



Land at the Old Vicarage Field and The Old Estate Yard,  
Church Road, Turners Hill

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## Mineral Resource Assessment

19<sup>th</sup> May 2025



## Notice

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Land & Mineral Management have been instructed by Gillings Planning Ltd, on behalf of Elivia Homes Ltd, to prepare a Mineral Resource Assessment relating to their proposal to develop land Old Vicarage Field, Turners Hill (the Land, grid ref: TQ 34028 35604). This report has been prepared after a review of relevant maps, documents, and available information.
- 1.2 The proposed development is for the construction of 40 dwellings (the Development). The Land, outlined in red below, has been identified as being 'suitable for development' within the Turners Hill Neighbourhood Plan:



## 2 Planning Policy

### National Minerals Policy

- 2.1 Paragraph 223 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) requires local authorities to provide planning policies that:

*“safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked)”.*

### Local Planning Policy

*West Sussex County Council*

- 2.2 Local mineral policy is set out in the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018-2033) (the Mineral Plan) with Policies M9 and M10 specifically relating to safeguarding (resources and infrastructure respectively).

- 2.3 There is no mineral infrastructure identified within the WSJLMP in any proximity to the Land, meaning Policy M10 is not relevant, however Policy M9 states:

*“(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. “*

- 2.4 The Land falls within a Mineral Safeguarded Area identified in the maps located within Appendix E of the Mineral Plan as being a potential resource for building stone and potentially brick clay

– specifically the Wadhurst Clay Formation (although the latter is difficult to determine due to low quality/large scale mapping).

*Mid-Sussex District Council*

- 2.5 The Mid-Sussex District Plan (2014-2031) also references mineral safeguarding. On page 57, the plan states:

*“Minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they are found. Therefore it is important to use them in the most efficient manner to secure their long term conservation. Where a development is sited in a West Sussex Minerals Consultation Area, further work will be required in conjunction with West Sussex County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority to identify whether minerals are accessible in sufficient amounts to be economically viable to extract.”*

- 2.6 Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside also states “.... Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.”

### 3 Mineral Deposits and Viability

#### Site Context

- 3.1 The Land is located on the Western side of the village of Turners Hill, north of Church Road (B2110) and west of Lion Lane and has a total area of 3.38ha. The Land can be considered in two parts – the main Development Area in the south, which comprises of a field known as Old Vicarage Field and the Old Estate Yard, and a strip running to the northwest (the Drainage Area).
- 3.2 The main Development Area is bounded to the east by residential properties, and to the north and west by tree lines with agricultural fields beyond them. Allotments adjoin this area in the northern corner. The Drainage Area runs across agricultural fields and crosses three hedgerow/tree lines.
- 3.3 Existing residential properties bound the site to east along Lion Lane. The sites southern boundary is bound by the Old Vicarage and School view, along with Turners Hill fire station towards the south eastern corner of the site. Turners Hill CoE Primary School is beyond to the south.

#### Quantity and Quality of Mineral

- 3.4 The British Geological Survey's (BGS) online mapping shows the whole of the Land (and immediately surrounding area) as being underlain by Ardingly Sandstone Member with no superficial deposits.
- 3.5 Ground investigation was undertaken in 2018 and consisted of two boreholes and nine trial pits.



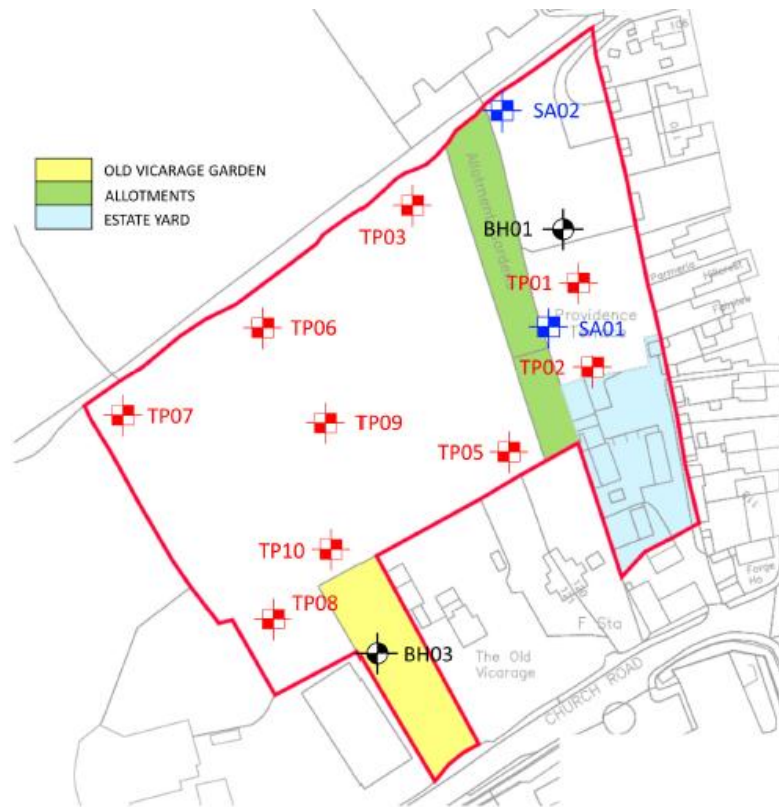


Figure 2 - Locations of Ground Investigation on the Land

- 3.6 The Ground Investigation found Ardingly Sandstone across the Development Area to a maximum depth of 7.05m below ground level (bgl) and with a thickness of up to 6.05m bgl, however the base of the sandstone was not found. It is of note that the sandstone was described as “extremely weak to very weak” and interbedded with clay beds, with a thickness of up to 0.50m and described as a “*stiff light orange brown sandy CLAY*”.
- 3.7 Ardingley Sandstone, also known as Wealden Sussex Sandstone or Tunbridge Wells Sandstone, is acknowledged as being a local building stone that has been used widely. However, given the observations of the Ground Investigation that the sandstone is “*extremely weak to weak*” it is highly unlikely the material here would be suitable for use as a building stone.
- 3.8 The interbedded clay is not classified, however given its description it is highly unlikely to be Wadhurst Clay Formation, which is generally soft, dark grey thinly bedded mudstones<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://data.bgs.ac.uk/doc/Lexicon/NamedRockUnit/WDC.html>

- 3.9 No ground investigation has been undertaken within the Drainage Area, however it can be considered as likely that the findings of such investigation there would be similar to any within the Development Area.
- 3.10 It can therefore be concluded that there is no viable Mineral reserve within or below the Land and therefore no sterilisation will take place.
- 3.11 It should be noted that even if the sandstone were of sufficient strength to be used as a building stone, due to the proximity of existing residential development constraining the Land, only a small proportion would be considered extractable which, combined with poor HGV access and the presence of thick clay interbedding, is likely make such any extraction inviable.

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 It is proposed to build 40 homes on Land at Turners Hill, near Crawley. The Land is safeguarded by planning policy for its potential to contain safeguarded mineral deposits – namely building stone (and possibly brick clay).
- 4.2 The Land is underlain by Ardingley Sandstone, which is a recognised building stone, however ground investigation found the underlying sandstone to be extremely weak meaning it is highly unlikely to be suitable for use as a building stone. The sandstone is also in close proximity to a number of existing residential properties which, combined with the sandstone being interbedded with thick clay beds, would likely make any extraction inviable.
- 4.3 Therefore, the Development can take place without sterilising any Mineral and there is no conflict with mineral safeguarding policies.