

Supplementary Mineral Site - Clipstone (MD50)

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1 Translations

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

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Customer Service Team

Mineral Development Plan Document

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2 Introduction

2.1 Bedfordshire County Council and Luton Borough Council are jointly preparing the Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) for Bedfordshire and Luton under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Framework will set out the policies and proposals for the development and use of land for minerals extraction and waste management within the County. It will guide decisions on planning applications and provide the spatial plan for Bedfordshire and Luton in relation to Minerals and Waste.

2.2 This document is in relation to the Minerals Development Plan Documents within the Framework.

2.3 We are currently at the Preferred Options Stage in the preparation of these documents. During consultation on the Preferred Options Documents in September / October 07, a new site was proposed for mineral extraction at Clipstone (MD50).

2.4 We are now undertaking public consultation on this site to gain information to enable us to assess its potential for inclusion within the Minerals Development Plan Documents.

2.5 The site has previously undergone consultation with thirty eight technical bodies including the Environment Agency and English Nature, and all responses received have been included in relation to each site. A full list of the consultees is available on request. We have also identified the initial key planning constraints for each site from our internal information.

2.6 We are also consulting on the Sustainability Appraisal for this site. The Sustainability Appraisal is being carried out by independent consultants, Environ, to assess the Framework against an agreed set of economic, social and environmental criteria throughout the preparation process.

2.7 What next?

2.8 Following this consultation we will then work towards the submission draft of the Minerals Plan Documents (Anticipated January 09). This will go before Full Council for approval before it undergoes an Examination in Public with an Independent Inspector.

3 How to Comment

3.1 This Supplementary Minerals Site paper is being published for consultation for a 5 week period starting on Monday 28th April 2008 and **ending at 5:00pm on Monday 2nd June 2008.**

3.2 The easiest way to comment is online. Go to www.bedfordshire.gov.uk

3.3 From here click on the "Consultations" link on the left hand side of the screen and follow the links to the Minerals Development Plan Documents. The online documents allow you to read and comment on the documents on line and through registering with the site you will also be notified of all future work on the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.

3.4 However if you do not want to comment online you can email mwplans@bedscc.gov.uk or write to

3.5 Minerals and Waste Plans Team, Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP

3.6 Please note that we cannot take comments by telephone, as we need to keep a clear audit trail for all the comments that we receive.

3.7 Due to the open nature of the preparation of the Development Plan Documents, any comments received to the consultation will not remain confidential and will be in the public domain.

3.8 **If you have any queries regarding this consultation, or any other aspect of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework, please contact the Minerals and Waste Team at mwplans@bedscc.gov.uk or telephone 01234 228738**

3.9 Sustainability Appraisal

3.10 Independent consultants, Environ, have also undertaken Sustainability Appraisal on this site. This is a separate document and is available to view on the County Councils website in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework pages.

4 MD50 - Land at Clipstone

Table 4.1 MD50 - Land at Clipstone

| Site Name | Land at Clipstone |
|---------------------------|---|
| Site Nominator | WBB Minerals |
| County Councillor | Cllr Rhys Goodwin |
| District Council | South Bedfordshire |
| Parish Council | Eggington / Hockliffe |
| Adjoining Parish Councils | Potsgrove, Battlesden, Chalgrave, Tilsworth, Stanbridge, Leighton-Linslade, Heath & Reach |
| Operation | Specialist sand extraction and processing |
| Capacity | 2.5 million tonnes |
| Notes from Nominator | |

Table 4.2 Summary of Constraints

| GIS Constraint | Issue |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Green Belt | Part or all of this site falls within the green belt. |
| Nitrate Vulnerable Zone | Part or all of this site falls with a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. |
| Rights of Way | There are rights of way issues within this site (FP14 Hockliffe) |
| Ancient Monument | A scheduled ancient monument falls within this site. |
| Internal Drainage Board Area | Part or all of this site falls within an Internal Drainage Board Area. |
| Internal Drainage Board Drain | Part or all of this site contains an Internal Drainage Board Drain. |
| Flood Zone | Part or all of this site falls within flood zones 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency's flood map. |

