



Didcot Garden Town HIF 1 Scheme

Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Preliminary
Assessment

September 2021

Prepared for:

Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
AECOM House
63-77 Victoria Street
St Albans
Hertfordshire AL1 3ER
United Kingdom

T: +44(0)1727 535000
aecom.com

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1. Introduction

1.1 Scope

- 1.1.1 This Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Preliminary Assessment has been prepared in support of a planning application and accompanying Environmental Statement (ES) for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF 1) Scheme (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme') and sets out the mineral and waste safeguarding matters arising from the Scheme.
- 1.1.2 OCC's proposed package of strategic transport improvements are vital elements of Didcot's development as a "Garden Town". The transportation package is described in Section 3: The Scheme.
- 1.1.3 A full description of the Scheme can be found in ES Chapter 2: The Scheme.
- 1.1.4 This preliminary assessment specifically considers the potential for mineral sterilisation in and adjacent to the Scheme and the potential for impact on existing and proposed mineral and waste sites/ operations.
- 1.1.5 A plan identifying the study area is provided in Appendix A.

1.2 Site Location and Surroundings

- 1.2.1 The Scheme is located within the administrative boundary of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) and the Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC).
- 1.2.2 The key land uses of the Site have been related to agriculture, quarrying and landfilling. Hanson Asphalt and Sutton Courtenay Quarry are located immediately west of the Site. A recycling facility and an energy from landfill gas facility are also located in this area.
- 1.2.3 The Site crosses Appleford rail sidings, which lead into the Hanson Asphalt site. This section of the Scheme crosses areas of infilled land west and south-west of Appleford that are related to the presence of the historic landfill sites in this area - ARC Limited, Sutton Courtenay 90 Acre Site and Radcot Farm.
- 1.2.4 The Site crosses the Sutton Courtenay Landfill licenced waste management facility between Appleford Sidings and the former Didcot A Power Station. The southern part of the restored landfill area is an active gas field.
- 1.2.5 A railway line runs along the eastern boundary of the Site extending from the north of the former Didcot A Power Station to the River Thames. Culham Railway Station is located at the north-eastern Site boundary; and the village of Appleford located east of the site and south of the River Thames.
- 1.2.6 The Site crosses a series of former gravel pits (worked ground) at Bridge Farm Quarry, to the south of the River Thames, with areas of restored wetland.
- 1.2.7 The landscape is open, with less tree cover than in the northern and southern parts of the study area. Tree cover in this area is principally around the settlement boundaries of Appleford, Sutton Courtenay, Culham and Long Wittenham. Hedgerows in road and field boundaries give some enclosure but allow intermittent

longer-distance views. The B4016 between Appleford and Culham has open boundaries onto fields in places, allowing views onto adjacent fields and former mineral working sites. The River Thames is lined by mature trees and riparian vegetation, forming a green corridor. The Thames Path National Trail follows the north bank of the River Thames through the study area.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 OCC (the promoter) issued an EIA Scoping Report to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in April 2020 (ref. R3.0047/20) detailing the proposed technical content and methodologies to be used during the preparation of the ES.

1.3.2 In their capacity as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, OCC is responsible for planning control of minerals and waste development including minerals supply, mineral safeguarding areas, site allocations and determination of mineral and waste planning applications.

1.3.3 In its response, the OCC minerals and waste planning team notes:

“For the majority of the site, it does not fall into any designated areas for the safeguarding of minerals except to the north east of Power Station A heading towards Appleford, and Culham Science Centre. The link road connecting from the north of Didcot towards Culham Science Centre passing Appleford would travel through Mineral Consulting Areas and Strategic Resource Area 5 (Thames and Lower Thames Valleys – Standlake to Yarnton (Sharp Sand and Gravel

Therefore, Policy M8 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (Adopted September 2017) for the safeguarding minerals applies...

It is also noted that the proposed scheme would pass Appleford Siding which is a safeguarded rail depot as under policy M9 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1...

Under Policy W11 of the same Local Plan, the four waste management facilities in the area of the proposed development scheme would need to be safeguarded. These are: Hill Farm (J James Ltd), Sutton Courtney (FCC and Hanson), Appleford Sidings (Hanson) and Culham No.1...

we would therefore expect an assessment of how the existing waste facilities in the area would be safeguarded, or if unable to be safeguarded how they would be replaced elsewhere.”

1.3.4 A full copy of OCC's mineral and waste team's consultation response can be found in Appendix B. The need for a Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Assessment was discussed again during a subsequent pre-application meeting held with OCC on 12th August 2020, and more recently, advice on minerals and waste matters has been provided by OCC as part of their formal pre-application advice for the Scheme, dated 7th May 2021 (refer to Appendix C).

1.3.5 This report addresses the points raised by OCC (acting in its capacity as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority) within their consultation response to the Scoping Opinion request, and the minerals and waste matters raised within the pre-application advice.

1.4 Report Content and Structure

- 1.4.1 This preliminary assessment has been carried out as a first stage qualitative desktop exercise.
- 1.4.2 The objective of Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) is to safeguard mineral resources from unwarranted sterilisation of potential mineral resources by non-mineral development. Mineral Consultation Areas (MCAs) are also defined as a buffer around MSAs to ensure that development proposals which may impact upon identified mineral resources are not unnecessarily sterilised.
- 1.4.3 Similarly, existing mineral infrastructure sites and waste management sites have also been safeguarded to protect them from being adversely affected by non-mineral development.
- 1.4.4 This report considers the impacts of the Scheme on MSAs, operational minerals and waste sites and allocated minerals and waste sites in the vicinity of the Scheme. This will allow for full consideration of the Scheme's ability to comply with minerals planning policy for minerals safeguarding.
- 1.4.5 Relevant material considerations, namely the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and good practice advice on mineral safeguarding in England published by the British Geological Survey¹ have also been incorporated where relevant.
- 1.4.6 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- Section 2: Planning Policy;
 - Section 3: The Scheme;
 - Section 4: Mineral Safeguarding;
 - Section 5: Waste Safeguarding; and
 - Section 6: Conclusions.

¹ Wrighton, C.E.; McEvoy, F.M.; Bust, R.. 2011 Mineral safeguarding in England: good practice advice. British Geological Survey, 46pp. (OR/11/046) (Unpublished)

2. Planning Policy

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The national and local planning policy documents which are considered relevant to the Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Preliminary Assessment of the Scheme are:
- NPPF as interpreted and explained in the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);
 - National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014);
 - OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy (adopted September 2017);
 - OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policies Map South (adopted September 2017);
 - OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan (1996) – saved policies;
 - VoWHDC Local Plan 2031 (Part 1) adopted in December 2016;
 - VoWHDC Local Plan 2031 (Part 2) adopted in October 2019;
 - SODC Local Plan 2035 adopted in December 2020; and
 - Any emerging local plans – including the OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 - Site Allocations.
- 2.1.2 In addition, the following documents are considered relevant when considering minerals safeguarding policy specifically:
- British Geological Survey (BGS): Mineral Safeguarding in England good practice advice (2011); and
 - BGS: A Guide to Mineral Safeguarding in England (2007).

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2.1 The revised NPPF was published in July 2021. Under Section 17, Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals, the NPPF states (at paragraph 210):

“Planning policies should: (...)

c) safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);

d) set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place...”

- 2.2.2 Paragraph 212 advises that local authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in MSAs if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.

2.2.3 Safeguarding of minerals infrastructure is not explicitly covered in the NPPF but guidance is contained within Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 27-006-20140306) which states that planning authorities should safeguard existing, planned and potential storage, handling and transport sites to:

- Ensure that sites for these purposes are available should they be needed; and
- Prevent sensitive or inappropriate development that will conflict with the use of sites identified for these purposes.

2.3 National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)

2.3.1 The NPPF does not cover specific policy on waste planning; this is separately contained within the National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW). The NPPW sets out the role that planning plays in delivering sustainable waste management and aims to ensure that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns.

2.4 Minerals and Waste Local Plan (1996)

2.4.1 Of the saved policies within the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (1996), Policy SC3: The Sutton Courtenay area (Inset Map 1), shown in Figure 1, is relevant as it depicts a large part of the study area.

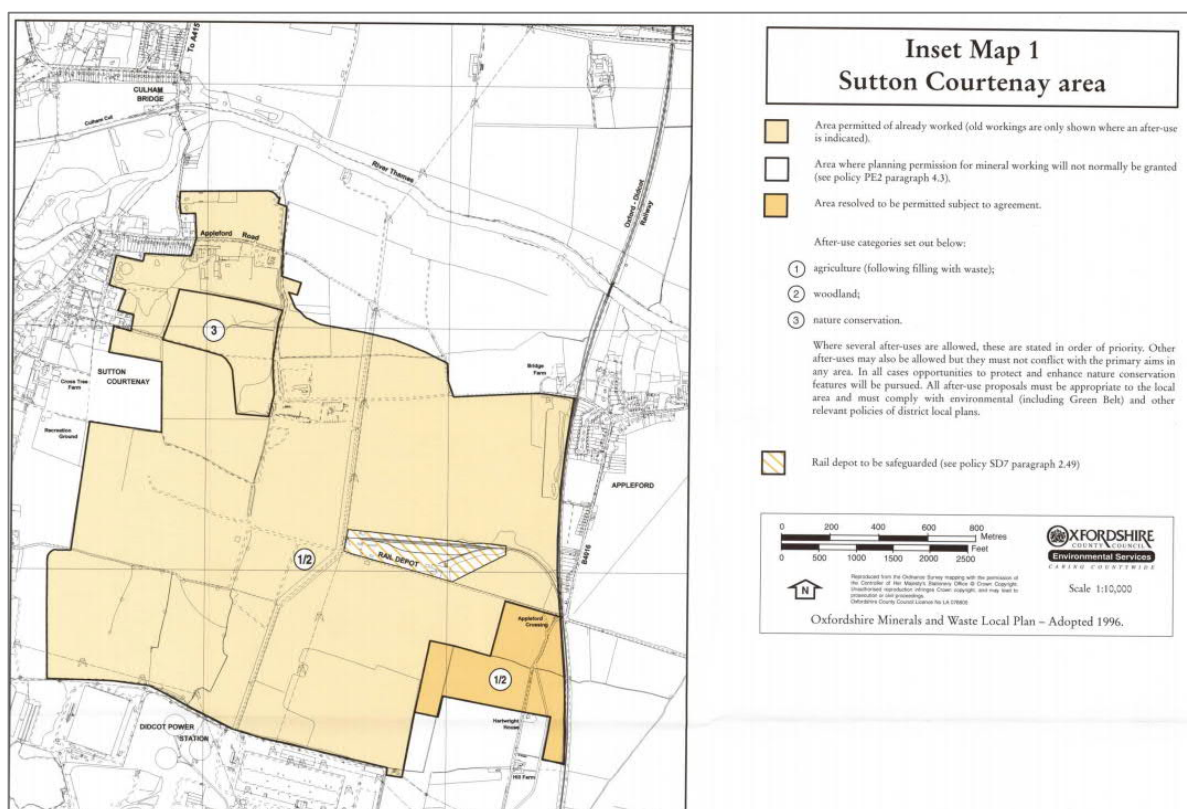


Figure 1: Inset Map 1 - Sutton Courtenay Area

2.4.2 The Scheme crosses the two areas identified in the plan as 1/2 for “*area permitted of already worked (old workings are only shown where an after-use is indicated)*” and “*area resolved to be permitted subject to agreement*”.

2.5 OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1 – Core Strategy

- 2.5.1 The OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy (MWLPCS) provides up-to-date minerals and waste planning policies and proposals for Oxfordshire for the period up to 2031.

