

**LAND NORTH OF HERTFORD (HERT4)
WARE PARK TRUST**

Update on Minerals

D. K. SYMES ASSOCIATES
Mineral Planning & Development Consultants

email: dks@dksymes.co.uk

May 2014

APPLETREE FARMHOUSE, 39 MAIN ROAD,
MIDDLETON CHENEY, BANBURY, OXON OX17 2ND

Tel: 01295 712266
Fax: 01295 712283

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PLAN:

1217/PO/1 - Progressive Operations Plan

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The area north of Hertford is identified in the adopted Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review as part of Preferred Area 2. Access is identified onto the B158 (Wadesmill Road) to/from the north only. In terms of timing the Plan looks to see this Preferred Area started 'earlier in the Plan period'.

1.2 The area immediately south of the Preferred Area 2 has been identified as a potential housing site (HERT4) in the Preferred Options consultation on the emerging East Hertfordshire Local Plan.

1.3 This identified that minerals could be a constraint to the development of HERT4 that needed to be addressed to ensure that any impacts from mineral extraction and restoration could take place without giving rise to any unacceptable constraints, as well as ensuring that proven reserves of minerals were not needlessly sterilised.

1.4 This formed the basis for a Proposed Strategy document prepared on behalf of the landowner to demonstrate a responsible approach to recovering the minerals as well as ensuring adequate protection to the amenity of any proposed residential development. This 'Strategy' Document was prepared following discussions with Hertfordshire County Council and was submitted to both Hertfordshire as well as East Herts.

1.5 The Strategy recognises that mineral extraction is on a progressive phased basis, with the worked out areas being restored. The design is to develop the site from south (i.e. near the proposed new housing) to the north such that any activities are sufficiently far away so as not to

cause any visual, noise or dust impacts by the time the HERT4 site is occupied for housing from 2020.

2. PROGRESS

2.1 Since the strategy report was prepared the following progress has been achieved,

- a mineral partner/operator has been appointed,
- a target mineral planning application submission date of July 2014 is agreed (earlier if achievable),
- an Environmental Impact Assessment will be prepared,
- baseline surveys have been completed on
Landscape & Visual
Ecology
Transport
Archaeology
Water/Flood Risk
Noise.
- a draft phased working and restoration scheme has been prepared against which the impacts and mitigation can be assessed,
- a proposed timescale for the minerals based on agreed minimum annual off take has also been prepared.

2.2 The draft working and restoration scheme is illustrated on plan 1217/PO/1 copy attached. The site is divided into four phases that are developed in a broadly south to north sequence. The basis of the scheme is set out below.

- a new purpose designed access onto the B158 with all traffic to go to/come from the north (i.e. no mineral vehicles will travel south through Bengoe/Hertford).

- a central 'stockpiling' area with the infrastructure (site office, weighbridge, wheel cleaning, car parking, etc.) screened by grassed earth bunds and additional landscaping.
- there is no on-site 'fixed' processing plant, but there will be mobile, low profile dry screening equipment to improve/balance the mineral output.
- phase 1 (the southern phase) will be screened by grassed earth bunds to protect the local amenities during excavation with the bunds being removed/used in the restoration to agriculture at a lower level by 2020.
- the proposed housing area will be over 200 metres from any ongoing mineral activity and protected by retaining a strip of unworked land together with further grassed bunds.
- the ongoing mineral extraction will continue to progress north with restoration to agriculture at a lower level being undertaken progressively.
- the scheme is due to be completed by 2030 with all infrastructure being removed, the restored landform being completed which includes a 'wetland' area to ensure that drainage returns to Greenfield runoff rates (including allowance for climate change).

2.3 A mineral application has to be in detail and the final scheme, especially landscaping proposals and the water balance calculations are still being finalised. As indicated above the proposed submission is targeted for the end of July 2014.

3. DELIVERY

3.1 The mineral application will be submitted independently to the progress of the East Herts Local Plan. It is recognised that mineral applications often take longer than the statutory timescale due to their specialised nature. The draft programme has allowed at least 6 months for determination.