Picture 4.1 MD50 - Land at Clipstone

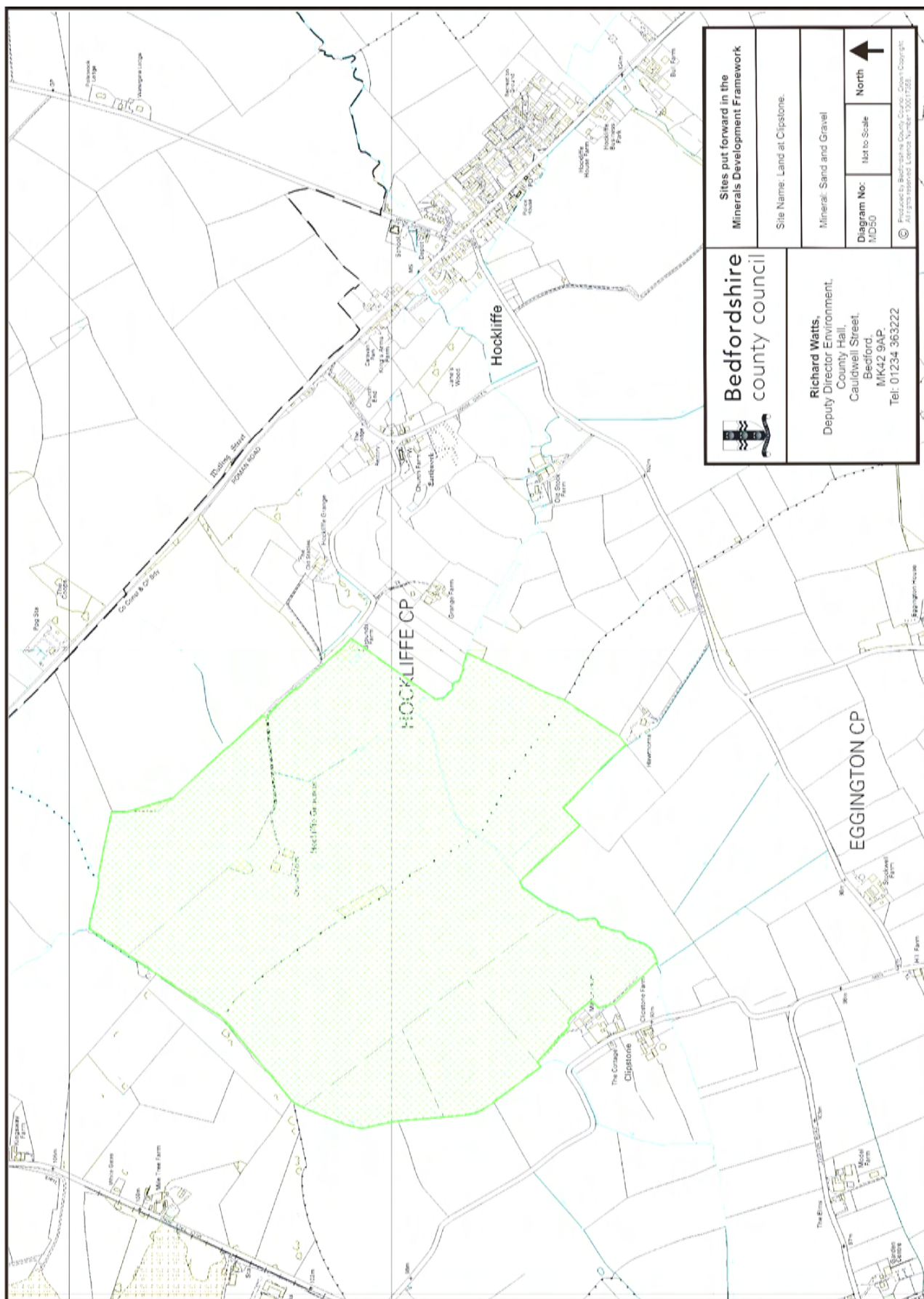


Table 4.3 Initial Technical Response

| Technical Body | Response Summary (Please note that these are summaries. Full copies are available on request.) |
|--------------------|---|
| Natural England | <p>Based on the level of information provided at this stage Natural England are unable to provide detailed comments relating to this site. However if further information is provided at a later stage, they have stated that they may wish to change their comments or provide additional advice.</p> <p>MD50 is within 0.7km Nine Acres Pit SSSI, which is notified for its geological features, Natural England considers that it is unlikely that this potential minerals extraction site will have any adverse impact on SSSI's, including Nine Acres Pit SSSI.</p> <p>Natural England state that this site covers a large area and it is likely that progressive restoration will be important. Given the large land take, it is likely that there will be impacts on BAP and / or legally protected species, for example, water voles, otters, bats, badgers, nesting birds and possibly great crested newts which will require further investigation, surveys and mitigation.</p> <p>Natural England would want to see the realisation of the potential for restoration to contribute towards local and / or national BAP targets along with Green Infrastructure initiatives.</p> |
| English Heritage | <p>English Heritage comment that although the site (and the area surrounding the proposed access from Mile Tree Road) does not contain any designated assets, the setting and integrity of these features is likely to be affected by the proposed minerals site. To the east, there are a number of significant features focused around the conservation area of Hockliffe Church End. This includes the Grade II* listed church (St Nicholas), a cluster of Grade II listed buildings and a scheduled ancient monument (moated site and earthworks). The main settlement of Hockliffe contains another cluster of listed buildings along the A5.</p> <p>Immediately to the west of the proposed site are three Grade II listed buildings at Clipstone. There is a Grade II* listed building to the south at Eggington, whilst there is a Grade 11 Registered Historic Park and Garden (Battlesden Park) less that 500m to the north.