noise and an unimaginable eyesore for 25 years.</p> <p>Within the mile sits Wallingford town a nationally important Saxon town with known important archaeological sites in its centre and stretching out to its borders with Cholsey village. Currently Wallingford is considered to be one of Englands best preserved Saxon towns. its very important for the local economy that tourists and visitors come to this community to see its attractions and help the local businesses to thrive. The movements of up to 80 lorries carrying gravel everyday along the bypass and the resulting dust noise would not encourage the visitors to come here. The increase in traffic would mean local people would stop using the bypass and come through the centre of Wallingford causing congestion and danger in the town.</p> <p>The residents don't want it here and neither will future residents. it is critical that OCC considers the the designated increases in population to Wallingford and the villages housing which the Core Strategy seeks to make currently 550 homes on the edge of the town alongside the bypass, with a further 150 in Cholsey as a larger village. Construction is currently under way for 350 homes at Fairmile ( Cholsey) and 42 at Crowmarsh Gifford In addition with upcoming planning applications for 160 at Moulsoford and 189 at the CABI site also on the bypass. That means some 3,500 more people in the next few years and doesn't include any windfall sites either. to achieve the vision for this area the community needs to preserve its assets not lose them. How many people would want to move to such a ruined area they just won't buy the houses.</p> <p>I am also concerned that the strategy only focuses on the one site, Cholsey and that no in depth analysis will take place. Decisions cannot be made without more options and careful considerations of each options merits and drawbacks. i urge you not to restrict the nomination to one site alone, that is a very poor way for elected leaders of the Council to apply taxpayers resources to such a problem. What is needed is to use resources effectively to subject more possible sites to a proper system of appraisal rather than putting through a site option of Cholsey alone.</p> <p>A mineral expert has confirmed that current choice of site at Cholsey is not the best place for a site Many other sites in South Oxon are better suited, again indepth comparison and analysis would bring these sits up to the nomination stage.</p>

	<p>I understand if the gravel extraction went ahead at Cholsey residents would suffer for 25 years and as yet there are no long term plans for the final use and restoration of the site . this too is unacceptable I urge you not to proceed with this and reconsider your options</p>
93	<p>I would like to take this opportunity to register my objection to the proposed site at Cholsey for the siting of a gravel pit. There is already too much future development, housing ,fairmile, Wallingford in the area. A gravel pit will just turn ,what is a green belt ,wonderful wildlife area into a blighted landscape. There will be new houses to be purchased on the bypass. Who in there right mind would buy a house opposite a gravel pit. Too much pressure is being placed on the Wallingford, Cholsey area the infrastructure just wont be able to cope.</p>
91	<p>I wish to register my strong objections to the proposal to put forward Cholsey village as the preferred option for gravel extraction A gravel extraction plant should not be placed in this location rather it should be placed somewhere that minimises the impact on such a significant centre of population such as this area and not be allowed to destroy an area of historical environmental archaeological and rural importance .This site would be within a 1 mile radius of the population of Wallingford Cholsey village Brightwell cum Sotwell and Crowmarsh Gifford each of these settlements have a distinct individuality historical importance which would be destroyed if this proposal goes through. Cholsey is a parish of considerable interest stretching back to 986AD.This proposal is a threat to the heritage of this age old farming community replacing reed beds water courses age old field patterns and significant amounts of wild life with dust noise traffic and an eyesore sitting next to the main route into Cholsey village.The proposal is out of character with the amenity and setting of Choleseys largely unchanged and unspoilt natural landscape.The popular Agatha Christie trail from Winterbrook to St Marys Church would be lost and the long awaited Cholsey to Wallingford cycleway would not be completed. I object most strongly to the extreme change such a proposal would bring to where I live, replacing fields and fauna with dust noise and an unimaginable eyesore for 25 years. Within the mile sits Wallingford town a nationally important Saxon town with known important archaeological sites in its centre and stretching out to its borders with Cholsey village . Currently Wallingford is considered to be one of Englands best preserved Saxon towns. It's very important for the local economy that tourists and visitors come to this community to see its attractions and help the local businesses to thrive. The movements of up to 80 lorries carrying gravel everyday along the bypass and the resulting dust noise would not encourage the visitors to come here. The increase in traffic would mean local people would stop using the bypass and come through the centre of Wallingford causing congestion and danger in the town. The residents dont want it here and neither will future residents. it is critical that OCC considers the designated increases in population to Wallingford and the villages housing which the Core Strategy seeks to make currently 550 homes on the edge of the town alongside the bypass, with a further 150 in Cholsey as a larger village.Construction is currently under way for 350 homes at Fairmile ( Cholsey) and 42 at Crowmarsh Gifford In addition with upcoming planning applications for 160 at Moulsoford and 189 at the CABI site also on the bypass. That means some 3,500 more people in the next few years and doesnt include any windfall sites either. to achieve the vision for this area the community needs to preserve its assets not lose them . How many people would want to move to such a ruined area they just won't buy the houses. I am also concerned that the strategy only focuses on the one site, Cholsey and that no in depth analysis will take place. Decisions cannot be made without more options and careful considerations of each options merits and drawbacks. i urge you not to restrict the nomination to one site alone, that is a very poor way for elected leaders of the Council to apply taxpayers resources to such a problem.What is needed is to use resources effectively to subject more possible sites to a proper system of appraisal rather than putting through a site option of Cholsey alone.</p>

	<p>A mineral expert has confirmed that current choice of site at Cholsey is not the best place for a site. Many other sites in South Oxon are better suited, again in depth comparison and analysis would bring these sites up to the nomination stage.</p> <p>I understand if the gravel extraction went ahead at Cholsey residents would suffer for 25 years and as yet there are no long term plans for the final use and restoration of the site. This too is unacceptable.</p> <p>I urge you not to proceed with this and reconsider your options.</p>
295	<p>I would like to register my strong opposition to the location of the above gravel pits proposed between Wallingford and Cholsey. As a resident of Cholsey, the impact of this plan on this large thriving community in my opinion will be devastating for a number of reasons:</p> <p><b>PROXIMITY TO HOUSING</b></p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site. It is also in very close proximity to a number of new housing developments, increasing the local population from 10,000 to over 13,000 within 5 years. With several other sites in S Oxfordshire why has the County Council proposed to put a gravel pit, with its associated noise, lorries, dust and economic blight so close to so many people? The proposal to put a gravel pit here is totally incompatible with the partly implemented strategy of housing development in this area.</p> <p><b>THE INCREASE IN LORRY TRAFFIC</b></p> <p>The Wallingford Road is frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians travelling to and from Wallingford and Cholsey. As Cholsey train station has a direct link to London, this is an important route for commuters and also for children travelling to and from school. The hugely increased lorry traffic, likely to be exiting on Wallingford Road will be extremely dangerous and is likely to increase the risk of road traffic accidents in the area. It is also likely to increase traffic on smaller village and through Wallingford routes as traffic tries to avoid lorry clogged bypass and main roads.</p> <p><b>THE EFFECT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The proposed area is a rich, unspoilt habitat, home to a diverse selection of wildlife including foxes and roe deer, red kites, stoats and otters to name a few. This area is enjoyed by locals and tourists alike with footpaths, listed buildings and attractions such as the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway and Agatha Christie Trail all within the proposed site or running directly alongside it. I believe this rich environment would not be suitable for such a development.</p>
133	<p>I am a resident of Cholsey village and have been horrified at your plan to allow gravel pits to be dug between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>You are planning to allow gravel extraction sites between Cholsey and Wallingford. There are only 2 roads between Cholsey and Wallingford and you intend to dig pits along both of them!! You have already passed disastrous plans to build thousands of houses in the area, in order to meet the previous government's monstrous house building plans. These alone will add thousands of cars to our already packed roads.</p> <p>The estimate is for 80 trucks a day, which is about 10 trucks per hour. 1 loud, dusty truck throwing its contents all around it every 6 minutes. This is obscene! Many people use the Wallingford Road to get to and from Cholsey station from Wallingford every day, either walking or cycling the same route.</p> <p>This will become a very dangerous pastime and I expect most people will take to their cars, sadly, we already have traffic building up on the roundabouts, then there is the new housing and the trucks would just make the traffic problem far worse.</p> <p>Also, one of the sites goes all the way to the river, from the Reading Road, now, I always thought that the Thames Path was a public right of way, now I may be wrong, but if the gravel pits go to the river, then walkers, ramblers and visitors to the area will not be able to use the Thames Path along the stretch between Cholsey and Wallingford, and the roads will be punctuated with a gravel truck every 6 minutes, not at all conducive to encouraging visitors to our lovely part of the world.</p> <p>I haven't even thought through the problem of the dust and dirt, which I am sure will affect everyone that has no option but to walk down those roads, but I do also want to point out you then plan to create a waste landfill site out of the pits when the gravel has been extracted. Now that is obscene!!</p>

	<p>Do the Developers know about these plans? I am sure the gravel lorries will prevent the sale of the houses in the area. You must reconsider these dreadful plans. I wish to add my strongest objections to this plan</p>
954	<p>May I register my strong objection to the proposed gravel extraction operation between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is an appalling proposal which if implemented will irrevocably damage the unique historical heritage of the Saxon town of Wallingford, acknowledged to be of national importance.</li> <li>2. It will also adversely affect <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The local ecology;</li> <li>b. The archaeological significance of the site;</li> <li>c. The adjacent A.O.N.Bs;</li> <li>d. The tourism (and hence the livelihood) of the area;</li> <li>e. The health of the local inhabitants (dust blown by the prevailing westerly winds);</li> <li>f. The local road and bridge system - already inadequate</li> <li>g. Not to mention the general degradation and blight which will develop from its close proximity to the homes of over 10,000 people?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. To add insult to the above injuries, I understand the gravel in question is of poor quality, making the site only questionably worthy of development.</li> <li>4. Further, if eventually the extraction takes place, the site cannot be restored as a lake, or used as landfill, owing to its proximity to the river.</li> </ol> <p>I ask you to think again, bearing in mind "the social, economic and environmental effects".</p>
936	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ...". Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 AD. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based. The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>Destruction of the local Environment</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>Likely Impact on Local Economy</p>

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral Extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.

It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road

I completely understand the desire that the county council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.

Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term.

We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.

It is not the best site in the County

It has low grade aggregates

The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area

The community has not been adequately consulted

It will blight the local economy of Wallingford

	It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.
125	<p>I am writing concerning the proposed gravel extraction located near Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>I have read the plans and the location of the site and am very concerned about the suitability. The main grounds on which I propose to campaign against the proposal are on Health and Safety.</p> <p>Prevailing winds the site is less than 1/2 a mile from Wallingford town centre and the prevailing winds from the extraction will blow directly over the town! The town has an aging population and the inevitable dust will without doubt trigger pre-existing respiratory problems. Surely a site not so close to the town would be preferred as it is so close the dust does not have a chance to hit any thermals to rise. In fact the "bowl" that Wallingford sits in, combined with the prevailing winds would reduce the air quality considerably. Without sounding dramatic, to allow this location would cause distress to those with existing respiratory problems and we may well have blood on our hands by allowing it.</p> <p>It is so close to the town the proposal at Wallingford and Cholsey is just crazy, absolutely insane there must be better suited locations in Oxfordshire? If this goes ahead I will happily chain myself to the road to protest. It is my moral obligation to protect the frail that live in this area. Please please consider other locations.</p>
126	We lodge our objection to the gravel extraction proposals in Cholsey and neighbourhood.
95	<p>I want to register my objection to the planned gravel extraction pit on the Wallingford Road, Cholsey.</p> <p>Not only are you about to spoil the countryside, and increase the hazards with the additional vehicles to present to the users of the road you are going to de-value our homes. You will cause our homes to be dirty and dusty and our washing will spoil.</p> <p>But most importantly to me is the fact I have respiratory problems. For the first time in my life living where I am and using the medication I do I actually have it almost under control. If you create this pit the amount of dust will cause me further problems and this is not considering all the other people in the area with such problems.</p> <p>You should not be allowed to just dump this site on us because it is away from the areas in which councillors live when it is actually not the best site for the extraction. You would not want it on your doorstep and neither do we. There are far more appropriate sites that would be far less disruptive to the community and their health and safety.</p>
96	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the</p>



railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

The site is surrounded by many houses including mine and number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten

years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.

I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.

I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.

Please don't ruin and destroy the place we live, the impact will be great to all,

97	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses including mine and number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden</p>
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plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

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In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial

companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.

I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.

I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.

Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.

Please don't ruin and destroy the place we live, the impact will be great to all

98	<p>Please register my objection to the Wallingford/Cholsey gravel extraction, as I believe it is: against the health interests of the long established adjacent communities; technically flawed in type of gravel to be extracted; will cause immense traffic problems (especially if the Northern Perimeter Road at Didcot becomes used by the lorries) This major planning disaster currently ends in a T-junction and then passes through a housing estate! - Ahhh, the wonders of local and district Planning Departments!!</p>
100	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses including mine and number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The</p>

by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.

I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have

	<p>long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Please don't ruin and destroy the place we live, the impact will be great to all,</p>
102	I would like to register my objection to the planned Gravel Pit between Winterbrook and Cholsey.
90	<p>It is appalling that you are considering using the land in between Wallingford and Cholsey as a gravel extraction area. What are your planning criteria for such a proposition?</p> <p>The site in question can be directly seen from both the Chilterns AONB and Wittenham Clumps AONB. The heavy traffic generated by such a proposal would be disastrous for the local roads. They are dangerous enough for pedestrians and cyclists at the moment. The gravel pit would destroy the local attractions of the Wallingford/Cholsey heritage railway, the footpath that runs alongside it, and the Agatha Christie trail.</p> <p>So the only planning reason for choosing this site is because of the existence of the gravel. I would be interested to see if other potential extraction sites were so thoroughly unsuitable.</p>
316	<p>I strongly oppose the excavation of gravel from Cholsey area.</p> <p>Having lived in this area all my life and growing up with the population increase, consider that the area proposed for the gravel pits is already surrounded by enough habitation to exclude working where normally people don't live.</p> <p>A gravel pit working with many commercial activities for a long period of time will simply destroy the environment for all who live in the vicinity.</p>
203	<p>I am writing to protest about the proposed gravel pit in the village of Cholsey.</p> <p>My husband and I feel lucky that we live in such an unspoilt beautiful area. It gladdens the heart to go along Church Road and up over Cholsey Hill as from the top you can see wonderful countryside for miles around and it would be sacrilege to have a nasty great scab of a gravel pit blotting the landscape.</p> <p>Cholsey village is an exceptionally good place to live. We have all the amenities one could wish for. The village is expanding with new houses being built and more people moving into the area. We have our own tourist attractions such as Agatha Christie's trail, which has a lot of visitors, a Steam Railway which is also very popular and which local people have put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to make it such a success. Older houses such as Brook House and the barns on Cox's farm to name but a few. All of these would be spoilt. Visitors do not want to walk along a gravel pit from Agatha Christie's house to her grave. They would not want to ride on the railway to look out on an ugly gravel pit and get covered in dust. Brook House</p>



	<p>would be surrounded by bleak, ugly pits.</p> <p>The whole population of Cholsey would suffer dust, noise and a great deal more traffic on our roads, especially large lorries.</p> <p>I understand that the material found in the site is of very poor quality anyway and that is the reason a previous contractor decided not to proceed. I am sure there must be areas in Oxfordshire where the gravel would be of better quality. Also the Cholsey site is only a small site and it seems ludicrous to spoil the whole village and landscape when the gravel excavated might not fill all the contractors requirements. I am also concerned that no long term plan has been put forward by Oxfordshire CC. What is to be become of the site when it is no longer making money for the contractor, will it just be discarded and left to become a boggy area in winter and dust bowl in summer!</p> <p>Please listen to our concerns on this matter.</p>
191	<p>Like many, many other people I would like to object most strongly to the proposed gravel pit site at Wallingford Road, Cholsey.</p> <p>As you can see from my address at the top of this letter, I am right in line of fire for the noise, dust, dirt, pollution of this site, and the view from my kitchen window (which I have enjoyed for the past 9 years) will be destroyed. (This I might add was a buying feature of this property, being the lovely meadow views.)</p> <p>Are you really going to desecrate this beautiful green meadowland, to ugly craters? We also already suffer from heavy traffic noise, but the level of noise from 3 huge gravel pits will be horrendous.</p> <p>I may be driven from my home in the near future, who then will be interested in buying my property. NO ONE.</p> <p>Please see sense &amp; dig your gravel pits somewhere else!</p>
189	<p>Re. Proposed Quarry between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>As a family we have lived in Cholsey - just off the wallingford Road and directly opposite the proposed site, for many years.</p> <p>Our children have walked to Wallingford, waited for school and college buses on the Wallingford road and walked dogs. With may families alike we enjoy the surrounding countryside along this route.</p> <p>To add heavy lorries - as many as 200 a day has been quoted - to this already busy road would make it intolerable for children walking, babies in pushchairs, those using public transport, dog walkers; the list is endless.</p> <p>The risk to public safety is unthinkable. There has already been 2 fatalities in the last 10 years without adding a bigger problem with huge lorries arriving and departing the proposed site.</p>
426	<p>Please be advised of our total opposition to this plan! With many hundreds of local residents (and community charge payers) we do not expect or accept that the immediate environment of northern Cholsey and south western Wallingford be turned into a virtual industrial site, with all the ill effects that would entail! Your Team and the O.C.C. generally must consider and act on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The environmental destruction of the area.</li> <li>(ii) The consequent aversion to purchase residential properties in this area - including the "Cholsey Meadows area". Thus consider the 'fall-off' in revenues to O.C.C. resulting from this.</li> <li>(iii) The pollution, noise, traffic congestion ensuing from vehicular activity connected with the proposed development. This will also have a negative effect on businesses already established on the south-western areas of Wallingford. Again there are implications for reductions in business rates and acceptable expansion there at.</li> <li>(iv) The loss of the Wallingford/Cholsey railway so damaging an important tourist/recreational feature and again having a negative economic effects considering potential revenues from visitors.</li> <li>(v) Why must O.C.C. be required to supply gravel to a neighbouring town development, which activity is the result of Central Government's growth plans? Have alternative gravel sources been considered? Have the Government's plans been challenged in this regard?</li> </ul>

	<p>(vi) Elected County and South Oxfordshire Councillors must be reminded that their political careers and changes of re-election will be bleak if they continue to support this plan!! We thank you for your attention to the foregoing contents.</p>
443	<p>I wish to register my objection to the proposed plans for gravel extraction at Cholsey. I think it is a failure of the County Council to put forward only one site, at Cholsey, in its minerals strategy. It appears that the site selection process has been pre-determined, offering no other alternatives to be assessed against each other in a fair and transparent way. The fact that any sites put forward for consideration by the Council for mineral extraction are limited to those proposed by gravel quarrying companies or landowners, whose properties contain the gravels, appears restricted and not a transparent, reasoned and comprehensively assessed basis on which to impose such huge impacts on one village. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. The consultation document makes no reference to other sites which would be able to meet this need and thus worthy of consideration. I understand from a number of sources, including a local hydrogeologist, that the gravel at the site in Cholsey is of poor quality. This poor quality gravel is said to be one of the principal reasons a previous contractor withdrew from this site, when it was considered twenty years ago. I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the restoration of the site. This appears to be a fundamental flaw in a plan of this nature. As restoration to a lake or landfill is not possible, due to the site's proximity to the river Thames, what suitable alternative is there? I feel it is shortsighted to allow gravel extraction to go ahead, with no plan, no agreement and no acceptance by the village as to what will happen after. I expect my points above to be taken into consideration.</p>
445	<p>I wish to register my objection to the proposed plans for a gravel extraction facility at Cholsey. I feel that to build such a facility in the middle of a population area of some 10,000 residents of Cholsey and Wallingford would be a tragedy for the area, from which it may never recover, certainly in my own lifetime. I find it impossible to see how the proposed sites can possibly safeguard the current character and setting of our village which is such an important area historically and naturally. As I understand it, Wallingford and Cholsey have worked incredibly hard over the last few years to further promote itself as an important area of archaeological interest, seeing as it is one of the best Saxon sites in the UK. All this work would be for nothing, the proposed plans would ruin it. I think back to how much everyone enjoyed the Bunkfest this year and getting the train to it from Cholsey on the Cholsey to Wallingford Steam Railway. This would vanish, who wants to ride past a gravel pit? I am also confused as to why local residents have been given such a short time to respond to this scandal? Why were we not given more warning? To propose such a venture so near to residents and schools is scandalous, the noise and dust will blight our village for years to come and I would ask you to consider whether you would wish to live in such an environment. I hope common sense will prevail and talk of ruining our lovely village will cease.</p>
334	<p>I am writing to you with strong objections to the proposed excavation of gravel from Chosley. It is a totally unsuitable choice of site and it would have an adverse impact on our local environment and residential amenities. The area is of historical interest and full of fauna and flora. This proposed site would impact 10,000 people within a mile area, the river, cuts across a historic trail, railway and nursery school. The added traffic to an already busy junction, dust, noise and heavy plant movement would be totally unacceptable.</p>

343	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</b></p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local Environment:</b></p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p><b>Likely Impact on Local Economy:</b></p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.</p> <p>Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p><b>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:</b></p> <p>It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.</p> <p>This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence</p>
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	<p>that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.  It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.  Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.  The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.  Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:  I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.  It is not the best site in the County.  It has low grade aggregates.  The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.  The community has not been adequately consulted.  It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
389	<p>Living in Wallingford has become a constant threat to the right to live a peaceful good quality way of life, vast swathes of new housing and now a gravel pit.  I am so against this dreadful plan to extract poor quality gravel from a beautiful green piece of land I appeal to you for common sense to prevail and put people before big business. Please stop this pit being created.</p>
613	<p>I hope you will not turn this lovely part of the Oxfordshire countryside into a gravel pit. It is much too near this medieval town and bring dust into our gardens and traffic all round Cholsey and Brightwell.</p>
576	<p>We are writing to register concern and objection over the proposed gravel extraction that is being considered in Cholsey. Referred by reference SG-33, SG-60 and SG576.  The introduction of such a complex will bring pollution, noise and ruin to our village and surrounding area.  Cholsey and Wallingford have long been a place of beauty, one of the reasons we moved here, and by the introduction of the gravel extraction it will split Cholsey and Wallingford into two, with a most unsightly entrance to both Cholsey and Wallingford.  The traffic increase will be horrendous even with our small bypass this will only alleviate the traffic flow until the country lanes to Didcot. The traffic</p>

	<p>route to the M4 will take in Moulsoford, Goring and Streatly, Pangbourne and a few other villages. Who can guarantee which transport routes the lorries will take?</p> <p>The environment will be severely disrupted over a long period of time, and when extraction is completed we will be left with a "crater" as I have been led to believe it will not be practical or environmentally safe to backfill.</p> <p>The location will effect at least a combined population of 10,000, and not to their benefit.</p> <p>The site although large will not provide any large job opportunities for locals. The three site locations I feel are going to be used as bargaining blocks with "we will only use SG so and so instead of all three". Is it a case of try for a lot and get a little?</p> <p>The historic charm of our area will be devastated and I doubt it will ever recover, I don't want to elaborate on this as I am sure that one of the other objection letters will cover this important part far better.</p> <p>The village has and is going through a transition at this time with a large luxury housing project being built on the old Fairmile Hospital Site as well as other proposed developments in the pipe line. I am sure that a gravel pit will have a detrimental effect on these projects.</p> <p>There are a lot of local businesses and leisure activities that will be affected by the introduction of a gravel pit.</p> <p>To name a few:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cholsey and Wallingford railway</li> <li>The Oxford Brookes Rowing Club</li> <li>The Wallingford Rowing Club</li> </ul> <p>The various cycle clubs that use the lanes around Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>The walking/hiking clubs that use the area</p> <p>the specialist shops and cafes in historic Wallingford</p> <p>It would be of interest to know if any of the "decision makers" for this project live in or around our village.</p> <p>We thank you for taking the time to read our objections and comments.</p>
742	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposal to create a gravel pit/extraction site on land separating the town of Wallingford and village of Cholsey. I am stunned that this site is even being considered as it will directly affect approximately 10,000 people living in the immediate (under 1 mile) area. I understand no other proposed site in Oxfordshire is as close to such large populations that would be negatively affected?</p> <p>I walk through the middle of suggested pit SG33 at least once a week with my dogs from the Wallingford road to join the Agatha Christie Trail that runs from Wallingford to Cholsey Church. If the gravel pit were to go ahead this link would be destroyed making it impossible to join the Agatha Christie path without going all the way into Wallingford first, and to add insult along the full length of the proposed gravel pit and its associated dust, noise and danger of large lorries. Destruction of our network of paths and green lanes - totally at odds with the government's message to get out and do some exercise, plus reducing the currently very good quality of air in the immediate area.</p> <p>Wallingford is a town that thrives because it is a scenic, picturesque, middle England market town full of history and old buildings - in short it is a tourist town. It is a town where television programmes are made to show off how beautiful English towns can be to the rest of the world. It is not a retail hub, where such issues are unimportant. The creation of a gravel pit to the south, blowing dust over the town would finish off The Bunk Line, Wallingford and Cholsey's historic railway that runs along the full length of the proposed gravel pit.</p> <p>I mentioned large lorries being a hazard to pedestrians as I assume they will be forced to exit the site onto the Wallingford road? The Wallingford road that is a small road entirely unsuitable for such vehicles (as it is this road has been the subject of need of a cycle path for several years due to fatalities as it is so narrow with funding already well advanced), yet there appears to be no other alternative? I understand it was recently concluded by the Highways Agency that the Wallingford ring road, the A4310 cannot have another roundabout inserted and so they would be unable to exit on to</p>

	<p>that road?</p> <p>All in all I find it a farce that this site has even been suggested just from the obvious problems it will create, let alone those that present themselves when you look at the site in more detail. These issues include the waterways running through into the Thames (recently praised for good water quality), poor quality of the gravel that could be extracted, high water table in the area, areas of outstanding natural beauty that look down on it. The list goes on ....</p> <p>I hope that sense is seen and this proposal thrown out.</p>
683	<p>I am writing to strongly object to the proposed plan for three huge gravel pits between Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>If given approval the industrial activity, noise and traffic will blight the area for many years to come and will destroy a green-belt area of valuable agricultural, amenity and wildlife importance. The developers will, no doubt, make a handsome profit and then move on to devastate other locale. In these over-populated islands, we must learn to conserve our precious landscapes rather than viewing anything of beauty as a potential target for a quick profit. In particular the relevant authorities must begin to listen to the voice of the local communities who are, in this case, overwhelmingly opposed to the plan.</p>
883	<p>Re: Proposed Sites for Sand and Gravel Extraction SG33, SG57 and SG60.</p> <p>I am writing to oppose the current proposals for three new sites for sand and gravel extraction within the Cholsey/Wallingford community. I wish to oppose the plans on three main grounds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The impact on the environment/landscape.</li> <li>2. The impact on the community.</li> <li>3. Doubts concerning the quality and sustainability of the resource.</li> </ol> <p>The impact on the environment/landscape:</p> <p>Cholsey and Wallingford lie within and adjacent to areas that are recognised as areas of outstanding natural beauty, including the Chilterns AONB (adjacent to SG60), the North Wessex AONB (within 10km) and the Ridgeway National Trail. All of the proposed sites lie within identified Priority Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) schemes as defined by Natural England (1). These HLS areas are defined as areas "where Natural England are seeking the most environmental benefits from HLS agreements for wildlife, landscape, the historic environment and resource protection". All of the proposed sites would negatively impact on each of these core objectives. The sites are likely to be visible for many miles from higher ground (Cholsey Hill, The Ridgeway, The Chilterns) as well as from stretches of the Thames Path irrespective of any local landscaping. This will detract from the overall beauty of the area.</p> <p>The impact on the Community:</p> <p>Cholsey and Wallingford form a community of up to 10 000 people and the two clusters of properties are mutually reliant on each other. Wallingford commuters use Cholsey Station and Cholsey residents support local businesses in Wallingford and use Wallingford Hospital and Health Centres and Secondary School. Sites SG33 and SG57 essentially would split the community in two.</p> <p>Cholsey Station provides Wallingford with links to London and the north. The Wallingford Road is used as a commuter route and a recent campaign has proposed a cycle path adjacent to the road to provide a safe commuter route for the cycling commuters of Wallingford and Cholsey. If sites SG33 and SG57 are selected, the plans for the cycle route cannot proceed and the Wallingford Road will become even busier. A major justification for the cycle route was to reduce the number of road traffic accidents on this busy stretch of road. If the cycle route does not proceed, it is likely that further fatalities will result. I also note in your Sustainability Appraisal document (2) that you talk of the option of using the railway line at Cholsey to move materials around. It should be noted that Cholsey Station is at the other end of the housing from the proposed sites and suggests that if this option were chosen there will be increased heavy goods traffic through a residential area. If roads are used, potential congestion on either the Wallingford</p>

Road or the Wallingford Bypass and routes towards the A34 as well as increased risk of accidents are likely to result.