Mineral Safeguarding

- 2.5.2 MSAs are defined on the Policies Map, covering the following areas of mineral resource:

- Sharp sand and gravel resources of significance in the main river valleys, in particular including the strategic resource areas identified in policy M3;
- Soft sand within the strategic resource areas identified in policy M3;
- Limestone within the strategic resource areas identified in policy M3; and
- Fuller's earth in the Baulking – Fernham area.

- 2.5.3 The Policies Map also defines MCAs which comprise land within 250m of the boundary of a MSA.

- 2.5.4 Policy M8: Safeguarding Mineral Resources states:

“Mineral resources in the Mineral Safeguarding Areas shown on the Policies Map are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:

The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or

The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or

The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.”

- 2.5.5 The Scheme falls within a MSA for sharp sand and gravel.

- 2.5.6 Policy M9: Safeguarding Mineral Infrastructure states:

“Existing and permitted infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals in Oxfordshire is safeguarded against development that would unnecessarily prevent the operation of the infrastructure or would prejudice or jeopardise its continued use by creating incompatible land uses nearby.

Safeguarded sites include the following rail depot sites which are safeguarded for the importation of aggregate into Oxfordshire:

- Hennef Way, Banbury (existing facility);
- Kidlington (existing facility);
- Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay (existing facility);
- Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarry (permitted facility); as shown on the Policies Map; and
- any other aggregate rail depot sites which are permitted, as identified in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Other safeguarded sites will be defined in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document”

- 2.5.7 The Scheme crosses the safeguarded area at Appleford Sidings and Sutton Courtenay.

Waste Safeguarding

- 2.5.8 Pending the adoption of the emerging Site Allocations Document, policy W11 of the MWLPCS safeguards all sites that contribute, or have permission to contribute, to Oxfordshire's waste management capacity. This applies to all waste management facilities except landfill (where policy W6 applies).

- 2.5.9 According to the Core Strategy, safeguarding existing and permitted waste management sites will help to:

- Prevent the loss of waste capacity to other forms of development;
- Keep options available for developing additional capacity; and
- Reduce the need to find new sites for waste uses.

- 2.5.10 Sites that are safeguarded are listed in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy. There are four waste sites within or close to the boundary of the Scheme:

- Hill Farm – Pallet and wood recycling;
- Sutton Courtenay – Non-hazardous landfill;
- Appleford Rail Sidings – Construction, demolition and waste recycling; and
- Culham No.1 – Recycling / transfer.

- 2.5.11 In addition, policy W11 states:

“Proposals for development that would directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the use of a site safeguarded for waste management will not be permitted unless:

- *the development is in accordance with a site allocation for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or*
- *equivalent waste management capacity can be appropriately and sustainably provided elsewhere; or*
- *it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer required for waste management.”*

2.6 VoWHDC Local Plan 2031: Part 1 and Part 2

- 2.6.1 There are no specific policies relating to minerals and waste management safeguarding within the Local Plan, the plan states that *“the Local Plan 2031 prepared by VoWHDC will be used to inform decisions on planning applications across the district, in conjunction with any Development Planning Documents (DPDs) relating to minerals and waste prepared by Oxfordshire County Council”*.

- 2.6.2 With regards to the Scheme, most of the underlying land is safeguarded for highways improvements, which is allocated in Core Policies 18 and 18a (CP18 & CP18a).

- 2.6.3 Core Policy 18: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub-Area states:

“Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the identified transport schemes listed by Core Policies 17 and 19.

Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact the delivery of the identified transport schemes (as shown by the maps in Appendix E and the Adopted Policies Map) should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.*

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the transport schemes listed.

New development in these areas should be carefully designed having regard to matters such as building layout, noise insulation, landscaping, the historic environment and means of access. Where appropriate, further detail for these schemes will be set out in Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

** the area shown on the Adopted Policies Map illustrates where Core Policy 18 will apply. It does not seek to show a precise alignment for the transport schemes, which will need to be informed by detailed design work, carried out in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant parties.”*

2.6.4 Core Policy 18a: Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South-East Vale Sub-Area states:

“Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of a new Thames River Crossing between Culham and Didcot, in accordance with Core Policy 18 (Local Plan 2031: Part 1).

This policy updates the area safeguarded as shown by the Adopted Policies Map and Appendix B.

In addition to land safeguarded for identified transport schemes set out in Core Policy 18 (Local Plan 2031: Part 1) the following schemes are also safeguarded:

- dedicated access to / from the A34 to Milton Park;*
- provision for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the A34 at Milton Heights; and*
- Cinder Track cycle improvements.*

2.6.5 *These schemes are safeguarded in accordance with Core Policy 18 and as shown by maps in Appendix B and the Adopted Policies Map”*

2.6.6 *“The area shown on the Adopted Policies Map illustrates where Core Policy 18 will apply. It does not seek to show a precise alignment for the transport scheme, which will need to be informed by detailed design work, carried out in consultation with Oxfordshire County Council and other relevant parties.”*

2.6.7 The safeguarded land is shown on the Adopted Policies Map – Abingdon-on Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area; Figure 2 shows a relevant extract.

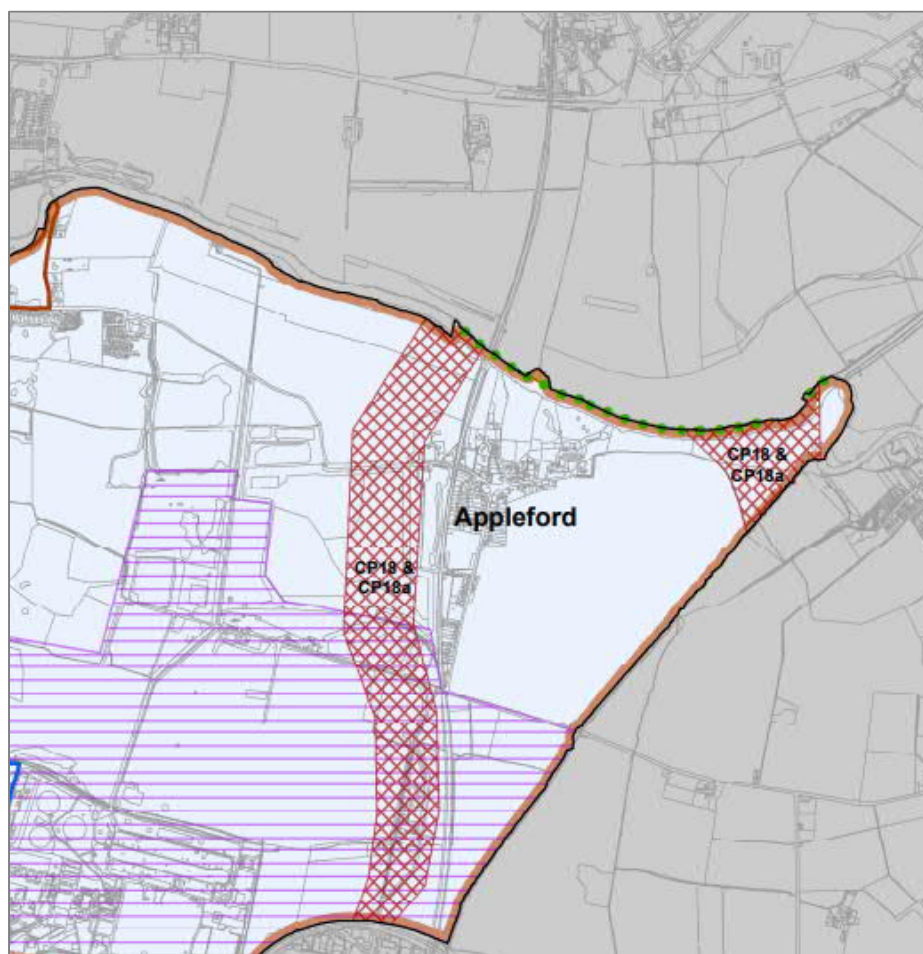


Figure 2: Extract of Vale of White Horse Policies Map

2.7 SODC Local Plan 2035

- 2.7.1 The Plan identifies locations for housing, retail and employment land as well as the infrastructure required to support this growth.
- 2.7.2 In relation to the Scheme, Policy TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes states:

“1. Land is safeguarded to support the delivery of the following identified transport schemes:

- *Clifton Hampden bypass;*
- *A new Thames River crossing between Culham and Didcot Garden Town;*
- *Didcot Northern Perimeter Road;*
- *Science Bridge, Didcot;*
- *(A4130/ B4493) Didcot Central transport corridor improvements;*
- *Southern Didcot Spine Road;*
- *A4130 road safety improvements;*
- *A4074/ B4015 (Golden Balls) junction improvements;*
- *A bypass for Watlington;*
- *A bypass for Benson;*

- A bypass for Southern Abingdon; and
- A new Park and Ride site at Sandford to the south-east of Oxford.

2. New development in these areas should be carefully designed having regard to matters such as building layout, noise insulation, landscaping, the historic environment and means of access.

3. Any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact upon the delivery of the identified schemes should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery.

4. Planning permission will not be granted for development that would prejudice the construction or effective operation of the transport schemes listed above.

5. As the options for the schemes progress, the impact of the schemes will be subject to thorough assessment. This will include full environmental and archaeological assessments working in association with the relevant statutory bodies. Where schemes are located in areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3, a flood risk sequential test and the exception test should be undertaken as part of the appraisal process.”

- 2.7.3 The safeguarded land is shown on the Adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies Map – North and South; Figure 3 shows a relevant extract.

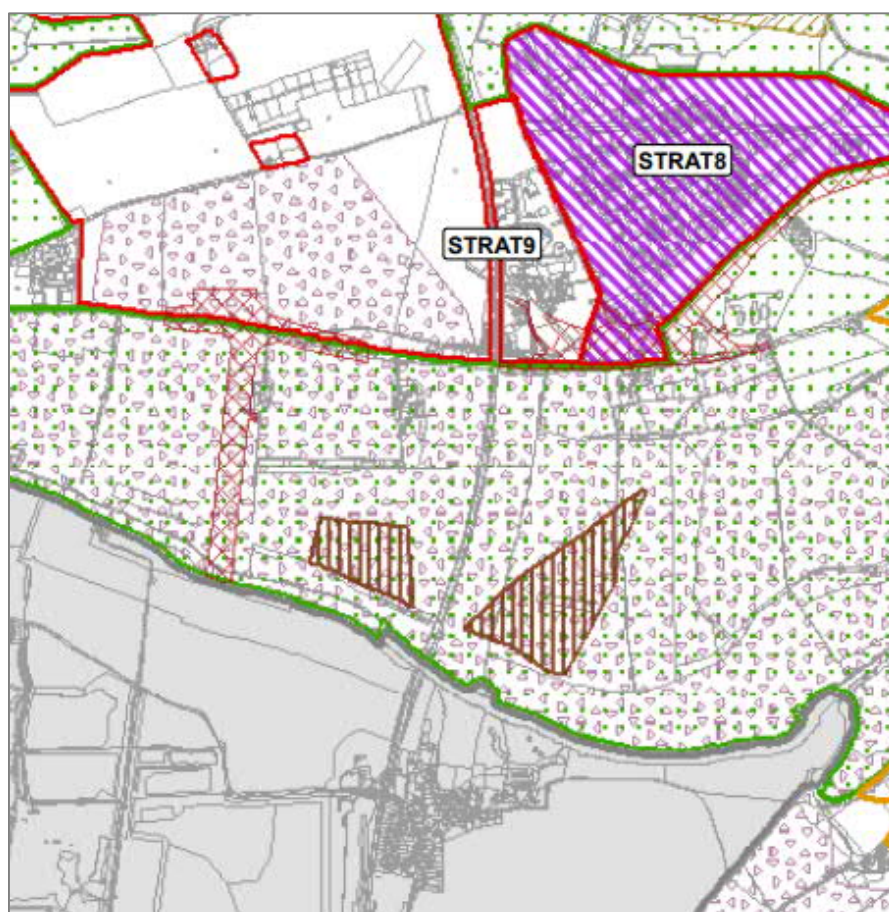


Figure 3: Extract of Vale of South Oxfordshire Policies Map

- 2.7.4 Policy EP5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas states:

“Minerals are a non-renewable resource, therefore, to safeguard future potential extraction, development will be directed away from Minerals Safeguarding Areas.

