

## **Wasing Lower Farm** **Document Reference WB M05**

We refer to Paragraph 5.16; 5.17 and 5.18 and Question 13 of the Consultation Document. We set out below responses to each of these paragraphs and to the Question.

**Paragraph 5.16:** Wasing Estate **PROPOSES** and **SUPPORTS** the inclusion of Site WB M05 as Three Preferred Areas for Mineral Working in the Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document. We define the three areas below.

### **Paragraph 5.17 and Paragraph 5.18:**

We wish to clarify our proposal as required by Paragraph 5.17 of the consultation document. We wish also to set out further and sufficient information in support of our proposals as required by Paragraph 5.18.

We have prepared and now submit this further and sufficient information. This response follows on from and explains in detail our representations submitted in our letter to the JSPU on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

## **A Site Location and Area**

### **A1 Corrections:**

As a priority we wish to correct parts of the statement made in the Consultation Document as follows:

1. The sites have been nominated by Wasing Estate acting as a mineral owning stakeholder and by Lafarge Aggregates Limited as a potential mineral operator. A legal agreement is in place between the parties to achieve the development of these resources. The authority is asked to recognise the common intention to develop.
2. The site constraints mentioned are outside the designated sites except for a public footpath crossing one of them and the private airstrip being on part of another.
3. The planning application referred to which was refused in 2002 and dismissed on Appeal in 2003 was for:
  - a. Extraction of 3.67 Million tonnes of Sand and Gravel
  - b. Erection of a new Processing Plant
  - c. Erection of a Readymixed Concrete Plant
  - d. Importation and Recycling of Inert Waste Materials
  - e. Landfill restoration of the worked out areas to agricultural use.

The size and scale and extent of these above developments were very much different and greater than the proposals which are now being put forward for consideration.

**As far as possible when dealing with the current proposals for identification we would like to insist that no comparison or association with this previous development proposal should be made.**

4. The Wasing Estate proposals are that Site WB M05 be described as **WB M05 North; WB M05 South; and WB M05 East**. Thus, we propose that there shall be three separate sites entered on the Preferred Areas DPD.
5. The Wasing Estate proposal for Site **WB M05 North** is that it should be identified as a **Preferred Area for Mineral Working** within the DPD and that this site **could be worked immediately** within the Plan period.
6. The Wasing Estate proposal for Site WB M05 South is that it should be identified as a Preferred Area for Mineral Working within the DPD and that this site could be **worked** later in the Plan period, assuming WB M05 has by then been worked.
7. The Wasing Estate proposal for Site WB M05 East is that it shall be identified as a Preferred Area for Mineral Working within the DPD but that it is **unlikely to be worked** within the Plan period.
8. We have not proposed at all that the mineral from this site should leave and travel north to the A4 along Station Road and Woolhampton.
9. We have suggested that processing of materials could take place either on each proposed site area, or (for all three) at the existing Woolhampton Pit processing plant site.
10. We have suggested that access may be via one of three routes; the precise route to be decided at planning application stage. These are further explained below.
11. Plans: We attach copies of Lafarge plans outlining the three proposed areas. We understand that Lafarge are submitting these to you in their response. Our proposed areas are the same as theirs and we ask you to note this.

**General Note:**

*The information which follows has been taken from the detailed reports surveys and data obtained by Lafarge Aggregates in support of their planning application in 2000. All of the information is likely to be held in the JSPU archives for consultation and verification as necessary. However, should any part of this information need support in documentary form we shall be pleased to make arrangements to provide it.*

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**SITE WB M05 NORTH****1. Mineral Type - Sharp Sand and Gravel****2. Geology**

The local area has been mapped by the BGS and shown on 1/50,000<sup>th</sup> scale Map No 268, Reading. The aggregate minerals have been assessed and reported in the BGS MAU report No 24 "Sand & Gravel Resources of the Country around Reading".

This proposed Preferred Area for mineral working has been tested through 22 boreholes which have penetrated the whole thickness of sand and gravel to prove the underlying London Clay. In addition there are a further eight water monitoring boreholes (plus an additional five from the sampling boreholes) used for sampling and recording ground water data.

