4. Aims and Objectives

by I. Roberts

At the outset this project aimed to provide a better overall understanding of the nature, distribution and, if possible, chronology of the archaeology of the aggregate yielding geology of the study area, in order that the results might be used purposefully in providing a more focused, meaningful and consistent approach in the mitigation of the impact of the aggregates industry on the archaeological resource. In providing a synthesis of mapped archaeological data, the project set out to provide an inter-county overview of the rural archaeological landscape, towards the production of a regional research framework. More specifically it aimed to provide data that would allow for better and more immediate assessment of the implications of Minerals Local Plans and UDPs, thus fostering closer liaison and common understanding between Mineral Planners, Minerals Operators and curatorial archaeologists in the different local authorities concerned.

An additional aim of the project was to raise the profile of the rural archaeology in the surrounding communities of the aggregate landscapes, so improving people's perceptions of the history of the landscape in which they live, so helping to engender a sense of identity and local pride. Thus a key objective was the dissemination the results of the project by a variety of means to meet both popular and academic requirements. The following 'Aims and Objectives' were identified at the outset of the project.

Aims and Objectives

1) Provide a resource that will foster a common understanding of the nature, character and research issues of the archaeology of the study area, towards eradicating cross-county disparities in mitigation strategies for aggregate extraction schemes for future Minerals Local Plans, LDFs and UDPs.

2) Contribute to a review of a broader synthetic level of archaeological understanding to help develop predictive and management tools for the aggregates

industry, mineral planners and archaeological curators (e.g. English Heritage 1991, 25-6; Olivier 1996, 41-2).

3) Enhance the understanding of the archaeology of the aggregate producing areas and its investigation through mineral extraction and so assist in an ongoing process of landscape characterisation (i.e. SMR/HER enhancement).

4) With the use of GIS, provide, both for the project and as a form of SMR/HER enhancement, a comprehensive map base of the study area containing all readily collated rural archaeological features recorded from aerial photographs, geophysical survey and excavation.

5) Redefine baseline knowledge of the archaeology of the Magnesian Limestone and its margins towards the creation of a regional research framework to inform mitigation requirements for future aggregate extraction.

6) Establish a better understanding of the extent and chronological development of settlement and exploitation of the Magnesian Limestone in the later Iron Age and Roman periods.

7) Provide an up-to-date perspective on the implications of the available archaeological evidence for the wider archaeological fraternity and other interested parties through the publication of a 150-page monograph

8) Through leaflets, lectures and a booklet, raise awareness in the local communities of the archaeology of the aggregate-producing areas and the history and role of the aggregates industry in mitigating the impact of extraction and assisting in archaeological research.