Where development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas cannot be avoided, developers are encouraged to extract minerals prior to non-mineral development taking place, where this is practical and environmentally feasible.”

2.8 OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 - Site Allocations

- 2.8.1 The OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 will, once adopted, replace the saved policies of the OCC Local Plan 1996. The document will allocate specific minerals and waste sites to deliver the Core Strategy. OCC consulted on the preferred options of the sites between January and March 2020 (Regulation 18 stage), and it is understood that a further Preferred Options consultation is due to take place in August-September 2021.

3. The Scheme

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 The Scheme consists of four separate but interdependent highway schemes, namely:
- A4130 Widening – The proposed improvement to the A4130 includes dualling between Milton Interchange at the A34 and a proposed new Science Bridge. The proposal also includes the provision of new and improved pedestrian and cycling facilities to meet modern standards;
 - Didcot Science Bridge – A new road link from the proposed dualled section of the A4130, which will extend over the Great Western Railway, through the former Didcot A Power Station site and join to the A4130 north of the Purchas/Hawksworth roundabout, including segregated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure;
 - Didcot to Culham River Crossing – a new road between the A4130 perimeter road in Didcot, and Culham near the Culham Science Centre (CSC) including two overbridges (one extending over the River Thames) and segregated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure; and
 - Clifton Hampden Bypass – a new road between the A415, Abingdon Road, at the CSC and the B4015, Oxford Road, north of Clifton Hampden village, including shared pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- 3.1.2 The Scheme will directly unlock the potential for 11,711 new homes and support the delivery of more than 17,000 new homes in total in the Didcot Garden Town area. The residential units are located across 12 separate sites in and around Didcot in SODC and VoWHDC.
- 3.1.3 The Scheme is also essential for the economic and social prosperity of Science Vale UK, one of the first Enterprise Zones, in addition to other newer Enterprise Zones in the area. Whilst the Scheme is based on future growth, the infrastructure will also help to ameliorate the issues resulting from historic housing and employment growth.
- 3.1.4 Preferred alignments for the four sections of the Schemes have been informed by a detailed and multi-stage optioneering exercise. This includes the production of an Options Appraisal Report (OAR) part 1 and 2 (AECOM, 2021) to identify the appropriate interventions and subsequent public consultation, engineering, traffic modelling, and impact assessment work to identify the preferred alignments.
- 3.1.5 Several engagement activities were undertaken to seek the views of local people and stakeholders on the proposals so that, where appropriate, they could be incorporated into the next stages of the scheme design process. These activities included two periods of public consultation and ongoing targeted engagement with local Parish Councils and other identified stakeholders.
- 3.1.6 The first public consultation was held between 2nd and 25th November 2018 on the proposed package of strategic transport improvements for Didcot and the surrounding area, which will support planned growth as detailed in the Local Plan. The purpose of this consultation was to explain options being considered, and to show early indicative plans of the transport improvements which will support the HIF bid. The second public consultation took place between 20th March and 30th April 2020, held online due to government's guidance on social distancing in response to Covid-19. This consultation focused on the chosen preferred routes.

- 3.1.7 Further details of public consultation and engagement is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement, which has been submitted as part of the planning application for the Scheme, and Chapter 5: General Consultation of the ES.
- 3.1.8 The location of the Scheme is illustrated in the plan included in Appendix A. The area of land over which the Scheme will occupy, during construction and operation, is referred to as the 'Site'. The total site area (both temporary and permanent) for the Scheme is approximately 157.25 hectares (ha).
- 3.1.9 A detailed description of the Scheme is contained in ES Chapter 2: The Scheme.

4. Mineral Safeguarding

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Mineral safeguarding is the process of ensuring that non-mineral development does not needlessly prevent the future extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance i.e. those that are considered necessary to meet society's needs.
- 4.1.2 MSAs are designated by Minerals Planning Authorities (MPAs) and cover known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development. OCC's MSAs are shown on their two published Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policies Maps (North and South).
- 4.1.3 This chapter considers the impacts of the Scheme on OCC's MSAs as well as on any allocated, permitted and/ or promoted mineral sites within or adjacent to the Scheme boundary, to assess the Scheme's ability to comply with planning policy for minerals safeguarding.

4.2 Safeguarding Mineral Resources

- 4.2.1 As identified on the plan attached at Appendix A, a large part of the Scheme crosses a MSA for Sharp Sand and Gravel within the wider 'Mineral Strategic Resource Area 5' for The Thames, Lower Windrush and Lower Evenlode Valleys area from Standlake to Yarnton. As a result, Policy M8 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan for the safeguarding of minerals applies.
- 4.2.2 The majority of the Scheme also lies within "Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvement", as allocated by policies CP18 & CP18a of the VoWHDC Local Plan 2031 and "Land Safeguarded for Strategic Transport Schemes" as allocated by policy TRANS3 of the SODC Local Plan 2035.
- 4.2.3 Where land is allocated by the aforementioned policies, it is considered that the Scheme accords with policy M8 of the MWLPCS on the basis that *"the site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan"*.
- 4.2.4 In terms of the parts of the Scheme that fall outside of the allocated CP18, 18a and TRANS3 areas, but are only required for temporary use (such as access and construction compounds), it is considered that this will not constitute sterilisation of mineral as the land will be restored following completion of construction works therefore enabling the mineral to be worked in the future if required.
- 4.2.5 The following sections assess the Scheme's interaction with the MSA in more detail.

4.3 Bridge Farm Quarry

- 4.3.1 The largest area of mineral safeguarded land that is within the Scheme boundary yet outside of the allocated/ safeguarded areas for strategic transport schemes is north of Appleford Road (B4016) up to the River Thames. Here the Scheme crosses Bridge Farm Quarry which is located within the wider established Sutton Courtenay minerals and waste complex.
- 4.3.2 The extent of Bridge Farm Quarry's extant permission area (as understood) is shown on Figure 4.

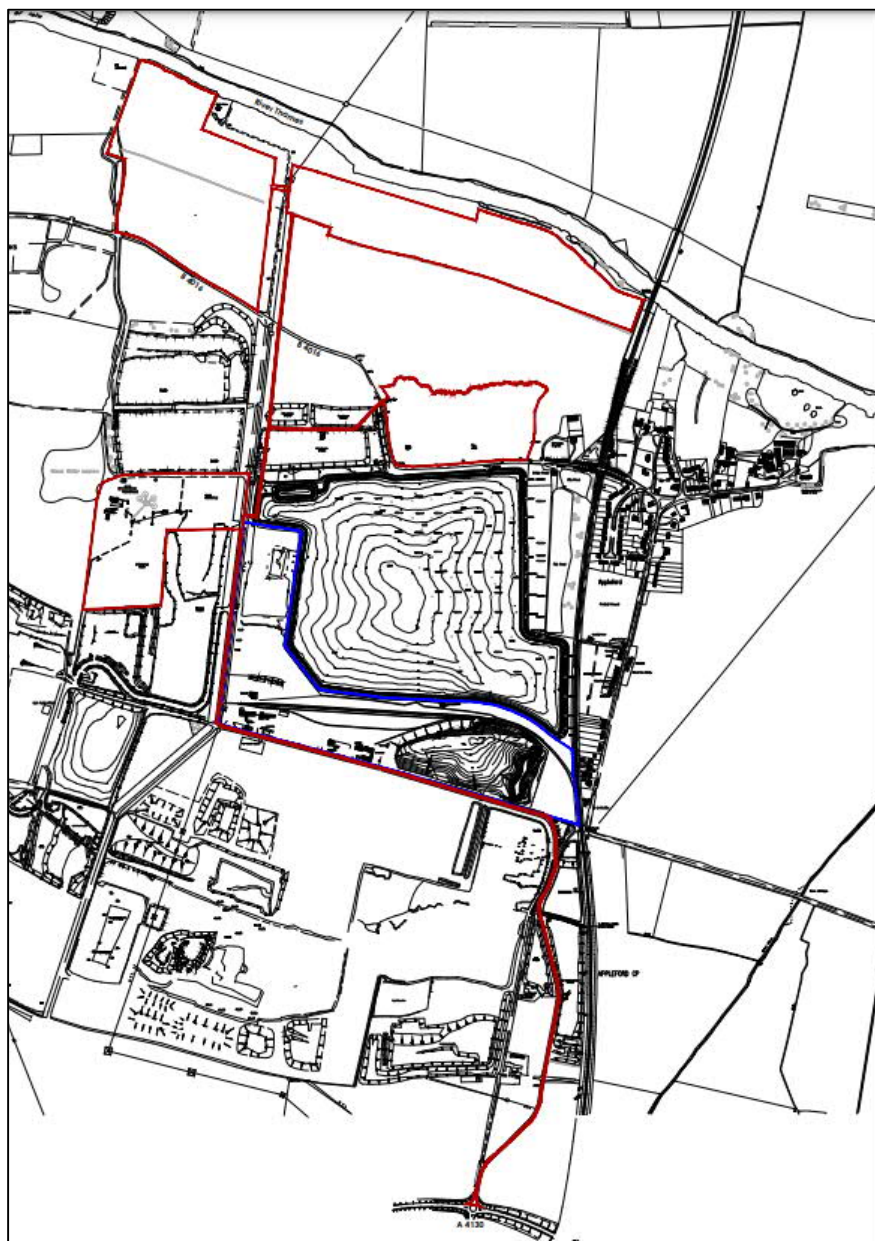


Figure 4: Bridge Farm Quarry Application Plan (MW.0049/19)

- 4.3.3 It appears that that most of the mineral resource has already been extracted from this area and Bridge Quarry is winding down to cessation, as evidenced by the information contained in several historic planning permissions and recent applications.
- 4.3.4 However, OCC confirmed during the pre-application meeting on 17th November 2020 that the western side of Bridge Farm has not yet been extracted, and that there is an outstanding application for the area which seeks to allow the removal of material by HGV/ road as the conveyor belt is out of use. Upon further research, it appears that the application in question is MW.0008/20, which is currently undetermined. The supporting information for the application reveals that the remaining area is within Phase 4 and that the remaining mineral amounts to only around 10,000 tonnes, which is in stockpile. It is also confirmed in the supporting information that, beyond this material, there is no more material to be removed. As a result, the Scheme will not sterilise mineral in this area as it has already been extracted.

- 4.3.5 Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that there are two approved restoration schemes currently in place for Bridge Farm quarry under planning permissions MW.0049/19 (phases 5, 6 and 7) and MW.0094/18 (phases 1 to 4b). An extract of the approved restoration plan for phases 5, 6 and 7 is shown in Figure 5, which also illustrates the approved restoration for phases 1 to 4b to the south-east.