A significant amount of work has been done to bring potential new residents and tourists to the area through housing development and tourism. Tourists bring much needed investment into the community and the proposed sites are likely to impact on the industry. Local attractions include a steam train, footpaths linking the Saxon town to outlying residential communities, The Thames Path as well as The Agatha Christie Trail. All of the proposed sites impact on these attractions: SG33, SG57: Steam Train, Agatha Christie Trail, local footpaths, SG60: Thames Path and local footpaths. I also believe that there is planned investment into new properties in the local area, in particular at Fairmile, CABI and Carmel College. The latter two sites would face the planned site SG57 and its presence may well deter potential buyers and impact further on Wallingford's financial future.

In addition, I read with interest your "Statement of Community Involvement", especially points 3.1 and 3.2 (3) where you state that there should be "Front-loading of involvement" and would like to inform you that I was unaware of any plans for extraction sites within the Chilsey/Wallingford area before September 2011 and when I received notification from the Parish Council. I would therefore question your definition of "front-loading".

Doubts concerning the quality and sustainability of the resource:

With respect to the extraction of gravel within the proposed sites I wish to raise two main questions.

A) Is the gravel within the sites of acceptable quality?

B) Are there potential practical issues with the extraction of the gravel?

C) What is the possible long term future of the site?

I have asked my father, a Chartered Geologist, to assess the sites using publicly available materials in order to assess the above questions. His report is attached for your information. His conclusions were as follows:

A) It is unclear whether there is a consistent source of gravel/sand within the proposed sites i.e. it may be "patchy" in distribution/constitution. This means greater soil and earth disruption to extract meaningful quantities. The gravel is unlikely to be suitable for road surfacing and high strength concrete. If used in concrete, the concrete may swell due to the flint and quartz content within the area. This will limit the potential use of the gravel even if it is combined with other materials. This potentially means importing mixing materials to the proposed sites and hence further increased traffic.

Ironstone within the mixture may also cause any concrete to discolour limiting its use.

B) The gravel is likely to be located near to or below the water table. It is therefore likely that any workings will rapidly become flooded. This view is corroborated in your Surface Water and Groundwater document where you suggest that all identified areas have an intermediate or high level risk of surface flooding (4). This impacts, and increases the cost of, the extraction process.

C) Given the proximity of the gravel/sand to the water table and the likelihood of flooding, it is likely that the long term future of any extraction sites would involve open water sitting. (It should be appreciated right from the start that this may create safety issues, considering the proximity of housing etc).

To conclude:

It is my belief that if the proposed works go ahead it will mean the extraction of poor quality sand and gravel at a high cost to the local area, community and economy. I would therefore ask you reconsider SG33, SG57 and SG60 as potential sources of gravel for Oxfordshire, particularly as Oxfordshire County Council states in its Minerals Planning Strategy Consultation Draft, September 2011, that the county has plentiful supplies of sand and gravel resources.

I look forward to hearing your conclusions on this matter.

884	Duplicated 883.
867	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:  It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.  The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.  The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>Destruction of the Local Environment:  In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.  I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>Likely Impact on Local Economy:  A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.  Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'  The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition, tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of filly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p>



	<p>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:  It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Blechington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.  The site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.  It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.  Only limited resarch has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.  The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>Transport Issues - A major increase in trucks on the road:  I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Schience Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the Council's key paremeters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is not the best site in the County.</li> <li>- It has low grade aggregates.</li> <li>- The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.</li> <li>- The community has not been adequately consulted.</li> <li>- It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</li> <li>- It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</li> </ul>
754	<p>I wish to register an objection to the proposals for the Wallingford area in the consultation, the central items of which are listed below. The details of these objections are attached.  It is not the best site in the County.  It has low grade aggregates.  Heavy trucks will have a hugh impact on the entire surrounding area and Oxfordshire County Council has shown it can barely maintain our roads even now.  The community has not been adequately consulted.  It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>

Re: Proposed Quarry Site in Cholsey

In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.

Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:

It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

Destruction of the local Environment:

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

Likely Impact on Local Economy:

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effects of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community:

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

	<p>This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.</p> <p>It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.</p> <p>Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the materials. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.</p> <p>The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road:</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford, or even further afield.</p> <p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
765	<p>I am writing to voice my concerns over the proposal to create a gravel pit between the ancient settlement of Cholsey and the historic town of Wallingford.</p> <p>Firstly, the choice of site put forward by OCC takes no account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey and two thirds of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the OCC Planning Strategy. And to subject so many people to such appalling conditions is not acceptable.</p> <p>As for the long-term future of the site, I am concerned that there is no real plan. I gather that it cannot be converted to a lake due to its proximity to the River Thames (and that these same issues may preclude the site being used for landfill). It may also be unlikely that the site would be used for disposing of inert building waste as this now tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we will be left with a huge eyesore of a pit in the heart of our Parish. And all for the sake of what I gather is poor quality gravel.</p> <p>With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council limited its options to just one area, without appropriate consultation or analysis of the local issues.</p>

	<p>It appears to be a fait accompli, with a decision already made without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only this one new site has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options. What will happen if this site is rejected in the event of a public examination by a government inspector? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. So, the question is, why has OCC opted for a single choice of this site? Perhaps it was thought local objections would be least troublesome compared to other sites that you might choose in the vast county of Oxfordshire. Hopefully you will by now have learnt that this is not the case, and received a very vocal objection from many of those that live and/or work locally.</p> <p>Maybe it is because OCC could minimise its own spending on infrastructure more than anywhere else, given how little OCC funding comes to the area, and how deprived Cholsey is in relation to other parishes of similar size. Besides essential services, such as the primary school, a few pavements over the last decade, and a small amount of road resurfacing (which was almost immediately ruined by gas contractors), Cholsey has seen no OCC investment of any worth. The parish council have been requesting a cycle-path along Wallingford Road and the 'missing link' along Reading Road, for many years, both of which a gravel pit on this site would probably kill off once and for all. Cholsey have also been seeking permanent library facilities for some considerable time, due to the inadequacy of Wallingford and the large size of our village - even now, we'll only get a 'community' library and nothing more. Even the upgrade to the primary school to take account of the Fairmile development is being restricted to limited restructuring on the existing site.</p> <p>I think it's time that you came clean over why Cholsey has been chosen ahead of any other site, or else do some proper groundwork to justify the proposal.</p>
767	<p>I am writing to voice my concerns over the proposal to create a gravel pit between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>The proposed extraction site will destroy the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited between the thriving village of Cholsey and the historic town of Wallingford. It is an area surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development like this will have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.</p> <p>Two examples of this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway will have more than half its operating area bordered by the proposed gravel workings. This will create a huge visual impact, and so will almost certainly curtail the income from paying passengers, and so will probably bring thirty years of voluntary work to a sad end.</li> <li>- There is also the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard - this will be destroyed by these proposals.</li> </ul> <p>It appears that there has been no proper assessment of the social, environment and economic impacts of the proposed site on the surrounding area nor that the benefits or drawbacks of using this site has been fairly evaluated in relation to any other site.</p> <p>It appears that the sole criteria for selecting a site has been one that is nominated or proposed by either gravel quarrying companies and/or landowners on whole property the minerals are to be found. One can assume that the interests of local people are not a priority to either party. However, I would like to think that our elected representatives would use their position to ensure that a full and unbiased appraisal is carried out of</p>

	<p>all and any possible sites within the county of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live and/or work within a mile of this site, and many hundreds live around it. To subject so many people to such massive upheaval, with the constant noise, disruption and dust, is not acceptable, not to mention the impact on property values.</p> <p>So I trust you will ensure this proposal is scrutinised heavily, local views taken into account, and ultimately for a more appropriate site to be chosen, if indeed a new site is even necessary.</p>
774	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed gravel extraction site to be located between Wallingford and Cholsey in South Oxfordshire. My objections are on a number of levels but I will focus on the three most worrying aspects: the impact on the safety and quality of life of local residents, particularly young people, the potential damage to the natural environment and the threat to the unique heritage of this area of Oxfordshire. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals' and I believe the effects of this proposal will be significant and negative in their impact.</p> <p>The proposed site along the Wallingford Road abuts directly onto existing residential development. The choice of site seems to take very little account of the fact that in excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundreds live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>I am very concerned that the site lies directly behind a children's day nursery, where children under the age of five spend a great deal of the day in the garden engaged in outdoor learning. The impact of noise and dust on the health of these young children, as well as the increased risk posed by a substantial increase in heavy traffic has not been considered with any care as far as I can see from the plans shown in the consultation. The risk of large numbers of heavy lorries moving through the streets of Cholsey and Wallingford, particularly to the children of both communities, is quite simply a matter of life and death, and I fear a decision to proceed with this proposal will have tragic consequences.</p> <p>These proposals will also end the development of Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. Potential funding from developers is time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I am in no doubt that this development would have a hugely negative impact on the natural environment as the site includes historic reed beds, watercourses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice given of the consultation period has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Foxes, roe deer and hares are often seen here, as well as weasels and stoats by Hithercroft Brook, and there have been sightings of otters in recent years. Buzzards, tawny owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds including lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site.</p> <p>I am also extremely concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to proximity to the River Thames and that this also precludes the site being used for landfill. The possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p>

	<p>The impact on the rich heritage of this area will be considerable, and I am in no doubt completely detrimental. The proposed gravel extraction sites will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour". The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, which runs from her former home in Winterbrook to her burial site in St. Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. The number one visitor attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly both culturally and economically.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. This would be a phenomenally sad end to more than thirty years of voluntary work and to an attraction which holds a special place in the hearts of many families.</p> <p>I understand that the sites under consideration by OCC for mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. I cannot believe this is a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality. I also understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>I urge you to give careful consideration to the significant negative impact this development would have on the quality of life, environment and cultural heritage of Cholsey and Wallingford, and to demonstrate your commitment to maintaining the exceptional character of this part of Oxfordshire by concluding that this development is not appropriate.</p>
612	<p>I wish to register an objection to the proposals for the Wallingford area in the consultation, the central items of which are listed below followed by the details of these objections.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>Heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area and Oxfordshire County Council has shown it can barely maintain our roads even now.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p>Objections:</p> <p>Proposed Quarry Site in Cholsey:</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt</p>

natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

**Destruction of the Local Environment:**

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

**Likely Impact on Local Economy:**

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

**Poor Economic Decision - A poor Decision for the Community:**

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Blechington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council. It has no local support outside the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from the site when it was considered twenty years ago.

	<p>Transport Issues - A major increase in trucks on the road:  I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wntage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the Council's key parameters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p>
654	<p>With regard to the Mineral and Waste Draft Plan Consultation, I feel very strongly the need to voice my concerns and my objections.  In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.  It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.  The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be foolish.  A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.  Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'  As a keen and regular cyclist I am also concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.  The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".  This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular</p>



	<p>interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm. Surely developing this site will have nothing but a negative if not disasterous impact on this precious wildlife?</p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>So it is for all of the reasons I have stated above that I feel the need to register my objection to the gravel pit proposals.</p>
606	<p>I wish to register an objection to the proposals for the Wallingford area in the consultation, the central items of which are listed below followed by the details of these objections.</p> <p>It is not the best site in the County.</p> <p>It has low grade aggregates.</p> <p>Heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area and Oxfordshire County Council has shown it can barely maintain our roads even now.</p> <p>The community has not been adequately consulted.</p> <p>It will blight the local economy of Wallingford.</p> <p>It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p>Objections:</p> <p>Proposed Quarry Site in Cholsey:</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey:</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a</p>

disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

#### Destruction of the Local Environment:

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

#### Likely Impact on Local Economy:

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

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The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

#### Poor Economic Decision - A poor Decision for the Community:

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.

This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council. It has no local support outside the vested interests of the landowners.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.

The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from the site when it was considered twenty years ago.

#### Transport Issues - A major increase in trucks on the road:

I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

	<p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the Council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.</p> <p>We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p>
330	<p>I am writing to object in the strongest terms to your proposal to site a gravel extraction facility within 150 metres of my home. The choice of Cholsey as the only available option at the eleventh hour has come as a huge shock to us and seems entirely inappropriate adjacent as it is to one of the largest towns in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The area concerned is currently earmarked as the location for the long awaited Wallingford to Cholsey cycle route, something that local residents have been campaigning for for many, many years and a project which the local Parish Council has been working towards for a very long time. A significant amount of the money needed has now been raised. What is to become of this cycle route? And what about the Wallingford and Cholsey railway which also runs along this site - surely nobody is going to pay to 'enjoy' a steam engine trip along the side of an extraction site. The 'Agatha Christie trail' would also be entirely ruined.</p> <p>Our property adjoins a field where Berkeley Homes wanted to build a large number of houses recently. They were prevented from doing so because of the important archaeological artifacts which were found in that field on initial exploration. This field is only a few metres from the proposed extraction site which is on the other side of the by-pass. I cannot understand how archaeology can be allowed to prevent house building on one side of the by-pass and yet on the other side, five metres away, it is fine to dig up an enormous area, ruining forever the historic landscape and the rural setting of Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>As a village Cholsey is already having to contend with a large increase in population due to the significant amount of housing that has been allocated to it by SODC. 350 houses are in the process of being built at Fairmile in Cholsey, 150 more have been allocated by SODC's core strategy and Wallingford itself is expecting 555 additional homes in the period to 2026. Is this not enough disruption for these communities to contend with? With all the open space around Oxfordshire which is not adjacent to a market town I do not understand why a site that fills the one mile between Wallingford and Cholsey can be best? I have even been told that the gravel here is fairly poor in quality - is there not better quality sand/gravel elsewhere?</p> <p>There are 10,000 people living within a mile or two of this site. The impact in terms of noise, dust, visual impact, travel disruption, reduced tourism, loss of amenity etc will be considerable. Why choose a site that affects so many residents when more appropriate sites are available?</p> <p>I would ask you, please, to reconsider this decision.</p>
437	<p>We object most strongly to farmland between Cholsey and Wallingford being turned into gravel pits.</p>
438	<p>I have lived near the western edge of Wallingford for nearly 60 years and in that time have seen the town's population double and the trunk road network widely expand; I understand the need for sand and gravel.</p> <p>But I'd suggest that the proposed extraction near Cholsey is ill-advised and I particularly object to OCC returning to this strategy after a previous rejection some 30 years ago, and then allowing only a few weeks for public comment.</p> <p>This site, I believe, is the only none in Oxfordshire now to be considered - if it is again resulted in a public enquiry, what then?</p> <p>The material is apparently excessively calcareous and of poor quality for concrete making - it is quite possible that a potential contractor might withdraw for this reason (as previously) at the last moment - what strategy then?</p> <p>There appears to be no defined plan for the restitution other than to leave a low lying wash/dust bowl.</p> <p>Concerning amenity, this is at present a quiet secluded meadow land of the best English lowland type. It supports, because of its seclusion, a wide</p>

	<p>range of bird and mammalian wildlife, which will obviously be driven away. However, there are almost certainly resident bats and newts, both closely protected species. What then?</p> <p>The proposed site is flanked along the entire north western boundary by restored standard-gauge Cholsey and Wallingford railway, the product of thirty years dedicated volunteer effort and a valuable tourist draw to Wallingford. What visitor would like a nostalgic rail trip along the edge of a gravel pit?</p> <p>Another tourist draw, the Agatha Christie trail would also suffer similarly.</p> <p>No-put forward other sites less likely to blight the environment of over 10,000 residents.</p>
186	<p>Cholsey: please stop people digging the gravel pit. Please stop it because I won't be able to take my dog out when I am 12. I also want to be able to cycle to Wallingford and Wallingford School when I am bigger.</p> <p>It is beautiful here. Please don't spoil it.</p>
195	<p>I would like to register my opposition to the proposed gravel extraction site between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take no account of the distance between what is a potentially disruptive and polluting development and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people.</p> <p>It is surprising that the County Council has only proposed one site for this development and it is difficult to understand why. Selection from a shortlist of one is not a rational approach, and leaves the council in a precarious position with regard to sourcing gravel in future.</p>
315	<p>I live in Winterbrook which is on the edge of Wallingford, in the Parish of Cholsey. The proposed gravel pit site is within 150 metres of my property but I have had no communication at all from Oxfordshire County Council to alert me to this potential threat or to offer me the opportunity to contribute to a consultation. The only reason that I know about this is via the local action group Communities Against Gravel Extraction (CAGE). Surely, in a democracy, affected residents should be contacted directly by OCC so that an open and honest conversation can take place? Not only have we had no information from OCC at all, we are now told by CAGE that the Cholsey sites are the only sites being considered at this stage. How can this be a 'consultation' if there is no choice of sites? This sounds to me like a 'done deal' which for us seems highly suspicious. Are there no regulations that require affected residents to be contacted? Do you not have guidelines on how to run public consultations - surely there needs to be more than one 'choice' of site? This has all happened very quickly and suddenly we are faced with a 'final deadline to comment' of 31st October.</p> <p>Are there political reasons why this is now suddenly being allocated to Cholsey? I understand that there is a better site at Sutton Courtenay which would affect far fewer residents than the 13,000 residents who will be living within a mile or two of the Cholsey site in 10 years time. A gravel pit should be situated in a rural area, not on the edge of a town, and particularly not a town which is recognised as a historic market town and dependent on attracting tourists.</p> <p>As residents of Winterbrook, we walk along the Agatha Christie trail with our dog, from Agatha Christie's blue plaque house in Winterbrook towards the church where she is buried in Cholsey. This is a popular walk with locals and a place of pilgrimage for fans of her books. This walk would be utterly ruined by the gravel pit. In Winterbrook we would also be down-wind of the gravel dust and the noise from the extraction works as well as the thundering of the lorries exiting onto the by-pass all day long. Where they will be headed is not at all clear since most of the construction in Didcot will be finished by the time this gravel pit opens in Cholsey?</p> <p>I am appalled by the short notice of this consultation, the fact that only one site is being considered and the complete lack of information provided to me by OCC when I live so close to the site. Why the secrecy and the sudden urgency? This site is completely unacceptable for a huge range of reasons; not least its close proximity to Wallingford and Cholsey where 10,000 people currently live and several thousand more are expected by the time this</p>

	<p>pit opens because of all the new housing coming there. I would respectfully request you to reconsider the suitability of this Cholsey site option.</p>
142	<p>I am a resident of Cholsey and I am writing in response to Oxfordshire County Councils "Minerals Consultation Strategy Consultation Draft - September 2011"</p> <p>In particular, I am writing to strongly object to the aspect of Policy M3 in the consultation which proposes that a new area of gravel working will be located at Cholsey to replace Sutton Courtenay when reserves there become exhausted.</p> <p>I object to this proposal on a number of grounds including, but not limited to, those discussed below.</p> <p>1. The negative impacts of new works at Cholsey on the local community, on its economy, transport network, archaeology &amp; heritage, ecology and environmental characteristics have been greatly underestimated during the formulation of the proposed strategy. As a result, the evidence on which the OCC Cabinet has made its decision to include Cholsey in the preferred approach is fundamentally flawed. The nature of the investigations carried out to date (and documented in the consultation documents) is insufficient to justify a decision to include new works in Cholsey in the preferred strategy. A number of shortcomings in the evidence base are highlighted below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social impact on Cholsey, Wallingford and the surrounding area - In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site and many hundreds live adjacent to it. Discussions within the community during the short period to date since the beginning of the consultation period have shown that the likely levels of noise, disruption, dust and other negative impacts are not acceptable to the local community. The true extent of the negative effect of the proposals on the social fabric of our community has not been explored in the consultation documentation, or the decision-making process leading up to it. The underestimation of the negative impact of the Cholsey works on people and local communities in the consultation is, at the very least, insulting and inflammatory and at worst, purposefully misleading (I refer to the 'Comments' column on p65 of the SA/SEA document, against '8. To minimise negative impacts of waste management facilities and mineral extraction on people and local communities', namely: "All but one of the proposed working areas are existing minerals working areas, the exception is Cholsey (sand and gravel). In this respect, while there will be no significant adverse effects of such workings on new communities (with the exception of the Cholsey area), those communities that are currently adversely affected by mineral workings are expected to continue to experience some effects for the long term, although once sites are fully worked out and restored, positive permanent effects are expected. The degree and nature of impacts is dependent on mitigation measures put in place, proximity to sensitive receptors and the duration of working.").</li> <li>- Economic - the works and associated processing facilities and traffic into and out of the works will make Cholsey and the surrounding area a much less attractive place to live. A key attraction of Cholsey for many families (including those moving out of London, who bring with them wealth, investment and commitment to the local community) is the quality of the local environment. The proposal will greatly reduce the attractiveness of Cholsey for such families and will reduce house prices across the area. The consultation makes no estimate of the negative economic impact of the works on the local economy (eg amenity value, house prices etc) which would have served to produce a more balanced picture of the economic pros and cons of including Cholsey in the preferred approach.</li> <li>- Transport - the proposals have not considered the hugely negative impact of increased HGV movement on the local roads between Cholsey, Wallingford and Didcot. Estimates of HGV movement on the road network in the area and the impact on traffic flows and road safety have not been included in the consultation documentation. I am also very concerned that the proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey cycle path, which would allow families to avoid cycling on Wallingford Road - a route which has had a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it over the years.</li> <li>- Heritage and archaeological issues - the Cholsey site is immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze and Iron Ages and the area around the listed building of Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. The potential of the</li> </ul>

site in terms of its archaeological value has not been explored or discussed in sufficient depth in the consultation documentation. Furthermore, the works will destroy two key attractions of our community - namely the Agatha Christie trail (which runs from her former home in Winterbrook to her burial site in St Marys Church) and the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway (like many other residents of Cholsey, I have enjoyed travelling on the railway many times with my children and I have taken friends and family who live outside the area on this amenity also).

- Ecological and environmental impact - it appears from the consultation documentation that insufficient work has been carried out to examine the ecological and environmental impacts of the works. The cursory examination of these impacts referred to in the consultation documentation (referencing the SA/SEA assessment) does not reference the fact that the site is currently a habitat for a number of bird and mammal species (including weasels, stoats, deer, hares, foxes, possibly otters, buzzards, owls, red kites) and the works would lead to the complete destruction of this habitat. The associated loss of invertebrates, plants and trees (which warrant targeted surveys in their own right) would affect the biodiversity of the area, and have knock-on impacts for ecosystem services such as flood protection and carbon storage. Furthermore, it is not apparent from the documentation that sufficiently detailed/any modelling of the impact of the works on local air quality (and hence the health of the local population) has been carried out. Finally, I am gravely concerned about the legacy issues of these works. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to its proximity to the River Thames and that the site cannot be used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is highly unlikely as this material is nowadays (quite rightly) recycled and re-used at source. The likely end state of the works - a depression that will seasonally fill with water, becoming marshy in Spring and Autumn and a dust bowl in Summer - is therefore completely unacceptable to me and to my family.

As a result, the OCC Cabinet have, to date, not been provided with sufficient evidence, information and also views from the local population in order to make a fair judgement about proposing Cholsey as a new gravel site in the preferred strategy. If OCC had carried out an appropriately detailed investigation into the pros and cons of this proposal and worked with the local community in order to do so, an improved evidence base would have been made available to the Cabinet which would have made a material impact on its decision to propose Cholsey as a new site. As a result, the consultation and the processes and decision-making leading up to its publication have been fundamentally compromised.

2. The basis of the 'switch' in policy with regard to Cholsey between October 2010 and February 2011 has been insufficiently explained and justified. The OCC document "Development of Draft Minerals Planning Strategy - September 2011" notes that in October 2010, the OCC Cabinet agreed a preferred approach to sand and gravel working that did not include a new site of works for Cholsey. Yet in February 2011, the document states that the Cabinet agreed a revised strategy which did include new works for Cholsey. The consultation does not provide sufficient evidence or argument to demonstrate, in an open and transparent way, the considerations taken into account by OCC when choosing to switch their position between October 2010 and February 2011 with regard to including Cholsey in the preferred approach. Furthermore, insufficient information has been made publicly available about the evidence base and decision-making process which resulted in all potential new sand and gravel sites nominated in the County, except Cholsey, being excluded from the preferred strategy (I note that 62 sand and gravel sites were originally nominated for consideration). In order to inform my understanding, I have submitted a Freedom of Information request to OCC in order to obtain further background about how the decision was reached to include Cholsey in the consultation on the preferred approach.

