

Guidance

## Minerals

Guidance on the planning for mineral extraction in plan making and the application process.

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From: **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government** ([/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government](#)), **Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018 to 2021)** ([/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government-2018-2021](#)) and **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities** ([/government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities](#))

Published 17 October 2014

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Revision date: 06 03 2014

## Dust emissions

### How should mineral operators seek to minimise dust emissions?

Where dust emissions are likely to arise, mineral operators are expected to prepare a dust assessment study, which should be undertaken by a competent person/organisation with acknowledged experience of undertaking this type of work.

There are 5 key stages to a dust assessment study:

- establish [baseline conditions](#) of the existing dust climate around the site of the proposed operations;
- identify site activities that could lead to [dust emission without mitigation](#);
- identify site parameters which may [increase potential impacts from dust](#);
- recommend mitigation measures, including [modification of site design](#)
- make proposals to monitor and report dust emissions to ensure compliance with appropriate environmental standards and to enable an effective response to complaints.

Paragraph: 023 Reference ID: 27-023-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### Stages of the dust assessment study

Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 27-024-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

#### Stage 1: Establish existing baseline conditions

Existing ambient conditions should be recorded over a period sufficient to identify seasonal variations in the range of existing conditions which naturally exist (ideally by a dust-monitoring programme). The assessment should take into account the principal existing dust sources (other than the site) such as air pollution from urban and industrial areas, existing mineral operations, agricultural activities and construction activities.

The location of residential areas, schools and other dust-sensitive land uses should be identified in relation to the site, as well as proposed or likely sources of dust emission from within the site.

The assessment should explain how topography may affect the emission and dispersal of site dust, particularly the influence of areas of woodland, downwind or adjacent to the site boundary, and of valley or hill formations in altering local wind patterns.

The assessment should explain how climate is likely to influence patterns of dispersal by analysing data from the UK Meteorological Office or other recognised agencies on wind conditions, local rainfall and ground moisture conditions.

Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 27-025-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **Stage 2: Identify site activities that could lead to dust emission without mitigation**

Potential dust sources should be identified and their potential to emit dust assessed with respect to the duration of the activity or the potential of dust to become airborne.

Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 27-026-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **Stage 3: Identify site parameters which may increase potential impacts from dust**

This brings together information collected in Stages 1 and 2 with information on sensitive land uses around the site in order to understand how these uses could be affected by dust. Computer modelling techniques can be used to understand how dust could disperse from a site. Alternatively, a more qualitative approach, relying on professional judgement, could be used to bring together the data collected in Stages 1 and 2.

Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 27-027-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **Stage 4: Recommend mitigation measures and site design modifications**

Measures to control dust should be specified and described in terms of their potential to reduce dust and consequent impacts.

Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 27-028-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **What facilities are sensitive or less sensitive to dust emissions?**

The relationship of the activities within mineral workings to surrounding land uses will vary from site to site. Since the nature of those land uses varies, so will their sensitivity to dust. Some environmental features may also be sensitive to dust.

Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 27-029-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **What additional dust control measures might be necessary?**

Additional measures to control fine particulates (PM10) to address any impacts of dust might be necessary if, within a site, the actual source of emission (eg the haul roads, crushers, stockpiles etc) is in close proximity to any residential property or other sensitive use. Operators should follow the [assessment framework](#) for considering the impacts of PM10 from a proposed site.

Paragraph: 030 Reference ID: 27-030-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **When should this additional assessment be carried out?**

The actual cut-off point for consideration of additional assessments for individual proposals will vary according to local circumstances (such as the topography, the nature of the landscape, the respective location of the site and the nearest residential property or other sensitive use in relation to the prevailing wind direction and visibility).

Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 27-031-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

### **Site Assessment flow chart**

[Site assessment flow chart \(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80007aed915d74e33f7dda/minerals1\\_033.pdf\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80007aed915d74e33f7dda/minerals1_033.pdf)

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Paragraph: 032 Reference ID: 27-032-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

## Quarry-slope stability

### What factors should be considered in assessing quarry-slope stability?

The consideration of slope stability that is needed at the time of an application will vary between mineral workings depending on a number of factors, eg depth of working; the nature of materials excavated; the life of the working the length of time interim slopes are expected to be in place; and the nature of the restoration proposals.

Appraisal of slope stability for new workings should be based on existing information, which aims to:

- identify any potential hazard to people and property and environmental assets and assess its significance, and;
- identify any features which could adversely affect the stability of the working to enable basic quarry design to be undertaken.

Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 27-033-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

## Charging for site visits

### Can mineral planning authorities charge for site visits?

Under the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012, mineral planning authorities can charge for a maximum of 8 site visits for monitoring site operations [within any 12 month period where the site is operational, or one visit in other circumstances](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2920/contents/made) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2920/contents/made>). Additional site visits may be undertaken but they cannot be