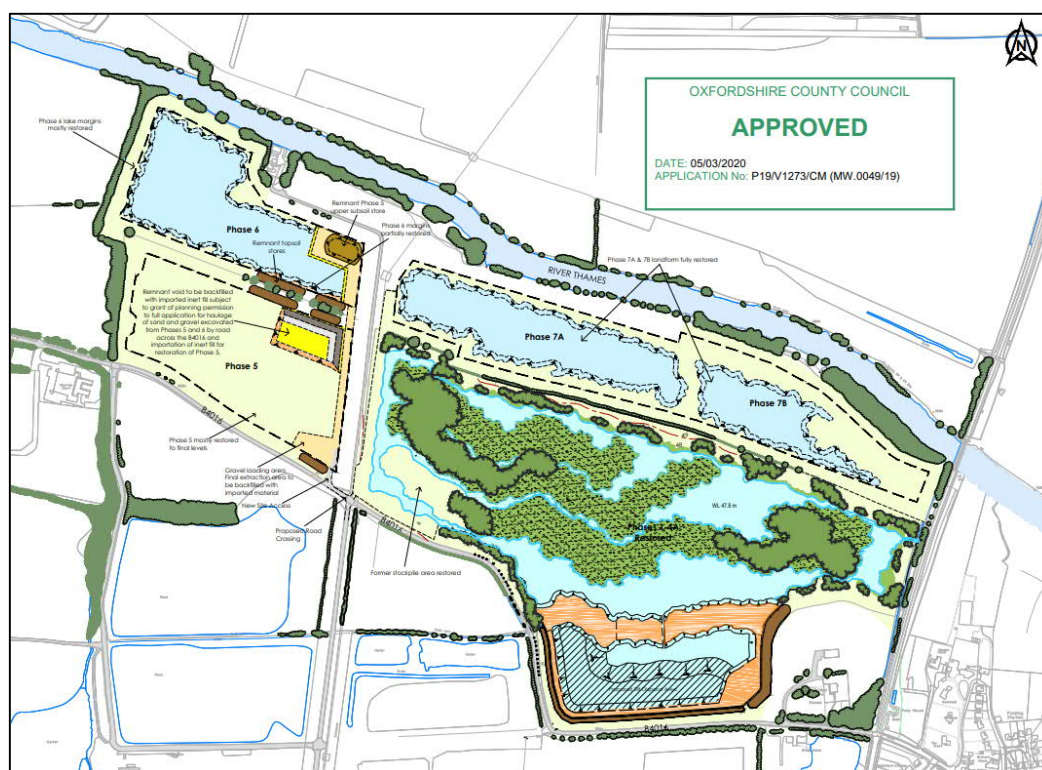


Figure 5: Extract of approved Restoration Plan for Bridge Farm

- 4.3.6 The Scheme passes through phases 1 to 4b and 7 meaning it presents a conflict with both restoration schemes as approved. However, OCC has advised that, should the Scheme be granted planning permission, a Section 73 application will be required to amend this restoration scheme. This is an approach that is accepted; therefore, it is considered that the issue of conflict with restoration plans can be remedied by means of a Section 73 planning application to vary the condition for the restoration of the site.
- 4.3.7 To conclude, the desk study indicates that the vast majority of the safeguarded area affected by the Scheme in this location has either been restored or is in the process of being restored to wetland, agricultural use or has been utilised as landfill. The remaining minority is in stockpiles and awaiting approval to be transported.
- 4.3.8 It is therefore considered that the Scheme will not be contrary to Policy M8 in this specific location as the economically viable sand and gravel has already been extracted from this area.

4.4 Land North of the River Thames

- 4.4.1 Beyond the Sutton Courtenay minerals and waste complex, north of the River Thames, the Scheme passes through an area of land covered by the mineral safeguarding designation.

- 4.4.2 The majority of this area, as identified in Figure 6, is also located within Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvement (as allocated by policies CP18 & CP18a of the VoWHDC Local Plan). However, as shown below, small parts of Scheme do cover areas that are within the mineral safeguarding designation but outside of the Highways Improvement allocation.

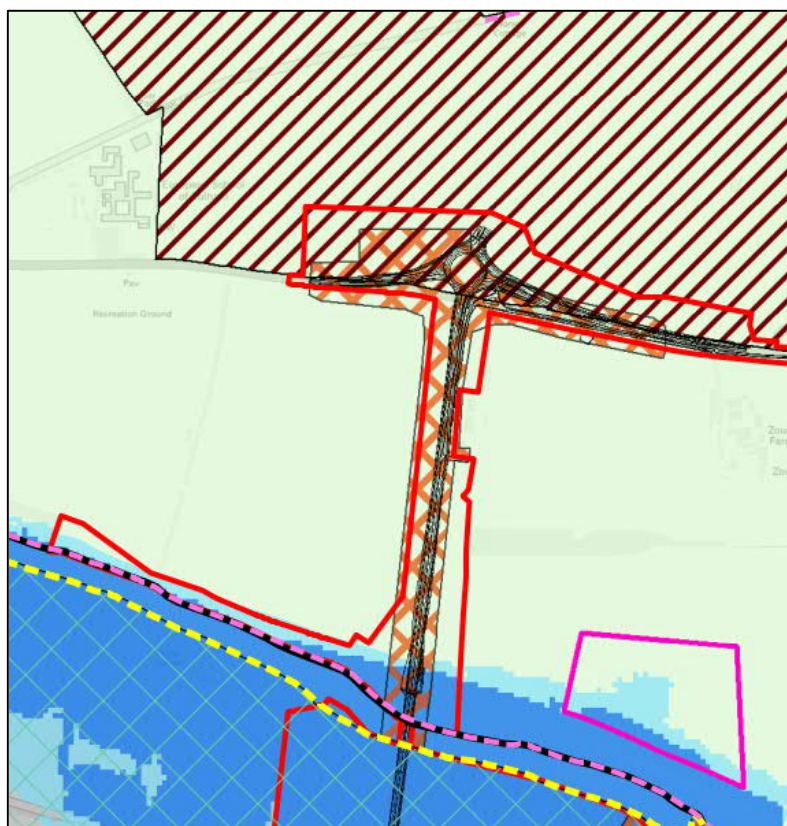


Figure 6: Land North of the River Thames map extract

- 4.4.3 The part of the site area that extends out to the west alongside the river is proposed for flood mitigation as associated with the Scheme which is intended to comprise a swale for water attenuation during flood events. Whilst this represents an area of mineral safeguarded land being lost to permanent development, it is considered acceptable because it is necessary ancillary development for the allocated highways improvements. Therefore, the exception offered by Policy M8 for sites allocated for development in an adopted local plan is considered to still apply.
- 4.4.4 Given the above area is not explicitly allocated for highways improvement as it falls outside of the allocation area, it is considered prudent to consider the remaining two criteria of Policy M8 which are as follows:
- The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or
 - The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.
- 4.4.5 It is considered that the need for the development i.e. the Scheme as a whole significantly outweighs any economic and sustainability considerations relating to the potential mineral resource (if any) in this small area, which are considered to be nil due to the fact that any mineral that may exist in this small area could not reasonably be worked in the future by virtue of the riverside location and constrained size meaning it is highly unlikely to be physically attainable or, if so, viable for extraction. It is considered that these evident constraints to extraction also rule out the third criteria.

- 4.4.6 In terms of the areas located either side of the Scheme alignment heading northwards, these are proposed for temporary use only, namely construction and construction access. As this land take will be temporary and subsequently restored following completion of construction works, this will not constitute sterilisation of mineral. As a result, there is no conflict with policy M8 in this instance.
- 4.4.7 Finally, there are also small areas of land north of the proposed roundabout that fall outside of the Highways Improvement allocation. As illustrated by the brown hatching on Figure 6, this land falls within the strategic allocation “STRAT9: Land Adjacent to CSC” of the SODC Local Plan 2011-2035 (2020), which is a key driver of the Scheme. It is considered that the potential for sterilisation in these small areas is acceptable because the land is already allocated for development in an adopted local plan, thus there is no policy conflict with Policy M8.

4.5 Site SG-62: Appleford

- 4.5.1 The emerging OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations is being informed by a site selection process for potential minerals and waste site allocations. A document titled Site Options Appraisal Version 3.0 (January 2020) assessed a site known as “SG-62: Appleford” (shown in Figure 7) for potential allocation with an estimated total yield of 1.1mts of sand and gravel.
- 4.5.2 SG-62: Appleford is located immediately south-east of the existing Bridge Farm Quarry, whilst the Scheme boundary abuts this site along its western boundary.

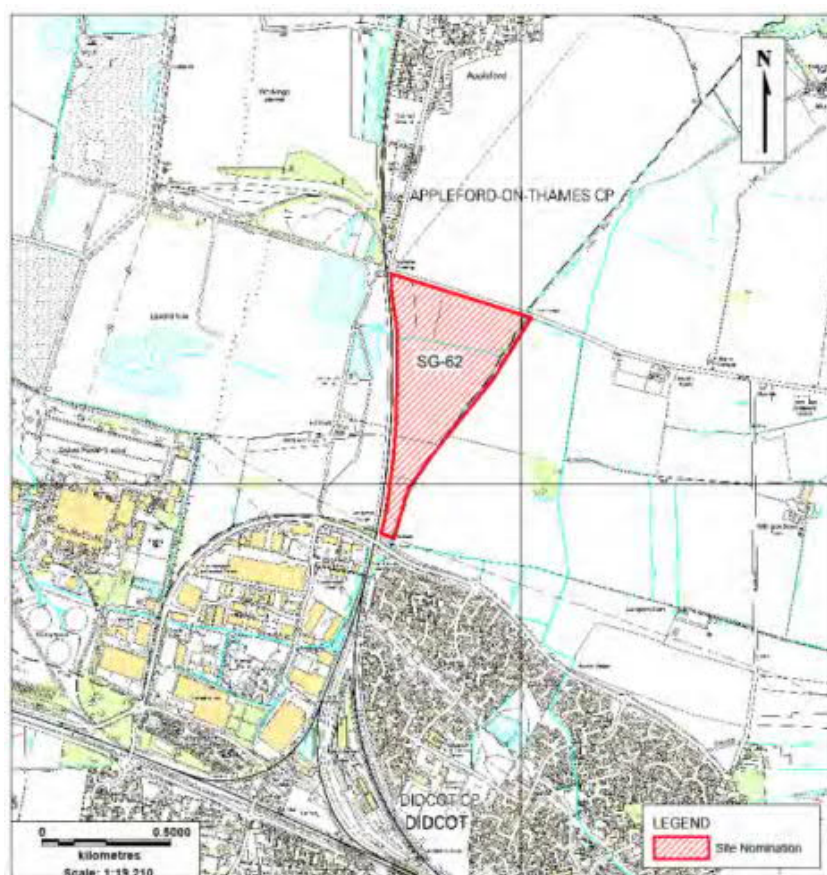


Figure 7: Site SG-62 Appleford

- 4.5.3 OCC’s assessment of the site stated the following:

“The site is located adjacent to an area of land safeguarded to support the delivery of a new Thames River Crossing between Culham and Didcot. As such any

development at this site must not prejudice the construction or operation of the scheme which is identified as of strategic importance to unlock growth in the Science Vale area and which has recently been approved for Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF)”

- 4.5.4 The subsequent Draft Sites Plan (Preferred Options Consultation) published in January 2020 discounted the site as a preferred option, but it is still listed as a “reasonable alternative” with the following information provided:

“Site SG62 Appleford is proposed as an extension to an existing quarry but it is separated from the existing plant site by the waste recycling uses, waste bodies, roads and a railway. It therefore appears in fact to be a new standalone quarry rather than an extension to the existing. The site would have a lifetime of 3 years and would produce 1.1mt of sand and gravel over the lifetime of the site.”

- 4.5.5 More recently, between January and March 2021, OCC consulted on an updated Site Assessment Methodology for Oxfordshire MWLP: Part 2 – Site Allocations and it is noted within this document that for SG-62 – Appleford, the Council were unable to contact the operator/ agent and as a result the site cannot be confirmed as reasonably available.
- 4.5.6 In conclusion, OCC has demonstrated that they are prioritising the land safeguarded to support the delivery of a new River Thames Crossing between Didcot and Culham over an extension to mineral working in this location, due to strategic policy initiatives. The Scheme is therefore not considered to conflict with policy M8 in respect to this promoted site.