3. The inadequate nature of the consultation regarding the inclusion of Cholsey as a preferred site for new working. Our Parish Council has made invaluable efforts, given the limited resources at its disposal, to flag up the consultation and its impacts to the local community. However, OCC itself has undertaken inadequate levels of consultation with the local community in Cholsey and Wallingford before including the proposal for Cholsey in its preferred strategy. The nature of the consultation does not seem, on an initial analysis, to be fully aligned with the 'Adopted Statement of Community Involvement' which is directly relevant to the proposal for Cholsey and many of the methods listed in Annex 4 of that document which could have been used to reach out specifically to the newly affected communities of Cholsey and Wallingford have been ignored by OCC. The population in the area are

	<p>busy, hard working people, many of whom have long commutes into London and who do not have as much time as they need, beyond their commitments to work and family, to investigate, consider and evaluate the impact of proposals such as those in the consultation on their community. Consequently, relying chiefly on a web consultation, based on a package of 19 separate consultation documents, many of which are of a highly technical nature and which do not provide an accurate picture of the impact of these proposals for Cholsey, provides insufficient "opportunities for early community involvement and a sense of ownership of local policy decisions" (referring to the Government principles outlined in section 3.1 of the OCC Adopted Statement of Community Involvement). The nature of this consultation and the process leading to its publication does not foster a sense that OCC has worked in partnership with the communities its policies will target and as such, I would consider that the propriety of this process should be further investigated, if necessary within a legal context.</p> <p>In summary, OCCs decision to propose Cholsey as a new site for gravel extraction has been made on an inadequate evidence base, using a decision-making process that lacks transparency and a mode of consultation that is not fit for purpose given the gravely negative impact of the proposals on a community of 10,000 Oxfordshire residents. I would therefore strongly recommend that the proposal to include new gravel works at Cholsey is removed from the final minerals strategy agreed by OCC.</p> <p>A decision by OCC to include a new gravel works for Cholsey in its agreed strategy is highly likely to mobilise further coordinated action by the local community against mineral extraction in the area, possibly by legal means. Such a decision would also have a much wider and damaging effect on the relationship between the local community and OCC more generally. If OCC choose to permit new gravel works in Cholsey, it is unlikely to be able to rely on the goodwill, cooperation and support of the community in other areas of policy-making (transport, environment, planning etc) where buy-in by the local population is required.</p>
127	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses including mine and number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p>

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis



	<p>on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>Please don't ruin and destroy the place we live, the impact will be great to all,</p>
128	<p>I WISH TO STRONGLY OBJECT TO THE GRAVEL PIT THAT IS CURRENTLY BEING PLANNED FOR CHOLSEY THIS WOULD RUIN THE VILLAGE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. WITH NOISE AND HEAVY VEHICLE TRAFFIC - LORRIES</li> <li>2. POLLUTION</li> <li>3. PREVENT SUITABLE SAFE ACCESS TO THE VILLAGE</li> <li>4. RUIN THE AREA SURROUNDING THE VILLAGE</li> <li>5. REDUCE HOUSE PRICES IN THE VILLAGE</li> </ol> <p>THERE HAS TO BE OTHER AREAS THAT WOULD NOT DESTROY EXISTING VILLAGES/DWELLINGS LOOK HARDER!!! LOOK ELSEWHERE AWAY FROM BUILT UP AREAS</p>

129	<p>We are all aware of the above plans for gravel extraction and I am writing to register my strong objection. As you know the area around Winterbrook has, for a very long time, been under siege for housing development to go along with the very large developments already taking place around Cholsey, leading to over-crowding, over-burdening of Wallingford town centre and other facilities, erosion of the essential countryside vital for our habitat and over-loading of our historically small roads. We are fatigued of this process of attrition and resentful of being forced yet again to enter into battle with organisation whose only interest is their commercial objective and whose resources for negotiation disproportionately and unfairly outnumber our own. Many of the previously iterated objections top housing development apply again.</p> <p>However, fundamental to these considerations, I understand that an underlying strategic review of possible sites for gravel extraction placed this site as the least suitable of a number of sites surveyed. The fact that the other sites, on review are not suitable does nothing to change that previous opinion that the Winterbrook/Cholsey site is the least suitable of all and that should guide your decision.</p> <p>Finally, I have been informed that some members of the committees making strategic decisions about the possible gravel extraction have personal interests in the other possible sites. I am certain that all of these are fully declared and that your process ensures that such members do not allow any clear conflicts of interest to affect their decisions.</p>
134	<p>I am writing to protest about the proposed gravel extraction site between Wallingford and Cholsey. This land abuts the main Wallingford to Cholsey road and is the proposed location for the long planned cycle route between the village and the town. The cycle route could not go ahead if the gravel extraction does. Similarly the land adjoins the Wallingford to Cholsey scenic tourist train route and the Agatha Christie walking trail - both significant tourist routes which would be ruined by gravel extraction.</p> <p>I do not understand how this site can have been selected adjoining as it does a town and a large village. It will have a detrimental affect on the road networks as well as the impacts of noise, dust, odour etc on thousands of local residents. Please do not choose this site for your minerals strategy.</p>
143	<p>Duplicates 142</p>
136	<p>From what I have read so far it is unclear to me what the impact of this pit will be on the Cholsey and Wallingford communities including: the local transport infrastructure; the environment around the pit and the wider area; the substantial length of time it will be operational; what will happen to the area when it is decommissioned; the local railway; and local tourism.</p> <p>I do appreciate that we do need to get our aggregates from somewhere but what adds to my concern is that I have only just heard about something that is happening very close to me with little time to respond to it.</p>
137	<p>I have just heard that fairly substantial pits are planned between Cholsey and Wallingford and, as a resident of Wallingford, I am concerned for the following reasons:</p> <p>1) It appears that the relevant papers on the pit were only published by Oxfordshire County Council on the 2nd September and the deadline for the consultation is 31st October 2011. This strikes me as insufficient time for residents and other interested parties to respond to the information contained within these papers and makes me wonder why so relatively little time has been provided by the Council.</p> <p>I would thus like to formally register my concern (I am reluctant to call it protest as I feel that I do not have sufficient detail to have answers to my concerns). I would also like a response concerning the Council's lack of direct communication with the residents that will be deeply affected by these proposed pits.</p>
246	<p>I am writing to wholeheartedly lodge my objection to the proposal that land adjoining Cholsey be used for gravel extraction and subsequently left to waste.</p> <p>We moved to Cholsey around five years ago, knowing the area well and having friends in the village. Its scenic and historical location, enormous sense of community and cohesion with nearby Wallingford is incredible. From the moment we arrived we sensed we were at home and that our children</p>

would be safe and able to thrive in the future. Destroying a vast area of land, for no apparently logical reason, would irredeemably shred Cholsey, Wallingford and surrounding villages.

I am regularly on foot around the area in question - either walking or cycling to Wallingford, or walking the fields with my dog. I have lost count of the number of times I have been stopped by tourists - often Americans - asking for directions to 'Cholsey church' (St Mary's) so that they can pay homage at Agatha Christie's grave. I am proud to be part of this heritage and only too delighted to assist. Should the extraction take place, Cholsey, Wallingford and Oxfordshire would have an important tourist site obliterated - and already stretched local businesses would lose a lifeline. Our world famous author and husband must be turning in their grave at the thought.

I understand that in your briefing document you refer to 'safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..; Cholsey is a parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986AD. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water courses and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. This particular area along the Wallingford Road surely must be deemed to be a 'heritage asset' within the definition of your plan. While walking the area I am struck by the variety of flora and wildlife I encounter. I sense how the landscape must have been like it for hundreds-thousands of years. This must be kept safe for future generations. My family regularly enjoy trips on the Cholsey and Wallingford steam railway and we often wave to the happy passengers on the trains when they go past. I've come across families in Reading, Oxford and London who know Cholsey thanks to having enjoyed a trip on the heritage railway. They all comment on the fun they experienced and the beautiful surroundings. If the gravel extraction were to happen I cannot envisage that the heritage railway would be able to continue to operate - why would anyone want to pass through a dust site? This would be a sad end to more than thirty years of voluntary work and a further blow to tourism and trade.

Since moving to Cholsey I have harboured the hope that my family, and others, would be able to cycle to Wallingford more safely, and especially that my daughters would have the chance to cycle to Wallingford school when the time arises. I am really concerned that the proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey cycle path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity - myself included - and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead. I gather that the sites under consideration by OCC for mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on a locality? There can be no doubt that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. Furthermore I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long term mining operations.

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer. We would have decades of destruction of a millenia established, beautiful, artefact laden landscape - for this? Remains of Bronze and Iron - age man, medieval Britain and more, turned to dust.

	I have always been of the belief that County Councils were there to serve and support its communities. Does my county council find itself struggling to make sound decisions? Let us hope not for the sake of Cholsey, Wallingford and beyond.
925	<p>I write to express my horror that the awful prospect of gravel extraction in Cholsey has risen from the dead. Already we have a village in which every spare piece of ground has or is being 'in-filled' with housing. Also, there is the major development at the old Fairmile Hospital site as well as the prospect of more housing in Winterbrook on the south side of Wallingford. Now we hear that our lovely way to and from Wallingford is to be permanently scarred with a gravel extraction site.</p> <p>If this proposed project goes ahead, it will have a huge impact on our village. Meeting the needs of commerce, national objectives and the local population requires smart planning and balance. Your planning guidelines lack these important requirements. The only obvious advantage of this proposal is that the company carrying out the extraction and the land owners will make a huge profit. However, against that one advantage, there are many disadvantages of which I will name just a few:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No safeguarding of the character and amenity of Cholsey village.</li> <li>The destruction of the historically important Agatha Christie trail.</li> <li>The extraction of gravel of an inferior quality, which is deemed to be 'not fit for purpose'.</li> <li>The destruction of listed buildings.</li> <li>The destruction of important yet untapped medieval settlements awaiting archaeological investigation.</li> <li>The permanent loss of important reed beds, watercourse and flora and fauna.</li> <li>A large increase in heavy traffic not just in the village but also in the surrounding areas.</li> <li>The eyesore of a ravaged countryside that will remain since the site will not be returned to its former beauty not turned into a lakeside environment.</li> </ol> <p>Furthermore, there does not appear to have been proper consultation when there are no other options. The Consultation document does not propose any other site. Thus, we must assume that our 'representatives' are already of a mind to approve this proposed development and like many politicians in these times are not listening to the public which elected them. I fail to see how the Council and its agency, can agree a development that will cause serious and significant harm to an important heritage asset without the most thorough investigative work beforehand. The Council seems to be planning to support commercial interests at the expense of the long-term consequences for quality of life for the rate-paying communities of Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>It is hoped that you will do the right thing and not just pay lip service to the Consultation process. We, as a community will continue to campaign for the dropping of this outrageous proposal. We trust that our elected representatives support and fight for our cause and oppose the commercial interests. This travesty should not under any circumstances be allowed to happen.</p>
115	I consider the analysis of aggregate needs against areas of supply, AONB and other considerations perfectly satisfactory. At this level, the reasons why Cholsey is selected are not clear, but I assume only because the other potential but rejected sites within SODC are not enumerated.
146 (Didcot Town Council )	<p>We have a concern regarding the proposed new area of working at Cholsey. This is intended to ensure a local supply of sand and gravel to planned development in southern Oxfordshire when reserves at Sutton Courtenay become exhausted in about 2020. Paragraphs 10 &amp; 11 refer.</p> <p>Policy C7 reads "Minerals and waste development will only be permitted where provision is made for convenient access to and along the primary road network in a way that maintains or improves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the safety of all road users including pedestrians;</li> <li>- the efficiency and quality of the road network;</li> <li>- residential and environmental amenity."</li> </ul>

	<p>The A4130 from Abingdon Road Didcot to the start of the Brightwell bypass does not satisfy the requirements which we have highlighted in bold. Firstly there are already too many HGVs using the A4130 Abingdon Road. The Northern Perimeter Road needs to be completed before sand and gravel for construction can safely be brought from east of Didcot to construction sites in and around Didcot. Abingdon Road is residential, and a walking route to the primary schools on the Ladygrove development.</p> <p>Secondly east from Hadden Hill, the A4130 is narrow and substandard, and has been the scene of numerous accidents. For example, the 40mph speed limit east of Didcot was introduced following a fatal accident, and earlier this year it was blocked for several hours on the morning of January 19, when an articulated lorry skidded off the road on ice.</p> <p>Major improvements to the A4130 would be needed. We trust that 6.13 would apply, and that "appropriate financial contributions ... [would] be sought from mineral developers and operators through legal agreement", before any gravel working at Cholsey is approved. Would the Community Infrastructure Levy cover the cost?</p>
148	<p>I would like to register my very strong objection to the plan for extraction between 2011 and 2030, although possibly only commencing in 2020 once Sutton Courtenay extraction has finished, of sharp sand and gravel in Cholsey.</p> <p>I also object to the proposed use of the land following extraction by filling with water as you state because of the generally high water table and a local shortage of inert waste material for infilling, most new sand and gravel workings in the river valleys of Oxfordshire will have to be restored to water bodies.</p> <p>I also read that it is recognised that where restoration relies on infilling with inert waste because of shortage of suitable fill material it may take some years to complete restoration. This I object to additionally.</p> <p>Should this project proceed the restoration should be back to agricultural land only so that the local landscape is not significantly altered by the creation of lakes from sand and gravel .</p> <p>The proposed Cholsey land is entirely within the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns Areas of outstanding natural beauty, which should offer protection against this use of the agricultural land proposed.</p> <p>This location is in a rural area, with a small country town and many small villages very close by.</p> <p>The existing road system has already become vastly overloaded and unsuitable for the existing level of traffic on the main roads and through all of the little villages and increase congestion and traffic on our local community and on our rural country environment.</p> <p>I would appreciate confirmation that you had read and noted my strong objections to this mineral and waste proposal for Cholsey.</p>
149	<p>I should like to add my objection to this proposal. The traffic on the A4130 is already too great and this would be likely to add a further 200 heavy lorry journeys per day onto this already overly congested and narrow road. I hate to think of the accidents which will be caused by impatient drivers.</p>
254	<p>In the Council's briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>Other issues that I believe need to be taken into account in assessing the proposals are detailed below.</p> <p>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to Cholsey.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are</p>

based.

The choice of site put forward by the Council for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

#### Destruction of the Local Environment

A significant factor in any assessment needs to ask whether there is "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development (likely to be 'unacceptable' in anyone's view). In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is surely an aspect that requires substantially greater research, investigation and assessment.

#### Likely impact on local economy

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

An example of such a consideration is the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, which runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames, and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.

A poor economic decision and a poor decision for the community

It is understood that this is the only new site under consideration by OCC for mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company which holds an option over the land and stands to gain most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality. This site is the only new site proposed within the minerals strategy yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the only site being put forward by the Council.

Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG-33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

#### Transport Issues

I fully appreciate the aim that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from west Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries onto roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which

	<p>time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial consideration, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no other local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading, Oxford or even further afield. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.</p> <p>Coupled with this is the factor that Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term (though the damage caused in that period will very much have very long term implications).</p> <p>I therefore implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning and in particular take account of:</p> <p>It is not proven to be the best site in the county  It has low grade aggregates  The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the surrounding area  The community has not been adequately consulted  It will blight the local economy of Wallingford  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
248	<p>I was absolutely disgusted to find out about your plans to destroy most of the countryside between the town I live in - Wallingford and Cholsey. I write this letter to outline the reasons why I think this site should NOT be used as a gravel pit.</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to 'safeguarding the character, amenity and setting; Cholsey is a parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986AD. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water courses and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. This particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a 'heritage asset' within the definition of your plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green</p>

Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

Para 6 & 7

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either.

Para 8

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake



	<p>due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p>
145	<p>I wish to register my strong objections to the proposal to put forward Cholsey village as the preferred option for gravel extraction</p> <p>A gravel extraction plant should not be placed in this location rather it should be placed somewhere that minimises the impact on such a significant centre of population such as this area and not be allowed to destroy an area of historical environmental archaeological and rural importance .This site would be within a 1 mile radius of the population of Wallingford Cholsey village Brightwell cum Sotwell and Crowmarsh Gifford each of these settlements have a distinct individuality historical importance which would be destroyed if this proposal goes through.</p> <p>Cholsey is a parish of considerable interest stretching back to 986AD. This proposal is a threat to the heritage of this age old farming community replacing reed beds water courses age old field patterns and significant amounts of wild life with dust noise traffic and an eyesore sitting next to the main route into Cholsey village. The proposal is out of character with the amenity and setting of Choleseys largely unchanged and unspoilt natural landscape. The popular Agatha Christie trail from Winterbrook to St Marys Church would be lost and the long awaited Cholsey to Wallingford cycleway would not be completed.</p> <p>I object most strongly to the extreme change such a proposal would bring to where I live, replacing fields and fauna with dust noise and an unimaginable eyesore for 25 years.</p> <p>Within the mile sits Wallingford town a nationally important Saxon town with known important archaeological sites in its centre and stretching out to its borders with Cholsey village . Currently Wallingford is considered to be one of Englands best preserved Saxon towns . its very important for the local economy that tourists and visitors come to this community to see its attractions and help the local businesses to thrive. The movements of up to 80 lorries carrying gravel everyday along the bypass and the resulting dust noise would not encourage the visitors to come here. The increase in traffic would mean local people would stop using the bypass and come through the centre of Wallingford causing congestion and danger in the town.</p> <p>The residents dont want it here and neither will future residents . it is critical that OCC considers the the designated increases in population to Wallingford and the villages housing which the Core Strategy seeks to make currently 550 homes on the edge of the town alongside the bypass, with a</p>

	<p>further 150 in Cholsey as a larger village. Construction is currently under way for 350 homes at Fairmile ( Cholsey) and 42 at Crowmarsh Gifford In addition with upcoming planning applications for 160 at Moulsoford and 189 at the CABI site also on the bypass. That means some 3,500 more people in the next few years and doesn't include any windfall sites either. to achieve the vision for this area the community needs to preserve its assets not lose them . How many people would want to move to such a ruined area they just wont buy the houses.</p> <p>I am also concerned that the strategy only focuses on the one site, Cholsey and that no in depth analysis will take place. Decisions cannot be made without more options and careful considerations of each options merits and drawbacks. I urge you not to restrict the nomination to one site alone, that is a very poor way for elected leaders of the Council to apply taxpayers resources to such a problem. What is needed is to use resources effectively to subject more possible sites to a proper system of appraisal rather than putting through a site option of Cholsey alone.</p> <p>A mineral expert has confirmed that current choice of site at Cholsey is not the best place for a site Many other sites in South Oxon are better suited, again indepth comparison and analysis would bring these sits up to the nomination stage.</p> <p>I understand if the gravel extraction went ahead at Cholsey residents would suffer for 25 years and as yet there are no long term plans for the final use and restoration of the site. this too is unacceptable</p> <p>I urge you not to proceed with this and reconsider your options.</p>
204	<p>Following your letter to me ref MIO/0488 from 2007 I understand that a further consultation is under way relating to the possible siting of a gravel quarry alongside the road between Cholsey and Wallingford. I and my family are residents on that road and have serious concerns around a further increase of traffic on the road, the despoilation of a very beautiful piece of countryside and the effects on the quality of life of those living close to the proposed works.</p> <p>The current road is marred by there being no enforcement of the 30 mile an hour speed limit, even though other parts of the village have chicanes and humps to calm the traffic. The speed of traffic along the current roadway is highly dangerous abutting as it does a narrow pavement upon which youngsters walk between Cholsey and Wallingford at all times of the day and night, large numbers of children await their school buses (and get on/off them in the roadway) and three times a day we walk our dogs down said pavement to reach the country walks whcih currently cross what may well become an industrial site. There have already been fatalities on this piece of road and the situation can only be seriously exacerbated by the additional traffic that such a scheme will engender.</p> <p>The piece of countryside between Wallingford and Cholsey forms part of the green swathes which make south Oxfordshire an area which has achieved a good balance between the necessity of development and housing and the amenity provided by clear pieces of countryside which are immediately accessible to those living in the towns and villages of this part of the country. The area under threat is criss-crossed by footpaths which are used by regular walkers from Cholsey, which is a very large village and hence accessible countryside is at a premium for residents. The use of this area for gravel extraction would seriously diminish the amount of readily accessible countryside. Furthermore the west side of the proposed site is demarcated by the Wallingford-Cholsey steam train branch-line which affords children in the region 3 miles of historic locomotion through unspoiled country. One of these three miles would now become an industrial waste-land from their point of view. The railway brings people and income into the region and its very existence would be seriously threatened by this development.</p> <p>Finally, the quality of life of local residents will be seriously affected through noise, dust and emissions nuisance as well as the traffic threat alluded to above. Furthermore the effect on the price of large quantities of housing (there is much very close by) will be hugely detrimental - mostly the types of housing are modest as compared with the spacious nature of much housing in many surrounding villages in south Oxfordshire - which means that the effect on the families concerned is much harder hitting in terms of real cost and resultant loss of value to their families.</p> <p>I hope the Council may reconsider its plans in the light of the above concerns.</p>
208	<p>I wish to register my personal opposition to the proposals for gravel extraction from open farmland between Wallingford and Cholsey.</p>

	<p>There are many good reasons for objections - noise, dust, road surface deposits, traffic impact - but my first concern, relating to the larger of the two sites, is that the green barrier between the two communities would be lost. My second concern is that the environmental quality of the smaller site would be seriously damaged; this is beautiful countryside land adjoining the river Thames, and it ought to remain so.</p>
193	<p>I do not expect that I am a lone voice, but almost!</p> <p>Concerning the application and 'need' to extract gravel from land north west of the Wallingford Road at Cholsey and alongside the River Thames a few hundred metres east of the site; this land is not used for any other purpose, it is quite a distance from most dwellings, other than Brook House, which is in the middle of the proposed site and the nearest half dozen houses are on the windward side of the site for the majority of the time.</p> <p>Most of the people who are so very much against this activity on these sites are living in houses which are probably built mainly of sand and clay, their gardens are concreted, walled and paved using gravel, sand and clay and the road which gives them access to their homes are constructed mainly from sand, gravel and tarmac - which is a large proportion stone. These people are happy to have used these materials which were 'quarried' from somewhere, do they expect someone else to pander to their needs forever? It is about time we all give something back, willingly, when the opportunity arises.</p> <p>If these operations do come to fruition, I imagine there will be some income to benefit the council, either County, Parish or both and some of this income could be used to rebuild the pavilion in Cholsey which was burned down some ten or more years ago! (What happened to the insurance money?)</p> <p>I do hope you will not ridicule my comments because I feel they are valid and there needs to be some tolerance and cooperation in this increasingly hateful and selfish world.</p>
187	<p>Objection to proposed gravel and mineral extraction in the area known as Cholsey.</p> <p>This would be an intolerable environment invasion to an area completely incapable of withstanding the impact of such disruption.</p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live within a 1 mile radius of the site. To subject some many people to the noise, dust filth and disruption is not acceptable.</p> <p>Roads and paths would be wrecked to say nothing of road sides and hedgerows....these disgusting lorries causing environmental damage that is irreparable and irreplaceable. How can a small town such as Wallingford with its restricted main cross roads and single lane river bridge cope with this grotesque blight of road, path countryside, and town...simple answer it cannot.</p> <p>Once again it is intended to put profit before people and wild life, fauna and flora.....so much for the empty words of environmental care expressed by local and national government alike. Original people must make sure the bin lids are closed, but profiteers can rape the country at will.</p> <p>It's immoral, and I say no....no....no.....stop before it is too late.</p>
433	<p>I am an Australian visitor, who has had the very good fortune to live in Cholsey for the past two months. I have been absolutely enchanted by the beauty of this part of England. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey area areas of outstanding natural beauty and significant cultural heritage, and must surely considered as enormous assets for Oxfordshire and for the whole of England.</p> <p>I have therefore been appalled to learn of a proposal to dig a gravel pit near this village. Such an act would have a huge and adverse impact on the character and natural environment of the area.</p> <p>Further to this, I find it quite bizarre that an area of such archaeological and historical importance as the parish of Cholsey could possibly be considered as an appropriate place for something as dirty and disruptive as a gravel pit. I understand the proposed site lies close to a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze and Iron Ages - it would seem vital to British heritage that an area of such archaeological significance is not destroyed.</p>

	<p>From the recognised beginnings of the parish approximately 1000 years ago, through to the more recent attractions of the home and grave of world-famous author Agatha Christie, Cholsey has a rich and colourful history. It would seem an act of folly to disregard the value of this history. I urge all those involved in the decision making process to reconsider the proposed gravel pit strategy and plead with you to save this beautiful part of rural England for the people who live here, and for future visitors.</p>
427	<p>I write to support the campaign AGAINST building Huge Gravel Pit between Wallingford and Cholsey. There isn't much space between the two places now and therefore such a big dusty, noisy site is not going to be very pleasant for all the people and wildlife currently residing there. There must be other places that are further away from centres of population that could be developed. I realise that the pit will provide jobs and also that we need gravel but surely it shouldn't be in an area such as this where it will blight the lives of people and animals for years and years. I hope you will be able to influence whoever now owns this area and make them think again before they are the cause of so much unhappiness.</p>
424	<p>As a long standing resident of Cholsey I oppose, and strongly object to the idea of Cholsey/Wallingford being the site of any gravel and soft sand extraction plans by OCC, and contractors because:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A gravel extraction pit at Cholsey is an environmental threat to the well-being of villagers and the village as a whole. In my opinion, gravel extraction at Cholsey would cause many health issues (physical and mental health) from noise, dust and HGV traffic pollution, because the proposed site would be right up to housing on the Wallingford Road and into Cholsey, and seriously affect a combined population of 10,000 people in Wallingford and Cholsey.</li> <li>- The proposed site will also sit opposite a children's nursery at the top of Reading Road at Cholsey and back down onto the Thames. Again, health issues could affect children, parents and staff at the children's nursery with the gravel site being so close.</li> <li>- Traffic would come to a standstill in the area; heavy HGVs around on local roads would be a danger to children, families, cyclists, pedestrians and everyone in the area.</li> <li>- The local economy, tourism and house values will suffer, people's lives will suffer, and the area will see lots of outward migration as people sell to move to avoid the gravel workings and the pollution it would bring. Inward migration would not happen because of the gravel extraction. In short, the local economy would be hugely affected. A once thriving village of 3,000 people and Wallingford Town of 8,000 people would stagnate and die.</li> <li>- Cholsey as a village will be damaged for at least 25 years, and beyond, especially if a landfill site replaces the gravel pit blight once it had finished, or it is left as "depression" in the ground which has then to be fenced off because of the danger that is left - what a scar on the landscape of South Oxfordshire this will be, so close to the Chilterns and Downs AONB, and will be seen from miles around, especially looking down on Cholsey and Wallingford from the AONB Chiltern Hills which border the sites. An absolute disgrace, from an environmental point of view, if gravel extraction is allowed to happen at Cholsey/Wallingford - a Saxon town of international and archaeological significance, so close to areas of AONB.</li> <li>- For all these reasons, and more (see below) as a long standing resident of Cholsey, who will be directly affected by OCC's gravel extraction plans, I absolutely oppose the idea of Cholsey/Wallingford being the site of any gravel extraction.</li> </ul> <p>Cholsey is adjacent to a huge AONB - which must be protected, and preserved. The siting of a gravel pit here will be a scar on the AONB landscape that will be seen here and for miles around.</p> <p>Even the environmental report (Sept 2010) on the OCC web site, by Scott Wilson, says Cholsey is "constrained" by AONB. See <a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/wasteandrecycling/planning/strategy/SASEARevisedMineralsSpatialStrategyOptions.pdf">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/wasteandrecycling/planning/strategy/SASEARevisedMineralsSpatialStrategyOptions.pdf</a>.</p> <p>In short, it says in that report: AONB constraints - Warborough, Cholsey and Dorchester.</p> <p>So, when the OCC minerals strategy team say there are "no constraints associated with Cholsey" this is at odds with the Scott Wilson report which says</p>

there are constraints (i.e. the AONB) and the road system around Cholsey.