There is a geological memoir of 1903 and a number of detailed geological reports held by Lafarge. The nature of the ground, the water table and the contained sand and gravel resource is thus very well understood.

**3. Economically Marketable Resource**

**Mineral of Sand & Gravel with Total Reserve estimated to be 1.05 Million tonnes in the proportions. This mineral resource meets the specifications for concrete production.**

**4. Estimated Annual Yield**

Anticipated to be between 120,000 and 150,000 tonnes per annum.

**5. Total Anticipated Lifespan of Resource Working and Restoration**

From grant of planning consent	1 year preparatory works, then
then	9 years sand and gravel production,
From grant of planning consent	1 year final restoration works
	<u>9-11 years activity.</u>

**6. Area**

Anticipated to be of the order of 25.7 hectares for the purposes of this submission with some 17.6 hectares extraction area subject to site specific proposals.

**7. Suggested Working Arrangements**

This will be subject of a specific planning application. However, material would be won from the ground by hydraulic excavator and transported to a processing plant by dump truck. Processing of material may be either within this site by means of a mobile screening and processing unit (the resource material is reasonably clean) or could be by remote processing using the existing Woolhampton pit processing plant site.

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**SITE WB M05 NORTH continued****8. Potential for Recycling of Aggregates**

- Within-Site Process Plant: Clean inert fill material may be taken and recycled for sale or use as an aid to restoration of any part of the site.
- Existing Woolhampton Process Plant Site: It would be convenient and comfortably possible to use this site for the importation and recycling of inert waste materials as a part of the day to day activities on the site.

**9. Access Arrangements and Anticipated Traffic Routing**

Dependent on a specific planning application, there appears to be three potential routes which may be used for access to and from the main highway system.

1. Station Road south onto Wasing Lane and the A340 and then the A4
2. Cross country Westwards to Brimpton Lane and then the A4
3. Cross country Eastwards onto the A340 and then the A4

The best route depends principally on the location chosen for the processing plant. The optimum route could only be selected and proposed after extensive consultation of the Estate's neighbours and the Parish and District Councils.

- A. Process Plant at Old Woolhampton Pit Site (1): Raw materials would be brought from the excavation site to this site for processing. Processed materials would then leave this site and journey, as previously, south along Station Road and east along Wasing Lane, via Aldermaston, onto the A340.
- B. Process Plant at Old Woolhampton Pit Site (2): an alternative route for lorries could be to travel westwards across Estate tracks to reach the Brimpton Lane and then to turn north along Brimpton Lane to reach the A4 within a short distance.
- C. Process Plant on each proposed site: This offers the potential to use all three routes.

**10. Suggested After-Use**

The Estate would see the development of this resource as opening the potential for change of use of this part of the Estate. The current agricultural use is very marginal and the regular flooding causes great uncertainty such that the revenues from agriculture are no longer reliable. Also, in keeping with European policy, the Estate is pursuing a policy of seeking to diversify out of a reliance on agriculture.

Therefore the Estate would like to examine the potential for water based leisure related activities on this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working. It would consider a range of after-use, from a mix of nature conservation and fishing to looking to the potential to link to the navigable River Kennet in the north and provide safe moorings for canal vessels of all descriptions in a marina development. Careful scrutiny of all such options would be made before a planning application is submitted but the Estate would like to see this site identified as a Preferred Area with a suggested After-Use at this stage as broad as possible. We note at this point the potential for this MWDF DPD to link directly to the West Berkshire DPD which carries emerging development management policies 1-4 supportive of expanding tourism and leisure facilities in the District, where appropriate.

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**SITE WB M05 NORTH continued****11. Landowner and Operator**

We confirm that the Wasing Estate would like to see this part of its sand and gravel resource worked out and restored during the plan period.

We confirm that the Estate has contracted with Lafarge Aggregates to pursue the planning process with a view to bringing forward the development of these minerals.

On behalf of the Estate therefore we ask that this area be identified as a proposed Preferred Area for early mineral working in the forthcoming DPD.

**Environmental considerations pursuant to Table 4.1 for WB M05 NORTH PREFERRED AREA STATUS in the DPD****12. Public Rights of Way**

FP 9 crosses the site from NW to SE. It will be possible to relocate the alignment of this footpath without interruption and for it to be used continuously by walkers during any mineral working.