4.6 Safeguarding Mineral Infrastructure

- 4.6.1 It is necessary to safeguard the infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals. The PPG sets out the requirements for planning authorities to safeguard their existing, planned and potential storage, handling and transport sites. This is further stipulated in the NPPF at paragraph 204, which states (inter alia):

“Planning policies should:

safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material;”

- 4.6.2 Within the MWLPCS, OCC define mineral infrastructure as facilities associated with the transport of minerals by rail or water; sites for the manufacture of aggregate mineral products; and sites for the handling, processing, and distribution of recycled and secondary aggregate material.
- 4.6.3 In line with national policy and guidance OCC has safeguarded four sites under Policy M9: Safeguarding mineral infrastructure. Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay, is the only one within the Scheme.
- 4.6.4 Appleford Sidings rail depot is the only named safeguarded mineral infrastructure that has the potential to be affected by the Scheme.
- 4.6.5 The following paragraphs demonstrate how the planning process for the Scheme has considered Appleford Sidings in accordance with relevant policies.

4.7 Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay

- 4.7.1 The Scheme crosses Appleford Sidings, which is identified as a Safeguarded Rail Depot under policy M9 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1. The extent of the safeguarded area is shown on Figure 8, which is an extract from the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policies Map (South).

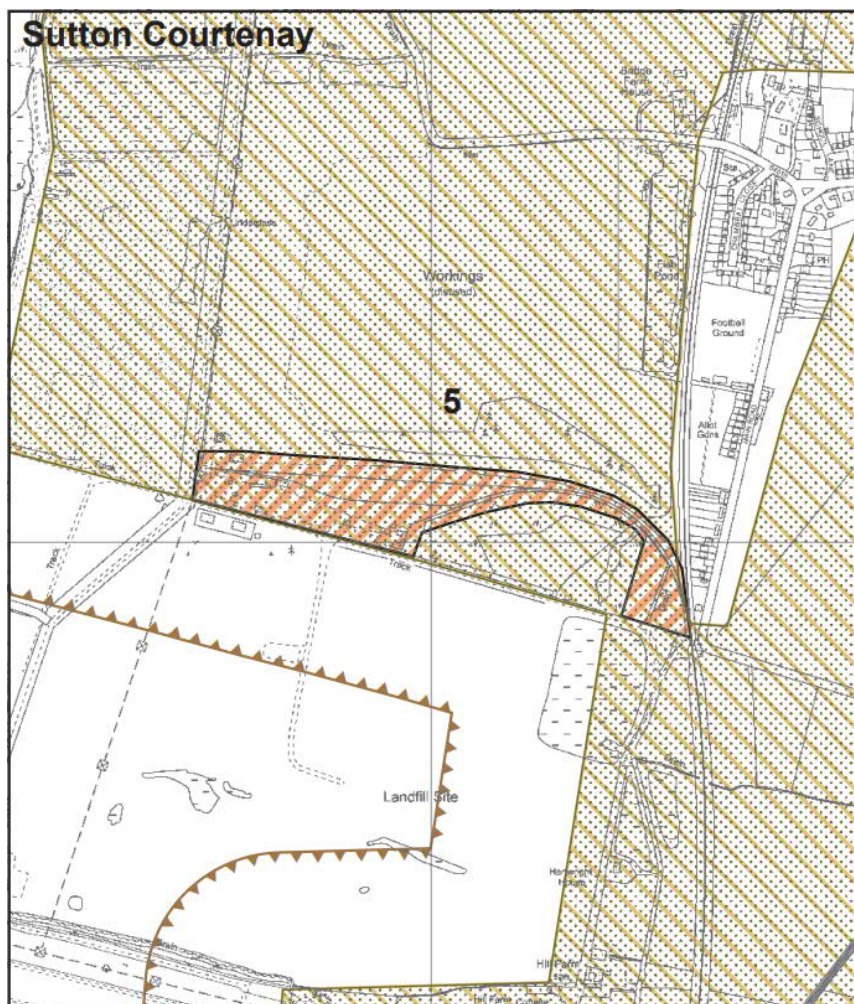


Figure 8: Appleford Siding safeguarded site

- 4.7.2 The Appleford Sidings were also specifically identified as a safeguarded rail depot in the OCC pre-application advice provided to AECOM in June 2020 and as part of the formal pre-application advice provided for the Scheme, dated 7th May 2021 (refer to Appendix C).
- 4.7.3 The existing sidings at Appleford were first permitted separately from the Sutton Courtenay Minerals and Waste Complex in 1972 (planning permission no. P633/72). A subsequent permission for a different rail configuration was granted in 1976 (planning permission no. SUT/APF/616/7) and was varied in 2017 to allow trains delivering aggregate to unload up until 2100 Monday to Friday on up to 150 days per calendar year (planning permission no. P17/V0789/CM, MW.0028/17). This consent remains the extant planning permission for the sidings.
- 4.7.4 The sidings are accessed by HGV from the south via The Portway, which borders the site to the south. The Portway is in part a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT), a Restricted Byway and a Bridleway. From the site entrance, The Portway continues east and then in a southerly direction down to the A4130 Didcot Roundabout.

- 4.7.5 In October 2020, OCC granted planning permission for development comprising construction and operation of two additional rail sidings at Appleford Depot (MW.0046/20). The following extracts are taken from the OCC Planning Officer's Delegated Report for this permission:

"VLP1 core policy 18 states that any proposals for development that may reasonably be considered to impact on the delivery of the identified transport schemes (including the route safeguarded for the Thames River Crossing between Culham and Didcot which runs directly through the application site) should demonstrate the proposal would not harm their delivery..."

The County Council's HIF1 Programme Lead Officer has confirmed that the applicant has been working with the County Council in respect of the Culham River Crossing scheme and that the proposed additional sidings would not impact on the delivery of the scheme which has already taken into account the need to bridge the existing rail sidings."

- 4.7.6 Based on the above, it is apparent that the design of the Scheme considers the extent of the safeguarded area by virtue of it specifically incorporating a bridge over the rail sidings.
- 4.7.7 Furthermore, Scheme construction will be managed to retain access to and not directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the use of a site; therefore, it is considered that the Scheme will not be contrary to Policy M9 of the MWLPCS at this location.

5. Waste Safeguarding

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section considers the impacts of the Scheme on the four identified safeguarded waste management facilities within or close to the boundary of the Scheme, namely:
- Hill Farm – Pallet and wood recycling;
 - Sutton Courtenay – Non-hazardous landfill;
 - Appleford Rail Sidings – Construction, demolition and waste recycling; and
 - Culham No.1 – Recycling / transfer.
- 5.1.2 Each waste site is considered against the relevant waste safeguarding policy (Policy W11) and the identified safeguarded waste sites in the following sections. At the time of writing, the emerging OCC Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations Document has not yet been adopted and therefore all sites listed in Appendix 2 of the MWLPCS are safeguarded.

5.2 Hill Farm

- 5.2.1 Hill Farm is identified as safeguarded waste site no. 144 in Appendix 2 of the OCC MWLPCS and the OCC pre-application advice dated June 2020.
- 5.2.2 The Draft Oxfordshire Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2018 (published June 2020) includes Hill Farm as an operational, permanent recycling/ transfer site with an annual capacity of 20,000 tonnes.
- 5.2.3 J James Ltd has operated a wood recycling facility at Hill Farm since 2006 (following grant of planning permission no. APF/18979/2-CM). Planning permission was granted in 2011 (11/01528/CM) to carry out the approved development without complying with certain conditions of the original permission to allow for amendments to be made to the site layout.
- 5.2.4 The site boundary is shown on an approved plan accompanying the above planning permission and is reproduced in Figure 9. The planning permission is not time limited and the permission is therefore considered to be permanent.



Figure 9: Hill Farm Site Boundary

- 5.2.5 The Scheme boundary wraps around the Hill Farm waste site, having been designed to exclude it from the application area.
- 5.2.6 Hill Farm is wholly within the Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvement (as allocated by policies CP18 & CP18a of the VoWHDC Local Plan). It is proposed that the Hill Farm site be protected as part of the delivery of the Scheme due to its allocation as a Local Development Order (LDO) employment site. The Scheme will provide a new access to this site, as identified in Figure 10. Therefore, operations at the site will continue.



- 5.3.1 Sutton Courtenay is identified as safeguarded waste site no. 010 in Appendix 2 of the MWLPCS. Sutton Courtenay was also identified as a safeguarded waste site in the OCC pre-application advice provided to AECOM in June 2020 and as part of the formal pre-application advice for the Scheme, dated 7th May 2021 (refer to Appendix C).
- 5.3.2 The site was originally a sand and gravel quarry, and the void left by mineral extraction is being progressively restored through landfill.
- 5.3.3 As at December 2015, the landfill had a remaining non-hazardous waste void space of 4,743,976 m³. This equates to a remaining capacity of 4,743,976 tonnes of non-hazardous waste and at the time made up 86.5% of the County's non-hazardous landfill capacity. The permitted and expected end date for landfilling at Sutton Courtenay is 2030.
- 5.3.4 The Draft Oxfordshire AMR 2018 (published June 2020) includes Sutton Courtenay as an operational, temporary, non-hazardous landfill site with a remaining void capacity of 3,889,805 m³.
- 5.3.5 It is understood that planning permission no. MW.0039/15, approved in 2015, is the extant landfill permission for the site. Figure 11 shows an extract of the approved Location Plan for the site.