The Wallingford Road (where I understand HGV Lorries will exit and enter the proposed gravel site) is already an accident black spot with a number of fatalities over the years. It's the main road in and out of Cholsey village, cyclists use it, pedestrians use it (there is only one side of the road with a narrow foot path, and that's on the side of the road that would run parallel with the proposed gravel site). Mixing all this up: village vehicle flows in and out of the village, pedestrians, cyclists with HGV gravel traffic would be an act of complete highway planning madness - to say the least.

In addition, after the Wallingford by-pass the road to Didcot (A4130 via Hadden Hill) which presumably HGV gravel traffic would take, is narrow and winding - another accident black spot - with many fatalities (6 fatal since 2006) along that road over the years. It's a road that is just too narrow for the passing of HGV gravel lorries loaded with gravel. This is all a big accident waiting to happen. I have seen articulated HGV trucks trying to pass each other on the road to Didcot and they find it very difficult to get past each other because the road is so narrow and twisty. The speed limits have already been reduced to 50 mph and 40 mph, with further calls for its reduction, and there is a busy cross road at the top of the hill. There is a 20 mph hour blind bend on the route to Didcot where all HGV traffic have difficulty negotiating because it is such a sharp bend. Many do not observe that speed limit on the bend. Imagine lots of fully laden gravel lorries passing this spot every day - a big accident waiting to happen. Cyclists also use this road to Didcot.

I understand the preserved railway (Cholsey Wallingford Railway (locally known as the "bunk line")) would have to close if this gravel site goes ahead - because tourists would not want to pay to travel past a gravel pit (most of the preserved railway runs right alongside the edge of the proposed gravel site). After 40 years and much money raised and spent on its preservation by local volunteers, the "bunk line" it is now a local and national leisure facility that brings tourism into Cholsey Village and Wallingford Town - who will compensate the preservation society and all the volunteers who have worked so hard on this preserved railway for so long, if it has to go out of business because of the gravel pit? This would be a massive loss for local tourism, Oxfordshire tourism and a local amenity in the area, should it close on account of the gravel pit. If the "Bunk Line" closes this would mean the loss of 10,000 national and international tourists a year to this attraction according to the team that run the line. This is local Cholsey & Wallingford tourism, and Oxfordshire tourism revenue that would be lost to village and town and county, not to mention the £7.5m that has been invested into this preserved railway line by volunteer groups over 30 years, according to the team that run the "Bunk Line".

The internationally famous crime author - Agatha Christie - is buried in Cholsey church yard and many from all over the world come to Cholsey and Wallingford to see the house where she lived in Winterbrook (which is adjacent to the proposed gravel site) and the church yard where she is buried in Cholsey and travel the "Agatha Christie Trail" of local footpaths and rights of way which run alongside and across the proposed travel site. That international tourist trade will be lost to South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire, in general, on account of a gravel site in Cholsey.

There are many small and medium size brooks and rivers flowing from the Thames across large parts of the proposed gravel site which are on zone 2 flood sites - as I understand it - any gravel extraction could upset the river flows around the area, not to mention any contaminations leaching to and from the local sewage works which also borders the proposed gravel site.

In my opinion, there are many "constraints" on Cholsey as a gravel site:

- Proposed Cholsey gravel site borders an AONB, Chilterns and North Wessex Downs, and the Thames.
- Local roads are not "up to the job" of constant HGV traffic - especially the A4130 over Hadden Hill towards Didcot.
- Local roads would be narrow and dangerous with the mix of HGV traffic, cyclists, pedestrians, cars etc.
- The Wallingford by-pass will become congested as people find an alternative route, to avoid getting stuck behind HGV gravel lorries. No doubt they will go through Wallingford Town. The Wallingford by-pass was constructed by OCC to take traffic away from Wallingford - the gravel site at Cholsey will ensure that the by-pass is no longer used for the purpose it was intended, as people go through Wallingford town to avoid the HGV gravel lorries and not use the by-pass.

- Cholsey site is too close to so called "sensitive receptors" - such as housing on the Wallingford Road, right on top of the village of Cholsey and town of Wallingford, and its associated housing and right opposite the Nursery School on the Reading Road.
- This site will damage local tourism - with the almost certain closure of Cholsey Wallingford ("Bunk Line") preserved railway.
- Agatha Christie tourism connection would be damaged with much loss of tourism income in the local economy.
- Wildlife and flora and fauna on the site will be damaged for ever - brooks and streams cross the proposed site and have Otters in them. A rare sight indeed. This will be lost.
- One of the proposed sites goes right down onto the Thames and the Thames path would be cut at that point.

A gravel extraction pit at the village of Cholsey and edge of Wallingford, right up to housing in Cholsey and the River Thames, is in my opinion, an environmental and planning disaster that will blight the area of Cholsey, Winterbrook and Wallingford now and for generations to come.

In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.

It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the AONB setting in which these buildings are based.

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." . The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses and field patterns which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, Tawney Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing, golden plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

	<p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region.</p> <p>Any semi-industrial development, such as gravel workings, which further expands the town's curtilage, must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'</p> <p>The choice put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable.</p> <p>Furthermore, I understand from a number of sources that the gravel material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel on this site is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered over twenty years ago , in 1987. OCC, please look back at your own archives and you will see that in 1987 the proposed sites in Cholsey/Wallingford were rejected both by OCC and the gravel companies - one of the reasons being the poor gravel quality and it being uneconomical to mine, not to mention the close proximity to the Chilterns and Wessex Downs AONB. Reasons for the sites rejection then, which are still valid now - nothing's changed!</p> <p>I am really concerned that the proposal for gravel extraction at Cholsey will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by OCC. Note also that HGV gravel lorries would have to cross the cycle path onto Wallingford Road. Not a good combination to mix HGV lorries loaded with gravel with cyclists, pedestrians, mothers pushing prams (on their way back from the Nursery on Reading Road) and cars. Accidents and fatalities waiting to happen.</p> <p>The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are lime limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>The proposed Cholsey gravel site is flawed on so many fronts and I strongly oppose and object to the site of gravel extraction on land between Cholsey village and Wallingford town.</p>
637	<p>Please, if there is an alternative that would not devastate an area as the Cholsey site would, please have another look and think about it more carefully. It is so easy to make decisions on places in which we do not live and would, in no way affect our lives, so please look within yourselves as well. The proposed site is a beautiful area, so accessible and used daily by so many. I know there is amazing archaeological and historical interest and it is so sad that this would be torn out of the ground. I walk to Wallingford daily through these fields with my children and every day is a beautiful and we find new things to look at and appreciate. Already the road to Wallingford is fast and dangerous and to also remove the beautiful fields and increase the danger of the road would make Wallingford so inaccessible.</p> <p>People tend not to write letters of objection because we feel so unimportant, insignificant and that those decision makers do not care whatever anyone says. I for the first time in my life have chosen to write and hope that you will, indeed, listen to the people of this area.</p>

799	<p>I am writing to register my immense disapproval for the proposed gravel pit in the village of Cholsey. My main concern is for the wildlife in that area and the habitats you are going to destroy. Cholsey is lucky enough to have red kites in the area, after much conservation work by many people, and you are wishing to destroy that. The noise from this gravel pit is going to affect everyone, as is the dust that will arise. The trucks that are going to rumble along that road will be constant, and I dread to think of the safety of all those walking and cycling to Wallingford along that footpath. Our village is a happy one with a good community spirit. The Wallingford-Cholsey railway is a good example of this, as is the local trade where we all support one another. Our school is very successful, I hate to think of the dust causing them to have to stay inside instead of using the outdoor adventure playground, sports field and forest school facilities. I beg you to please reconsider, find a site that is not going to have such an impact on the local community.</p>
764	<p>We have recently fought to safeguard the continuity of our local natural habitat over commercial gain, when an ill conceived proposal for gravel extraction adjacent to Berrick Salome was submitted. Far from adopting a "not in our backyard" approach, we are dismayed that the latest proposal is to affect an equally sensitive location.</p> <p>Residing in a village satellite to Wallingford, we are enormously concerned about the impact any quarry will have close to the town. The routes to be used by the quarry trucks are key to various schools and will add significant danger to children, cyclists and cars. Aside from the Wallingford by-pass, the route to Didcot is not suitable for such a significant increase in journeys from vehicles as large as those that will be employed by the quarry. Two issues raise particular concern. Firstly, we understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists. Secondly, limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>This clearly infers that the council is running out of options and appears to be forcing through a proposal in order to meet an uncomfortable obligation. In doing so it is in danger of causing itself great embarrassment, especially if the process evidently only skirts around a full consultation and fails to address fully the community who will be most affected.</p> <p>The only winners are the Landowner, the contractor and the council who will be rid of an awkward problem.</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ...." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. We understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other</p>



	<p>older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ...", the proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. The site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>Of more concern is the loss of habitat to Buzzards, Tawny Owls and Red Kites that nest here. The fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include Lapwing; Golden Plover; Fieldfare; Redwing and Roosting Grey Herons. Little Owls, Barn Owls and, occasionally in winter, Short-Eared Owls can be seen. In recent years Barn Owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term. Given the loose approach to consultation, the devastating impact on the natural habitat of various species of birds and mammals and ultimately, the poor quality of aggregate available from the site, we believe the Council should consider denying this proposal.</p>
1004	<p>I understand that Cholsey Parish Council were informed in February this year that Cholsey was no longer an option for the gravel pit but without any detailed consultation this site is now the preferred option.</p> <p>It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefits and drawbacks. If the position means that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not a selection and the council has left itself with no other options. There are significant reasons why Cholsey is not an appropriate site.</p> <p>PLANNING</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey Village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p>

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

It would also join up the towns of Wallingford and Cholsey which I understood the planners wished to keep separate.

#### GEOLOGY

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.

#### LONG TERM PLANNING

I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dustbowl in summer.

#### HERITAGE

In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.

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The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.

The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

#### ENVIRONMENT ECOLOGY

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular

interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

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#### ARCHAEOLOGY

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

#### TOURISM

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

#### HIGHWAYS

The adjoining roads to this site are the bypass and Wallingford Road.

Wallingford Road is totally unsuitable for use by heavy vehicles. It is a narrow road barely sufficient for 2 cars. It is dangerous having a fatality last year and a recent crash in the last couple of weeks when a vehicle went through a hedge.

I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.

The bypass is a fast road and the only solution would be a traffic lights or a roundabout for the connection to this site. I understand this is not acceptable to highways.

The route from this site to Didcot past North Moreton is an extremely dangerous road and not suitable for the proposed vehicle movement for heavy vehicles.

#### CONCLUSION

I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your

	<p>plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p>
929	<p>I was shocked to learn about the proposed gravel extraction in Cholsey. This proposal has caused considerable anger through-out the village, at the way this proposal has been handled.</p> <p>We all acknowledge that there is a need for gravel extraction in South Oxfordshire to prevent the need for transporting sand and gravel long distances across the county, and to make sure that there are adequate reserves for future provision. However the Cholsey site was not amongst those originally proposed and it has not only been introduced at the last minute, but it has become the County's recommended site for South Oxfordshire. By introducing the site at such a late stage it is difficult to carry out appropriate consultation.</p> <p>It is particularly difficult to understand the council's proposal given that when the site was previously suggested for gravel extraction some 20 years ago, the previous contractor withdrew over concerns about the quality of the gravel. It appears that the proposal came from the land agents for the trust that owns much of the site. The proposed site is very close to the village and if there is a development of further housing to the south of Wallingford (on a site also owned by the same trust) then this will mean even more properties will be adjacent to, or within a few hundred yards of the extraction site.</p> <p>Two of the existing properties are listed buildings and Brook Farm has just under-gone extensive renovation and landscaping. I cannot imagine that the new owners of the farm were aware of the gravel pit proposal, which if it had been made known in good time, should have been identified to them through the locals search, but as indicated above this site seems to have been a very late addition to the Mineral Strategy.</p> <p>This site would have a very detrimental effect to village life and the village environment, through increased pollution, problems with transport and a loss of the natural amenity within the village. Currently we have a growing colony of red kites within the village and I wonder what the effect would be on this recently re-introduced birds.</p> <p>I do hope that the council will reconsider recommending the Cholsey Site as its preferred site for gravel extraction.</p>
995	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting.." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extractions sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than 40 years in Winterbrook to her burial site in St Marys Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the</p>

railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, Tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. Thee birds include lapwing, golden plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Fam is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds the site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals'.

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey Village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that seperates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In exces of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit tha brings ten

	<p>years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people.</p> <p>The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merit, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not a selection and the council has left itself with no other options.</p> <p>It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking. The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>I understand from a number of sources that the material found in this site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with the proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will be ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time most of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p>
751 (Aston)	I am writing on behalf of the Joint Parish Councils of Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe to object in the strongest terms to the plan to establish a new quarry on a site between Wallingford and Cholsey in South Oxfordshire.

<p>Tirrold &amp; Aston Upthorpe PC)</p>	<p>This is not a single parish or town council matter; the proposed development would affect the lives of the whole wider community living and working between Wallingford and Berkshire Downs. we do not believe that there has been anything like adequate local consultation on this proposal, nor proper appraisal o the consequences of carrying it out. It would be an imposed solution to the County's mineral requirements, flying the face of a significant number of negative and contrary factors; yet no other site is even being considered for this particular role. This is particularly strange in the light of a strong perception that the Cholsey site is considered technically deficient in a number of respects, such as its proximity to the River Thames, the relatively poor quality of its gravel and sand, the limited size of its extraction potential and the perceived difficulties inherent in its post quarrying restoration and reversion to public use. This last deficiency is of particular relevance in view of the proximity of the proposed quarry to such dense areas of housing, the inhabitants of which are likely to be left with an ugly scar on the landscape, with which it will be difficult to do anything creative or useful.</p> <p>One of the main reasons why this is not a suitable site for quarrying and the heavy traffic, noise, dust and other environmental pollution which would inevitably accompany it, is the fact that it would impact on so many people. The historic town of Wallingford and the currently thriving village of Cholsey, respectively, will pretty much abut the NE and SW ends of the planned quarry, so that many thousands of people will find themselves living and/or working within a mile of the quarrying activities, which could not but blight the day to day lives of most of them. Why is OCC planning to subject so many people to such a noisy, disruptive and heavy truck generating development? At present a pleasant area of farmland and wetlands is all that separates the town and the village and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the various obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>To start with, your reference to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." of the site can be nothing but empty words in circumstances where an area of countryside, which must fall under your definition of a "heritage asset" is dealt with in such a cavalier fashion. It is impossible to visualise how the proposed quarrying site can realistically be managed over very many years, such that it could genuinely safeguard the character, amenity and setting of what is now a largely unspoilt natural landscape.</p> <p>Your consultation document refers also to the "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." I have dealt with residential amenities above, but in terms of the environment, wildlife and sensitive receptors, this proposed site, between Wallingford and Cholsey, includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. They are rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat for a wide range of animal, bird and insect life. These animals include, but are not limited to, deer (both roe and muntjack), foxes, hares, weasels, stoats and in recent years, otters. Bird residents include buzzards, tawny owls and red kites and the surrounding fields are also much used by flocks of other bird visitors, including lapwing; golden plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons, little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls. I dare say that, given more time to put together a survey, local naturalists would be able to report an even richer spectrum of wildlife than that described here.</p> <p>Significant numbers of hikers, ramblers and other visitors are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural beauty, which surrounds the proposed quarry site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement and thriving village of Cholsey all play their part in establishing the attractiveness and leisure potential of this area, something which must be severely affected and weakened by such a semi industrial development as the proposed quarrying activities. This in turn will have a negative impact on the economic health of both Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>The aim of extracting gravel and sand from sites close to areas of future building development sounds admirable in principle, but in this case fails to really take into account the probable disjoint between the building and extraction programmes and timelines.</p> <p>Mention must also be made of the impact of the proposed quarry and its attendant infrastructure implications on the surrounding area, including our own villages of Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe. The chief of these will be the increase in heavy truck traffic, particularly significant on the A4130</p>
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	<p>Wallingford bypass and Didcot road, which will already be struggling under the additional strain of new housing developments at the Fairmile, Carmel College, Slade End and, perhaps, Winterbrook. The villages and lanes will not be spared either, with significant numbers of gravel and aggregate trucks deciding that the quickest way to Wantage is through South Moreton and the Astons to the A417 and Blewbury, ignoring with impunity the 7.5 tonne gross vehicle weight restriction on this route, which should theoretically protect the area from HGV transits, but which does not.</p> <p>In conclusion, it is our opinion that development of the proposed quarrying site between Wallingford and Cholsey not only jeopardises the residential and environmental health and wellbeing of the local and wider area, as described above, but also fails to address honestly the long term mineral extraction requirements of Oxfordshire, or to take proper account of the strategic environmental assessment and planning strategy objectives and criteria referred to in your Consultation Draft.</p> <p>For all the above reasons, we would urge you, therefore, to reconsider your intention and proposal to put this site forward for planning consideration.</p>
805	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposed site for gravel extraction at Cholsey.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through noise, dust and smell.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside green lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p>



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The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.

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I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the

	<p>site being sued for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>I plead you to reconsider Cholsey as your chosen site for gravel extraction.</p>
807	<p>I am writing to complain about the proposed site for gravel extraction at Cholsey.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside green lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden</p>

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In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis

	<p>on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being sued for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County Council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science Vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>I plead you to reconsider Cholsey as your chosen site for gravel extraction.</p>
562	<p>It is difficult to imagine this is a serious proposal. But it appears to be, and so I am writing to strongly object to it, and to beg the Council to consider the many profound reasons for not siting a gravel pit along the Wallingford Road.</p> <p>There is evident of occupation during the Bronze and Iron Ages in this area, and there is likely to be significant archaeological material there. Around Cox's Farm, a listed building, is a mediaeval settlement area, outlying a mediaeval town with a long early history. If this site is interfered with, without prior in-depth investigation into its architectural potential, its legacy will be lost forever. These inheritances don't belong to us to destroy. They are not ours to sell off. They transcend money in importance. We have a duty of care to respect and preserve them. There are historic reed beds, field patterns and water-courses unchanged for decades here. It would be a grave matter to be responsible for wiping these off the map where they have survived since the Cholsey map of 1695. Environmentally, this area is a long-standing, unspoilt wildlife habitat, nesting place for buzzards, tawny owls and red kites, and much visited by flocks of lapwing, fieldfare and the like, especially in winter.</p> <p>For the above reasons and many more, Cholsey and Wallingford attract people who energetically care about the area, its history, its geography, its</p>

	<p>geology, its areas of outstanding natural beauty. If we, and those before us, had not cared, there would most likely be little of its history left by now. It is a miracle so much has been preserved and I beg the Council to think again and again and again before letting go of this unrepeatable heritage asset.</p> <p>Walkers, tourists and visitors of all kinds are attracted to the area and they bring prosperity. If this proposal were to be agreed by the Council, the attraction will be severely diluted. The popular Agatha Christie trail will be destroyed, and the Cholsey/Wallingford steam railway will be threatened with closure. The newly approved Wallingford to Cholsey cycle path will not be created. A large semi-industrial site linking Wallingford and Cholsey will change their character entirely, and the impact of years of dust and noise and heavy vehicles will be inescapable.</p> <p>The effect on the residents will be profound and long-term. Not only their homes, but the whole area will be devalued by the gravel pits. The knock-on effects will be felt in every level of the community for the next twenty years. More than 10,000 people live/work within a mile of the site and hundreds more about it. How can such an imposition on the community ever be justified? Apparently there is no post-quarrying restoration plan for the site. It is too close to the river for either landfill or the creation of a lake. What is to happen when the last lorries depart and the dust finally settles? Will our legacy to future generations here be the trade-off of an important part of our heritage in exchange for a summer dust-bowl and a winter bog - an unredeemable waste-land? The gravel itself and the income it briefly generates are unlikely to benefit Wallingford or Cholsey in a way that could ever atone for the losses. Gravel extraction is a commercial operation and the companies involved cannot be expected to be environmentally sensitive or altruistic. In the scale of things any gain can only be short-term. The gravel companies move on and the destruction they leave behind is permanent. The suggestion that the gravel itself is of poor quality (which is one reason a previous contractor pulled out 20 years ago) is really irrelevant to this argument.</p> <p>The point I am trying to make is about personal responsibility. None of us can later plead ignorance of what is at stake here. It cannot be argued that this is but a small part of our heritage picture which, in the interests of short-term gain (but whose?) we can afford to sacrifice. If we cut a small part out of Van Gough's Sunflowers what would the effect be on the whole picture? Exactly.</p> <p>In so many ways the Council has got things right and been instrumental in preserving much of what makes these historic places survive and flourish. So please, please, get this one right too.</p> <p>Thank you for reading this letter.</p>
435	<p>With regard to the proposed gravel pit sites along Wallingford Road, near the roundabout on Reading Road. We strongly object to these plans as they are totally unsuitable sites.</p> <p>The land adjacent to Wallingford Road has an abundance of wildlife. The Bunk railway line runs through there. This is a very popular steam train ride overlooking the countryside. This would be replaced by an unsightly, noisy gravel pit.</p> <p>The area wouldn't be able to cope with all the added traffic. Caps Lane runs between Wallingford Road and Reading Road. It would become a cut through for traffic.</p> <p>It is very popular for the walkers and horse riders of Cholsey. Being narrow with several sharp bends the increase in traffic would make it impossible for the residents of the lane and those who use it for walking and horse riding. The site on Reading Road is situated right on the river flood plain. Every winter the whole area floods. What will happen to all this water if there is a gravel pit on this site? Pumping the water would only move the problem elsewhere.</p>
175	<p>Please reconsider the Cholsey site as a site for your gravel pit.</p> <p>The site lies close to a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement</p>

	<p>area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.</p> <p>Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p>
176	Duplicate entry of 751
209	<p>I have been a resident of Cholsey for 11 years and love the village. It has an excellent community spirit and the surrounding area is beautiful for running and walking. I use all the local footpaths around the village and am very upset to hear that the Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former house in Winterbrook, to her burial site at St. Mary's Church, will be destroyed by these proposals. Agatha Christie is the world's best-selling author and a huge asset to our area; destroying this popular attraction would be misguided and foolish.</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance earliest records beginning in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed-beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan. The site is surrounded by many houses including a number of listed buildings. The area is full of wildlife and I have seen an otter on one occasion in the stream which flows across the area. This wildlife is surely entitled to be protected.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape. I am writing to request that this proposal is dropped and would like my objection to be formally recorded during this consultation period.</p>
292	<p>I can't tell you how appalled I am at this latest threat to our environment in the Wallingford/Cholsey/Brightwell - cum-Sotwell area. It seems that the powers that be are determined to ruin our environment in any way they can.</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years.</p>

These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

Para 6 & 7

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either.

Para 8

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial

	<p>companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am also concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>In view of all of the above points, the proposal is absolute madness. I feel so strongly about it that I will protest to the bitter end.</p>
302	<p>I wish to comment on the above particularly in relation to SG60, White Cross Farm Wallingford.</p> <p>As a new site this would have more impact on the local community with long term adverse cumulative effects including ecological, visual and local landscape impacts, air and noise pollution from HGV movements, traffic congestion, GHG emissions and impact on water environment.</p> <p>The URS Scott Wilson SA/SEA report says 'introducing mineral working in this area could have potential for negative amenity effects of the local community'</p> <p>Extraction of minerals here would create a loss of flood plain.</p> <p>This is an area which regularly floods. According to your preliminary site assessment 26.5% of this site is in flood zone 3b.</p> <p>A stream crosses this land so extraction would disrupt its flow.</p> <p>According to Oxfordshire's Sustainable Community Strategy Briefing Paper 6 :Environment (Aug 2007) by 2020 Oxfordshire winters will be wetter with an increased risk of flooding.</p> <p>There may be an impact on the water quality of the Thames. According to the URS SA/SEA report, extraction could have 'negative effects of the river</p>



(and) this should be considered during site selection.'

Some of this area is Grade 2 agricultural land.

The road network from this site is not good: particularly the road to Didcot and on to Wantage and Grove would not be suitable for a large quantity of HGV transporting gravel to construction sites. According to the URS report 'infrastructure improvements would be required to support working in this area... moving materials by road has potential for negative transport impacts (air, noise, congestion) as well as GHG emissions.' The A4130 and A4074 would need to be upgraded.

Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.

As mentioned by John Howell on his website, 'Oxfordshire has been dealt a bad hand at the regional level in terms of the total amount of gravel which it is now being asked to provide and it is now being asked to take more than its fair share while other counties get off lightly... We need to be much more robust in calling for more emphasis to be placed on the use of recycled aggregates. The Government has now given OCC the ability to ditch the former Government's regional minerals figures if it can justify an alternative. I urge them to take this opportunity.

Also as you say in 2.16 'The County Council considers that these policies generally continue to be appropriate to Oxfordshire, except that the figures for mineral supply are considered to be unjustifiably high.' It is also stated in Atkins' Local Assessment of Aggregate Supply Requirement that 'The county council believes that the regional figure is too high and that the Oxon sand and gravel apportionment is unnecessary, unacceptable and inappropriate.' This document also states that 'sales of sharp sand and gravel have fallen consistently since 1997 and the 2009 figure was less than half the level of sales in each of the years in the period 1996-2001. The fall between 1999 and 2009 is 68%. Nationally there has been a fall in sales of sand and gravel by 40% between 1999 and 2009. The comparable figure for the SE is 57%.'