**13. Agricultural Land Classification**

The land soil and quality is patchy in quality but has been assessed previously at 36% Grade 2 and 64% Grade 3 or lower.

**14. Services**

A single overhead electricity power line crosses the site at the north and west.

**15. Topography**

The site is generally flat lying with a gentle fall to the river in the north and east between 58 and 56 metres above sea level.

**16. Hydrology**

The water table has been monitored since 1990. Results indicate that the Rest Groundwater Levels in the site vary between 55.77 metres and 55.31 metres.

**17. Archaeology**

The whole of this part of the River Kennet valley is of interest for its archaeology. In connection with previous considerations to work minerals in this area a number of specific investigations have been carried out and reports produced. However, we would expect that pre-working pitting and visual inspections at soil stripping stages would be carried out to ensure that no finds of any significance are overlooked nor destroyed.

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**SITE WB M05 NORTH continued****18. Ecology**

There are no statutory or other nature conservation designations affecting any part of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working. An Ecological Survey of the area would be undertaken at the time of any planning application but it is worth noting that the following nearby designations exist at present:

- Woodland near Woolhampton.
- Woolhampton Reedbed SSSI.
- River Kennet SSSI.

**19. Noise**

Survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**20. Dust**

The sand and gravel resource is found in a water environment and is unlikely to generate dust as it is exposed and recovered. A survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**21. West Berkshire Planning Strategy**

This development meets the general sustainability criteria, spatial policy 6 and development management policies 1-4 in the emerging development plan document. It could lead to the provision of tourist facilities as mentioned the emerging policy for Rural West Berkshire.

**22. Sustainability**

Wasing Estate recognises that sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. More broadly, sustainable development policies should encompass three general policy areas: economic, environmental and social. For many years the Estate has pursued sustainable development policies relevant for the maintenance of the fabric and character of the Estate in their time and it proposes to do so for its future.

It is important at present that the Estate should be able to diversify some additional parts of its land resource away from agricultural production, whilst maintaining the essential characteristics and attributes of a country estate. It is confident that it can achieve this through the gradual change of use brought about through development of this mineral resource. We would therefore commend the identification of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working at an early date in the Plan Period as possessing attributes for the JSPU Minerals DPD which distinguish it from other sites.

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**SITE WB M05 SOUTH**

1. **Mineral Type:** - Sharp Sand and Gravel
2. **Geology:** in large part is from the same data base as for WB M05 North
3. **Economically Marketable Mineral of Sand & Gravel with Total Reserve estimated to be 1.19 Million tonnes.** This mineral resource meets the specifications for concrete production.
4. **Estimated Annual Yield**  
Anticipated to be between 120,000 and 150,000 tonnes per annum.
5. **Total Anticipated Lifespan of Resource Working and Restoration**

From grant of planning consent	1 year preparatory works, then
	8 years sand and gravel production
	1 year final restoration works
From grant of planning consent	10 years activity.

We note that this may overlap the timing indicated for site WB M05 North.
6. **Area**  
Anticipated to be of the order of 40.6 hectares of which some 28.3 hectares extraction area.
7. **Suggested Working Arrangements**  
This will be subject of a specific planning application. However, the resulting restored after use would be landscaped to accord with the proposed after-use
8. **Potential for Recycling of Aggregates**
  - Within-Site Process Plant: Clean inert fill material may be taken as an aid to restoration or part fill of any lake margins.
  - Existing Woolhampton Process Plant Site: It would be convenient and comfortably possible to use this site for the importation and recycling of inert waste materials as part of the day to day activities on site.
9. **Access Arrangements and Anticipated Traffic Routing**  
Dependent on a specific planning application, there will be likely to be a continuance of the access routes and arrangements as approved for Site WB M05 North.
10. **Suggested After-Use**  
The Estate would see the development of this resource as opening the potential for partial change of use of this part of the Estate and would consider a range of after-use, from a mix of nature conservation and fishing use of water or restored to its former uses, including the airfield tenancy, by means of infilling.
11. **Landowner and Operator**  
We confirm that the Wasing Estate would like to see this part of its sand and gravel resource worked out and restored during the plan period.

