

Minerals Safeguarding Statement

Land at Mercer Road North Horsham

The Horsham local validation list requires that a Mineral Safeguarding Statement be submitted –

“for all Major and Minor developments (Residential or Non-Residential 3ha or more; Non-Residential 1,000sqm/1ha or more), at Outline or Full Planning stage only, where the site falls within the defined Minerals Consultation Zones.”

The site at Mercer Road is over 3ha in size and falls within the Brick Clay Resource Mineral Safeguarding Area. It is identified as - Brick Clay: Weald Clay Formation as set out in the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan 2018.

The key policy from this plan is

Policy M9: Safeguarding Minerals

(a) Existing minerals extraction sites will be safeguarded against non-mineral development that prejudices their ability to supply minerals in the manner associated with the permitted activities.

(b) Soft sand (including potential silica sand), sharp sand and gravel, brick-making clay, building stone resources and chalk reserves are safeguarded against sterilisation.

Proposals for non-mineral development within the Minerals Safeguarded Areas (as shown on maps in Appendix E) will not be permitted unless:

(i) Mineral sterilisation will not occur; or

(ii) it is appropriate and practicable to extract the mineral prior to the development taking place, having regards to

the other policies in this Plan; or

(iii) the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral and it has been demonstrated that prior extraction is not practicable or environmentally feasible.

As the site at Mercer Road is allocated for residential development in the Submission version of the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 under Strategic Policy HA 10 which states

HA10: Horsham Housing Allocations

1. The following sites are allocated, as shown on the Policies Map, for the provision of at least 400 homes:

- *HOR1: Land at Hornbrook Farm, 10.45 hectares (100 homes)*
- *HOR2: Land at Mercer Road, 14.3 hectares (300 homes)*

It must be considered that part (iii) of policy M9 has been met and the overriding need for housing within Horsham outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral.

The 300 units allocated will make up a considerable amount of Horsham's housing need over the lifetime of the plan as well as their 5 year housing land requirement.

It should also be noted that the site is adjacent to a railway line, ancient woodland and existing residential dwellings and there are a number of mature and Veteran trees on site, so it is also the case that prior extraction is not practicable, environmentally or economically feasible.