3.2 Physical development of a new mineral working is dependent upon dry ground conditions as well as seeking to work with the agricultural tenant to minimise impact. The draft programme is;

- decision between Dec. 2014 - March 2015
- construct new access between April 2015 - August 2015
- prepare stockpiling area July - August 2015
(depending on crops noting it can be done in parallel with access construction)
- prepare Phase 1 July - Sept 2015 and commence extraction
(this will include construction of all environmental bunds)
- complete restoration of Phase 1 by Sept 2020
(target date is Sept 2019)
- complete restoration of Phase 2 by Sept 2023
(apart from haul road and bunds)
- complete restoration of Phase 3 by Sept 2027
(apart from haul road and bunds)
- completed restoration of Phase 4 by Sept 2030

3.3 The above timescales are based on projected minimum annual tonneages so should represent a conservative position.

4. SUMMARY

4.1 Since the preparation of the Mineral Strategy Report in December 2012, the mineral development proposals have substantially progressed with the appointment of a mineral partner/operator.

4.2 Background environmental reports have been prepared. A draft progressive scheme of working and restoration has been agreed with the mineral partner and the final details are in the process of being agreed to enable impacts and mitigation to be assessed.

4.3 A full mineral application is targeted for July 2014 with an anticipated decision within 6 - 8 months.

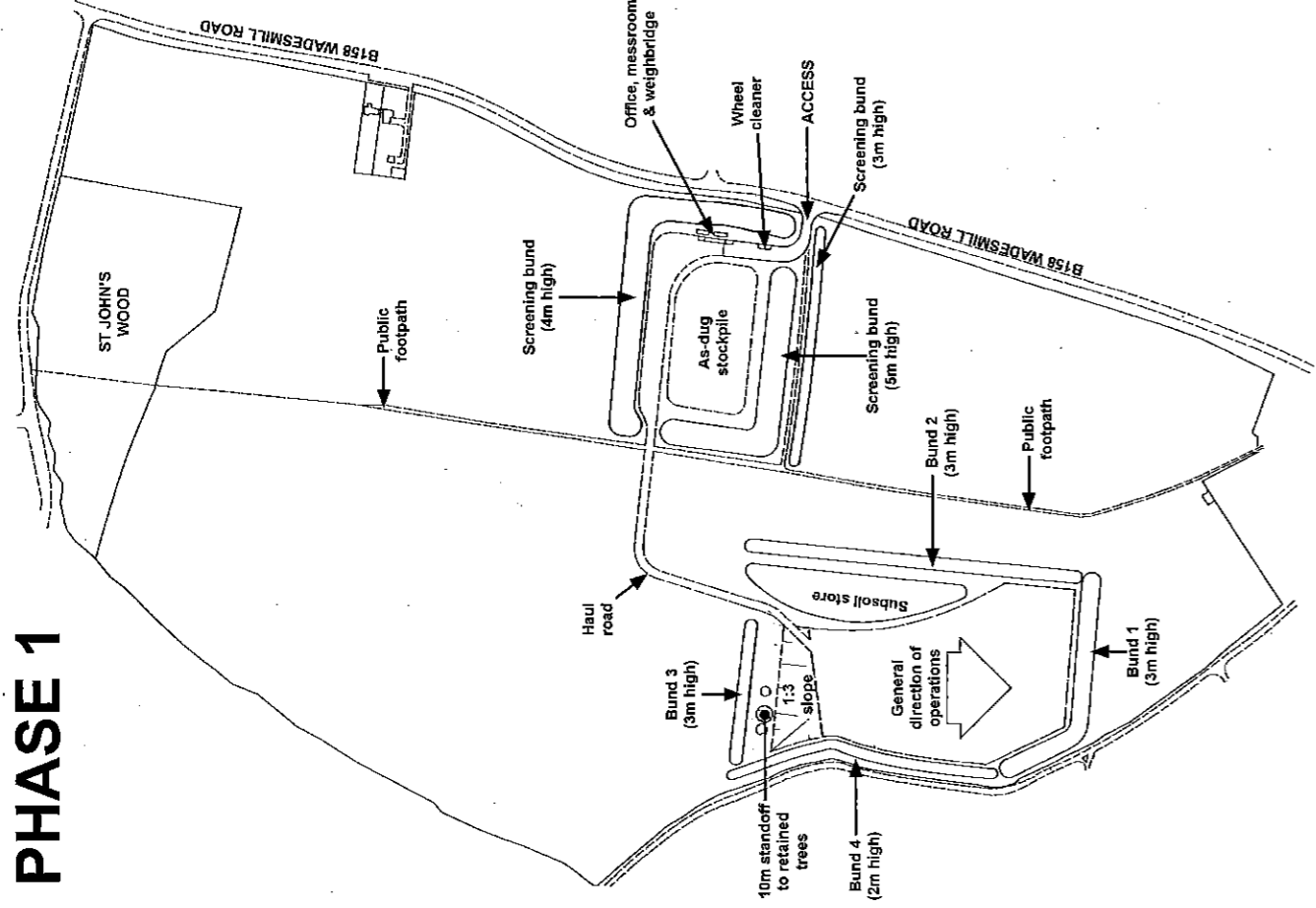
4.4 A draft conservative timescale has been prepared which shows that the southern phase will be completed by, or before Sept 2020. Once this first phase is completed, the ongoing mineral development has been designed to be sufficiently far north to give rise to any unacceptable impacts.