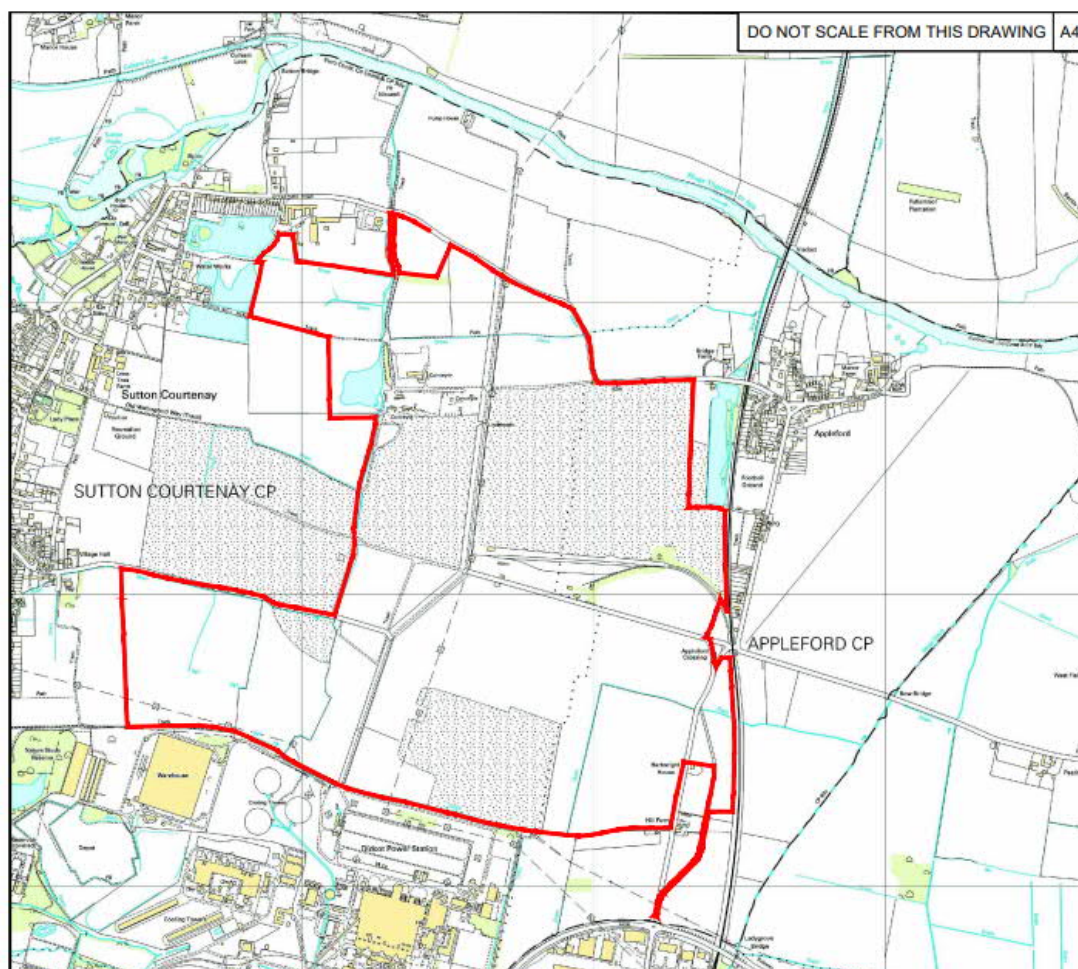


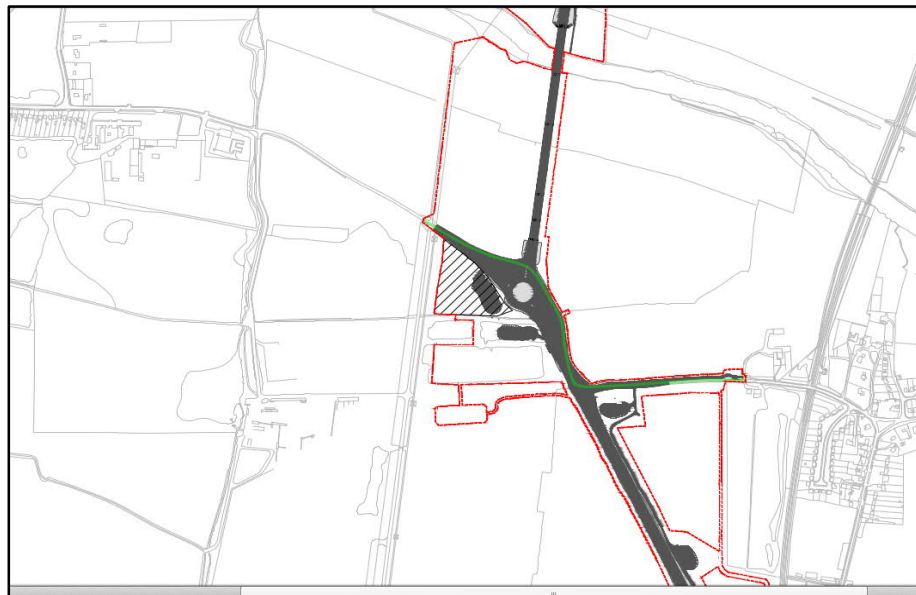
Figure 11: Location Plan for Sutton Courtenay landfill

- 5.3.6 A restoration scheme has been approved for the site under this permission (drawing ref 427R220F dated 3rd August 2015) which is being progressively carried out by the operator. An extract of the approved restoration scheme is shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12: Extract of approved restoration scheme

- 5.3.7 A small section of the Didcot to Culham River Crossing alignment presents a conflict with the approved restoration scheme. The impact will be limited to the area west of the road alignment. The area affected has been included in the site extent and form part of the planning submission. This area is shown in Figure 13. However, as confirmed by OCC in their aforementioned pre-application advice, this can be remedied by means of a Section 73 planning application to vary the condition for the restoration scheme.



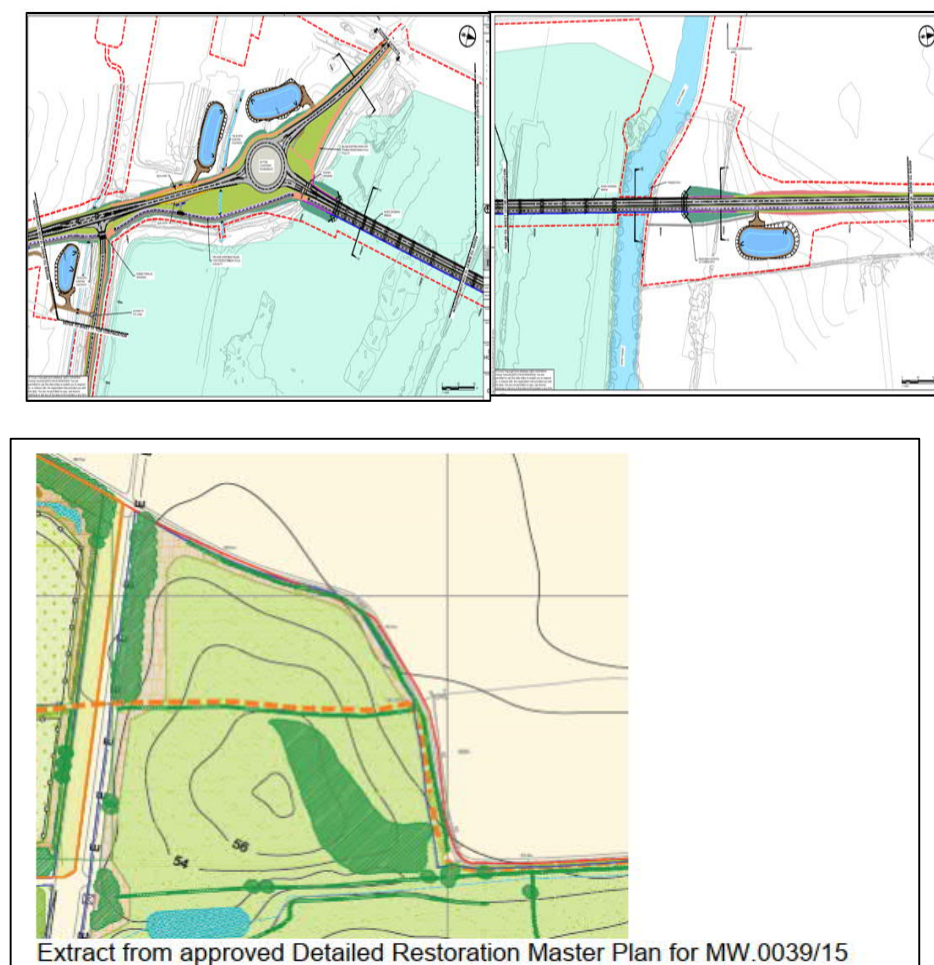


Figure 13: Extracts showing conflict with restoration scheme

- 5.3.8 Based on the information publicly available via OCC's online planning register and information provided during the pre-application meeting with OCC on 27th April 2021, it is understood that the majority of the land which the Scheme crosses within the Sutton Courtenay Minerals and Waste Complex is that which is either already restored or is in the process of being restored by the operator in accordance with the above plans.
- 5.3.9 Furthermore, a significant proportion of the Scheme is also within Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvement as allocated under policies CP18 & CP18a of the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan (shown on the Adopted Policies Map for the Abingdon-on Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area).
- 5.3.10 The Preferred Options Consultation paper for Part 2 – Site Allocations (January 2020) assessed Site 010 Sutton Courtenay as a potential allocation in the emerging plan but noted:
- "Site 010 Sutton Courtenay is in an area where land is safeguarded for highway improvements in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 and has therefore been removed from the list of reasonable options."*
- 5.3.11 Therefore, in this case, the Scheme is not at conflict with Policy W11 (Safeguarding waste management sites) due to it being *"in accordance with a site allocation for development in an adopted local plan"* as per the wording of the policy exception.
- 5.3.12 All other waste related activities within the wider Sutton Courtenay Minerals and Waste Complex (Materials Recycling Facility, Waste Transfer Station and composting

area) are outside of the Scheme boundary and providing that access can be retained, these activities should not be adversely affected by the Scheme.

5.3.13 On this basis, the Scheme is not contrary to Policy W11 of the MWLPCS with regards to waste site 010 as:

- Where the Scheme is within the Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvements, the Scheme is in accordance with a site allocation for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan;
- Where the Scheme is outside the Land Safeguarded for Highways Improvements, it is considered that the area within the Scheme boundary is no longer required for waste management as far as can be reasonably determined using publicly available information; and
- The current landfill operations and access requirements including consultation with the landfill operator are considered in the design of the Scheme. Therefore, the Scheme should not directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the use of the waste management site and will not be contrary to policy W11 of the Core Strategy.

5.4 Appleford Sidings

5.4.1 Appleford Sidings is a safeguarded waste site that is located within the Appleford Sidings (Safeguarded Rail Depot) site discussed earlier in the assessment under Section 4.7.

5.4.2 Appleford Sidings is identified as safeguarded waste site no.114 in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy, which describes it as a CDE Recycling facility operated by Hanson and located at grid reference SU 520931. It was also identified as a safeguarded waste site in the OCC pre-application advice provided to AECOM in June 2020.

5.4.3 The Draft Oxfordshire AMR 2018 (published June 2020) categorises Appleford Sidings as a non-operational, permanent CDE recycling site with an annual capacity of 100,000 tonnes.

5.4.4 Waste management operations at the Sidings are located to the west of the point at which the Scheme is proposed to traverse the existing railway. The Scheme boundary does not encroach onto the waste management site itself.

5.4.5 However, as a result of the Scheme crossing the existing railway that serves both the asphalt plant and adjacent waste management site, due consideration has been given to the potential that the Scheme could impact upon waste operations.

5.4.6 It is considered that the bridge proposed to pass over the railway enables the sites to remain operational with a retained ability to move materials in and out of the Sidings. Once the bridge is installed, it is not considered that the Scheme will directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the waste management operations.

5.4.7 The Scheme has been designed in a way that acknowledges the operations at Appleford Sidings and ensures their protection. No physical modifications are required that could inhibit the long-term use of the railway to serve the waste site.