</p> <p>In additional to the above designated features, the proximity of the proposed site to the A5 is also significant. This section of road formed part of the Roman Watling Street, and it is probable that the site and the surrounding area contain archaeological remains. The County Historic Environment Record (HER) and English Heritage's National Monuments Record (NMR) should be consulted to ascertain archaeological potential.</p> <p>In summary, there are a number of designated and non-designated historic features that would be affected by the extraction of minerals from this proposed site. English Heritage have significant concerns about using this site and would need proper assessment to be carried out to judge the impact on historic buildings, townscapes, landscape features and archaeological remains and their settings. Such assessment should follow advice in PPG's 15 and 16 as well as advice in MPS1 (particularly paragraph 14).</p> <p>English Heritage state that they have recently published guidance on Mineral Extraction and the Historic Environment, which should help with future minerals planning work.</p> <p>English Heritage have not been able to visit the proposed site to judge the impacts more accurately on the ground. Notwithstanding this, the above comments should be taken in consideration when reviewing the Minerals Site Allocations Plan.</p> |
| Environment Agency | <p>The Environment Agency comment that the proposal is for a large quarry area between the villages of Clipstone and Hockliffe, to extract 2.5 million tonnes of silica sand (from the Woburn sands formation). The Environment Agency's records indicate that the proposed site is on a minor aquifer. Also, approximately 350m to the north east of the site is situated a Class 1 Source Protection Zone (SPZ) surrounding an important public water supply abstraction point.</p> <p>The Environment Agency would not accept dewatering of an extensive aquifer, nor an uncontrolled breach of a confining layer. Any future applicant would need to investigate the strata thickness and piezometric surface below the site to determine whether a confining layer would be removed. Dewatering is unlikely to be acceptable, however 'wet working' has been previously used in nearby quarries.</p> |