4.5 On the basis of the above, it is evident that the mineral sterilisation concerns expressed in the draft Policy HERT4 are being actively resolved and the site will be available for residential occupation by September 2020, at the latest. The proposals in draft Policy HERT4 are, therefore, robust and deliverable.

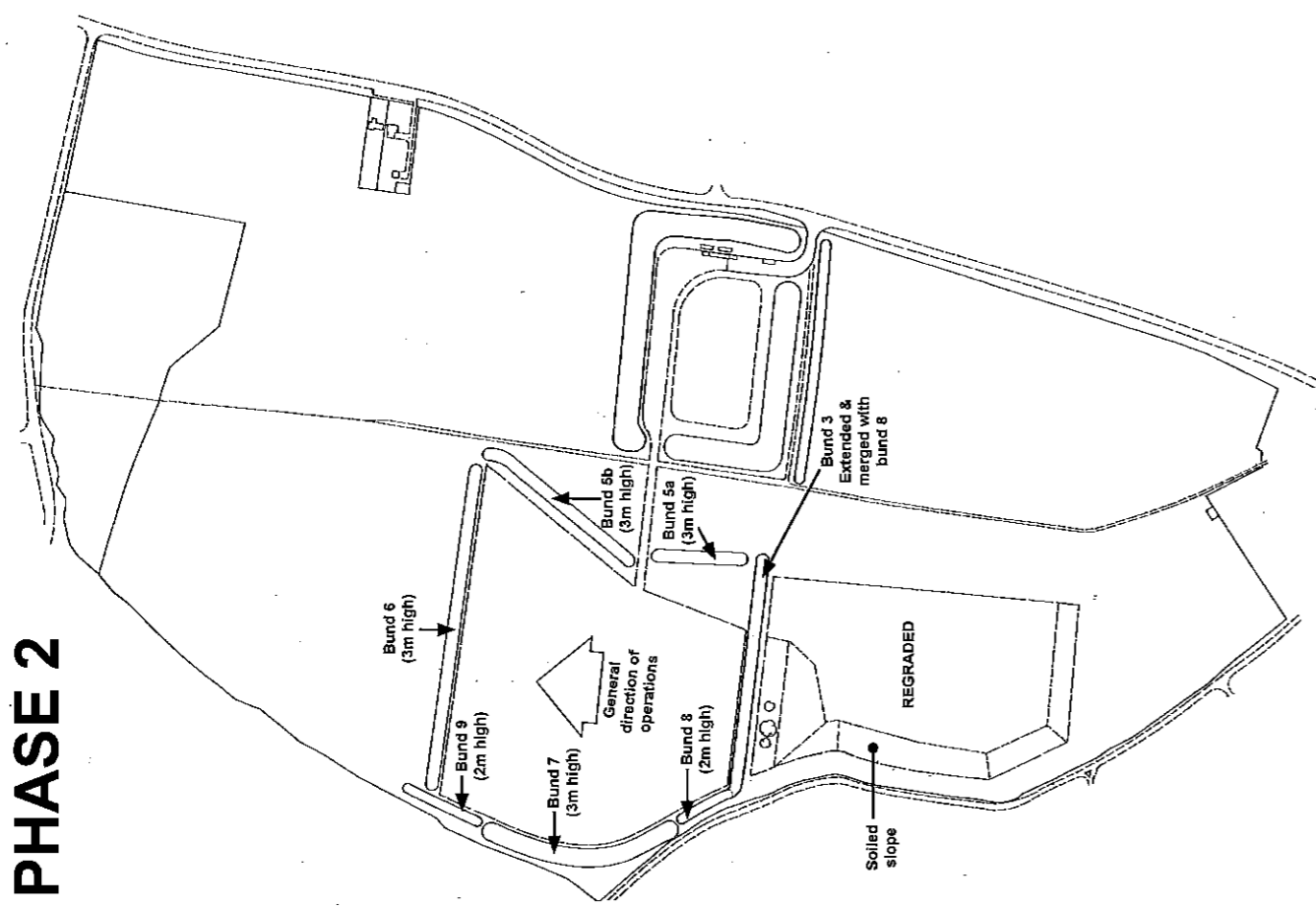
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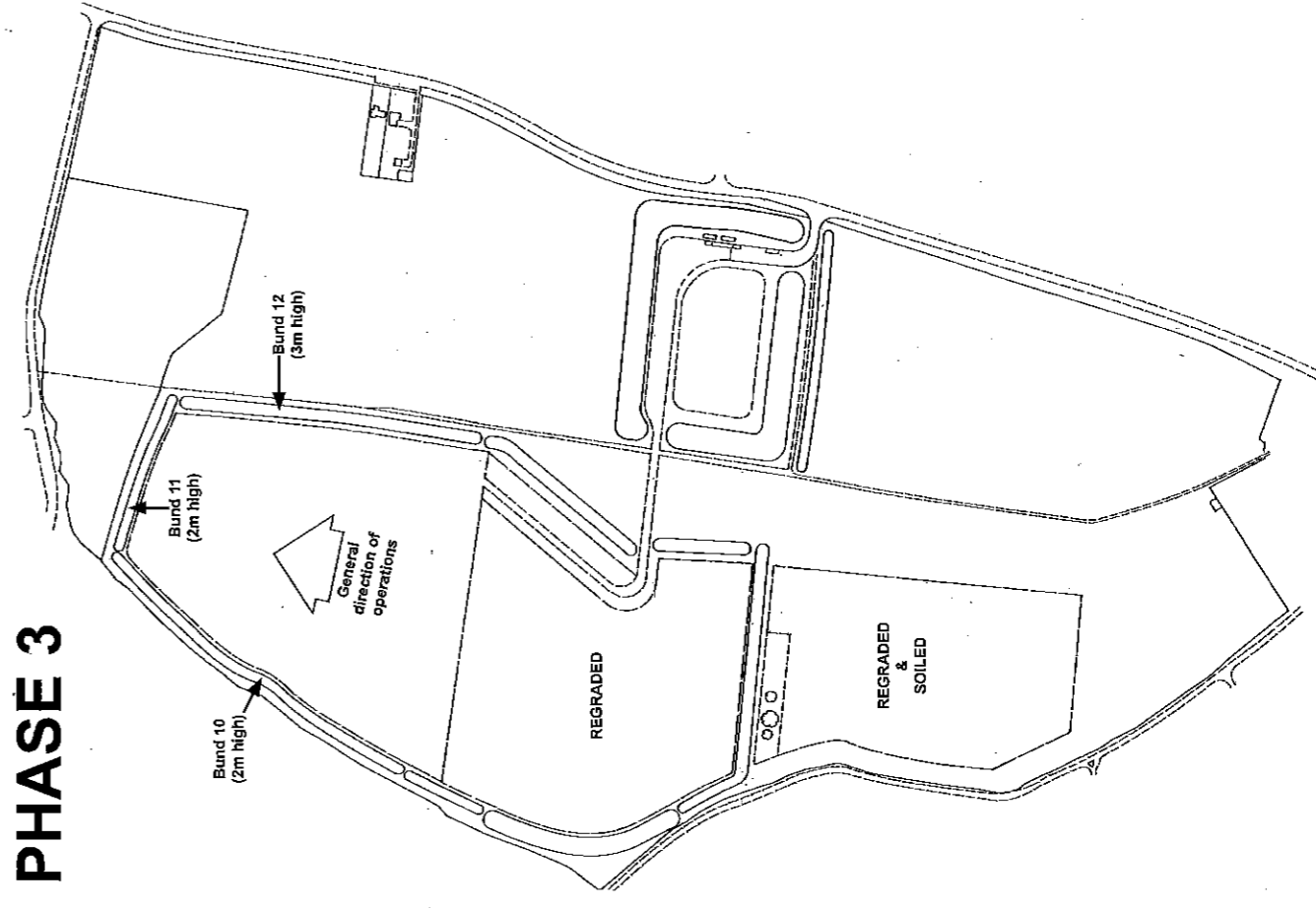
PHASE 1



PHASE 2



PHASE 3



PHASE 4