Previous planning applications have been rejected on this site. According to the SODC planning register;

In 1957 a caravan was not permitted because it would 'seriously injure the visual... of the riverside' and there were also traffic issues.

In 1973 a boat mooring and mushroom sheds were refused because the site was in the flood plain and any building would be 'likely to further and materially increase the risk of flooding elsewhere'. It would also 'detract from the visual amenities of the area'.

In 1974 agric dwelling and farm buildings were refused because they would 'generate increased turning traffic on the road and would interfere with the free flow and safety of traffic.'

In 1978 an application for 'winning and working of minerals' as a County Matter was refused as it was contrary to county development plan, contrary to interim policy on sand and gravel, contrary to R Thames policy, substantial intrusion into rural area, inadequate access, additional turning movements, loss of Grade 2 agric land. There was a further application in 1984 where no decision was issued for a fish farm which seems to have originally omitted to include the mention of related mineral extraction and which eventually went before the Secretary of State.

There is a risk of bird strike for RAF Benson.

In your briefing document you refer to 'safeguarding the character, amenity and setting'.

A gravel site here would cause a loss of right of way ie the Thames Path National Trail. If the path was diverted then the Thames Path would not be running alongside the Thames.

The site is directly opposite a Grade II listed building ie St John The Baptist's Church and diagonally opposite other listed buildings ie Julius Gottlieb Gallery and Boathouse, Jewish Synagogue and Amphitheatre.

According to your preliminary site assessment this site is 'in or directly adjacent to AONB'

	<p>The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.</p> <p>In the 1980s the construction of the Wallingford bypass was proposed. This prompted a series of archaeological excavations as a riverside settlement near White Cross Farm was known - there had been some small excavations between 1948 and 1980.</p> <p>From 1985 - 92 a series of archaeological excavations were carried out where the bypass was to cross. The site at White Cross Farm including timber structures has been securely radio-carbon-dated to the late Bronze Age (c900-700BC). The artefacts suggest a high status site with a range of domestic and ritual activities represented and included an oak jetty.</p> <p>(Cromarty, AM, Barclay, A, Lambrick, G, and Robinson, M 2006, Late Bronze Age ritual and habitation on a Thames eyot at Whitecross Farm, Wallingford: the archaeology of the Wallingford bypass 1986-92.</p> <p>Winterbrook Bridge, adjacent to SG-60, was designed to span the width of the late Bronze Age site at White Cross Farm. The topsoil and any underlying archaeology was undisturbed by the building of the bridge but now you propose to extract minerals here.</p>
155	<p>I consider gravel extraction in a location like Cholsey to be totally inappropriate considering the unspoilt rural nature of the surrounding land.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Our current road traffic problems will be exacerbated. This cannot be avoided.</li> <li>2) Visitors will no longer be able to pursue their recreational activities (and locals). Footpaths will no longer be there to walk along.</li> <li>3) The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway currently runs through picturesque countryside. Not many people would want to take a trip alongside a gravel pit with inevitable consequences for the financial position of the railway. The railway benefits the locality.</li> </ol> <p>In summary, although I admit to being a "nimby" I also think that development of gravel extraction plans will destroy the asset that Cholsey, Wallingford and the inhabitants currently have.</p>
158	<p>I write to object to the gravel pit near Wallingford which is being planned. I live a long way from this site, however I wish to support those who will be affected. I visit the area periodically and would hope it can be left for future generations to enjoy and not despoiled for greed and profit.</p>
159	<p>Dear Sir/Madam</p> <p>I wish to object strongly to the proposed siting of three enormous gravel pits in the immediate vicinity of Cholsey. What an extraordinary site to choose.</p> <p>The track of the Cholsey and Wallingford Preservation Railway, run and maintained by enthusiastic volunteers, which is much appreciated by local people and visitors, runs the whole length of the proposed gravel pit, and instead of acres of farmland and country views, would enjoy a mile of industrial desecration. I fear it would probably close.</p> <p>There is a recently established Agatha Christie trail from her house in Winterbrook, on the edge of Wallingford, to her grave at St Mary's Church, Cholsey. How many tourists would trudge alongside a gravel pit?</p> <p>Heavy lorry traffic (eighty movements a day are predicted), dust, noise and the destruction of our countryside are not to be tolerated. Why must gravel extraction take place right next to a thriving village? Is this not ridiculous planning? Vast gravel pits on the edge of a thriving village, struggling</p>

	<p>to retain some semblance of rural tranquillity are not to be tolerated. The threat to our local wildlife cannot be over emphasised. Yours faithfully</p>
153	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the Character of Wallingford and Cholsey</b> It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village. The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based. The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p><b>Destruction of the local Environment</b> In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p><b>Likely Impact on local Economy</b> A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.' The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. It is widely recognised that Agatha Christie is the number one attraction of our area is. In addition tourists come to the area for its rich history, the serenity of the River Thames and the diversity of the landscape. To dig a quarry so close to Wallingford has to be an act of folly. It will be an eyesore on the entire landscape as viewed from all of the surrounding hills that form an area of outstanding natural beauty.</p> <p><b>Poor Economic Decision - A Poor Decision for the Community</b> It is understood that this the only new site under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area and was proposed by Smiths of Bletchington, the very quarrying company who has an option over the land and stands to gain the most if permission is granted. This is neither a reasonable nor an</p>

	<p>acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality.  This site is the only new site proposed within the Minerals Strategy, yet there is no evidence that it is the best site for the job. There is no evidence that the site has been adequately appraised and yet it is the ONLY site being put forward by the Council.  It has no local support outside of the vested interests of the landowners.  Only very limited research has been conducted to date on the site SG33 to test the quality of the minerals. The results of the bore holes drilled reveal that the aggregates are low grade and will require to be mixed with other stone before they could be used by the building industry.  The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago.  Transport Issues - a major increase in trucks on the road  I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.  If the aggregates are sold locally they will need to be mixed with other stone or if there is no local market it will have to be sold to developers in Reading and Wantage. Either way there will be a massive increase in miles travelled by heavy trucks. This is one of the council's key parameters dictating any potential location.  Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term.  We implore the Council to re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.  It is not the best site in the County  It has low grade aggregates  The heavy trucks will have a huge impact on the entire surrounding area  The community has not been adequately consulted  It will blight the local economy of Wallingford  It will be a monstrous eyesore that is surrounded by designated areas of outstanding natural beauty.</p>
150	<p>I am writing to express my concerns with respect to the proposal for a gravel extraction site near Wallingford (SG 33, SG 57 and SG 60)  These sites are very close to the town of Wallingford and the village of Cholsey and will have a large negative impact on over 10,000 peoples lives.  This will be due to the dust from the site causing health issues (there are several primary schools and one secondary school near this location) as well as the visual impact and noise of a gravel pit next to a residential area. One mile from either end of the proposed zone encompasses the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford.  The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development.  The roads around Wallingford are already full to capacity at peak times. It is impossible to imagine how traffic will be able to flow with the increased car and truck transportation required for such a site.  I would strongly object to a gravel extraction site at any of these 3 locations.</p>
177	<p>I would just like you to know that my family and I, are totally against having a gravel pit in this area.  This area is too small for such a major development.  I have lived here for the past 39 years and, I would hate to see such a beautiful place ruined by having large</p>

	lorries disrupting and spoiling the serenity of the place, not forgetting the wild life that is so special.
178	I understand you are proposing gravel extraction in my village. WHY? Cholsey is such a small pretty village, why would you choose to destroy a beautiful section of our county?? Please, please reconsider.
180	<p>I object to draft Policy M3. My concern relates to the selection process and contents of draft Policy M3 whereby Cholsey is identified as the sole location for new working for sand and gravel to replace Sutton Courtenay.</p> <p>I believe there is a very strong case for Cholsey not to be included at all, and most certainly not to be the sole site identified for future extraction.</p> <p>Site Assessment</p> <p>To date there has only been a very cursory assessment of the site with respect to the issues that would need to be resolved prior to any application being considered. The Preliminary Assessment of Minerals Site Nominations is a tick box exercise with little or no attempt at evaluation or weighting of the issues in any meaningful way.</p> <p>However, the proximity to an AONB, which effectively surrounds the sites, could have been a reason in its own right to exclude Cholsey as identified in paragraph 2.8 of that document where:</p> <p>"There is a policy presumption against any mineral working unless it can be shown that the need for development outweighs any adverse environmental consequences on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or their setting</li> <li>· The conservation interest of a Special Area of Conservation, SSSI, or National Nature reserve;</li> <li>· A Scheduled Ancient Monument or other nationally important asset.</li> </ul> <p>2.9 If a site is in or immediately adjacent to one of these areas and is constrained by other planning criteria, this could preclude further development.</p> <p>In addition to the AONB, site SG-60 would impact on the nationally important bronze age island settlement that was revealed prior to the construction of the Wallingford bypass bridge. Indeed, the discovery of the archaeology led to the bridge design to be altered to minimise impact and became an example of best practice. In that case there was no option to have the bridge elsewhere. SG-33 and 57 also have great potential for important archaeology.</p> <p>Wallingford's history and archaeology has been the subject of great investigation in recent years with research led by the universities of Leicester, Exeter and Oxford, working in close association with Wallingford Museum and The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society. This has further expanded on the importance of the town's Saxon origins and subsequent development. There have been four conferences dedicated to Wallingford with eminent speakers from across the country.</p> <p>Indeed Wallingford is the finest example of a Saxon town in the country.</p> <p>As our knowledge expands so does the importance of the town and its hinterland increase with the potential to attract many visitors. SODC, the town council and others have invested much time and considerable sums of money to improve tourism in the area and this could be severely affected by the proposed extraction.</p> <p>The absence of any historic landscape characterisation work in any of Oxfordshire is noted on page 23 of the Oxfordshire Minerals Development Framework SA Scoping Report of May 2011. That this has yet to be carried out shows what little regard has been given to the importance of history and archaeology by OCC.</p> <p>The potential impacts as outlined above, along with many others, were listed in the results of consultation published by OCC in 2007. They appear to have been ignored.</p>

	<p>The need for further evaluation is contained in various documents including the Draft Preferred Minerals Core Strategy SA/SEA August 2011 where at paragraph 4.3.3 it is noted that that potential adverse affects will need to be addressed at site allocation stage. How can this be possible with what is effectively one site?</p> <p>Selection of Cholsey as the Sole New Site</p> <p>It is accepted that minerals will need to be extracted within the county but the selection process must be fair, objective and transparent. From the information on the OCC consultation site it is far from clear how Cholsey became the sole site to be selected. Referring to the Development of Draft Minerals Planning Strategy Sept 2011 it can be seen that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stage 6 - Five sites for new working are listed in the Stakeholder Consultations on Revised Sites July 2010.</li> <li>· Stage 8 - The Initial Preferred Approach agreed by Cabinet in October 2010 kept the option open for new extraction sites to be considered if studies showed this to be necessary.</li> <li>· Stage 11 - By February 2011 Cholsey is accepted by the Cabinet as being the sole site for new extraction</li> <li>· Stage 12 Draft Minerals Strategy agreed by Cabinet July 2011.</li> </ul> <p>Although settling on Cholsey seems to have occurred by February 2011 a further report continues to identify other potential new sites. The SA/SEA report on Minerals Apportionment Levels prepared by URS in July 2011 gives a brief review of new sites including Clifton Hampden and Stadhampton. I cannot fathom what logic was followed by OCC to remove the other sites to leave just Cholsey.</p> <p>In summary I believe that there are good reasons to drop the Cholsey sites now and that the process to identify Cholsey as the single area for new extraction is flawed. If pursued in this way then OCC may be left in the embarrassing and costly position of having to start the process again.</p>
207	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the proposed gravel extraction plan in the Parish of Cholsey.</p> <p>I cannot see how you are 'safeguarding the character, amenity and setting' (quoting your briefing document) of our local area. The proposed site will affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the wildlife and environment of what is currently a grazed farmland site</li> <li>- the many houses that directly border the proposed site</li> <li>- the preserved railway which runs alongside the site.</li> </ul> <p>I cannot see how the proposed site will allow the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. Cyclists need a safe route along what is otherwise a very dangerous road and locals have campaigned for many years to have a cycle path built. I understand that funds from various sources have been identified to allow the path to be built but your plan will surely mean that it cannot happen. In fact traffic flow is likely to increase making the road even more dangerous.</p> <p>Does a plan exist for the restoration of the area following the extraction? The closeness of the River Thames means that the site will be unsuitable for a lake or for use as landfill, so what will it be used for?</p> <p>I am also very concerned that there is only one site under consideration. Is this really the only location that your deem suitable? Why was this site chosen? Is it for the right reasons or just because landowners and extraction companies have said that the site is available? Indeed, I am led to believe that the gravel is of poor quality, which is said to be one of the reasons that a previous plan to use this site failed many years ago.</p> <p>Please reconsider this proposal before you ruin the 'character, amenity and setting' of our local area.</p>
432	<p>I am writing to voice our concern at the nomination of the Wallingford/Cholsey sites (SG-33I SG60, SG57) for the future extraction of gravel.</p>

	<p>We have occupied Cox's Farm, one of the two listed buildings that will be directly affected by the proposals, since 1998 and we are absolutely appalled at the prospect of having this development on our doorstep. The only access to our house runs across a corner of the site SG33 and if the proposal goes ahead as planned. The ancient track serving the house, which is also a public footpath, will have to be removed.</p> <p>I find it hard to believe how incredibly ill informed the nomination to use this site seems to be. Whilst residents near any such development will always be accused of not wanting these schemes in their back yard, the people responsible for such proposals should equally be able to justify to these residents the future devastating effects their action will have.</p> <p>The Cholsey/Wallingford site it would seem has been selected through just such a process of Nimbyism and put forward as a site that is an easy target now that other suggested areas have proved unwilling to have gravel extraction on their own doorstep. However, I hope you are by now aware that nearly 10,000 people live in close proximity to these sites and the interference this will cause to their lives will be of great concern to the council in the future when they have to live with today's mistakes.</p> <p>I am deeply apprehensive about the process by which the Council have made their decision to nominate Cholsey as their chosen site in the south of Oxfordshire. It appears that all references to alternative new sites have been removed from the consultation reducing the choice to just one. This does not make it a true consultation as selection from a choice of one is not selection and the Council has left itself with no other options.</p> <p>I hardly need to say anything about the ill considered and poorly thought through long term effects such an overbearing and disproportionate activity will have on the environs of two ancient Oxfordshire settlements. It seems extraordinary to me that people who are either elected or choose to work for an elected body and whose remit is to serve for the good of the county can be responsible for imposing such a distressing proposal on so many people.</p> <p>I can only hope that the enormous body of opinion against this outrage can persuade the county council to look long and hard at this, listen to the people you represent, protect the places you claim to value and act responsibly for the future.</p>
581	<p>I am writing to you in order to register my strong objections to the above proposal. It is my understanding that there must be a public consultation before such a proposal is submitted. I have not been made aware in any way or form by the County Council that such a development could be happening in the future.</p> <p>Cholsey is a popular, vibrant and rural South Oxfordshire village with a very strong sense of community. To propose land within Cholsey as a potential mineral extraction site is flawed.</p> <p>The communities of both Cholsey and Wallingford, around 10,000 people within 2 mile radius, would all be affected by such a development. For those closest to such a site, there would be an increase in traffic, noise, dust and potentially dangerous road conditions caused by the constant daily movement of vehicles and their loads. Those further from the site would also be affected by the traffic and air pollution.</p> <p>There has been in the pipeline for some time a plan for a cycle path between Cholsey and Wallingford, which would run alongside the proposed site. When this is in place and if the proposed site goes ahead, the conditions would be very dangerous for adult cyclists, children cycling to and from school and other pathway users. I have two small school age children, who will be potential users of a cycle path in ten years in order to get to their secondary school. If the gravel extraction site goes ahead, I would be extremely concerned about their safety.</p> <p>Cholsey is proud of its reputation of being a popular place to live for all sectors of the community. As a family, we currently enjoy walks together following the route of the 'Bunk line' train, which runs from Cholsey to Wallingford and forms part of the proposed extraction site. It is wonderful to be able to reach such beautiful countryside by walking from our house. If the extraction site goes ahead, we will no longer want to walk along this lovely footpath and valuable wildlife will be lost. It is my concern that an extraction site will severely damage the perception of Cholsey as a quiet, rural place to live for families.</p> <p>The development will potentially also sound the death knell for the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway, a wholly volunteer-run steam railway. Who is</p>

	<p>going to pay to enjoy lovely views of gravel extraction along its length? It would be a sad loss for the communities of Cholsey and Wallingford should the 'Bunk line' cease to exist because of a loss of passengers.</p> <p>Many tourists who visit the area enjoy both the steam train and paying a visit to the grave of Agatha Christie, in Cholsey churchyard. My fear is that people will no longer wish to walk the 'Agatha Christie trail' past an industrial site and that we will suffer as a result with a lack of visitors.</p> <p>It is my understanding that the proposed extraction site will provide materials for building locally, however, much of the planned new housing, particularly in Cholsey is already underway, and will be completed long before the ten year commencement of such a facility. It is hard to understand how it will be useful to have such a site in an area where there is no longer any need for it. I am also deeply worried about the long term plans for such a site would be when the extraction has ceased. To leave it empty, as a depression, will surely render it a potentially dangerous and unstable site.</p> <p>In conclusion, I believe that a proposal for a mineral extraction site in Cholsey is completely inappropriate. It would affect thousands of people already living in Cholsey and Wallingford and could severely damage our communities by reducing the number of people who desire to visit or live here. I urge you to strongly re-consider this proposal and instead investigate sites which could run such operations away from thriving communities.</p>
588	<p>I write to protest vigorously against current proposals to extract aggregates from land within the village of Cholsey. I also wish to comment unfavourable on the manner in which OCC has attempted to force this plan through on a limited timescale and with inadequate consultation. Such has been the Council's haste, that it appears ignorant of a number of relevant facts.</p> <p>The parish of cholsey sits in an area of great natural beauty which - as a simple matter of principle - should not be sacrificed in the cause of wealth creation. Quite apart from the obvious point that yet another rural area finds itself under threat of destruction, the proposed work is situated inside the community. Cholsey has, over a number of years and through its own efforts, resisted the predations of Wallingford's expansionist policies and it is appropriate, at this point, to observe that the residents of Winterbrook, which lies at the north-west limit of the parish, have, in two very public ballots, voted to remain under Cholsey's stewardship. This remains their legally-defined position. Despite the presence of the unfortunate but very necessary by-pass road, the suggested extraction site does not lie between Wallingford and Cholsey but within the community of Cholsey. It is thus unthinkable that the proposed works should take place here.</p> <p>The area in question is rich in native flora and fauna and it is significant that threatened species have found safe haven in Cholsey in recent decades, in some cases staging a come-back from serious decline. You should be aware of arguments which will have reached you from local ecological experts. Aggregate extraction would negate the long-term efforts of farmers, ecologies and nature itself.</p> <p>There are further arguments - on which you will have received separate information - concerning the ancient history and archaeology of the open spaces alongside the Wallingford Road. Industrial excavation would do incalculable damage to our future, wider understanding of the ancient settlements that we now call Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>I need hardly mention the physical disruption and nuisance that gravel extraction would cause, so close to populated areas, nor the damage to property values. However, I believe the greatest damage would be to the consciousness and self-image of the community itself. Cholsey is an extremely active village, boasting many sporting, social and creative organisations besides a busy annual timetable of traditional events. Extraction works would not only tear a massive hole in the village's landscape but, equally, in its self-esteem and ability to provide the quality of life which has made it one of the more desirable places to live in South Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Although the information has reached me anecdotally, I understand that the chief promoters of this ill-starred exercise in exploitation themselves live in districts where aggregate deposits are plentiful; moreover, that these deposits are more suitable for economical extraction and that they are situated further from inhabited areas. I have learnt that consultants have advised against extraction at Cholsey for precisely these reasons. Whilst we all play the 'not in my back yard' game at one time or another, I detect more than a hint of self-interest on the part of the promoters in attempting to</p>



	<p>visit the many disadvantages of gravel extraction on the village of Cholsey. This scheme amounts to officially-sponsored vandalism and must be stopped in its tracks.</p>
757	<p>In relation to the proposed gravel extraction at Cholsey, I have many areas of concern regarding the siting of this along the Wallingford Road which is in very close proximity to residential properties and is in fact not on the edge of the village of Cholsey as some have stated, but in fact right at the heart of the settlement of Cholsey, separating as it does the village of Cholsey from the area of Winterbrook which is also a part of Cholsey. At a recent public meeting in Cholsey, it was noticeable that the residents of Winterbrook were out in force and obviously consider themselves to be part of the Cholsey community.</p> <p>It will not only be the village of Cholsey (including Winterbrook) which will be adversely affected by the proposed development since the pit as proposed would impact seriously on the whole of Wallingford as well, through 'noise, dust, odour', increased traffic and destruction of an area of tranquil, unspoilt English countryside and wildlife habitat. The prevailing wind would make the town of Wallingford a prey to the resulting pollution; as many as 10,000 people live within a mile of the proposed site. It would seem that it would have been difficult for the Committee to have found a more disruptive site in the whole of South Oxfordshire if they had set about it with that sole purpose.</p> <p>My husband and I moved to the Wallingford area 12 years ago and have grown to love it for its unspoilt atmosphere and sense of civic pride. In that time we have watched the town beginning to set more store by its long and fascinating history and develop its heritage for commercial purposes. This summer we have had the pleasure of showing various visitors from Britain and abroad around Wallingford and its surroundings, and we have enjoyed researching the history of the town and neighbouring villages. We would like to congratulate the SODC and SE England Development Agency for the excellent series of leaflets available from Tourist Information which have assisted us in our explorations and which are, presumably, designed to encourage tourism to the area.</p> <p>When talking about wallingford to people abroad we have noticed that, while they may not have heard of Queen Matilda or Stephen, King of the Romans, they have all heard of Agatha Christie, even people from as far away as India and China, though this is not really surprising since she is the world's best-selling author of all time. Only this summer our Belgian visitors' greatest wish was to see Agatha christie's house in Winterbrook and grave in Cholsey churchyard. Certainly when one visits the grave there are frequently 'votive offerings' left by visitors and the languages show how far people have travelled; some certainly come from the Far East. In our opinion, the area should make still more of this connection and benefit the town's growing tourism industry and economy, rather than destroying the attractiveness of the surrounding area.</p> <p>The Dame Agatha Christie Trail leaflet is an excellent resource when visiting these sites. We are horrified to think that the entire route of that trail is blighted by the proposed gravel extraction works between Winterbrook, Wallingford and Cholsey, should permission for them be given. Would anybody want to spend a day walking or even driving from Agatha Christie's house in Winterbrook to Cholsey church if the whole route were to be blighted by industrial workings? Such things are the stuff of ugly everyday life, not of days out and holidays.</p> <p>We gather that the operators of the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that the proposed gravel pit would probably result in their ceasing to operate because they fear that the workings would make the Bunk Line unsafe and that paying customers would not be prepared to pay to view an ugly industrial site. Their advertising flyer boasts that 'Our line runs through the beautiful countryside of South Oxfordshire...!' This would mean the loss of yet another tourist attraction for the town.</p> <p>In fact many tourists and walkers are attracted to this part of the Thames Valley by the attractive unspoilt countryside so close to an equally attractive small market town with its range of facilities and historic sites on offer. We are blessed by being on both the Ridgeway and the Thames paths and to destroy the natural beauty would certainly impact adversely on the economic viability of the area. Some people might argue longer term future, by this loss of attractiveness to tourists and visitors?</p> <p>We strongly urge the councils to reject this proposal and save the growing tourist interest in our area. It seems like killing the golden goose or shooting</p>

	<p>ourselves in the foot, since both Cholsey and Wallingford will suffer hugely from reduced quality of life and loss of income from shopping and tourism, with no benefit to our area, especially since it seems on professional advice, that the quality of the gravel at this site is poor. This would mean a huge disruption and upheaval of many people's lives and not even for good quality gravel.</p> <p>To raise another area of concern, it is clear from where I live at the southern end of the Wallingford Road that many people (certainly hundreds of cycle journeys per week) cycle the route and I know from personal experience that many of them use the train for travel to Didcot, Oxford, Reading and further afield for work, shopping etc. In fact my husband and I both use bikes to go to Wallingford several times per week and also, like many others, to access the station. If, as seems to be the case, around 200 lorries per day were also to use the road it would become even less safe for cyclists than it is currently and probably much less popular as a means of travelling from Cholsey to Wallingford. Both Wallingford and Cholsey are about to see large numbers of new residents as a result of housing developments. Both places are becoming increasingly difficult for parking and it would seem sensible to try to encourage rather than discourage cycling as an alternative means of travel with much less impact on parking and congestion in the town's narrow historic streets. The centre of the town is already almost at gridlock at certain times.</p> <p>Many of us are at a loss to understand how this proposal has come about when the site was not on the short list of proposed sites. It seems that there are very considerable vested interests at play here and that the whole process has been more akin to landing a hot potato on an unsuspecting community's lap (when its representative was caught napping at best, or at worst was reprehensibly negligent of consulting and representing the views of his electorate) than to a proper democratic hearing and reasoned consideration of the needs of the communities involved. Indeed, how can there be a consultation process when there is only one possible site proposed? Also the time allowed for the consultation process seems indecently short and much shorter than in other recent similar cases, almost as if it was hoped that no-one would notice in time to react. We are tempted to question the legitimacy of the process and whether our council is acting in our interests; certainly whether our councillor is listening to and acting in our interests. We hope and urge that the councils involved will recognise the lasting and damaging blight on the whole area of Cholsey and Wallingford which this plan involves and refuse permission to the developers.</p>
947	<p>As a resident of Cholsey, I am totally opposed to the proposed gravel extraction from land alongside the Wallingford Road.</p> <p>In the first instance, the Wallingford Road forms part of my daily commute to and from work. This is a journey that is already affected by bottlenecks and hold ups, and I am concerned that the proposed number and nature of vehicle movements from the proposed site will cause further disruption at the start and end of my day.</p> <p>On a less personal note, the Wallingford Road is the major artery from the centre of the village to Wallingford and the ring road that enables personal and public transport to access amenities that we do not have in the village such as medical care and larger and more varied shops. Surely up to 200 vehicle movements a day from the proposed site will have a severely detrimental affect on Cholsey residents' ability to travel out of the village, not to mention the damage that such vehicle movements will cause to the road structure?</p> <p>Furthermore I have heard that some County Councillors are ignorant of the actual parish boundaries and believe that Winterbrook is part of Wallingford; this is not true. Earlier in the year I was part of the 80 strong group that walked the 17 miles that make the parish boundary, beginning and ending in the Wallingford Medical Practice car park adjoining the brook which forms the ancient boundary between Wallingford. Therefore it is clear that the proposed site would effectively separate Cholsey and its sister Winterbrook. This must be the first instance of a gravel pit being opened up in the MIDDLE of a village! It is also rather shocking that decisions about a project, which will have such a detrimental impact upon a community are being made without recourse to the full facts.</p> <p>The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. the area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known</p>

