

BUILDING STONE

INTRODUCTION

Natural building stone is very important for the ongoing repair and maintenance of Gloucestershire's rich and diverse built and historic environment. It is used for walling, roof tiling and architectural purposes (sometimes called dimension stones, which can be cut into different shapes and sizes).

Gloucestershire's building stone resources are primarily derived from a variety of different Jurassic limestone types found in the Cotswolds and Carboniferous sandstones from the Forest of Dean. A small proportion of building stone is also produced from Carboniferous limestones within the Forest of Dean.

Building stone from Gloucestershire is well known for its variation in colour, texture and finish. This characteristic has led to a '*true sense of local distinctiveness*' and unique architectural style, which is demonstrated in many of the County's traditional buildings. It has also resulted in a relatively large number of small-scale extraction sites that are often intermittently worked.

HOW MUCH IS SUPPLIED?

In 2003, 20 active quarry sites supplied a total of 146,000 tonnes of non-aggregate minerals used for natural building & roofing stones and agricultural purposes.

WHERE IS IT EXTRACTED?

In 2003, the vast majority (82%) of material was supplied from 12 Jurassic limestone quarries based in the Cotswolds. The remaining (18%) was sourced from 3 Carboniferous limestone quarries and 5 Sandstone quarries located in the Forest of Dean.

HOW MUCH IS AVAILABLE AND HOW LONG MIGHT IT LAST?

At the end of 2003, the permitted reserves of non-aggregate limestones and sandstones totalled 4.65 million tonnes.

Based on the average annual supply over the last 5-years (1999 - 2003), Gloucestershire has enough overall reserves to last for around 30 years.

It is however important to recognise that the estimated remaining reserves do not reflect the differences in end-uses for the stone (*e.g. for walling or tiling*) or the variations in colour, texture and finish. Ultimately these characteristics will determine whether or not certain stone types can be used for particular building and roofing stone projects.