5.4.8 As a result of the above, it is not considered that the Scheme will be contrary to policy W11 of the MWLPCS.

5.5 Culham No.1

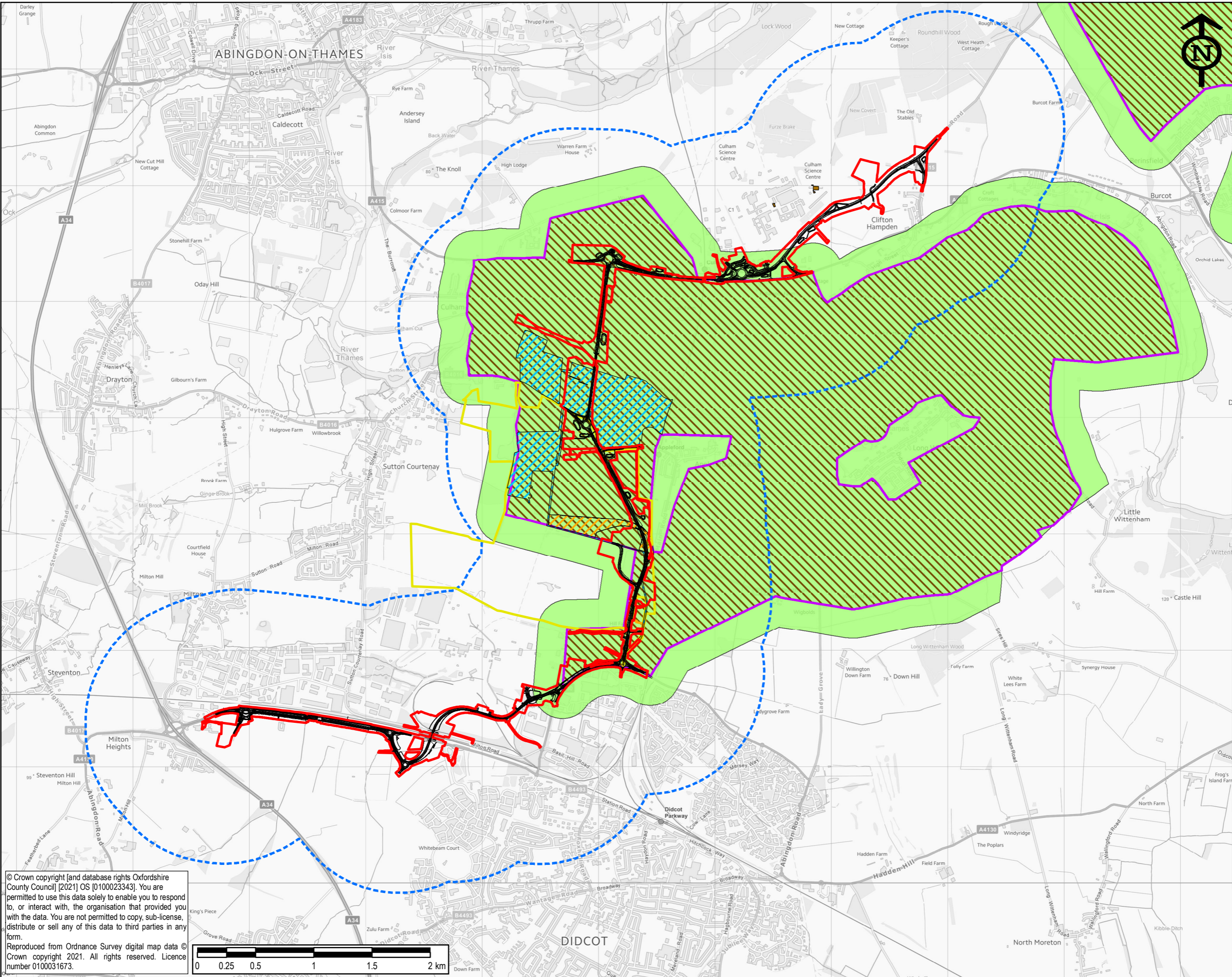
- 5.5.1 Culham No.1 is identified as safeguarded waste site no.216 in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy. Culham No.1 was also identified as a safeguarded waste site in the OCC pre-application advice provided to AECOM in June 2020 and as part of their formal pre-application advice for the Scheme, dated 7th May 2021 (refer to Appendix C).
- 5.5.2 The Draft Oxfordshire AMR 2018 (published June 2020) includes Culham No.1 as a permanent recycling/ transfer site with an annual capacity of 50,000 tonnes.
- 5.5.3 Using the grid reference provided for the site in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy (SU 531953), it is understood that this site is currently operated by Green Star (part of Biffa) and that the site address is Unit 126, No 1 Site, Station Road, Culham, Abingdon, OX14 3DA (adjacent to the western boundary of Culham Science Centre).
- 5.5.4 Using available mapping and aerial imagery, and based on the above address, Culham No.1 site looks to be located wholly outside of the Scheme boundary. Access will be retained during the Scheme construction phase.
- 5.5.5 As a result of the above the Scheme will not be contrary to Policy W11.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 This Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Preliminary Assessment has set out the mineral and waste safeguarding matters arising from the proposed Didcot Garden Town HIF 1 Scheme and assesses the potential for mineral sterilisation, impact on existing and proposed mineral sites, and impact on existing waste facilities, both within and around the Scheme.
- 6.1.2 As outlined in the assessment, the Scheme passes through a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for Sharp Sand and Gravel as defined by OCC, therefore Policy M8 of the Core Strategy applies. This assessment has demonstrated that the Scheme will not cause the direct sterilisation of workable mineral largely due to extraction already having taken place over several years in the area i.e. the reserves have already been exhausted.
- 6.1.3 Where workable reserves may be present in or close to the Scheme, such as land south-east of the existing Bridge Farm Quarry (Site SG-62: Appleford), this assessment has described how these sites have already been promoted by developers and subsequently discounted by OCC from allocation on highways grounds and/ or due to being located within land safeguarded to support the delivery of a new Thames River Crossing between Didcot and Culham. This supports the view that the Scheme is compliant with planning policy M8.
- 6.1.4 In terms of safeguarded mineral infrastructure, it has been demonstrated that the Scheme will not prevent or prejudice the operation at Appleford Sidings as the design of the Scheme has explicitly considered the operation and ensured uninterrupted access to the site is retained. Therefore, it is considered that the Scheme will not be contrary to Policy M9.
- 6.1.5 Furthermore, this assessment has considered the four identified safeguarded waste sites and has demonstrated that none of them will be adversely affected by the Scheme. The Scheme has been designed in a way that neither prevents nor prejudices the use of the safeguarded sites for waste management, and therefore is not contrary to Policy W11.
- 6.1.6 In conclusion, this assessment demonstrates that the tests set out in policies M8, M9 and W11 of the Oxfordshire's adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy are satisfied by the Scheme.

Appendix A Planning Policy Minerals and Waste



IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL WORKS ON THIS DRAWING WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY A COMPETENT CONTRACTOR WORKING, WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO AN APPROPRIATE METHOD STATEMENT.

THIS DRAWING IS TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ISSUE THAT IT WAS ISSUED FOR AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.

LEGEND

Indicative Red Line Boundary (Subject to Change)

Indicative HIF 1 Highway Design (Subject to Change)

1km Study Area

Safeguarded Rail Depot (Policy M9)

Minerals:

Mineral Strategic Resource Area (Policy M3)

Mineral Safeguarding Area: Sharp Sand and Gravel (Policy M8)

Mineral Consultation Area

Bridge Farm Minerals Site

Waste:

Hill Farm Waste Site

Culham North Waste Site

Sutton Courtenay Landfill

First Issue	AG	EH	06/07/2021	P01
Revision Details	By	Check	Date	Suffix
Purpose of Issue				
FOR INFORMATION				
Client				
County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND				
Project Title				
DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN HIF 1 SCHEME				
Drawing Title				
PLANNING POLICY MINERALS AND WASTE				
Designed AG	Drawn AG	Checked JH	Approved AB	Date 25/08/2021
Internal Project No. 60632497		Suitability S2		
Scale @ A3 1:30,000		Discipline Planning		
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Appendix B OCC Minerals and Waste Team Consultation

From: Periam, David - Communities <David.Periam@Oxfordshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 June 2020 15:11
To: Davis, Harry - Communities
Subject: FW: Comments for Planning application R3.0047/20 Didcot HIF

Hello Harry,

Please see the comments below from our Minerals and Waste policy team.

Thanks,

David

From: Minerals and Waste Plan Consultation - E&E <Minerals.Waste@Oxfordshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 June 2020 14:51
To: Periam, David - Communities <David.Periam@Oxfordshire.gov.uk>; Planning - E&E <planning@Oxfordshire.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning application R3.0047/20 Didcot HIF

Dear David,

Thank you for consulting us on planning application reference R3/0047/20 which was received on 18th May 2020 and is as follows:

Scoping Opinion request for Didcot Garden HIF 1 Scheme - widening of the A4130, the provision of a new bridge (the Didcot Science Bridge), new river crossing (Didcot to Culham River crossing) and the Clifton Hampden Bypass at Land in the parishes of Milton, Didcot, Harwell, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford-on-Thames, Culham and Clifton Hampden

The proposed development includes: the provision of a dual carriageway from a point approximately 320m east of the Milton Interchange; a four arm roundabout to the east of the existing Milton Gate junction (to provide access to a new business park and Local Plan housing); and a new signalised T junction (three armed roundabout) to provide access to Valley Park planned residential area. This would provide a link to the section of the current A4130 retained as a single carriageway. A new dual carriageway would link the two roundabouts. A proposed road bridge (Science Bridge) plans to connect Valley Park residential area to the former Didcot A Power Station redevelopment. The second part is a single carriageway linking from northside of the bridge to the existing A4130 north east of Didcot A redevelopment. There is a proposed river crossing from Didcot to Culham, a new single carriageway link between the B4015 Oxford Road and the A415 which also provides access / egress to Culham Science Centre.

For the majority of the site, it does not fall into any designated areas for the safeguarding of minerals except to the north east of Power Station A heading towards Appleford, and Culham Science Centre. The link road connecting from the north of Didcot towards Culham Science Centre passing Appleford would travel through Mineral Consulting Areas and Strategic Resource Area 5 (Thames and Lower Thame Valleys – Standlake to Yarnton (Sharp Sand and Gravel).

Therefore, Policy M8 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (Adopted September 2017) for the safeguarding minerals applies.

Policy M8: Safeguarding mineral resources

Mineral resources in the Mineral Safeguarding Areas shown on the Policies Map are safeguarded for possible future use. Development that would prevent or otherwise hinder the possible future working of the mineral will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:

- The site has been allocated for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or
- The need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or
- The mineral will be extracted prior to the development taking place.

Mineral Consultation Areas, based on the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, are shown on the Policies Map. Within these areas the District Councils will consult the County Council on planning applications for non-mineral development.

It is also noted that the proposed scheme would pass Appleford Siding which is a safeguarded rail depot as under policy M9 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 1.

Policy M9: Safeguarding mineral infrastructure

Existing and permitted infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals in Oxfordshire is safeguarded against development that would unnecessarily prevent the operation of the infrastructure or would prejudice or jeopardise its continued use by creating incompatible land uses nearby.

Safeguarded sites include the following rail depot sites which are safeguarded for the importation of aggregate into Oxfordshire:

- Hennef Way, Banbury (existing facility);
- Kidlington (existing facility);
- Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay (existing facility); and
- Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarry (permitted facility);

as shown on the Policies Map; and

- any other aggregate rail depot sites which are permitted, as identified in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Other safeguarded sites will be defined in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document.

Therefore a mineral assessment would be expected outlining what minerals (including recycled and secondary aggregates) would be needed for the construction of the site, where from as well as any possible impacts of the development on the safeguarding mineral sites and infrastructure.

Under Policy W11 of the same Local Plan, the four waste management facilities in the area of the proposed development scheme would need to be safeguarded. These are: Hill Farm (J James Ltd), Sutton Courtney (FCC and Hanson), Appleford Sidings (Hanson) and Culham No.1.

Policy W11: Safeguarding waste management sites

The Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document will identify sites that will be safeguarded for waste management use for the duration of their planning permission, comprising:

- operational waste management sites with planning permission;
- sites with planning permission for waste management use which have not yet been brought into operation;
- vacant sites last used for waste management purposes; and
- sites allocated for waste management development in the Site Allocations Document.

Pending the adoption of the Site Allocations Document the sites safeguarded for waste management use are specified in Appendix 2.

The list of sites safeguarded for future waste management use will be monitored and kept up to date in the Minerals and Waste Annual Monitoring Report.

Proposals for development that would directly or indirectly prevent or prejudice the use of a site safeguarded for waste management will not be permitted unless:

- **the development is in accordance with a site allocation for development in an adopted local plan or neighbourhood plan; or**
- **equivalent waste management capacity can be appropriately and sustainably provided elsewhere; or**
- **it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer required for waste management.**

We would therefore expect an assessment of how the existing waste facilities in the area would be safeguarded, or if unable to be safeguarded how they would be replaced elsewhere.

We would also welcome a Circular Economy Statement outlining details of waste production / prevention from the development.

We also have a few minor comments and requests for clarification about figures and statements made in the Scoping report for Chapter 12 – Materials Assets and Waste. We have also made a comment regarding Chapter 5 too.

They are as follows:

Chapter 12

Paragraphs 12.2.2 – 12.2.4

Clarification is sought on why the study area for the use of material assets in construction is only in the scheme boundary yet for the use of secondary of Secondary and recycled in 12.2.4 it's the South East?

Paragraph 12.4.4

Further detail is sought on the figure of 26% for the relevant target for alternative aggregates for the scheme.

Paragraph 12.4.9

Aggregates are imported by three rail depots into Oxfordshire – not one: Banbury, Sutton Courtenay and Kidlington. Permission has also been granted for another at Shipton on Cherwell. Does the developer mean Aggregate depot in close proximity to development, if this is the case, they should set out the radius from the project within which they are searching for different facilities.

