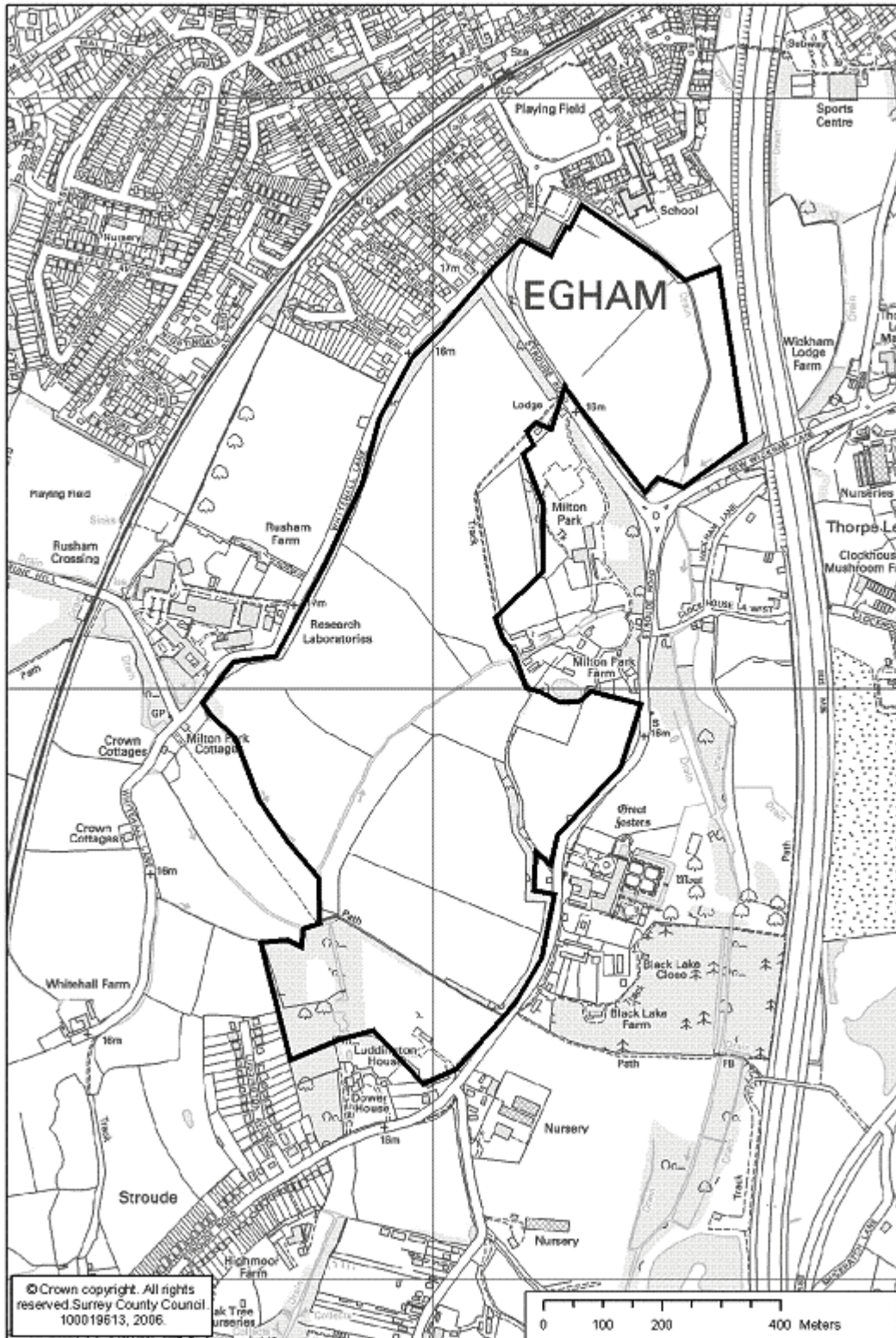


Preferred area D: Milton Park Farm, Egham



(Runnymede 500995E 169941N)

Location

The land lies immediately south-east of Egham, north of Stroude village and west of the M25. The land lies within a significant gravel deposit, with preferred area E - Whitehall Farm to the south-west.

Description

The site consists of a large area of farmland that is mainly used for horse pasture. It has a number of open pasture fields or areas of rough grassland scrub, divided by fragmented and poorly managed hedgerows, with some mature hedgerow trees and individual mature trees within the fields. The boundaries generally consist of a mix of narrow treebelts and shrub planting. The north end is segmented by the Stroude Road.

