



**Policies Map: Inset Map 6,  
Strategic Minerals sites Bridge Farm,  
Willington Lock and Willowhill Farm**

Scale 1:20000

**LUTON**  
BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

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**Table 22 Bridge Farm, Willington Lock and Willowhill Farm**

Proposed use	Sand and gravel extraction
Unitary Authority	Bridge Farm: Bedford Borough, bordering onto Central Bedfordshire Willington Lock: Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Willowhill Farm: Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough
Parish	Bridge Farm: Parish of Great Barford Willington Lock: Moggerhanger and Willington Willowhill Farm: Moggerhanger and Willington
Site area	Bridge Farm= 87 hectares Willington Lock= 55 hectares Willowhill Farm= 64 hectares
Operator	Hope Construction Materials
Reserve available	Bridge Farm= 544,000 – 1,004,000 tonnes Willington Lock= 1,244,000 tonnes Willowhill Farm= 740,000 tonnes
Grid reference	Bridge Farm: TL 12621, 51386 Willington Lock: TL 12403, 50518 Willowhill Farm: TL 12720, 50161
Primary/Secondary Freight route to be used	A421 (via C44(the former A421)) and Secondary Freight route A603
Future access routes	All three sites would utilise the existing access from the Willington Quarry processing plant onto the A603. Mineral would be taken to the processing plant at Willington Quarry via land at Dairy Farm. It is possible that an alternative access to Dairy Farm will be provided off the C44 if the processing plant is relocated here from Willington Quarry.
Affected Public Rights of Way	Several footpaths run through Bridge Farm and Willington Lock sites, while one bridleway runs into Willowhill Farm and one between Bridge Farm and Willington Lock. The Bedford to Sandy Country Way (part of the National Cycle Route) crosses Willington Lock
Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Great Barford Gravel Pit CWS and the River Great Ouse CWS are located between the boundaries of Bridge Farm and Willington Lock. Willington Lock is crossed by Blunham Disused Railway CWS and is 500m east of Willington Moat CWS. Willowhill Farm is bordered to the north by Blunham Disused Railway CWS. The sites are immediately east of Bedford River Valley Park.
Mineral Safeguarding Area	Within the River Valley/Glacial Sand and Gravel MSA
Heritage Assets	Bridge Farm contains a variety of archaeological features including ring ditches and rectangular enclosures. The whole area is likely to be archaeologically sensitive. It is also close to the scheduled Barford Bridge and Great Barford conservation area.

	<p>Willowhill Farm is archaeologically sensitive with archaeological cropmarks recorded over most of it. It is also to the east of a Roman settlement indicated by finds coinciding with rectangular enclosure cropmarks.</p> <p>Willington Lock contains two possible ring ditch cropmarks and again the whole area is likely to be archaeologically sensitive. It is 500m east of the scheduled "The Docks" moated site, Hengri- form monument and several bowl barrows.</p>
Proximity to active waste site	Bridge Farm is located 700m east of an aggregates recycling facility.
Landscape designations	Willington Lock and Willowhill Farm are partly located within the Forest of Marston Vale and partly within the Ivel and Ouse Countryside Project Area. Bridge Farm is entirely within the Ivel and Ouse Countryside Project Area.
Environment Agency Flood Zones	All sites are partially within Flood Zones 2 and 3
Processing plant site	All three sites would act as Satellite sites to feed the existing Willington processing plant.
Other relevant issues	Willowhill Farm and Willington Lock: Extraction of this site could prejudice long term aspirations to re-use the original route of the Bedford-Cambridge railway line.
Development and Restoration Requirements	<p><b>Bridge Farm:</b> The north eastern side of this site is close to the village of Great Barford. Measures need to be taken (stand offs, planting, bunding etc) to ensure that the two schools and local residents are adequately protected from potential disturbance. Quarry traffic is precluded from using the village for access. An assessment will be required of the existing wetland habitat and measures proposed to mitigate the loss of this habitat. The land is likely to be restored back to farmland but opportunity should be taken to improve biodiversity, and contribute to local and national BAP targets. Opportunity should also be taken to provide flood alleviation within any restoration scheme, possibly through the creation of wetland habitat. Footpaths will be affected by extraction and measures should be taken to ensure that the paths are retained, even if temporary diversions are required, and improved as part of the restoration scheme. Opportunities should also be taken for landscape enhancement, taking account of Green Infrastructure initiatives which may include Bedford River Valley Park. Based on the Agricultural land assessment for Dairy Farm it is likely that the agricultural land here is predominantly grade 3a with some grade 2 and with grade 3b on the heavier alluvial soils adjoining the river, These grades can be maintained in the restored site by careful soil handling techniques.</p> <p><b>Willington Lock:</b> Progressive restoration will be important. There is a CWS within the site and extraction is likely to impact on BAP and/or legally protected species (Great Crested Newts, Water Voles, Otters, bats, badgers and birds). Further investigation, surveys and mitigation is required. Potential for restoration to contribute towards local and/or national BAP targets along with Green Infrastructure initiatives that might include the BedfordRiverValleyPark. Restoration could also provide potential for flood alleviation works. The</p>

	<p>Bedford-Sandy Country Way and Willington FP3 cross the site and may need to be diverted during extraction but there are opportunities to improve access as part of the restoration scheme. The agricultural land value is predominantly grades 3a and 3b which can be maintained during restoration with careful soil handling techniques.</p> <p><b>Willowhill Farm:</b> The south west part of the site is close to residential property and measures need to be put in place (stand offs, planting, bunding etc) during extraction to mitigate against potential disturbance. Extraction could affect a CWS and impact on BAP and/or protected species (Great Crested Newts, Water Voles, Otters, bats, badgers and birds) – further investigation, surveys and mitigation is required. Opportunity should be taken to improve biodiversity and to contribute to local and national BAP targets along with Green Infrastructure Initiatives that might include Bedford River Valley Park. Restoration is likely to be to farmland but with opportunity taken to create wetland habitat. Willington bridleway 8 should be improved as part of restoration scheme. No agricultural land valuation has been undertaken but on the basis for Willington Lock it is anticipated that there will be a combination of grade 3a and 3b land.</p> <p><b>Overall Restoration:</b> The operator for all three sites is currently extracting and restoring other mineral sites on land between the A603 and the A421. An indicative restoration plan has been drawn up to facilitate the phasing and restoration of these strategic sites.</p>
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