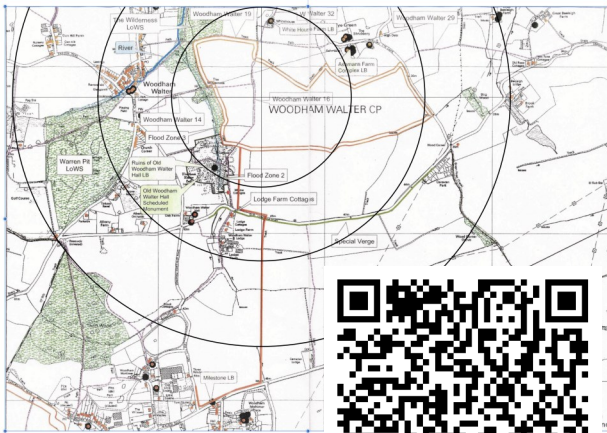


MINERALS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW GUIDANCE



Guidance for objecting to the inclusion of sites A58 Little Smiths, Danbury and A66 Whitehouse Farm, Woodham Walter in the Essex County Council Minerals Local Plan Review

Radius Map shows 200m, 500m and 1 km



Scan the QR Code for consultation response form.

Deadline 5pm 19th March 2024

Woodham Walter Parish Council's Decision to Object

At its Extraordinary Council Meeting on 27th February 2024 Woodham Walter Parish Council resolved to object to the inclusion of two sites directly affecting the village in the *Essex County Council Minerals Local Plan Review* and to ask for them to be withdrawn completely. The two sites are:

- Whitehouse Farm (A66)
- Little Smiths (A58)

Below is a synopsis of the Parish Council's full-form response to the consultation, focussing on those issues that in its view encompass the most meaningful and adverse impacts resulting from the potential operation of these sites for mineral extraction, where ECC's RAG assessment is inaccurate or understated in its analysis of those impacts.

We encourage you to respond to the consultation by 5pm on 19th March.

Links to consultation documents can be found here:

<https://woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk/minerals-local-plan-review/>

We also recommend you visit the village campaign group website at: www.stopthequarry.co.uk

Woodham Walter Parish Council

Email: parishclerk@woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk
 Website: www.woodhamwalter-pc.gov.uk
 Tel: 01245 373686

Key Considerations – Whitehouse Farm site (A66)

Planning History

- Whitehouse Farm has been the subject of a number of planning applications, appeals and promotions for inclusion in Mineral Local Plans since 1979. None has been successful.
- The current review is considering effectively the same site, which has remained largely unchanged over the whole of this period.

Landscape

- Woodham Walter is one of only 6 Arcadian villages in the Maldon District, characterised by open space and ancient woodland.
- The excavation of at least 4 million tonnes would destroy the local 'high landscape character'.
- It is within the Site of Special Scientific Interest Minerals Impact Risk Zone for the Blackwater Estuary SSSI Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation.
- The site consists of Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

Historic Landscape / Archaeology

- Site bordered by Heritage assets, some 30 of significance, including the original Woodham Walter Hall, an Historic England Scheduled Ancient Monument of National Importance, the Elizabethan Grade II* Parish Church, and many cropmarks.
- The adjacent core of Woodham Walter is a Conservation Area.

Water / Hydrography

- Pollution of the Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area, the Ramsar site and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation, and of water that is still extracted from boreholes or nearby river and streams by residents at Wood Corner.
- Gravel extraction would cut through the aquifer

- which supplies the many springs in the Wilderness, leading to the death of trees and wild plants.

Access and Transport

- Local road infrastructure is entirely unsuitable for the purposes of serving this site.
- The suggested but unspecified solution is the addition of a haul road crossing Old London Road to/from the A414.
- Risks from HGV movements of 120+/day to local drivers, pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists, and reduction in air quality.
- A414 is already stressed from increasing traffic and with increasing congestion.

Air Quality / Noise & Light Pollution

- Air Quality will be affected by road transport, on-site plant and dust.
- Dust, grains and smaller particulates will be released to the atmosphere which is detrimental to health. This is a concern given the proximity of the primary school, the Traveller's site, all properties on Blue Mill Lane and Curling Tye Lane and the village as a whole. The school playing field is as near as 200m to the promoted site, the building line of The Street is approx.400m.
- Noise and light pollution, both to levels unacceptable in an Arcadian village.

Health and Wellbeing

- The adverse combined impact of reduced air quality, of increased noise and light pollution, of increased HGV traffic, of increased congestion on the A414 and activity on other local roads, and of the loss of local amenities would be seriously detrimental to health and wellbeing locally.

Biodiversity

- Major adverse impact on the biodiversity of the area by permanently changing the landscape and altering wildlife routes and habitat for species such as badgers, owls, bats, buzzards, lizards, hares, deer, newts, skylarks and nightingales.

Public Rights of Way

- The proposed site is crossed by three footpaths (FP14, FP16 and FP19). They would be destroyed by the development of the site.

Key Considerations – Little Smiths site (A58)

Overview

Whilst this site is mainly outside Woodham Walter, the village would be affected by it.

Key Considerations

Many of the general considerations raised above are relevant but the following are particularly important when considering the Little Smiths site:

Water / Hydrography

- A watercourse is within the site boundary. Appropriate mitigation would be required because of the very high water table at the Royal Oak Pit

Air Quality

- The site would likely have an unacceptable impact on air quality, given the additional traffic and on-site workings

Health and Wellbeing

- Comments above apply particularly in view of the dwellings on Old London Road, Herbage Park Road and the 102 Warren Lodges.

Biodiversity

- Importantly, in addition to above, Thrift Wood Local Wildlife Site is Ancient Replanted Woodland and therefore classed as Irreplaceable Habitat
- There are two specimen veteran Oak trees adjacent to the site, and these too are classed as irreplaceable habitat.

How To Respond online

- ⇒ Complete online consultation portal document via: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/planning/42a7d44e/consultation/>
- ⇒ Respond to the Candidate Site Assessment for:
 - Site A58 (Little Smiths) and/or
 - Site A66 (Whitehouse Farm)
- ⇒ Answer the following main questions:
 - Consent
 - About You
 - Scroll to site number and answer the question:
- ⇒ Do you have any comments on the assessment of this site?

REMEMBER TO FINISH AND SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE

How To Respond Email/Post

- ⇒ If you are unable to submit your comments online, you will need to complete a form and email to: mandwpolicy@essex.gov.uk or by post to: FREEPOST RTKH-XUBZ-CJZS, Essex County Council, Minerals Planning Consultation, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH
- ⇒ Ask the Parish Clerk for a copy or download the form here: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/Response%20form%20-%20Candidate%20sites%20report.pdf>
- ⇒ Respond to the Candidate Site Assessment for:
 - Site A58 (Little Smiths) and/or
 - Site A66 (Whitehouse Farm)
- ⇒ Answer the following main questions:
 - About You
 - Tick the site number and answer the question:
- ⇒ Do you have any comments on the assessment of this site?

We are here to help if you need us. Please get in touch via the Parish Clerk 01245 373686