

ASP4 Slade Farm, Hedgerley Area Statement



Location

The site is located immediately south of the M40 motorway, 2km (1.2 miles) west of Gerrards Cross, 5.5km (3.4 miles) north of Slough and 700 metres north of Hedgerley.

Site Area

19 hectares (47 acres)

Existing Use

Agricultural

Potential Yield

1,500,000 tonnes

Extraction Rate

150,000 – 200,000 tonnes per annum

Planning Context

In 1978 the site was suggested as a Preferred Area in the draft Minerals Subject Plan but subsequently removed with the introduction of the Southern Plateau Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL). In 1991 the site was put forward by an operator for consideration at the Minerals Local Plan Inquiry but was rejected by the Inspector on the grounds that there was no need to extract minerals from the AALs to meet the currently required levels of provision. This site was submitted again as a potential preferred area at the MWLP inquiry in 2005 but the County Council declined to consider additional sites at this time, a conclusion accepted by the Inspector.

Positive Sustainability Factors

- Not within a groundwater protection zone (SA 10)
- Not within a flood risk area (SA 11)
- No ecological designations on site (SA 5)
- No recreational resources on site (SA 20)

SITE PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Environmental

The site is recognised as a protected landscape included in the Southern Plateau Area of Attractive Landscape. Slade Wood situated in the south west corner and the woodland adjacent to the western boundary are recognised and protected as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands. The site is of arable land use to the west and pastureland to the east of the hedgerow running down the centre of the site.

Access

Access would be from Hedgerley Lane.

Amenity

Slade Farm is a listed building which is situated 200m south of the site. Hedgerley lies approximately 500m south and Hedgerley Green 400m east. The potential impacts from mineral extraction on the properties immediately to the south of the site could be mitigated through appropriate buffering and sensitive design of mineral extraction operations.

Landscaping

The woodlands situated in the south west corner of the site would need to be protected by reducing the working area. The depth of woodland screen on the western boundary would need to be increased as well as some form of additional coverage on the southern and eastern boundaries.

Restoration

Possible restoration schemes could either be the creation of a shallow valley draining to the east where a small wetland/seasonal pond could be established, or alternatively, the area could be returned to the existing levels through inert landfilling.

Water Quality

The site is not within a groundwater protection zone although appropriate measures must be provided so as to ensure the water environment is protected from contamination.

Floodplain

The site is not within a river floodplain. However, as the site is in excess of 1 hectare in size, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will need to be undertaken.

Ecology

There are no statutory or non-statutory sites located within the site. Three County Wildlife Sites and eight Biological Notification Sites are within 1km of the site. The site has potential to support nesting birds, bats, dormice, and reptiles. Appropriate surveys would need to be undertaken before proposals are submitted.

Rights of Way

There are no footpaths or bridleways crossing the site.

Archaeology

Archaeological findings have been recorded on site and in the vicinity just to the north, 600m east and the listed buildings at Slade Farm to the south. A field evaluation would be required before proposals were to be submitted.

Negative Sustainability Factors to be addressed in planning applications

- Within AAL (SA 8)
- Archaeological remains on site (SA 6)
- Safeguarding the amenities of local residents (SA 3, 16)