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| Technical Body | Response Summary (Please note that these are summaries. Full copies are available on request.) |
|--|---|
| | <p>The Clipstone Brook runs through this site and in some places the site has been categorised as being in Flood Zone 2 and 3. There are also a number of historic landfills to the north and west of the proposed site the closest being approx 650m away. There is also a SSSI approx 620m to the north west which is known as "Nine Acres Pit".</p> <p>There are a number of sand and gravel quarries in this area. However, because of the proximity of the NALD abstraction point and Class 1 SPZ to the north east and the state of the surrounding aquifer any extraction operations in this area must be undertaken with extreme care. Any subsequent planning application must take into consideration groundwater conditions, abstraction points, SPZ, SSSI etc. in the area.</p> <p>For any future application, further details would be required on the proposed sand extraction methodology along with details of the proposed scheme for the final site restoration. The site and its surrounding area have been previously recognised as having a potential multi-functional usage. This could incorporate proposals for flood alleviation, biodiversity enhancements and recreation / amenity.</p> <p>Whilst we would have no objection to the allocation of the site, we would wish to be involved with any future discussion on its development proposals.</p> <p>EA Fisheries and Biodiversity team have provided the following comments:</p> <p>In terms of restoration we would be looking to maximise biodiversity gain. The types of habitat which should be considered are the LBAP priorities - wet habitats include flood plain grazing marsh and lowland wet meadow, reedbed, wet woodland (actually a mosaic of habitats with a fairly low proportion of tree cover (20-30% and upwards) - and the newly added pond habitat. Of course the actual topography and water levels of the site would need to be looked at to see which is appropriate and sustainable. It may be possible to enhance the Clipstone Brook itself too - e.g. by creating a wider wildlife corridor and/or instream enhancements.</p> <p>In terms of Fisheries - if a lake or series of large ponds are to be created then a fishery with angling platforms would be a possible outcome, adding another reason to attract visitors to the site. Designed to have diverse edges and depths then biodiversity can benefit too. Not all ponds would want to have fish as this would limit the use of the site by amphibians (fish eat their eggs).</p> <p>The Environment Agency support the green wheel access idea around Leighton Linlade. Paths should be positioned so certain areas of the park naturally get less disturbance.</p> |
| Network Rail | The site is in excess of 3km from operational railway infrastructure and will not affect the interests of Network Rail. In these circumstances, Network Rail have no comment to make on this site. |
| Beds CC – Heritage and Environment | <p>The Heritage and Environment Team at Bedfordshire County Council have the following comments to make. This is a sensitive site in a tranquil rural area. The site falls within the Toddington-Hockcliffe Clay Hills landscape character area. This has retained a fairly strong pattern of enclosure and is considered to have a moderate to high sensitivity to change. A key objective for this area is to conserve the Clipstone Brook Valley e.g. through conservation and extension of pasture. Mineral extraction and the likely restoration to wetland features would conflict with this. A further sensitivity is the proximity to the historic landscape and parkland in the vicinity of the church and Grange. The site is crossed by rights of way and the area is very important in terms of recreation.</p> <p>This site is not acceptable for development in terms of landscape. The land is Green Belt and should remain as a rural land-use. The change in landform, visual intrusion, noise and lighting would detract from landscape character. The site is also distant from the urban area and does not link with other areas of mineral activity - so that any possible gains for public recreation are minor when compared to the visual impact and landscape damage.</p> |
| Internal Drainage Board (Buckingham and River Ouzel) | This site is within the Board's district and has an adopted watercourse running through it. |