	<p>medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.</p> <p>Moreover, the site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm and other older houses, such as Brook House that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In particular the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St. Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate, as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through "noise, dust and odour".</p> <p>Besides the impact on tourism, in excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people? Furthermore, I am seriously concerned that there is no long-term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source.</p> <p>So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer: How pleasant for the residents of cholsey and Winterbrook; and how will this encourage people to use the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway or want to walk the Agatha Christie trail?</p> <p>Finally the Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefits and drawbacks. It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. There is no mention within the consultation document of other sites, which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>In short, if anything, Cholsey needs investment not extraction!</p>
922	<p>We are horrified that this site could even be considered. This stretch of the River Thames is without doubt a site of outstanding natural beauty and is home to a wealth of wildlife. We cannot see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of this largely unspoilt natural landscape. This stretch of the river is used by many local people and visitors alike to walk along the Thames. It is also used by the Oxford University boat club as the longest stretch of river on which to train. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p>

	<p>We understand that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. So why is the council even considering this site now?</p> <p>We are very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. If the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer. This area already floods; when the lakes at Carmel College overflow this is where the excess water goes to. Had this been taken into consideration whilst the gravel extraction is taking place and how will it effect the area when finished?</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p> <p>With all of the building proposals in and around Wallingford, gravel extraction does not seem either sensible or viable. By the time the gravel extraction is started, the building works will have taken place. Will people really want to buy properties next to a gravel pit?</p> <p>Wallingford is currently a small, historic market town. With the planned 500 plus additional houses and a gravel pit the soul of this town will be lost forever and with it a very special part of Oxfordshire.</p> <p>We urge you to reject Cholsey as a site for gravel extraction.</p>
914	<p>We are writing to object to the opening of gravel pits at the site of the only two roads directly between this village and Wallingford.</p> <p>The worst aspects in this matter appear to be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is too close to both Cholsey and Wallingford.</li> <li>2. The area would be ruined for many years to come, if not permanently, and</li> <li>3. Traffic in the area will be in chaos for the same period.</li> </ol> <p>Surely there is somewhere "in the middle of no-where" for such an unsightly scheme?</p>
918	<p>I would like to register my very strong opposition to the proposal to allow gravel pits to be sited on land beside Wallingford Road between Wallingford and Cholsey. As a resident of Cholsey, I believe that the impact of this plan on this large thriving community will be devastating for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In excess of 10,000 people live within one mile of this site, and would abut directly onto housing, and residential sites. The noise, dust and odour, as well as the visual impact at a site would have a detrimental affect on the daily lives of all these people. Furthermore, the proposal to put a gravel pit here is totally incompatible with the partly implemented strategy of housing development in this area.</li> <li>- Wallingford is a historic town, and Cholsey is a parish of considerable historical importance. In addition, the Thames and Ridgeway paths, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty border the sites. The proposed sites would therefore significantly detract from the enjoyment of the region by locals and tourists, and would have a impact on the economic viability of the district.</li> <li>- The Wallingford Road is the main link between Cholsey and Wallingford for cyclists and pedestrians, and particularly as a school route for children. The hugely increased lorry traffic, likely to be exiting on Wallingford Road, will be extremely hazardous and is likely to increase the risk of road traffic accidents in the area. It is also likely to result in an increase of traffic on smaller village roads and routes through Wallingford.</li> </ul> <p>I understand that under the Minerals Planning Strategy, the authorities are obliged to consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals. I think it is clear that an objective assessment of these sites will show that they will have very significant impacts against all of these criteria, and are therefore inappropriate for this development.</p>
994	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed gravel extraction between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p>

	<p>1. The Cholsey site is the only site selected by the Council. The core strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific and its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and the site of the operation will not be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.</p> <p>2. Your briefing document refers to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D and its history, economy and social activities were and are inextricably linked to that of Wallingford. The proposed gravel pit is right on the shortest distance between Wallingford and Cholsey, a distance of less than two miles. To put a site with constant noise, disruption and dust in the heart of these communities is not acceptable. Surely the Council could have found a site with far less impact on local communities.</p> <p>3. I am very concerned at the lost of an area with a very distinct character. The area of the proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses and field patterns, which are largely unchanged from those recorded on the 1965 Cholsey map. Consequently this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your plan. Also, I am suprised that no consideration has been given to the Letcombe Brook, from which Brook House gets in its name. The out flow from the sewage works goes into this water course which is in hydraulic connection with the gravels. Removing this connection will have almost certainly have a significant impact on the flows in the brook with consequences to wetlands and fields beyond the boundaries of the gravel pit.</p> <p>4. There is the impact on the local economy from tourism. The proposed works will destroy the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard. In addition it must make the viability of the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway very questionable as it will totally spoil the visual setting from the trains.</p> <p>5. I would be interested to know whether a detailed study of the quality of the gravel in this area has been carried out to establish wither is is fit for the purposes planned and whether the thickness of the gravels over the whole of the proposed area is sufficient for commercial operations. This also relates to my first point as, if it is found that the gravel extraction is uneconomic, then the Council has no alternative plan. A further point is that the site is likely to contain archaeological sites and if these are proven to be extensive, whether the development will become uneconomic.</p> <p>6. Given the lead in time before production at the pit can start, I cannot believe that the currently known construction will be able to make use of the gravel extracted from it. How have the Council assessed future, unknown needs for gravel in South Oxfordshire and how are they able to ensure the gravel is only used for construction in the local area.</p>
1011	<p>I am writing to express my objections to the proposed gravel pits on sites SG-33 and SG-60 in the middle of the Wallingford/Cholsey conurbation. I have listed below some of the many reasons why theis location in the heart of a historic tourist town is totally unsuitable.</p> <p>The primary reason, set out in more detail below, is the health risk associated with mineral extraction, processing, transport and subsequent infilling of the site.</p> <p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <p>The digging, screening, loading and transporting of sands and gravels releases dust and particulates into the air. The larger dust particles can be greatly reduced by screening with earth banks, wheel washing etc but the very fine dust including Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS) are spread on the prevailing winds. The very fine dust classified as PM10s are a known health risk to the young, elderly and to those with respiratory problems. Regular exposure causes silicosis and can be considered to be carcinogenic.</p> <p>The Wallingford community hospital, a nursing home and numerous homes are within 500m of the edge of the proposed site. The prevailing winds blow straight in their direction. I would like to reference the governments own guidelines for controlling the effect of dust on the environment:</p> <p>Minerals Policy Statement 2: Controlling and Mitigating the Environmental Effects of Mineral Extraction in England - Annex 1 : Dust Summary</p>

This annex to Minerals Policy Statement 2: Controlling and Mitigating the Environmental Effects of Mineral Extraction in England (MPS2) is a statement of the policy considerations in relation to dust from mineral workings and associated operations, and how they should be dealt with in local development frameworks and in considering individual applications. Appendices briefly outline information on the nature of dust, give examples of methods of reducing and controlling dust, and outline good practice in dust assessment. The Government expects mineral planning authorities (MPAs) in England to have regard to this annex alongside the policies contained in the MPS2 overarching document.

Extracts from the document

1.19 If within a site the actual source of emission (e.g the haul roads, crushers, stockpiles etc) is within 1000m of any residential property or other sensitive use, then a further assessment should examine the likely impacts and the weight they should be given in the decision making process.

1.25 MPAs and mineral operators should ensure appropriate consultations and effective liaison with all stakeholders, including statutory consultees and the local communities potentially affected by dust emissions. In particular, they should seek the technical advice of, and preferably involve in the pre-application discussions, the environmental health officers (EHOs) of the area concerned, as the regulator for quarry processes under the EPA 1990

1A.5 Dust particles are dispersed by their suspension and entrainment in an airflow. Dispersal is affected by the size of the particles emitted, and wind speed as well as their shape and density. Smaller dust particles remain airborne for longer, dispersing widely and depositing more slowly over a wider area. Large dust particles (greater than 30 sqm), which make up the greatest proportion of dust emitted from mineral workings, will largely deposit within 100m of sources. Intermediate-sized particles (10-30sqm) are likely to travel up to 200-500m. Smaller particles (less than 10 um) which make up a small proportion of the dust emitted from most mineral workings, are only deposited slowly but may travel 1000m or more. Concentrations decrease rapidly on moving away from the source, due to dispersion and dilution. Large and intermediate sized particles are often referred to as nuisance dust, while small particles (PM10) are associated with effects on human health.

HSE Publication QY0 clearly states that sands and gravel contain greater than 70% crystalline silica and therefore any dust produced in their extraction has to be considered to be hazardous. QY0 and QY2 set out precautions to protect site workers.

Larger particles can be considered as 'nuisance dust' and can be largely controlled on site but very fine particles are a serious risk to health, can spread over a wider area and are very difficult to control. RCSs are released by gravel and sand extraction and can cause permanent lung disease and can lead to death. These fine particles (PM10s) can lodge in the lungs and can cause cancer. The old and young are particularly vulnerable to respiratory problems. The Wallingford hospital, directly in line with the prevailing winds, has a maternity unit and caters for elderly patients. There is a residential home for the elderly on the Reading Road within 500m of the site. Up to 10,000 inhabitants are within 1 mile of the site.

These government publications make it clear that PM10s can affect health up to 1000m from the site and all "Stakeholders" in that area must therefore be involved in the planning process. Local residents, the local council, health workers etc were not made explicitly aware of the proposed site but were only involved 'at the eleventh hour' by local pressure groups after the proposal was accidentally uncovered.

End of life use

Government guidelines state that any plans must clearly identify the use of the site after extraction. I understand that the proposal is to use the site for the disposal of inert waste. The affect of this on the health of the community, the environment and local amenity value is not clear.

Tourism

Tourism has been identified as being key to the ongoing prosperity of Wallingford and Cholsey. The citing of the proposed gravel extraction/Waste disposal site between the Thames path and the popular Bunk Line railway is going to have a severe affect on the future of the area. It could lead to the closure of the railway and would disrupt the Agatha Christie Trail.

Community Development

Wallingford and Cholsey are a single community. The administrative boundary between the parishes runs along Bradfords Brook on the Reading Road in

	<p>Wallingford. Although in easy walking distance of Wallingford town centre, many of the houses on the Reading Road are actually part of Cholsey. The cultural and historical ties between the communities are numerous. The citing of a gravel extraction business right in the heart of the community is a perverse decision that will have a severe detrimental impact on the local community.</p> <p>Transport Lorry movements in and out of the site will have an effect on the local road network and current and proposed housing developments close to the roads. Noise, dust and the risk to cyclists are the major concerns. Although the Wallingford bypass is reasonably wide, the roundabouts and roads leading to Didcot and to Oxford are not suitable for an increase in heavy traffic.</p> <p>Quality of the gravel I understand that the site had previously been ruled out due to the type of gravel that could be extracted . There would be a requirement for it to be mixed with crushed rock. The transport of this rock will impact on the overall distance that materials need to be transported. The transport, crushing and mixing processes will all contribute to lorry movements, dust and noise.</p> <p>The decision process I understand that the use of this site for gravel extraction had previously been ruled out by OCC. Looking on the internet it is obvious that the other proposed sites were vigorously opposed by local residents and local MPs (including David Cameron). As we had been informed that there was no longer a proposal to use the Wallingford/Cholsey site, the residents of this area did not put in objections to the plan. If this lack of objection resulted in the Cholsey site being nominated as the preferred and only site then there has been a clear breach of the spirit of the planning guidelines. This taken together with the fact that the local stakeholders were not adequately informed must constitute a flawed planning process on behalf of OCC. The process should be abandoned or at the very least delayed for 12 months to allow a full review of the process, the facts behind the decision and to provide sufficient time for investigation and a considered response by the parties affected.</p> <p>Summary The proposed use of the Cholsey site for gravel extraction must be rejected. There will be an unacceptable impact on the local environment, amenities and communities including health risks to the young, elderly and those with respiratory problems. The planning process would appear to be seriously flawed in that the 'stakeholders' were not adequately informed with the result that the OCC recommendation did not take into account the many factors affecting the Wallingford Cholsey community. I know of no other major development of this type where local democracy has been so blatantly ignored. I have personally talked to many local residents in the last 2 weeks and found that they were still totally unaware of what has been proposed. It is the duty of OCC to take positive steps to involve the local communities before making any recommendations and decisions. The short time period between the community's 'discovery' of the recommendation and the decision date clearly demonstrate the failure of OCC to consult.</p>
904	<p>I wish to object to the bizarre and irrational decision, out of the blue, to make Cholsey the preferred site of gravel extraction. The decision breaches the terms of your Common Core policies C3 to C6. Amongst the more serious practical implications of this plan are the totally inadequate local roads for a major increase in heavy traffic, which will divert light traffic back into Wallingford, a situation the bypass was designed to avoid. Together with equally ill-considered proposals for major building at the western end of Wallingford, this will result in the increased use of the A4130, which is a notoriously dangerous road totally unsuitable for the heavy traffic it already takes. This is of serious concern to residents at this end of Wallingford, where far too much heavy traffic is already being diverted, to the increasing peril of local people, including primary school children, and property such as mine, which has already been struck during an icy winter when the roads were left ungritted. The choice of site put forward by the OCC fort his consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people currently, set to rise within a few years - well before any</p>

scheduled works would start - to some thousands more. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two communities and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,00 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundreds live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.

The proposed extraction sites cannot possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to a thriving village.

The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, running from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook to her burial site in St Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. One of the leading attractions of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best selling author. To destroy this attraction would be sheer lunacy.

The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work, especially since it is now bringing thousands of people into Wallingford for the annual Bunkfest, a much needed boost to the local economy.

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors ..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat. I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, roe deer and hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where weasels and stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing, golden plover, fieldfare, redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.



The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The bypass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore, since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history, disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed. This will add considerably to the cost of any such workings - and it is far from evident that the quality of the gravel is worth it. Many other sites in the same area have been rejected as poor quality and Cholsey was until as recently as the end of last year, not on the list of preferred options.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. It should also be noted that the Oxford Partnership has highlighted poor air quality among the environmental issues facing the area of South Oxfordshire, and that they are "directly linked to congestion and transport emissions", a situation that would be worsened by the current plan.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals'. There is woefully little evidence to suggest that they have.

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the Council has left itself with no other options.

It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. The whole process is highly suspect in terms of the self-contradictions between previously outlined policies and the present 'rabbit out of the hat' designation as preferred option. This reeks of abuse of process. There is no rational explanation for this volte face.

It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations.

Again, we come back to abuse of process and lack of regard for the local residents, all of whom have funded the various and endless consultation exercises and Local Plans which had come up with good solutions to the problems facing Wallingford in particular, with regard to the development of heritage and tourism as a boost to the local economy. These efforts are showing early signs of promise, all of it now to be choked to death by clouds of dust, since the prevailing winds in Wallingford almost always come directly from Cholsey. Will the huge attractions generated by volunteer endeavours, such as the Classic Car Rally, the Beers and Blues Festival and the Bunkfest, which are bringing thousands of non-residents into Wallingford, continue once the area become a dust bowl?

I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from this site when it was considered twenty years ago. It is also close to a sewage works, and

	<p>to a major gas main - both reasons for avoiding or simply excluding this site in the criteria of your previous policy documents, which mysteriously mean so little now (they are all on your website, so we won't pretend you do not understand the reference).</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer. These issues were among the reasons why earlier 'consultations' did not result in Cholsey being seen as a 'preferred site'.</p> <p>Another matter for concern is that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>The County Council may well wish to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document.</p> <p>Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet longer term development requirements. It would provide at best a short-term gain in gravel extraction, but impose years of blight on two communities of considerable historical and archaeological importance, surrounded on all sides by Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p> <p>Considered from all conceivable aspects the designation of Cholsey as preferred site is fundamentally flawed. So numerous are the contradictions with stated policies and the results of previous consultations that quite serious questions arise about the integrity of the whole exercise. In the last analysis, Cholsey and all sites close to the Thames going south of Oxford to the county boundary should be ruled out on account of the lack of high quality material, the abundance of nationally important archaeological sites, and the environmental importance of an important agricultural area surrounded by designated AONB's.</p>
604	<p>I write to protest in the strongest possible terms against the proposed siting of a new gravel extraction pit and all resulting works in the fields next to Wallingford Road, Cholsey.</p> <p>The area proposed for the new works is one of considerable natural beauty and peace. Building a large industrial site would effectively destroy this beauty completely. The proposal to situate a gravel pit here, in the form proposed (insofar as this information is available) raises many issues. Objections to it could focus on a number of different points, and I mention only a few here.</p> <p>1. Health</p> <p>The site proposed is right in the middle of the "village" which constitutes Cholsey itself. (Cholsey includes the houses at the southern end of Reading Road and the north end of Wallingford Road as well to the south of the proposed site). The population of Cholsey as a whole is at present c.3000; the</p>

population of Wallingford is c.7000 (and both are set to increase by a further 25% as a result of new building proposals). Virtually all this population live within 1.5 miles of the proposed site for the gravel pits. Inevitably the work involved will create significantly increased levels of dust and air pollution. It will thus constitute real health problems for a very significant number of people. It will particularly affect young children (who are often more prone to asthma) and hence act as a significant deterrent to families thinking of moving to the area. Allowing such a development so close to such a large concentration of population is in my view totally unacceptable and would force many people to have to live with an environment that may seriously threaten their health and welfare. Further, the resulting blight on house prices in the area will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for people to seek to find a healthier, less dangerous environment in which to live by moving away: house prices will inevitably fall if the gravel pit is sited here and peoples' ability to relocate will reduce correspondingly, especially if they work in the highly priced Thames Valley area. The health risks are exacerbated even more if, as is reported to be the case, the gravel which would be available here is of low quality and, as a result, more rock has to be imported and a cement works built on the site to deal with it to turn into gravel and/or cement. The resulting dust and air pollution will be even more horrendous. Further, if the gravel that can be extracted from this site is indeed of low quality, it is almost impossible to conceive why this site has been chosen at all: surely a site should be chosen that gives gravel of the required quality.

### 2. Transport

The current proposal will also have a very significant effect on local transport. We have been told that all the gravel going out, as well as the rock being brought in, will have to be via lorries. Further, we have been told that it will be impossible to arrange for the lorries to access the Wallingford by-pass road directly, or the roundabout at the top of Wallingford Road. As a result the only possibility is that they will have to use Wallingford Road itself. This is already a very busy and rather dangerous road already. It is relatively narrow and quite unsuited to heavy goods traffic. Despite this, it is used by many cyclists (myself included) as the main route to get between Cholsey and Wallingford. (And for inhabitants of Cholsey, this is vital as Cholsey retains its status as a "village" so that all major infrastructure links such as doctors, dentists, main shopping venues, banks, main bus links, secondary schools etc are situated in Wallingford as the neighbouring "town". Conversely, the proximity of Cholsey to Wallingford is essential for Wallingford residents wishing to access the main line rail station at Cholsey).

For many people, Wallingford Road is the main route used to travel between Cholsey and Wallingford by bicycle, and is used for this by a high volume of cycle traffic every day. (The other main road, the A329 to Goring and Pangbourne, is used by fast through traffic and positively dangerous for any cycling.) It has been suggested that a gravel pit would probably mean something of the order of 200 heavy lorries a day using Wallingford Road to access and exit the site. The result would be that Wallingford Road would become a highly dangerous road for any would be cyclist. The result will inevitably be that many people would no longer dare to cycle on the road any more, and would use cars instead. The resulting pressure on possible parking spaces would be disastrous in both Cholsey and Wallingford: parking opportunities in both places are already at almost bursting point. It might also mean that fewer people travel by train if they have to drive to Cholsey but parking is either very expensive or not available at all at/near the station. It would also be tragic in relation to wider issues of environmental policy by effectively forcing people away from a "greener" lifestyle using bicycles for short journey to using cars, and perhaps using trains less than cars for longer journeys, resulting in increase in CO2 pollution etc. This cannot surely be in line with the council's policy in general.

### 3. Consultation process

I, along with many other residents in the area, am appalled at the way in which this process is being rushed through without adequate time for proper consultation. The news that Cholsey was being seriously considered for a gravel pit site only emerged, almost in passing, earlier this year. At no stage were local inhabitants given proper information by the Council on what is, on any showing, a massive planning application which will affect the whole population of both Cholsey and Wallingford. It is only thanks to some local people that the news of what is planned has been made public to residents who live nearby and who will be seriously and adversely affected.

	<p>4. Long term effects</p> <p>It is my understanding that the long term plans for the site are that the pits and holes generated will not be filled at the end of the extraction period. The area will thus not be left with potentially attractive lakes (which might go some way to compensating for the disruption and health risks caused while extraction is taking place); rather it will simply be left with empty pits, which will flood in the winter, dry out in the summer and generally remain an eyesore on the landscape for ever. This is really a disastrous situation for the local community.</p> <p>For these (and many other reasons which one could mention if space permitted), I urge the council to rethink its proposal and refuse permission for the site next to Wallingford Road, Cholsey to be used commercially for gravel extraction.</p>
182	<p>We feel compelled to comment on the The Oxfordshire County Council Minerals Plan. Having lived near gravel extraction for a number of years in Ashton Keynes, we know the number of lorries, noise and dust that is produced is significant. The key concern for us though is the lack of proper road infrastructure in and around Cholsey to accomodate the lorries. Ashton Keynes is connected via the Spine Road (B4694) to the A419 which then connects the gravel pits directly to the M4 and M5. The Spine Road is a wide road that was improved to accomodate the gravel extraction. The distance that the lorries have to travel to a dual carriageway is only a few miles, if that. However the road infrastructure in this area is by no means comparable. From Cholsey the roads are single carriageway and have a number of tight bends. The increase in traffic is likely to lead to significant congestion and increase the risk of accidents. The roads through Didcot are already congested when you are trying to reach the A34, additional lorries will make this intolerable. To our mind, it would have to be a requirement of any extraction that the A34 via Didcot is the only route for the lorries to reach the M40/M4. The alternative routes are too minor and would cause significant danger and congestion. In addition the quality of the road surface throughout the area is poor, adding more heavy traffic will exacerbate this problem.</p> <p>In addition, we agree with the comments made by others with regards to safe guarding the character and beauty of the area, which is already being upset by the volume of new housing. The noise and the dust will cause a lot of distress to a large number of people due to the proximity of the site to Cholsey and Wallingford. We would question whether there are other sites that are less close to populated areas and closer to major trunk routes. We believe that the Council should re-visit the proposal to put the site at Cholsey forward for planning.</p>
198	<p>Objection to the creation of a minerals extraction site between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>I have recently moved into Cholsey and I chose to come and live in this location because we had explored the area in a number of walks and found the area to be of great beauty and supporting a large amount of wildlife.</p> <p>The proposed site for the extraction of gravel in the land between Cholsey and Wallingford would, if given the go-ahead, cause a detrimental effect on the attractive countryside designated and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its wildlife, and have a direct affect on the walks in the area, a number of which either go through or alongside the proposed area.</p> <p>The development would have a negative impact on tourism in the area as it would demolish the recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, and likely cause the closure of the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway, as there would be little of any beauty to attract visitors to a railway running, for the majority of its path, alongside a gravel pit.</p> <p>I urge the council not to include Cholsey and Wallingford Gravel Pit as a preferred site in their recommendations for future minerals extraction.</p>
199 (E Hagbourne PC)	<p>East Hagbourne Parish Council supports the existing principal locations for sharp sand and gravel working set out in Policy M3, as well as the extension of the Sutton Courtenay area into areas SG-53 and SG-62 north of Didcot town, and possible expansion to the north east. In particular, these are appropriate minerals winning areas for the major housing and business developments taking place in, and proposed for, the Didcot area.</p> <p>The sites have significant reserves of good quality sharp sand and gravel, lie within and are in close proximity to proposed expansion areas of Didcot. There is good potential for connection to existing adjacent processing plant, as well as to rail connections (Appleford sidings) and road connections to the Didcot area.</p>

	<p>Firm control and monitoring is needed so that the policies and strategy are fully implemented to ensure there is no adverse environmental impact on the villages of Appleford and Long Wittenham. This includes not using the village roads for hauling aggregates and concrete, the provision of buffer zones between village and pit workings and protection from noise and dust.</p> <p>The new areas SG-33, SG-47 and SG-60, in the proximity of Wallingford and Cholsey raise a major concern. These areas do not have either adequate road or rail infrastructure for transport of the minerals beyond supporting the limited housing development proposed for the Wallingford area. They do not meet the criteria set out in Transport Policy C7.</p>
184	<p>I live near the roundabout in Winterbrook and am writing to object to the plans to extract gravel from land between Winterbrook and Cholsey - sites SG33, SG60 and SG57.</p> <p>Gravel extraction on the land proposed will ruin my enjoyment of the surrounding countryside, devalue my property and spoil the local environment for everyone living in the vicinity.</p> <p>In addition to this, the volume of traffic and noise generated from the site(s) will cause a nuisance, and a danger to those using the roads from the bypass towards Moulsoford and Cholsey. In particular, the road to Cholsey is narrow and dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists - heavy plant vehicles can only make this worse.</p> <p>There are also concerns relating to the river; that one of the proposed sites is so close to the river that it will ruin the Thames Path. Furthermore, site SG33 is not only close to the already dangerous road to Cholsey, but close to the railway. This railway is a visitor attraction, enjoyed by many people in and around Wallingford. It is supposed to be for pleasure rides, for people to enjoy the views. How pleasurable will it be to look out on a gravel site? This can only be detrimental to the railway's business.</p> <p>I sincerely hope that you will take my objections seriously, and those of all the other residents and businesses in the area, and reconsider your plans for extracting gravel from these sites.</p>
168 (PAGE )	<p>Policy M3: Strategy for the location of mineral working</p> <p>6. The identification of the new area of working at Cholsey is broadly supported as the southern site to replace Sutton Courtenay when supplies expire around 2020.</p> <p>Cholsey is closest to the demand nodes and has limited risk of flooding. Continued extraction is supported at the existing areas of working (the Lower Windrush Valley, Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton, Sutton Courtenay, and Caversham). These sites can provide sufficient resources to meet the above supply requirements and are well located to the principal centres of demand - i.e. where significant housing development is proposed - at Oxford, Witney, Didcot and Wantage &amp; Grove. In addition they are well located to the strategic transport network to access centres of demand in the north of the County at Banbury and Bicester.</p> <p>7. Notwithstanding this broad support, the policy as drafted is objected to: the wording should be amended so as not to necessarily restrict working at the reserves at the Lower Windrush Valley, and at Eynsham/Cassington/Yarnton. Similarly, an objection is made to the supporting text at paragraphs 4.18 and 4.19 where it is stated that one of the 'principles' which has informed the selection of the preferred strategy is that the rate and intensity of mineral workings at west Oxfordshire should not be increased.</p> <p>These are arbitrary restrictions on production in these locations, which have no basis in evidence. The policy rightly states that new production in these areas could be achieved through extensions to existing quarries, as this reflects point 6 of paragraph 15 of Minerals Planning Statement 1 (MPS1). Moreover, there are obviously economic reserves in these areas and the effect of the policy would be to sterilise these (which is clearly contrary to national policy on minerals). This is strongly objected to.</p>