Paragraph 12.4.12 (See in parallel with notes on Table 12.3 below)

This paragraph needs further clarification. There will be annual updates to landfill capacity for Oxfordshire within the Annual Monitoring Report, therefore there is available information on changes to landfill capacity.

This paragraph does not appear to include reference to inert landfill capacity and the capacity figure is incorrect for non hazardous waste.

Also, please state why the landfill capacity requirement for the development needs to at a site with a stable non reactive hazardous waste cell?

Section 12.7

The Assessment Methodology at 12.7 seems positive and clear.

However, please ensure the correct baseline is used in terms of landfill capacity. (See notes further down Table 12.3)

Paragraph 12.7.3

In addition, we have a number of proposed amendments to the bullets at 12.7.3 that we feel would benefit the Scoping Report.

Third bullet (addition in green)

- Establishing whether any identified mineral safeguarding sites will be sterilised; and undertake a Minerals Assessment where this is the case

Addition of two further bullets

- Estimating the likely proportion of construction and demolition waste that would be recovered and used on site
- A review and assessment of the potential locations for the source of material

Comments about Tables in Chapter 12

Table 12.1

Is this table a replica of the table for Policy W2 of the Core Strategy? If it is then it should read "Proportion of projected arisings taken to be inert." Not project. If it isn't an exact duplicate and these are their targets for their project, then this should be stated.

Table 12.3 – Landfill Capacity Data.

Further information on the source of this data is needed.

Oxfordshire in 2017 had inert landfill capacity of 6,933,000m³ and Non Hazardous landfill at 4,771,000m³ as reported in the 2017 Annual Monitoring Report.

Chapter 5

Paragraph 5.2.7 in Chapter 5.2

This section discusses what Local Planning Policy should be considered in the preparation of the report. The policies in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan should also be considered.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Kind Regards

Anna

Anna Herriman
Planning Policy Officer (Minerals and Waste)
Oxfordshire County Council
Strategic Infrastructure & planning,
New Road,
Oxford
OX1 1ND
Email: anna.herriman@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Mob: 07990 368235

Appendix C Formal Pre-application Advice



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Environment and Place
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

Jo Beech, AECOM
Sent by email

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director for Environment
and Place

Date: 7th May 2021
My ref: PRE.0062/21

Dear Jo,

Site details: Didcot HIF 1, Land in the parishes of Milton, Didcot, Harwell, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford-on-Thames, Culham and Clifton Hampden.

Description of proposed development: Pre-application advice for Didcot Garden Town HIF 1.

Thank you for your request for pre-application advice contained in your e-mail and accompanying documents dated 22nd April 2021. This is part of ongoing engagement with regard to the anticipated submission of the application in the summer of 2021. This pre-application advice letter addresses specific questions and requests raised and made at the meeting on 27th April 2021 as underlined below.

Is the change in the nature of the application to be 'hybrid', with outline planning permission sought for a replacement Gatehouse to serve RWE and full planning permission sought for remainder of the scheme acceptable ?

It is understood that it has been decided to include as part of the application a request for outline planning permission for a replacement gatehouse building to the power station site. It is understood that you have received legal advice in support of this approach and this is accepted. As the application would be submitted by the County Council as the developer pursuant to the requirements of Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 as amended, it is considered that, should planning permission be granted, any subsequent Reserved Matters Application for the details of the gatehouse building would also need to be submitted under Regulation 3 by the

County Council as the developer. This would not of course preclude a third party making an independent full planning application for a replacement gatehouse building should they wish to do so.

It is agreed that the drawings set out in the pre-application request would provide the appropriate level of outline application detail for the removal of both the existing and the construction of the new gatehouse. However, as it is necessary to show height, it would seem that an indicative roof plan would also be appropriate.

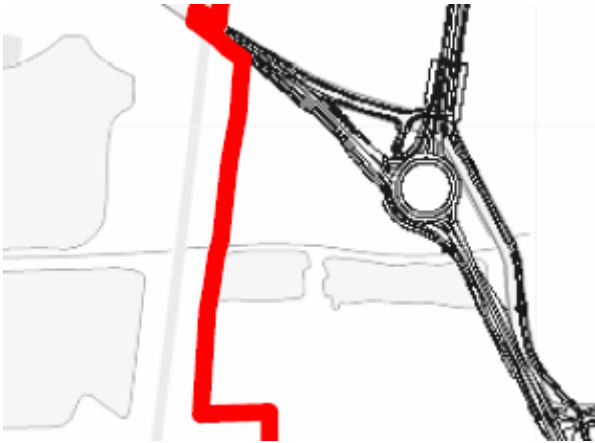
This element of the proposed development will also need to be addressed as relevant within the Environmental Impact Assessment.

Hanson Minerals Restoration Scheme – Overlapping Permissions, is the approach set out below to deal with the restoration of the existing Bridge Farm quarry should permission be granted to the HIF 1 application acceptable ?

The proposed scheme would cross through the Sutton Courtenay mineral and waste management complex. Specifically it would affect the restoration of the Bridge Farm quarry which is currently required to be in accordance with the approved restoration scheme. It is intended that the HIF 1 application will include a revised restoration scheme for Bridge Farm where that approved would require to be altered due to the construction of the road. Should planning permission be granted to the HIF 1 application, separate section 73 applications would be required to amend the existing restoration schemes as those planning permission areas extend beyond the HIF 1 application area. It is understood that you have received legal advice in support of this approach and this is accepted. It is agreed that separate section 73 applications would be required if the red line of the HIF one scheme does not encompass the full area subject to restoration and aftercare conditions on the current mineral planning permissions.

It should be noted that the current restoration schemes for the total Bridge Farm quarry area are contained in two planning permissions: MW.0049/19 which provides for the restoration of phases 5, 6, & 7 of the quarry and MW.0094/18 which provides for the restoration of phases 1 to 4B of the quarry. Both permissions are also subject to aftercare conditions requiring post-restoration aftercare periods of seven and five years respectively. It would appear that the HIF 1 application area would pass through phases 1 to 4B and 7 thus directly affecting the restoration and aftercare requirements covered by both these planning permissions. Should any permission for the HIF 1 application not be implemented then the restoration would be completed as currently approved. Planning permission MW.0094/18 is also subject to section 106 legal agreements including with regard to the provision of a 20 years long term management scheme (including public access) and bird management schemes. Consideration should therefore be given to the need to also amend any of the terms of these legal agreements insofar as they would be affected by the HIF 1 application.

It would also appear from the most recent red line scheme drawing (DGT_ZZ_ZZ_ZZ - FG - EG- 0001 Rev P01) that the scheme would also conflict with the remaining restoration and aftercare requirements of the existing landfill permission no. MW.0039/15 in the area shown in the extract below compared with the red line permission area for MW.0039/15:



Extract from red line as currently drafted for the HIF 1 application



Extract from red line planning permission area drawing for MW.0039/15



Extract from approved Detailed Restoration Master Plan for MW.0039/15

It is recommended that this is also discussed with the site operator/landowner and that further legal advice is sought with regard to whether the revised restoration of this area should also be included in the HIF 1 application followed by a subsequent section 73 application to amend the restoration and aftercare requirements of planning permission no. MW.0039/15.

Are the List of cumulative schemes as shown on drawing no. GEN PD-ACM-ETS-DGT ZZ ZZ ZZ-FG-T-0003 (P1) and in the Didcot HIF Longlist Cumulative Schemes document for consideration as part of the Environmental Statement acceptable ?

All the schemes proposed for inclusion are agreed as ones which should be assessed for potential cumulative impacts. It is not though clear why the schemes with ID nos. 8 and 134 have been concluded to both be excluded. ID no. 8 has outline planning permission and it is not clear why it is assumed it will not be delivered contemporaneously with the HIF 1 application should planning permission be granted. ID no. 134 is the existing landfill permission at Sutton Courtenay which is already being implemented and has permission to continue for the disposal of waste until 31st December 2030. It is assumed that in any instance, the relevant topic areas of the Environmental Statement will take into account such matters as cumulative transport impacts from other developments generating vehicle movements including the various other mineral and waste permissions at the wider Sutton Courtenay minerals and waste complex.

You also asked whether we hold any details of the Didcot to Oxford railway widening scheme from two to four tracks. I have not been able to find any detail on this and there appears to be no commitment to it in the near future on Network Rail's website. There is reference to support for it in the County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 Volume 3: Rail Strategy but it would not be in the remit of the county council to bring the scheme forward as far as I am aware. Unless you find any information to the contrary, it would seem that it can be discounted from the assessment of cumulative schemes in the Environmental Statement.

Webpage link: [LTP4 - Countywide and corridor strategies | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

As part of the request for pre-application advice it is requested that OCC planning confirm whether it agrees with the list of documents and plans identified to be provided with the application and those that are scoped out.

With regard to the Local List, this is currently unadopted but by the time the application is submitted, it is anticipated that a revised version will have been adopted. It is intended that it will go out for a period of public consultation once the results of the county council elections are known and we have the new councillor contact details. It is not anticipated that there will be any major changes to the list of topic areas however.

In Table 2 you have set out which of the elements of the Local List you believe are relevant. As above, it is suggested that an indicative roof plan for the gatehouse building be provided and, should there be any other ancillary buildings proposed as part of the full application then clearly full details including the roof details will be required.

Although not a minerals application, as set out above, a revised aftercare and restoration plan/schemes for Bridge Farm and part of the Sutton Courtenay landfill site will need to be provided. Also as set out above, there is a requirement through a section 106 Legal Agreement for the provision and implementation of a Bird Management Plan for the purposes of avoiding bird strike. Therefore the Birdstrike Risk Management Plan topic will also need to be addressed in association with the revised restoration and aftercare requirements. You should therefore liaise with the Ministry of Defence as this requirement exists to address their concerns with regard to the creation of water bodies at Bridge Farm.

Ministry of Defence contact e-mail address: DIO-safeguarding-statutory@mod.uk

It is noted that it is intended that the requirement for an Open Space/Playing Field Assessment will be provided as part of the Planning Statement. This will be acceptable but this topic should be properly addressed as a clearly defined section of the Planning Statement.

Paragraph 146 of the NPPF allows for local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location to be treated as not inappropriate. However, this is on the condition that it would preserve openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. It would seem that there will be structures included as part of the proposed development, including the bridge over the River Thames, which would arguably affect openness and conflict with the purposes of designation e.g. through encroachment in the countryside. Whilst there is specific policy support in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan for the development within the specific safeguarded areas, this does not preclude detailed consideration of any application against Green Belt policy. The development has to be viewed as a whole and so if any part of it is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt then the application would need to be considered as a departure from the development plan and very special circumstances would then need to exist. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Unless you are to put forward the

case that the development is not inappropriate then you would therefore need to provide a Green Belt Statement and put the case for the existence of very special circumstances.

The list of documents and plans provided otherwise appear comprehensive and it is agreed that they are suitable to be provided with the application.

The comments are offered without prejudice to the determination of a future planning application for this development. Such an application would be assessed on its merits against the development plan and other material considerations at the time of submission.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

David Periam

David Periam
Development Management Team Leader
David.Periam@oxfordshire.gov.uk
07824 545378

Disclaimer

Any advice given in relation to the planning history of the site, planning constraints or statutory designations does not constitute a formal response of the Council under the provisions of the Land Charges Act 1975.

Any pre-application advice given by Council Officers does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council with regards to future planning consents.

Any views or opinions expressed are given in good faith, and to the best of ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application, which will be subject to public consultation and ultimately decided by the Council. The Council cannot guarantee that new issues will not be raised following submission of a planning application and consultation upon it.

You should be aware that Officers cannot give guarantees about the final formal decision that will be made on your planning or related applications.