| Technical Body | Response Summary (Please note that these are summaries. Full copies are available on request.) |
|---|--|
| | <p>The Drainage Board have the following comments to make. All proposals will need to comply with the Board's Byelaws and be designed so as not to have any detrimental impact on the watercourses (flood risk, siltation etc). The developer will require the approval and consent of the Drainage Board. They would also require access for maintenance. The site is also partly within the Environment Agency's (EA) indicative flood maps.</p> <p>The Internal Drainage Board would recommend that the planning authority seek to secure flood defence improvements as part of the development both during the site operation and permanent restoration phases. This site is on the same watercourse as the EA's flood defence improvement scheme which has been deferred due to limited funding, so this site may be able to provide betterment to Leighton Buzzard.</p> |
| Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Technical Unit | <p>The Joint Technical Unit made the following comments.</p> <p>Within the meaning of the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, Leighton Linslade and its environs has been identified as a potential location for future growth. At this stage, preferred option(s) has yet to be arrived at for the purposes of the Core Strategy and therefore, it is feasible that an urban extension may be located hereabouts. Accordingly, should the County be minded to allocate the said site for mineral extraction, due regard should be afforded to this potential relationship. In the consideration of the said allocation, material consideration should be afforded to:-</p> <p>HGV Lorry Movements:- It is assumed that once the sand is stored and processed, onward movement will for the greater part be along Eastern Way and then onto the A5. Having regard to the proposed level of working (2.5million tonnes), any intensification of extraction will impact upon the existing local road network and the A5 trunk road which is a material consideration. It is suggested that through any permissions, conditions are imposed restricting the number of lorry movements to and from the site.</p> <p>Noise attenuation: Given the relation to existing residential properties and potential expansion of Leighton Buzzard, any proposal should include rigorous noise attenuation measures.</p> <p>Flood Alleviation: In the Autumn of 2005, the Environment Agency undertook a consultation exercise on flood risk management for the Clipstone Brook which runs through the proposed mineral extraction site. The proposed flood risk management system would in part involve the construction of flood storage management measures within the proposed mineral extraction area. When consulting with the Environment Agency, the issue of how the proposal may impact upon flood management measures should be addressed.</p> <p>Rights of Way and access to Green Infrastructure: Given the relation to east Leighton Buzzard and the village of Hockliffe, it may well be found that the proposed mineral workings will by virtue of their location have an impact upon Rights of Way networks and access to the countryside. If this is found to be the case, compensatory measures will have to be put in place.</p> <p>Restoration Plans: Given the growth area agenda, it is highly likely that the subject area will provide future growth area opportunity be it in the form of open space provision. To this end, any restoration scheme should be restored to provide future open space (be it either informal or formal) provision.</p> |
| Beds CC - Countryside Access | <p>The Countryside Access team at County Hall comment that extraction has the opportunity to develop a country park and linear access complex in the east of Leighton Buzzard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hockliffe FP 14 crosses the site, Heath/Reach BW 3 and Eggington FP 4/5 about it. Therefore, potential for useful links between them and perhaps including the upgrade of FP 14 and Hockliffe FP 13 to bridleway in order to link in with Battlesden BW 5 east of A5. Latter will require improvements to the road crossing and perhaps would suggest such even if the upgrade to bridleway doesn't occur. ● If final restoration to country park, access should be from as many directions as possible and encourage travel to/from on foot, cycle or even horseback rather than car. Coming from Clipstone side would require some connection to FP 4 and / or road verge improvements ● Proposed improvements to Clipstone Brook by the relevant authority could allow additional connecting access both within and outside the site ● Consideration should be given to potential development east of Leighton Buzzard. |

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|---|---|
| The Greensand Trust | <p>The Greensand Trust stated that restoration provides opportunity to create a park and enhance existing rights of way.</p> <p>A Greensand Trust ecologist has undertaken a biological survey in this area, and additionally the line of the Clipstone Brook has been designated a County Wildlife Site. As an example there are numerous pollard willows, with long rows of old pollards concentrated either side of Clipstone Farm and these on their own are enough to make this section of the brook meet the CWS minimum thresholds with extra interest provided by occasional native black poplars. Other important wetland indicator species, scrub and hedgerow habitats exist in the area and on its borders. Works should not destroy drainage etc on which such elements depend.</p> |
| Beds CC – Highways | <p>Bedfordshire County Council Highways stated that there are two different scenarios to consider with this site:-</p> <p>If all extracted mineral was destined for Double Arches for processing then subject to a satisfactory access onto Mile Tree Road, there are no particular concern on highway grounds. The number of trips generated by Double Arches is controlled and this site would not generate any additional traffic onto the A5 or into Heath and Reach.</p> <p>If the extracted mineral is to go elsewhere then the only route from Mile Tree Road that would be acceptable would be via Eastern Way and the A5. This would then be subject to the agreement of the Highways Agency and potentially require improvement to the junction with the A5.</p> |
| GO East - Rural and Climate Change Team | <p>The GO-East Rural and Climate Change Teams provide only statutory responses on behalf of the DEFRA Secretary of State in relation to a development affecting more than 20 ha of "best and most versatile land" (i.e. land classified as grade 1, 2 or 3a by the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system).</p> <p>Go East checked their records and had no detailed ALC information for the site. The site is shown as Grade 3 on the published provisional ALC map at 1:250,000 this map is only suitable for a strategic rather than a site specific planning purpose. The 'likelihood of best and most versatile land' dataset (again at 1:250,000 scale) suggests a moderate likelihood of 'best and most versatile land' i.e. between about 20-60% of the area could be BMV, but again this is only a best guess. As always with site specific proposals, a more detailed survey is usually needed to give a more definitive response.</p> |

Question 1

**Do you support the above site for mineral extraction?
Do you object to the above site for mineral extraction? If so, why?**

Are there any issues we need to consider with the above site?

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