	<p>8. Paragraph 4.18 of the draft Core Strategy explains that the cap is proposed due to concerns regarding generation of traffic, impacts on local rivers and groundwater flows, and the impact on local communities; however these concerns apply equally to all the potential mineral extraction sites being considered and are therefore not sufficient justification, in themselves, to warrant the cap. Further, the policy requires rates of extraction to not exceed past levels, which have been low in recent years and represent only a fraction of the reserves available (see above). Applying this artificial cap to sites at west Oxfordshire means that the draft Core Strategy does not offer flexibility: if for any reason sites are not delivering as planned then the document needs to contain the flexibility of approach to increase the rate of supply at existing workings rather than to open new sites. As proposed, the strategy is therefore considered to fail the tests of soundness.</p> <p>9. Support is expressed for the exclusion of sites at Benson, Drayton St Leonard, Shillingford and Stadhampton (sites SG-03, SG-09, SG-13 and SG-59 respectively) from the preferred strategy. These, along with all the other sites considered, have been assessed through the Council's 'Preliminary Assessment of Minerals Site Nominations' and comments on this are made as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o SG-03: support is given for the classification of this site as "red" (whereby the site is precluded from further assessment) on the grounds that it is almost entirely within flood zone 3b, is high quality agricultural land and is adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</li> <li>o SG-09: under the issue of archaeology, the assessment concludes that the site "should not, on archaeological grounds, be considered for mineral extraction".</li> </ul> <p>However, the overall planning assessment is "amber" (i.e. that it can be considered) - no reasoning is given for this overall assessment which is contradictory and is objected to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o SG-13: support is given for the overall classification of this site as "red" (to be precluded from further assessment).</li> <li>o SG-59: object - this site should also be "red" as a) its delivery appears to depend on site SG-09 (which should be "red" in any event) and b) over 50% of it lies within Flood Zone B - we contend that the latter point renders it unsuitable for further consideration.</li> </ul> <p>10. All four of the above sites should therefore be precluded from further assessment and discounted as future sites for mineral extraction (including safeguarding, see below).</p> <p>The reasons that these sites should be excluded all relate to their impact on finite resources (e.g. soil quality (agricultural value), features of archaeological interest, flood zones) - the protection of these resources must be considered paramount when balanced against other objectives such as traffic impacts and local communities which, although important, are only temporary in nature (as the impact only takes effect for the duration of time that the minerals are worked). In addition, the above sites are not as well located in relation to the future centres of demand previously referred to (Oxford, Witney, Didcot, and Wantage &amp; Grove) or as easily accessible to those centres in the north of the County (Banbury and Bicester).</p> <p>11. Finally, an objection is made to the exclusion of Sutton/Stanton Harcourt as a potential new site as it has a capacity of 14mt. No reason is provided for its exclusion.</p>
217	<p>In relation to the proposed gravel extraction at Cholsey, I have many areas of concern regarding the siting of this along the Wallingford Road which is in very close proximity to residential properties and is in fact not on the edge of the village of Cholsey as some have stated, but in fact right at the heart of the settlement of Cholsey, separating as it does the village of Cholsey from the area of Winterbrook which is also a part of Cholsey. At a recent public meeting in Cholsey, it was noticeable that the residents of Winterbrook were out in force and obviously consider themselves to be part of the Cholsey community.</p> <p>It will not only be the village of Cholsey (including Winterbrook) which will be adversely affected by the proposed development since the pit as proposed would impact seriously on the whole of Wallingford as well, through 'noise, dust, odour', increased traffic and destruction of an area of</p>

tranquil, unspoilt English countryside and wildlife habitat. The prevailing wind would make the town of Wallingford a prey to the resulting pollution; as many as 10.000 people live within a mile of the proposed site. It would seem that it would have been difficult for the Committee to have found a more disruptive site in the whole of South Oxfordshire if they had set about it with that sole purpose.

My husband and I moved to the Wallingford area 12 years ago and have grown to love it for its unspoilt atmosphere and sense of civic pride. In that time we have watched the town beginning to set more store by its long and fascinating history and develop its heritage for commercial purposes. This summer we have had the pleasure of showing various visitors from Britain and abroad around Wallingford and its surroundings, and we have enjoyed researching the history of the town and neighbouring villages. We would like to congratulate the SODC and SE England Development Agency for the excellent series of leaflets available from Tourist Information which have assisted us in our explorations and which are, presumably, designed to encourage tourism to the area.

When talking about Wallingford to people abroad we have noticed that, while they may not have heard of Queen Matilda or Stephen, King of the Romans, they have all heard of Agatha Christie, even people from as far away as India and China, though this is not really surprising since she is the world's best-selling author of all time. Only this summer our Belgian visitors' greatest wish was to see Agatha Christie's house in Winterbrook and grave in Cholsey churchyard. Certainly when one visits the grave there are frequently 'votive offerings' left by visitors and the languages show how far people have travelled; some certainly come from the Far East. In our opinion, the area should make still more of this connection and benefit the town's growing tourism industry and economy, rather than destroying the attractiveness of the surrounding area.

The Dame Agatha Christie Trail leaflet is an excellent resource when visiting these sites. We are horrified to think that the entire route of that trail is blighted by the proposed gravel extraction works between Winterbrook, Wallingford and Cholsey, should permission for them be given. Would anybody want to spend a day walking or even driving from Agatha Christie's house in Winterbrook to Cholsey church if the whole route were to be blighted by industrial workings? Such things are the stuff of ugly everyday life, not of days out and holidays.

We gather that the operators of the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that the proposed gravel pit would probably result in their ceasing to operate because they fear that the workings would make the Bunk Line unsafe and that paying customers would not be prepared to pay to view an ugly industrial site. Their advertising flyer boasts that 'Our line runs through the beautiful countryside of South Oxfordshire...!' This would mean the loss of yet another tourist attraction for the town.

In fact many tourists and walkers are attracted to this part of the Thames Valley by the attractive unspoilt countryside so close to an equally attractive small market town with its range of facilities and historic sites on offer. We are blessed by being on both the Ridgeway and the Thames paths and to destroy the natural beauty would certainly impact adversely on the economic viability of the area. Some people might argue that a gravel extraction plant would create jobs, but how many jobs would be lost both in the near and longer term future, by this loss of attractiveness to tourists and visitors?

We strongly urge the councils to reject this proposal and save the growing tourist interest in our area. It seems like killing the golden goose or shooting ourselves in the foot, since both Cholsey and Wallingford will suffer hugely from reduced quality of life and loss of income from shopping and tourism, with no benefit to our area, especially since it seems on professional advice, that the quality of the gravel at this site is poor. This would mean a huge disruption and upheaval of many people's lives and not even for good quality gravel.

To raise another area of concern, it is clear from where I live at the southern end of the Wallingford Road that many people (certainly hundreds of cycle journeys per week) cycle the route and I know from personal experience that many of them use the train for travel to Didcot, Oxford, Reading and further afield for work, shopping etc. In fact my husband and I both use bikes to go to Wallingford several times per week and also, like many others, to access the station. If, as seems to be the case, around 200 lorries per day were also to use the road it would become even less safe for cyclists than it is currently and probably much less popular as a means of travelling from Cholsey to Wallingford. Both Wallingford and Cholsey are

	<p>about to see large numbers of new residents as a result of housing developments. Both places are becoming increasingly difficult for parking and it would seem sensible to try to encourage rather than discourage cycling as an alternative means of travel with much less impact on parking and congestion in the town's narrow historic streets. The centre of the town is already almost at gridlock at certain times.</p> <p>Many of us are at a loss to understand how this proposal has come about when the site was not on the short list of proposed sites. It seems that there are very considerable vested interests at play here and that the whole process has been more akin to landing a hot potato on an unsuspecting community's lap (when its representative was caught napping at best, or at worst was reprehensibly negligent of consulting and representing the views of his electorate) than to a proper democratic hearing and reasoned consideration of the needs of the communities involved. Indeed, how can there be a consultation process when there is only one possible site proposed? Also the time allowed for the consultation process seems indecently short and much shorter than in other recent similar cases, almost as if it was hoped that no-one would notice in time to react. We are tempted to question the legitimacy of the process and whether our council is acting in our interests; certainly whether our councillor is listening to and acting in our interests. We hope and urge that the councils involved will recognise the lasting and damaging blight on the whole area of Cholsey and Wallingford which this plan involves and refuse permission to the developers.</p>
218 (Goring PC)	<p>I have been instructed to write on behalf of Goring Parish Council to express their concerns about the proposed gravel pits in the Council areas of Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>Although your plans do not fall within our Council boundaries it will have an adverse impact on our roads given Goring already suffers from traffic jams day and night. Lorries will undoubtedly use Goring as a short cut being a convenient crossing point of the Thames. It is also felt this will have an effect on the environment and animal life. The area around Wallingford and Goring attracts many tourists because of its natural beauty and by allowing gravel pits this will undoubtedly have a negative effect and could reduce the number of visitors to the area.</p>
219	<p>I wish to object to plans to extract gravel at Cholsey</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1/ it will blight an area of unspoilt countryside</li> <li>2/ it will destroy prime farmland (which we will some day regret)</li> <li>3/ the industry will say that gravel is needed for construction - but it's time the industry began to look at alternatives and recycling, rather than always taking the easy option</li> </ol>
223	<p>I am writing to express my dismay at the plan to develop land between Cholsey and Wallingford for gravel and sharp sand extraction.</p> <p>Consulting the Community. This is an exceptionally long consultation document, given that it is intended to be read by the general public and additionally it states that specific sites will be identified in a subsequent document. I am disturbed to find that Cholsey has been put forward as the preferred new location without any alternatives, in spite of the many obvious reasons why this location is unsuitable. Indeed the consultation document seems to argue against its own case notably:</p> <p>Protecting ANOB and Local Communities. The area is surrounded by AONB and close to a particularly attractive section of the River Thames used for leisure by many local people as well as tourists. If developed, the site will stretch from the thriving community of Cholsey and the ancient and historically important town of Wallingford spoiling the environs of both by increasing the volume of heavy industrial traffic creating problems for road safety, noise and dirty roads as well as creating an eyesore in this rural environment.</p> <p>Keeping Supplies Local. The geography of the area suggests that after the next wave of development in Wallingford (which would probably have been completed before any sand extraction at Cholsey came on line) supplies would only be going west towards Didcot as there is no volume in local demand going immediately south, north or east. I understand that there are questions over the quality of the deposits at Cholsey such that the extracted gravel would need to be mixed with non-local materials. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the gravel would actually be used locally. I hope that in consulting with local people, the council will take on board the many ways in which gravel extraction at the Cholsey location would</p>



	damage the environment, local economy and the quality of life of residents in the area and find a more appropriate location.
429	<p>Having lived in Wallingford Road, Cholsey for over 40 years I would like to state my objections for the proposed gravel pits in Cholsey and Wallingford. I cannot understand that the proposed extraction sites will safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of an unspoilt natural landscape.</p> <p>The new Agatha Christie Trail will be completely spoilt by your proposals. After all Agatha Christie is the number one attraction in this area. From my back garden I can see the Cholsey &amp; Wallingford steam railway, which attracts many visitors to the area. If the proposed gravel pits go ahead, this could mean the railway will have to close. Volunteers have been working on this for the past thirty years, once again attracting many visitors to the area.</p> <p>The Wallingford Road is already a very busy and fast road. How can it possibly cope with so many extra large and noisy vehicles? The choice of site put forward by OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and work places of 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two thirds of Wallingford. At the moment this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the planning strategy. Several other sites are available in south Oxfordshire, why therefore has the county council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p> <p>I understand from a number of sources that the material found in the site is believed to be of poor quality. The poor quality of the gravel is said to be one of the reasons that a previous contractor withdrew from the site when it was considered some twenty years ago.</p> <p>As the Wallingford Road is a long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous road, we have been waiting for a cycle path for some years. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable this to happen in the next five to ten years. The route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from the developers are time limited and will be lost if the scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I hope you will take these objections into consideration when making your decisions.</p>
162	I think this is a really bad plan. It is an area of incredible beauty which will be devastated irreparably not just by the extraction but also by the increase in heavy traffic.
778	<p>I am against this proposed site being adopted for the following reasons:</p> <p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to Cholsey.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St.Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be ridiculous.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway.</p>

The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.

In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.

I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.

This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.

Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.

The site lies immediately to the south of a complex archaeological area which has evidence of occupation from the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. The by-pass is a false modern dividing line to what should be viewed as a contiguous site and features have been identified suggesting an early field system. It is an area that is highly likely to contain significant archaeological material. The area around the listed building Cox's Farm is also a known medieval settlement area. Therefore since the area is part of the hinterland of a major medieval town, with a long continuity of earlier settlement history disruption of this site should not be undertaken lightly. Proper, deep archaeological investigation must be undertaken if the archaeological potential of this area is not to be totally destroyed.

A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.

Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'

The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.

In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?

The Core Strategy put forward by OCC is not site specific. Its main purpose is to lay down guidelines and provide information to those seeking to

	<p>extract minerals in Oxfordshire. This means that the site of operation will be decided upon without a full analysis of its merits, benefit and drawbacks. If the position remains that only one new site - Cholsey - has been nominated then it is not going to be possible to withdraw the decision in the event that the site is deemed unsuitable. Selection from a choice of one is not selection and the council has left itself with no other options.</p> <p>It is bizarre for the County Council to just put forward one site for the imposition of this gravel pit. What will happen if this site, when subjected to public examination by a government inspector, is found lacking? The County Council will be left with not just no site, but no minerals strategy either. It is understood that the sites under consideration by OCC for Mineral extraction in this area are limited to those nominated or proposed by gravel quarrying companies and/or the landowners on whose property the minerals are to be found. Does this sound like a reasonable and acceptable basis on which to impose such a massive upheaval on our locality? One can assume that the interest of local people is not a priority to large commercial companies or those who stand to benefit from hefty land sales. I would like to think that our elected leaders would use the resources that we all pay for in our rates and taxes to seek out sites in advance and subject these to proper appraisal prior to offering them for long-term mining operations. If we were to take a cynical view on the matter we might think that the OCC had backed itself into a corner over the matter and had little time and space left in which to manoeuvre.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>I am really concerned that these proposals will preclude the development of the Wallingford to Cholsey Cycle Path. People in both communities have long campaigned for this amenity and a fully costed, part funded proposal has been developed by the County Council. The Wallingford Road is long, straight, narrow, fast and dangerous; over the years there have been a number of cyclist deaths and injuries on it. I understand from the Parish Council that funds from future housing development in Wallingford and new government money will enable the development of this route in the next five to ten years. Unfortunately the route runs for the full length of the gravel pit site. The funds that come from developers are time limited and will be lost if your scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I completely understand the desire that the County council has to move gravel extraction closer to the point at which it will ultimately be used. Your plan is aimed at moving extraction away from West Oxfordshire and putting the large lorries on to roads nearer to areas where houses are being built in Wallingford, Didcot and the new Science vale development. However, the proposed Cholsey site is not due to start production for ten years, by which time much of the house building in this area will have been completed. There is also nothing to stop the developers of the site, for whom this will be a commercial direction, selling the gravel in to Reading, Oxford or even further afield.</p> <p>There is no evidenced schedule of proposed development activity for the time period in question, to justify the proposed levels of extraction required. I would have expected details of all proposed development in South Oxfordshire to have been documented within the Consultation document. Cholsey is a small site, which will not meet the stated development requirements in the longer-term. There is no mention within the Consultation document of other sites which would far better meet the development requirements in the longer term.</p>
899	<p>I am writing to voice my objection in connection to the proposed Gravel pit on land between Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>One of the reasons I chose this area when I moved here a number of years ago was the unspoilt landscapes and beautiful country sides that could be reached so easily from within the village of Cholsey. Is a gravel pit a suitable sight to be greeted with in an area of outstanding natural beauty - I think not.</p> <p>I am concerned people will no longer want to visit this area as a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty given the hideous site which would hit them as they come across the proposed gravel pit. This would put off walkers to this area decreasing the tourists to the area and further more</p>

	<p>impacting the local businesses including shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes, hotels/B&amp;Bs etc which rely on this trade. The destruction of the Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St. Mary's Church graveyard will drive away visitors wishing to follow in her footsteps.</p> <p>We are also extremely lucky with the amount of wildlife we have in this area that would be driven out of their homes or be forced away due to the noise coming from the gravel pit. In the area are animals that require space away from humans including foxes, roe deer and hares. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm. Removing the fields takes away their homes driving them out of the area.</p> <p>It is also lovely to see the Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway still operating today and the special functions they are able to lay on throughout the year of which so many people receive enjoyment from. I understand that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are rightly concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to the closure of the railway. This would be a disgraceful end to more than thirty years of voluntary work of people who have worked so hard to keep the railway going.</p> <p>The increase in traffic, especially the lorries transporting gravel from the site will add further danger to our roads not to mention extra dirt and dust on one of the major access roads to the village of Cholsey.</p> <p>I am very concerned that there is no long term plan for the final use and restoration of the site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with proximity to the River Thames and that these same issues preclude the site being used for landfill. Further, the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely as nowadays such waste tends to be recycled and re-used at source. So we are to be left with a depression that will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in spring and autumn and a dust bowl in summer.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character of a largely unspoilt natural landscape that surrounds Wallingford and Cholsey.</p> <p>I urge you to please reconsider your plans and not to allow the gravel pit to go ahead in the Wallingford/Cholsey area.</p>
865	<p>Please consider this as a formal response to Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals Planning Strategy Consultation Draft (September 2011). I am a resident of Cholsey, Oxfordshire, and vehemently object to Policy M3 that proposes that Cholsey is utilised for sand and gravel extraction when reserves at Sutton Courtenay are exhausted. This objection is based on two broad premises (each of which highlights strong multiple anomalies);</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OCC's technical justifications that are clearly and substantially defective; and</li> <li>2. A lack of proper process involved in the decision to allocate Cholsey as the preferred option that has at best been completed without due diligence and at worst is negligent and illegal.</li> </ol> <p>I will address these in turn below:  Defective Technical Justifications:  The negative impacts of new gravel works at Cholsey have been severely underestimated during the preparation of the proposed strategy. Thus the evidence on which the OCC Cabinet has used to draw its conclusions and thus include Cholsey as the preferred choice is flawed and must be revisited. The shortcomings include, but are not limited to the following listed points. Many of these failings are based on an insufficient evidence base and/or lack of clarity.</p> <p>A. Social impact on the village of Cholsey, the ancient market town of Wallingford and the surrounding villages.  In excess of 10,000 people live within one mile of the proposed development extents; hundreds of people live in the immediate vicinity. It is evident</p>

that your investigations have been nothing but superficial, and the cumulative impacts, factoring the number of impacted residents, does not reflect a balanced argument in the decision-making process. This is in direct contravention of your stated policy which claims that you will: "minimise negative impacts of waste management facilities and mineral extraction on people and local communities" ('Comments' column on page 65 of the SA/SEA document, item 8).

I quote your own consultation documentation further:

"All but one of the proposed working areas are existing minerals working areas, the exception is Cholsey (sand and gravel)".

Thus, as I stated above, you are directly contravening your own policy. Not only this, but Cholsey appears to be the only option that would contravene this policy, thus you have exceeded yourselves in your ability to undermine yourselves so spectacularly!

Cholsey and Wallingford are exceptionally pleasant settlements to live and work in. You are planning to undermine the lives of tens of thousands of people.

This impact for the population is compounded by the impact on house prices. We are a young hardworking family struggling to pay a hard-to-obtain mortgage through an immensely tough economic climate. Your current mismanagement of this policy has had the immediate effect of freezing the house market, effectively destroying the value of our house. Remember when considering this the numbers of houses affected by this. Looking forward, the long term value of houses is likely to drop by a minimum of 10% thus placing thousands in negative equity. My family, like many others, are now trapped from moving forward, irrespective of improved economic conditions.

The Wallingford Town plan, supported by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) and thus I presume (through the hierarchical democratic process) OCC, is centred around attracting tourism, primarily through its unique cultural, heritage and archaeological assets (see below). Thus you are undermining the prospects of an entire town.

B. The archaeological and heritage values of Cholsey and Wallingford.

The geographical setting of the town, including being the most downstream point (and thus closest to London) facilitating crossing of the River Thames, has provided Wallingford and its surrounds with a rich and diverse, often critical role in English history through every period. Substantial evidence of occupation from the Bronze and Iron Ages lie immediately adjacent to the proposed development area, and it is short-sighted at best to presume that crucial further finds are not held by the land proposed to be irrevocably degraded. This has not been considered in the consultation documentation.

Wallingford was briefly the capital of England, and the site of the national mint for a considerable time. Significant Roman sites are believed to lie between Wallingford and Cholsey, and Wallingford played an important role in the English Civil War.

Two key heritage attractions will be decimated by the proposed development. The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway will become entirely defunct by the proposed works. Tens of thousands of visitors are brought to South Oxfordshire by the railway, providing income to businesses within the surrounding area. Could you imagine the local authorities in Cornwall granted permission (yet alone developing plans themselves) that would decimate the Bodmin and Wenford Railway, so critical to the local tourism industry? No! The Agatha Christie Trail would similarly be rendered defunct. The Thames path and Ridgeway trails, in addition to the Chiltern Hills would also be affected. The cumulative impacts are substantial: does not the Wallingford area comprise one of the most important destinations for tourism in Oxfordshire after the City of Oxford?

C. Environmental impacts, including ecological degradation.

Insufficient assessments have been carried out to determine the likely environmental and ecological impacts. Your own documentation (SA/SEA document) fails to recognise the presence of numerous bird and mammal species known to be present. Thus your decision making process is ill-informed, and you do not have the ability properly provision for appropriate mitigation.

There is no evidence of any substantive modelling of the impacts of air quality on the local population. As an environmental consultant I know that

modern modelling techniques can provide accurate quantification of these impacts, which fairness dictates should be compared to the impacts at other potential sites.

D. Site legacy.

Your long term plans for the site are stated as being to provide a destination for inert building waste. However, you fail to recognise that such material is contemporarily in high demand and thus is unlikely to become available for such use. Given that the site cannot be used for the creation of a lake given its proximity to the River Thames and furthermore cannot be used for landfill, I demand that you come clean and reveal what is likely to happen to the Cholsey site. I assume that even if you found sufficient inert waste to fill the site, it would be used for house-building: Again please be clear about the post-filling plans.

Lack of Transparent Consultation:

There has been an unjustified change in policy between October 2010 and February 2011 regarding the choice of Cholsey as the preferred option. The OCC document Development of Draft Minerals Planning Strategy, dated September 2011 states that in October 2010, the OCC Cabinet agreed a preferred approach to sand and gravel extraction works that did not include plans for Cholsey. Despite this, in February 2011, the document states that the Cabinet agreed a revised strategy which did include new works for Cholsey. The consultation does not provide sufficient evidence or argument to demonstrate, in an open and transparent way, the considerations taken into account by OCC when choosing to dramatically switch their position between October 2010 and February 2011 with regard to including Cholsey in the preferred approach. Similar failings are responsible for the lack of justification for all potential options, bar Cholsey, being excluded from the same process. From the documentation I have seen, these sites number 61. I understand that there is currently a Freedom of Information request that has been submitted to OCC in order to elucidate the decision-making process on both of these fronts: I fully expect that this request will be fully and efficiently satisfied.

I further note that there has been little, indeed no consultation with the community in and around Cholsey and Wallingford. This is entirely contradictory to the Adopted Statement of Community Involvement which is clearly relevant to this process; OCC's own guidance has been flagrantly ignored, to the sceptical mind (forgive me, given the overwhelming evidence base) purely to protect vested interests. There is no sense within the community that OCC has offered satisfactory consultation process at any stage of this process. Should satisfactory justifications not be presently supplied, the Community threatens a response within a legal framework.

The lack of appropriate consultation and transparency in the decision-making process is unacceptable in modern democratic process for the following rudimentary reasons:

- It is patronising to voters;
- It is financially inefficient as is likely to lead to a need for repetition of Council work;
- Evidence of opacity in Council practice that (justifiably) will lead to the undermining of trust in both OCC process specifically and in the democratic process more generally.
- The UK claims to set a democratic example in a modern world, to such a strong degree that we currently have armed forces serving on three separate sovereign nations, and with political pressure being applied on dozens more. This is wholeheartedly undermined if we cannot allow UK citizens a fair and transparent political process on issues within their own county.

In summary.

I thus urge you to apologise to the tax-paying public, and complete this consultation based on a sound, technically-competent and comprehensive evidence base. The consultation should be transparent and use effective communication.