Residential properties are located along the western boundary in Whitehall Lane and Manorcrofts Road, and also adjoin the north-west corner around Manorcroft School and the area to the south and south-east around Luddington Avenue and the Stroude Road. At the north end of the site lies Manorcroft School, and immediately to the east and west lie research establishments. Great Fosters, a grade I listed building and grade II registered Historic Park and Garden is located to the east, on the other side of the Stroude Road. A public footpath runs across the southern side of the site from Stroude Road towards Whitehall Lane.

Estimated yield:	3.35 million tonnes of concreting aggregate
Area:	64ha
Planning designations:	Green Belt Site of Nature Conservation Importance

This preferred area was included as a Category 1 site in the *Surrey Minerals Local Plan 1993*, but no application came forward.

Planning applications to work this preferred area should address:

Access, traffic and transportation

Access should be technically possible from the Stroude Road, but this would require the removal of trees and hedgerows causing a local environmental impact. Given the proximity of preferred area E - Whitehall Farm, there are concerns about the cumulative impact of traffic on the local road network if both were worked simultaneously, therefore extraction should be phased with the Whitehall Farm preferred area.

There are a number of level crossings in the vicinity of Milton Park Farm, which if used by mineral traffic could cause delay and disruption to local traffic. Proposals to work this preferred area will require mineral lorries to be routed to avoid these crossings by accessing the site via Stroude Road, and onto the primary route network via New Wickham Lane, Thorpe Lea Road and the Thorpe bypass.

Processing

A processing plant could be accommodated on-site. Only one processing plant will be permitted to be in operation within the Egham preferred areas (Milton Park Farm and Whitehall Farm). The preferred location would be within the northern segment of the area adjacent to the M25, away from Manorcrofts School and towards New Wickham Lane. If the processing plant were located in this northern area of land, material would need to be moved from the southern side of the Stroude Road to the plant by conveyor on an overhead gantry. Proposals to move material in this way should address the landscape and visual impacts, and the highway safety impacts for users of the Stroude Road.

Local amenity, phasing and footpaths

Unworked margins and further screening should be provided adjacent to Manorcrofts Road and Whitehall Lane. Working should be phased, and applications should assess the potential environmental impact of noise, dust, visual impact and traffic, so as to minimise the impact on nearby properties. The footpath across the site would need to be safeguarded and diverted.

Hydrology

The area is within a major aquifer and groundwater source protection zone 3 for a public water supply at Chertsey, and there are abstraction licences within 0.5 km. Rusham Stream crosses the land and there are several other small surface water features. The water table is high and liable to localised flooding. Planning applications should include a hydrological risk assessment of the short- and long-term impacts of working and restoration. This should include an assessment of the impacts on local properties and trees from dewatering, impacts on local aquifers, and the impacts on local water flow from the removal of gravel. Proposals to work and restore the site with fill are likely to require unworked channels of gravel to facilitate groundwater flow, with filling in a cellular manner around them.

Ecology

The land is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance, and contains small hedged fields, shaw belts, and areas of wet woodland. The high water table means that it is also likely to contain damp grassland communities. Stag beetle are thought to be present on the site, and are a species of principle importance. The impact of working and restoration on this local ecological designation and species should be assessed as part of any planning application.

Aircraft

The site lies within 13km of Heathrow Airport. Planning applications should take into account the potential hazard to aircraft from birds attracted by the development during the operational and restoration stages of mineral working.

Listed buildings and gardens

The boundary of this area is approximately 30m from Great Fosters, a grade I listed building and grade II registered Historic Park and Garden. Similarly, Luddington House and Lodge and Milton Park and its South Lodge are grade II listed buildings and adjoin the boundary. Proposals should assess the impact of working and restoration on preserving the character and setting of these buildings and gardens.

Archaeology

The land is within an area of high archaeological importance, and prior archaeological assessment, and if necessary evaluation, would be required as part of any proposal.

Landscape

This is an attractive area of former open farmland that possibly contains remnants of Windsor Great Park. Applications should assess important landscape characteristics and features, and in particular identify any surviving element of wider historic parkland.

Restoration

Restoration should contribute to meeting informal recreational, landscape and nature conservation objectives. Restoration should involve inert fill to create a landscape of open grazed parkland with areas of wet woodland and provide for public access. The restoration needs to be linked to that for preferred area E - Whitehall Farm and respect the setting of Great Fosters listed building and registered gardens. Restoration options are covered in more detail in the *Mineral Sites Restoration SPD*.