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**SITE WB M05 SOUTH continued**

We further confirm that the Estate has contracted with Lafarge Aggregates to pursue the planning process with a view to bringing forward the development of these minerals.

On behalf of the Estate therefore we ask that this area be identified as a proposed Preferred Area for mineral working in the forthcoming DPD.

**Environmental considerations pursuant to Table 4.1 for WB M05 SOUTH PREFERRED AREA STATUS in the DPD****12. Public Rights of Way**

There are none potentially affected. FP 6 follows an estate trackway.

**13. Agricultural Land Classification**

The land soil and quality is patchy in quality but has been assessed previously at 100% Grade 3 or lower.

**14. Services**

There are no major services in this area

**15. Topography**

The site is generally flat lying with a gentle fall to the north and east between 63 and 58 metres above sea level. It should be noted that tree plantation belts designed to screen the workings from visibility have been established since 1995/1996. These will be semi-mature by the time this area becomes subject of any possible future workings. We consider this to be an important factor to be taken into account in respect of this area.

**16. Hydrology**

The water table has been monitored since 1990. Results indicate that the Rest Groundwater Levels in the site vary between 59 metres and 58 metres. This favourable hydrological regime offers opportunity for this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working to be restored in part to lake water related options.

**17. Archaeology**

The whole of this part of the River Kennet valley is of interest for its archaeology. In connection with previous considerations to work minerals in this area a number of specific investigations have been carried out and reports produced. However, we would expect that pre-working pitting and visual inspections at soil stripping stages would be carried out to ensure that no finds of any significance are overlooked nor destroyed.

**18. Ecology and Identified Interests**

There are no statutory or other nature conservation designations affecting any part of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working.

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**SITE WB M05 SOUTH continued**

Nearby sites identified for various reasons are as follows:

- Woodland near Woolhampton.
- Woolhampton Reedbed SSSI.
- River Kennet SSSI.
- Wasing Park

**19. Noise**

Survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**20. Dust**

The sand and gravel resource is found in a water environment and is unlikely to generate dust as it is exposed and recovered. A survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**21. Private Airfield**

The Estate has granted tenancy of sufficient land for use as a private airfield and their Tenants are aware of the Estate's long term intentions to work the sand and gravel in its land. Therefore, the Estate would hope to have sufficient long term identification of this site as a Preferred Area for Mineral Working to enable it to collaborate with the airfield tenant to make mutually acceptable arrangements for temporary alternative airfield accommodation on Estate land.

**22. West Berkshire Planning Strategy**

This development meets the general sustainability criteria, spatial policy 6 and development management policies 1-4 in the emerging development plan document. It could lead to the provision of tourist facilities as mentioned the emerging policy for Rural West Berkshire.

**23. Sustainability**

Wasing Estate recognises that sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. More broadly, sustainable development policies should encompass three general policy areas: economic, environmental and social. For many years the Estate has pursued sustainable development policies relevant for the maintenance of the fabric and character of the Estate in their time and it proposes to do so for its future.

It is important at present that the Estate should be able to plan to diversify some additional parts of its land resource away from agricultural production, whilst maintaining the essential characteristics and attributes of a country estate. It would like to be able to plan to protect its airfield tenant.

It is confident that it can achieve this through the gradual change of use brought about through development of this mineral resource. We would therefore commend the identification of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working in this JSPU Minerals DPD.

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**SITE WB M05 EAST**

1. **Mineral Type:** - Sharp Sand and Gravel
2. **Geology:** is in large part from the same data base as mentioned for WB M05 North
3. **Economically Marketable Mineral:** Sand & Gravel with Total Reserve estimated to be 1.1 Million tonnes in the proportions. This mineral resource meets the specifications for concrete production.
4. **Estimated Annual Yield:**  
Anticipated to be between 120,000 and 150,000 tonnes per annum.
5. **Total Anticipated Lifespan of Resource Working and Restoration:**