I am a hydrological consultant and have worked on flood risk assessments where developers are rightly required to follow all proper processes, provide satisfactory development proposals that are based on sound evidence base of cost-benefit analysis, satisfy legislative requirements and

	<p>properly mitigate where impacts are made. There is no reason why OCC should not also follow these fundamental principles as it expects others to do. I drive on the county's roads and appreciate that there is a need to source material resources for development. However, this decision-making process is clearly flawed.</p> <p>Please add me to all correspondence and consultation lists on all matters relating to the Minerals Planning Strategy. Please forward all documentation in hard copy to my home address above, and electronically to the email address provided, also at the head of this letter.</p>
915	<p>I strongly object to the gravel pit plan for Cholsey &amp; Wallingford we do not want or need them.</p> <p>We have new build homes here in Cholsey and the village is rapidly increasing in size, we are after all only a village and the roads will not take the extra traffic, lorries break up roads quicker than anything.</p> <p>There is wildlife to consider, I have seen Badgers and Deer cross the road at different times to the fields you have in mind for your gravel pits, also what will happen to the brook that runs through the fields, there is wildlife that use it.</p> <p>Our village has no need or wants the gravel pits.</p>
916	<p>I enclose my reasoned objection to the OCC's choice of site for gravel extraction and the way it was done. I believe that a more appropriate site in terms of effects on the local population and even in terms of gravel extraction itself could be found from among those originally considered. I have written to my MP asking for a full public enquiry and for the names and addresses of all officials involved to be made public for purposes of transparency.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health hazards: All residents of Cholsey and Wallingford would be affected. Dust in the quantities produced by such workings is dangerous to health. It would be blown by prevailing winds towards both populated centres. People driving or walking past the gravel extraction workings would be affected; anyone who has ever walked on a road frequented by gravel lorries will know that it is impossible to avoid breathing the dust. Lorries every 6 minutes would add to road congestion and diesel particulate pollution. The noise would affect the quality of life of local residents and deprive them of their right to enjoy their property in peace.</li> <li>2. Illogical choice: The decision is allegedly based on expert mineral extraction information but an expert commissioned by local residents says that that information was flawed because the site is not in fact the best of the half dozen originally considered.</li> <li>3. Saving money for the company or council at the expense of residents: One of the criteria in the proposal was the availability and proximity of main roads in order to transport the extracted gravel. This criterion should play no part in the decision-making process because it is only a means of saving money for the gravel extraction company (or the council) which would otherwise have to build an access road if another site were to be chosen. Harming local residents in order to save money for a gravel company is not a proper consideration.</li> <li>4. Long-term hazard: The proposal that the site would be subject to waste landfill would present an indefinite hazard to local populations due to the toxins often contained in such landfill.</li> <li>5. Loss of beautiful countryside: At present, the area proposed for gravel extraction is a beautiful area and one that I enjoy walking in, as do many others. The loss of attractive places to walk directly from home, without using a car, would be a severe deprivation and affect my whole equality of life. I walk daily.</li> <li>6. Suspicious motives: communist dictatorships did it this way: When considering all the possible sites for a gravel extraction works, Oxfordshire County Council's choice of the few fields between Cholsey and Wallingford (an area of less than one mile with population centres to north and south) in preference to other less populated sites is akin to decisions taken in totalitarian states. It was done semi-secretly, without officially notifying the local authority most affected (Cholsey) that it was among sites being considered. Furthermore, it was done without considering the residents' Human Rights to peaceful enjoyment of their property. It was also done without considering the possible objections of those local residents (numbering about 10,000 in Cholsey and Wallingford), who have now been given just a period of weeks to react.</li> </ol>

	<p>7. All this suggests that those officials who made this decision in the way they did - in an underhand way - should have their motives examined by a full public enquiry. For purposes of transparency their names and addresses should be revealed so that residents can make a judgement about their motives.</p>
917	<p>In your briefing document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting..." Cholsey is a Parish of considerable historical importance, with its recognised beginnings in 986 A.D. The 1695 Cholsey map shows that the area proposed for gravel extraction along the Wallingford Road contains reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which are largely unchanged today. As such, this particular area along the Wallingford Road must be deemed to be a "Heritage Asset" within the definition of your Plan.</p> <p>It is impossible to see how the proposed extraction sites can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting, of a largely unspoilt natural landscape, sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village.</p> <p>The recently adopted Agatha Christie Trail, that runs from her former home of more than forty years in Winterbrook, to her burial site in St. Mary's Church graveyard, will be destroyed by these proposals. I understand from a recent letter to the Wallingford Herald that the number one attraction of our area is Agatha Christie - the world's best-selling author - to destroy this attraction would be an act of folly.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>In terms of "unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors..." The proposed site along the Wallingford Road is shown as abutting directly onto existing residential development. In terms of environment, as mentioned above, the site includes historic reed beds, water-courses, and field patterns, which have remained unchanged for hundreds of years. These fields and watercourses are also rich in wildlife and afford an unspoilt natural habitat.</p> <p>I understand that the proposed site has not been subjected to intensive study in the past, so the short notice provided of the proposal has not allowed more than a brief assessment to be made based largely on recent observations by local naturalists.</p> <p>This is largely a permanent grazed farmland site with hedges and trees around much of the boundary. Those bordering Green Lane are of particular interest, being well established and supporting a wide range of bird species. Much of the hedging is mature Hawthorn and to the north east of Green Lane there are also broken lines of mature hedging that are probably of greater value to wildlife than as field dividers. Most of its value probably lies in the lack of disturbance. This may explain why it is an area where it is easy to see creatures that require space away from humans. Foxes, Roe Deer and Hares are often seen here. Hithercroft Brook, alongside Green Lane, is where Weasels and Stoats are seen, and beside which there have been sightings of Otters in recent years.</p> <p>Buzzards, tawny Owls and red kites nest here and the fields are much used by flocks of birds in winter especially. These birds include lapwing; golden plover; fieldfare; redwing and roosting grey herons. Little owls, barn owls and, occasionally in winter, short-eared owls can be seen. In recent years barn owls have been mainly concentrated around Cox's Farm.</p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames valley by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi- industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district. Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals.'</p> <p>The choice of site put forward by the OCC for this consultation seems to take very little account of the distance between what is potentially a disruptive, dusty, noisy eyesore and the homes and workplaces of up to 10,000 people. A circle drawn one mile from either end of the proposed zone</p>



	<p>would encompass the whole of Cholsey village and two-thirds of the town of Wallingford. At present this area of farmland is all that separates the two settlements and the imposition of these works can contribute nothing to the obligations set out for consideration in the Planning Strategy.</p> <p>In excess of 10,000 people live within a mile of this site, and many hundred live around it. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and dust is not acceptable. With several other sites available in South Oxfordshire why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that brings ten years of economic blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people?</p>
926	<p>I write with regard to the proposed Gravel pit site between Cholsey and Wallingford.</p> <p>The council seem to have taken little account of how close the site is from homes and small businesses in our beautiful and thriving community of Cholsey.</p> <p>Cholsey is a close knit community that is devastated at the thought of its character and setting being ruined by noise, dust, traffic and left with an unsightly scarred landscape, not to mention the impact on our local wildlife, flower and fauna.</p> <p>Please find another site that will not have such a devastating impact on a community.</p>
944	<p>With reference to the gravel pit I wish to express my dismay and disgust at the proposals.</p> <p>The proposed site put forward by Oxfordshire County Council does not seem to take into account the distance between what would be (among other things) a disruptive, dusty and noisy eyesore and the homes/workplaces of up to 10,000 people. To subject so many people to the constant noise, disruption and air pollution is just not acceptable. As a parent to two young children I feel that this would not be an ideal setting to bring our children up in. One of the key factors when we purchased our property was the close proximity to the beautiful countryside, which will be totally ruined if the proposed plans go ahead. The proposed site is an area where we currently enjoy going on family walks with our dogs and enjoy seeing the wildlife and nature at its best.</p> <p>The gravel pit would obviously have a huge effect on house prices too - if we decided to move house in the future the value of our property would undoubtedly be reduced. With several other sites available to South Oxfordshire, why has the County Council opted to put a gravel pit that will bring ten years of blight followed by a further ten years of disruption so close to so many people and their homes/workplaces?</p> <p>In your Briefing Document you refer to "safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ..." I do not understand how the proposed site can possibly safeguard the current character, amenity and setting of a largely unspoilt natural landscape which is sited on the outskirts and bounded to one side by the major access road to our thriving village. The gravel pit would result in an increase in traffic with large lorries travelling on the Wallingford Road in Cholsey (which is a long, straight, fast, narrow and already very dangerous road) and also on roads that are near to areas where houses are being built. Surely the danger aspect of large lorries travelling on roads near residential areas has to be taken into consideration too?</p> <p>I am also concerned that there is no long-term plan for the restoration and final use of the proposed site. I understand that the site cannot be restored as a lake due to issues with its proximity to the River Thames and that it cannot be used for landfill due to the same issues. Also the possibility of the site being used for the disposal of inert building waste is unlikely, as such waste now tends to be recycled and re-used at source. Does this mean that we will be left with a depression which will seasonally fill with water, become a marshy area in Spring and Autumn and a dust bowl in Summer (creating yet more air pollution)?</p>
931	<p>We wish to register our strong objection to the possible development of the above sites. The main reasons for our objections are outlined below.</p> <p>Site SG-60</p> <p>This site borders the river Thames directly and is situated in an area of great beauty. The fact that this site is even considered, is quite astounding. In addition, the Thames Path runs along this stretch of riverbank and it is a very popular route for the serious Thames Path walker Throughout the year we see large numbers of walkers come through Thames Street, where we live and which is part of the Thames Path.</p> <p>It is also a very popular walking area for local residents and from elsewhere. Walkers from outside Wallingford often start their walk in this town, in</p>

order to enjoy this magnificent stretch of river. Consequently, they also make use of the local amenities, thereby supporting the local economy, which is badly needed for the long-term survival of this town.

Wallingford needs income from tourism and this is fully supported and recognised in the OCC's Economic Strategy Plan. The destruction of this area of natural beauty, would run counter to this strategy.

The development will also have a direct impact on the rich and varied wildlife.

The site is surrounded by busy roads. Heavy lorry movements in and out of SG-60 would create a potential traffic hazard on the Reading Road (A329) and the A4130 by-pass. Impatient and frustrated drivers will be inclined to take risks and try to overtake slow moving lorries. (This is already happening now - as witnessed by us).

There is a major residential development in progress on the Fairmile site along the A329, close to the proposed site. This will create a substantial increase in traffic into Wallingford along this road, as this is the nearest major shopping centre.

In addition, the former Carmel College site is also considered for residential development, with the creation of 160 new homes. This would add to the traffic hazards, as most people from this development are likely to use Wallingford amenities. This road safety issue must not be underestimated, due to the potentially heavy increase in local vehicle movements on the roads surrounding the site.

The great big holes which would be created will be an eyesore for years to come. Would they be filled in (inert landfill?) or left open and become lakes? There must be issues concerning possible contamination of the river, which after many years of hard work by the environment agency has been cleaned up and has become very popular with fishermen.

The possible ecological impact and other consequences, such as water levels, drainage etc, are beyond our technical competence, but need serious analysis.

The commercial interests of the landowner and operating company, seem to completely ignore the beautiful surroundings of this site and the massive impact it would have on local people and tourists, who make great use of this area. There is only one way to describe this proposal viz ecological vandalism and commercial greed.

Site SG33/SG57

It appears that this site was the subject of a planning proposal in 1987. However, the contractor withdrew owing to the poor quality of the gravel. A further unsuccessful attempt was made in 2007.

This proposal covers a much greater area than SG60, as the attached map shows. Since this site is adjacent to an existing residential area, the social impact will be horrendous. The proposal will subject the residents to years of noise, dirt and HGV traffic. Projected lorry movements are in the region of 200 per day (100 in and 100 out).

Currently the land in question is primary grazing land with a rich mixture of ecological assets, which would be destroyed. There are also archaeological aspects which have not been fully investigated, particularly relating to the Bronze Age and Iron Age. This would be lost forever.

This site runs alongside the Wallingford Road, which is the major access road into Cholsey. It is long and narrow. A number of cyclist fatalities have occurred over the years. The substantial increase of HGV traffic from this site will make this road even more dangerous. In addition, it will greatly increase traffic on the A4130 by-pass, as discussed under section SG60. Assuming that this HGV traffic is going primarily to Didcot, the 'old' A4130, once you leave the by-pass, becomes even more treacherous, narrow, bendy and bumpy.

The potential traffic increase from Carmel College and Fairmile sites must be incalculated, thereby compounding this road safety issue. This matter needs thorough investigation, before it is too late!!

As under SG60, the following technical issues need clarification:

	<p>a) Does it affect the water supply of Cholsey?  b) What will be done with the big holes?  c) Restoration.  d) Ground water level impact.  e) Contamination of the river Thames.  f) Noise level guarantees for residents.  g) Safeguards regarding archaeological finds.  h) Impact on Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway.</p> <p>If in 1987 the gravel was rejected because of its poor quality, what has changed since? Are we happy to use inferior quality gravel? If it wasn't good enough then, it is not good enough now.</p> <p>We must again come to the conclusion that this is a poor proposal and in the wrong place. It will affect residents adversely for years to come, together with the negative ecological impact. All for the sake of commercial gain.</p>
932	<p>I have been resident in Wallingford for over forty five years and would like you to know that I strongly object to the proposed gravel extraction plans. I am deeply opposed to a plan that by definition will irreversibly destroy our natural landscape, damaging the environment for wildlife and farming, and that at the same time would be visually repellent.</p> <p>I shudder to imagine the initial disruption that would be caused by many movements of heavy machinery in the area, the upheaval and the consequent travel disruption.</p> <p>On top of this there would be noise pollution and dust fall out that would impact adversely on individual house owners and the town in general. Surely intolerable?</p> <p>Further I am concerned that, were these gravel extraction sites to become established, they would devalue other nearby land areas. This in my mind would make them more likely to come under pressure from property developers. This, as you know, is an issue that has caused much debate and worry to the local townsfolk for a number of years. To now have this new threat to contend with is nothing short of an outrage.</p> <p>Wallingford is an ancient town, situated magnificently within an area of historic richness and beauty. I sincerely hope that you will preserve this and reject the proposed gravel extraction plans.</p>
933	<p>I am writing to register my objection to the proposed gravel pits for Cholsey and Wallingford. I object strongly to the location of this gravel pit and the negative impact it will have on local community and wildlife.</p> <p>The site is surrounded by many houses, including a number of listed buildings, notably the barns on the Wallingford Road and Cox's Farm, and other older houses, such as Brook House, that are significant local landmarks. It must be wrong to destroy forever the setting in which these buildings are based.</p> <p>The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway have said that these plans will result in their being unable to operate as the gravel workings will cover more than half of their operating area. They are concerned that the impact on their income from paying passengers could lead to closure of the railway. This would be an ignominious end to more than thirty years of voluntary work. All of these will be directly impacted by the proposed gravel extraction sites, which will have a severe adverse impact visually as well as through 'noise, dust and odour'.</p> <p>A large number of tourists and walkers are drawn to this part of the Thames Valley by the area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which surrounds this site. The Thames and Ridgeway paths, the historic town of Wallingford and the ancient settlement of Cholsey are all key to the enjoyment and attraction of the region. Any semi-industrial development which further expands the town's curtilage must have a detrimental effect on their natural</p>

	<p>beauty and consequently the economic viability of the district.</p> <p>Under the Minerals Planning Strategy the authorities are obliged to 'consider the social, economic and environmental effect of their proposals'.</p>
919	<p>I write to protest against the proposal to allow gravel extraction and the building of a cement works on these sites.</p> <p>If this project goes forward the resultant destruction of our beautiful countryside and the concomitant harm to wild life will be irreversible and is unacceptable at a time when we are learning the importance of considering the effects of our actions on the environment.</p> <p>Furthermore, the process of gravel extraction and the increase in heavy traffic which will be caused by the cement works will cause a significant loss of quality of life for the residents of these two communities and many nearby villages.</p> <p>Surely the adverse effects on the environment and the local community should outweigh the commercial advantage of those who wish to profit by this vandalism.</p>
920	<p>I write to protest against the proposal to allow gravel extraction and the building of a cement works on these sites.</p> <p>If this project goes forward the resultant destruction of our beautiful countryside and the concomitant harm to wild life will be irreversible and is unacceptable at a time when we are learning the importance of considering the effects of our actions on the environment.</p> <p>Furthermore, the process of gravel extraction and the increase in heavy traffic which will be caused by the cement works will cause a significant loss of quality of life for the residents of these two communities and many nearby villages.</p> <p>Surely the adverse effects on the environment and the local community should outweigh the commercial advantage of those who wish to profit by this vandalism.</p>
955	<p>I write this letter to express my objection and distress for the proposed Gravel Pit around the Cholsey and Wallingford area.</p> <p>I am sure you are aware the site(s) you plan to let be transformed into a horrendous gravel pit are truly wonderful examples of beautiful natural areas not only for many species of wildlife and birds, but enjoyed by residents, visitors and tourists throughout the year.</p> <p>To disrupt the landscape in such a severe and damaging way will have an extreme impact on small business that rely on the setting they are in, such as The Cholsey and Wallingford Steam Railway - a voluntary business that has operated for over thirty years, attracting visitors to the area. Helping to draw more tourism and revenue to Wallingford and Cholsey and also helping to increase awareness of these 2 charming places.</p> <p>'Safeguarding the character, amenity and setting ...' - I understand that any company and council would make this their prime objective when proposing any form of excavation or building work in their local area, but I am sure I am not alone when I ask you how this is possible?</p> <p>We all know any building work with excavations causes dust, and disruption along with noise pollution and odours and I think about this being on my doorstep on a much larger scale for the next 20 years and the impact that it will have not only on myself and home but on residents and local business owners and it angers me.</p> <p>Living in a peaceful village like Cholsey I do not expect to have the tranquillity compromised like this - if this was the case I would not pick one of the most picturesque counties in England to live in, I would be living in an industrial city where this kind of disruption would not collide with everyday life as much as it would here.</p> <p>I cannot speak for other residents in Cholsey (or Wallingford) but I believe many people live in this area for its remoteness, we have a train station that runs straight into surrounding cities such as London and Oxford, we don't want to bring industrial qualities to our doorsteps.</p> <p>Cholsey already has a large residential development happening here, I refer to the Fairmile Hospital and Cholsey Meadow Development. This is maintained fairly well by the owners however locals do still have to battle with the ongoing noise pollution, increased construction vehicle traffic and numerous examples of said vehicles causing pot holes on public road around their site entrances. To then add a gravel pit and their construction traffic to an already busy surrounding area is very insulting. And to rub salt further into an already sore wound why Oxfordshire County Council opt for the Cholsey and Wallingford area for this gravel pit when there are a handful of other sites in South Oxfordshire that are better suited, and not</p>

	<p>already experiencing construction disruption.</p> <p>I read information about the proposed Mineral and Waste area and I understand that whilst Oxfordshire County Council are wanting to make sure there is no 'unacceptable adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors' it appears that in order to maintain and protect wildlife and nature (such as the field patterns and water-course) full, extensive, professional surveys and assessments need to be carried out on the proposed sites...however this seems to have not happened yet?</p> <p>It also seems to me that other unique qualities of these areas, such as the archaeological sites around Cholsey and Wallingford should be considered during the above assessments.</p> <p>I hope that this letter fully expresses to you my objection to the proposed gravel pit site.</p>
966	<p>I have been made aware of the Core Strategy proposal to promote sites SG33, SG57 and SG60 as the preferred option through the activities of CAGE (Communities Against Gravel Extraction), and below I have set out my response.</p> <p>Consultation</p> <p>Referring to the Oxfordshire Statement of Community Involvement, adopted on 7 November 2006, I note there are various engagement techniques that OCC propose to use. I live opposite and within 15m of Site SG57. I have not been made aware of any of these consultation mechanisms by OCC directly and question whether the Council has adequately implemented its own consultation process.</p> <p>SITE SG57</p> <p>I object to the proposal that Site SG57 is a preferred option on the following grounds:</p> <p>Proximity</p> <p>This site is too close to Cholsey. Historically Oxfordshire has adopted the distance of 350 metres from a settlement as a buffer zone. If the edge of settlement is defined as either housing on two sides of the road or the 30 m.p.h. limit such a buffer zone makes significant inroads into the SG57 area and is likely to make the site unworkable and uneconomic.</p> <p>Any development with associated dust and noise that is within 350m will be a nuisance to my house and to our neighbours.</p> <p>Landscape</p> <p>Site SG57 is located in a former meander loop channel of the River Thames, and as such is a feature of special landscape importance. It is likely to date back to the Ice Age and destruction of this feature would be detrimental to the local landscape and heritage.</p> <p>Viability</p>

The drift geology is mapped as alluvium. Two borehole records are available for this area on the GeoIndex for the UK at [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk). Borehole SU 58 NE 88 and SU 58 NE 89 indicate that beneath a topsoil and less than 1m of clay there is a horizon described as 'ballast' with chalk and clay of approximately up to 3m. This is not a very accurate description of the materials, but it suggests that the mineral deposits at this location are of a high calcium carbonate content. Such aggregates are not of the best quality and their usefulness may therefore be limited without further augmentation and processing. Mineral deposits with a better specification are available elsewhere.

#### Flooding

Site SG57 lies within the former river channel and as such is at a lower level than the Wallingford Road to the south-east. The fields flood in winter when the groundwater level is high. The channel feature is likely to be in hydraulic continuity with the current River Thames corridor, and as such the storage capacity within the meander loop plays an important role in alleviating flooding in the Wallingford and Cholsey area.

Cholsey Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) is located adjacent to Site SG57. It is at the lowest point in the sewer system. On occasions when there is heavy rain there is potential for the capacity of the sewers to be overwhelmed. In July 2007 there was extensive flooding in the Wallingford Road when all the sewers flowing down to the works backed up causing flooding with contaminated water to my gardens and adjacent properties.

[photo of front garden 58A Wallingford Road Cholsey, July 2007 attached]

#### Contamination

The juxtaposition of Cholsey WWTW to Site SG57 presents further issues regarding the management of migrating contaminated groundwaters. The Cholsey WWTW was constructed around 1957. It later included processing of all the waste water from the ABM Maltings which generated a load on the works equivalent to a small town.

There are many documented instances of groundwater contamination, particularly from ammonium, beneath WWTW sites. If gravel extraction takes place next to the Cholsey WWTW it will draw contaminated groundwater into the workings and cause eutrophication of open waters. Extensive mitigation measures will be required to prevent this occurrence and will affect the viability of the site.

#### Access and Traffic

The section of the Wallingford Road passing Site 57 is almost entirely within the 30 m.p.h. zone, but this restriction is poorly observed as noted by the Police who have used our drive for speed checks. Tankers regularly turn out onto the road from WWTW to transport sludge to the Didcot works. Any additional lorry traffic from mineral extraction or other associated plant operations would be dangerous and unacceptable.

Cholsey has been campaigning for a cycle track along the Wallingford Road to improve cycle access to Wallingford, particularly for younger and less

confident riders. It is written into the Travel Strategy prepared by Sustainable Cholsey and presented to the Cholsey Community Development Trust.

Access from the north through Site SG33 would require the Cholsey Brook to be crossed and many field boundaries. Adequate mitigation measures will be required to prevent any contamination of the surface water quality, or destruction of hedgerows and trees.

#### Wildlife

The field opposite my house, part of Site SG57, is farmed for hay in the spring and early summer and used for sheep grazing at other times. In winter time when the groundwater levels rise and it floods there are flocks of geese and swans. I have also seen heron. Loss of such meadow land would be detrimental to the local biodiversity.

If gravel is taken out of this channel feature then it is likely that the site will be flooded by groundwater for most of the year.

#### SITE SG60

I object to the proposal that Site SG60 is a preferred option on the following grounds:

##### Proximity

This site is too close to the Winterbrook area of Wallingford. Historically Oxfordshire has adopted the distance of 350 metres from a settlement as a buffer zone. If the edge of settlement is defined as either housing on two sides of the road or the 30 m.p.h. limit such a buffer zone makes significant inroads into the SG60 area and is likely to affect the viability of the site.

The site has a boundary with the River Thames to the east, and mineral extraction will potentially be detrimental to this main river as discussed below.

##### Landscape

Site SG60 is located on the banks of the River Thames, and forms part of the river corridor, and is visible from the river itself, the opposite bank and from the Wallingford Bypass. Mineral extraction at this location would destroy the vista of the river corridor.

##### Viability

The drift geology is mapped as First River Terrace. In Mineral Assessment Report 64 a borehole (SU 68 NW 9) was drilled immediately to the west of the southern end of Plot SG60 on the opposite side of Reading Road. Beneath a topsoil cover of 0.2m the First Terrace River deposits comprised of 1.0m of sandy clay over 2.6m of clayey pebbly sand. Lower Chalk was encountered at 4.8m depth. The particle size distribution was dominated by sand with a mean gravel content of 16% and the composition of the gravel was predominantly chalk and limestone (66-70%). The mineral deposits at this location are of a high calcium carbonate content. Such aggregates are not of the best quality and their usefulness may therefore be limited without further augmentation and processing. Mineral deposits with a better specification are available elsewhere.

##### Flooding

Site SG60 lies on the banks of the River Thames and is almost certainly subject to river flooding [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk). If gravel extraction occurred at this site there is the undesirable potential for the Thames to break through into the workings in an extreme flood event, similar to that which occurred in July 2007.

##### Access

I regularly walk the Thames Path between Cholsey and Wallingford. I would not wish the path to be diverted, closed or put at risk because of gravel extraction.

#### SITE SG33

I object to the proposal that Site SG33 is a preferred option on the following grounds:

#### Proximity

This site is located on the mile or so of land between the two settlements of Cholsey and Wallingford, which have a joint population of some 10,000 people. Brook House and New Barn Farm lie within the site, and Cox's Farm is to the west. Any buffer zones required due to the proximity of these settlements will reduce the viability of the site.

#### Landscape

Site SG33 is located on the terraces and former channel of the River Thames and as such they are features of special landscape importance. They are likely to date back to the Ice Age and destruction of them would be detrimental to the local landscape and heritage.

In June this year I walked the Cholsey Parish boundary in this area as part of the 2011 Cholsey Festival. With others I had permission to traverse fields not on Rights of Way and I was delighted by the beauty of the fields and landscape in this part of the parish.

#### Viability

In Plot SG33 a mineral assessment borehole (SU 58 NE 14) was located in the south west corner, and another borehole (SU 58 NE 13) was located immediately to the west of the railway line in the northwest corner. Borehole SU 58 NE 13 comprises 0.1 of soil over 0.6m of very silty clay over 5.1m of clayey sandy gravel. Sand (16%) was the dominant particle size with 23% gravel. The mean limestone and chalk content of the gravel was 65%. The mineral deposits are essentially sands with gravels of a high calcium carbonate content. Such aggregates are not of the best quality and their usefulness may therefore be limited without further augmentation and processing. Mineral deposits with a better specification are available elsewhere.

#### Access and Traffic

I understand that access is proposed to be at the northern end of this site directly on to the Wallingford bypass. This is already a busy section of road, and queuing can occur at peak times. Additional mineral extraction traffic may cause others to divert through the historic market town of Wallingford to avoid queues.

Although the bypass links to A class roads access to future identified markets in Didcot and the west is along a narrow road beyond Brightwell cum Sotwell.

#### Economic Impact

The mineral extraction would have a detrimental effect on all the effort and resources that have been used to develop tourism in this area such as the Cholsey and Wallingford railway, the Agatha Christie trail and the historic town of Wallingford.

The presence or the blight potential of mineral working may also affect sales on the developments of the Fairmile Hospital, Carmel College and CABI sites.

In future I would like to be directly consulted by OCC on matters related to mineral extraction development on these sites, and I look forward to receiving a summary of the results of this consultation.