From grant of planning consent	1 year preparatory works, then 8 years sand and gravel production 1 year final restoration works,
From grant of planning consent	8-10 years activity.
6. **Area:**  
Anticipated to be of the order of 21.6 hectares.
7. **Suggested Working Arrangements:**  
This will be subject of a specific planning application. However, the Estate would wish to be satisfied, long in advance of any potential working, such that it could propose and consult with Aldermaston P.C. and its neighbours, the formulation of a mutually acceptable after-use restoration.
8. **Potential for Recycling of Aggregates**
  - Within-Site Process Plant: Clean inert fill material may be capable of being taken and recycled with surplus unsold materials used as an aid to restoration of any lake margins and the site generally.
  - Existing Woolhampton Process Plant Site: It would be convenient and comfortably possible to use this site for the importation and recycling of inert waste materials.
9. **Access Arrangements and Anticipated Traffic Routing**  
Dependent on a specific planning application, there will be likely to be a continuance of the access routes and arrangements as approved for Site WB M05 North.
10. **Suggested After-Use**  
The Estate would see the development of this resource as opening the potential for change of use of this part of the Estate. It would consider a range of after-uses, from a mix of nature conservation and fishing use of lake water or restored to its former use.

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**SITE WB M05 EAST continued****11. Landowner and Operator**

We confirm that the Wasing Estate would like to see this part of its sand and gravel resource developed.

We confirm the Estate has contracted with Lafarge Aggregates to pursue the planning process with a view to bringing forward the development of these minerals.

On behalf of the Estate therefore we ask that this area be identified as a proposed Preferred Area for mineral working in the forthcoming DPD.

**Environmental considerations pursuant to Table 4.1 for WB M05 EAST PREFERRED AREA STATUS in the DPD****12. Public Rights of Way**

FP 10 crosses the site from NW to SE, joining FP 6. It will be possible to relocate the alignment of these footpaths without any need for interruption of use and for them to be used by walkers continuously during any mineral working on the proposed Preferred Area for mineral working.

**13. Agricultural Land Classification**

The land soil and quality is patchy in quality but has been assessed previously at 100% Grade 3 or lower.

**14. Services**

No major services are present in this area.

**15. Topography**

The site is generally flat lying with a gentle fall to the north and east between 58 and 56 metres above sea level. It should be noted that tree screen plantation belts designed to screen the workings from visibility have been planted since 1995/1996. These will be mature by the time this area becomes subject of any future workings and this is an important factor to bear in mind when identifying this area.

**16. Hydrology**

The water table has been monitored since 1990. Results indicate that the Rest Groundwater Levels in the site vary between 58 metres and 55 metres. This favourable hydrological regime offers potential for this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working to be restored by introducing potential lake water related options.

**17. Archaeology**

The whole of this part of the River Kennet valley is of interest for archaeology. However, in connection with previous considerations to work minerals in this area a number of specific investigations have been carried out and reports produced. However, we would expect that pre-working pitting and visual inspections at soil stripping stages would be carried out to ensure that no finds of any significance are overlooked nor destroyed.

**SITE WB M05 EAST continued****18. Ecology**

There are no statutory or other nature conservation designations affecting any part of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working.

Nearby sites identified for various reasons are as follows:

- Woodland near Woolhampton.
- Woolhampton Reedbed SSSI.
- River Kennet SSSI.

**19. Noise**

Survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**20. Dust**

The sand and gravel resource is found in a water environment and is unlikely to generate dust as it is exposed and recovered. A survey at the time of any planning application would identify any necessary measures for mitigation in accordance with best practice.

**21. West Berkshire Planning Strategy**

This development meets the general sustainability criteria, spatial policy 6 and development management policies 1-4 in the emerging District development plan document. It could lead to the provision of tourist facilities as mentioned the emerging policy for Rural West Berkshire.

**22. Sustainability**

Wasing Estate recognises that sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. More broadly, sustainable development policies should encompass three general policy areas: economic, environmental and social. For many years the Estate has pursued sustainable development policies relevant for the maintenance of the fabric and character of the Estate in their time and it proposes to do so for its future.

It is important at present that the Estate should be able to plan to diversify some additional parts of its land resource away from agricultural production, whilst maintaining the essential characteristics and attributes of a country estate. It is confident that it can achieve this through the gradual change of use brought about through development of this mineral resource. We would therefore commend the identification of this proposed Preferred Area for mineral working in this JSPU Minerals DPD.

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