Please see Annex AC4 for supporting information, and the “Introduction” for Health and Safety considerations and advice on the use of the guidance.

1. Rehabilitation of the Land
   The primary objective of aftercare must be the rehabilitation of the land, in order to improve the physical characteristics of the soil and rectify any problems with careful agricultural management.

2. Local Agricultural Systems
   Local agricultural systems may, to some extent, limit the agricultural management options for a site in formal aftercare.

3. Off-site Constraints
   Is there anything off-site which constrains how the agricultural land in aftercare on site is managed?

4. Level of Experience
   The skills and expertise of the operator, landowner or farmer may limit the agricultural options. It must be borne in mind that restored agricultural land needs very careful management.

5. Site Assessment
   Is there a need for an independent assessment of any aspect of the land during the aftercare period?

6. Codes of Good Agricultural Practice
   As with undisturbed agricultural land, the Codes of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Air, Soil, and Water and the Green Code relating to pesticides should be adhered to.

7. Landfill Gas Wells
   The layout of landfill gas wellheads should have been designed so as to cause minimum disruption to the agricultural use of the land following restoration. Inevitably however, gas wells will cause some disruption to agriculture or may limit the agricultural systems that can be practised.

8. Landfill Gas Monitoring
   Monitoring of landfill gas will take place all year round. Access to wellheads needs to be controlled carefully to avoid indiscriminate trafficking.
For more detailed information see:

- MPG7 The Reclamation of Mineral Workings (DoE 1996) (Paragraphs 56-74, 97-102 and Annex A)
- Guidance on Good Practice for the Reclamation of Mineral Workings to Agriculture (DoE 1996) (Pages 28-33, Annex A (MPA’s) & Annex B (Operators))
- Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Soil (MAFF 1998 PB0617)
- Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water (MAFF 1998 PB0585)
- Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Air (MAFF 1998 PB0618)
- Green Code - Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings (MAFF 1998 PB3528)
- Controlling Soil Erosion (MAFF 1999 PB4262)
- Landfill Gas & Leachate Control Applied to Arable After-use (MAFF 1998 PR4869)

Cross references:
- AP 11
- AC 1, 2
1. Rehabilitation of the Land

It must be borne in mind by all parties with an interest in the formal aftercare of restored mineral and waste sites, that the primary objective must always be the rehabilitation of the land, through the improvement of the soil’s physical characteristics and rectifying problems though careful agricultural management and remedial works. Economic considerations should not be allowed to outweigh this primary objective. There may be requests, particularly from the farmer, to allow particular crops to be grown that are not in an approved aftercare scheme or conditions. Whilst all such requests should be given reasonable consideration, if there is a risk that the soil could be damaged by certain agricultural operations, the request should not be permitted. Examples may include a request for a crop to be grown which has a very late harvest date - hence increasing the risk of trafficking when soil is wet, or allowing livestock to graze before or beyond the permitted dates set out in the aftercare scheme or conditions.

2. Local Agricultural Systems

Local farming systems may constrain what agricultural system can be followed during the formal aftercare of a restored site. For example, there may be little chance of growing a crop which isn’t grown locally, as there may be little availability of specialist machinery or farmers with the knowledge or skills of growing that crop. Observing local agricultural systems will also give good clues as to what system is most likely to work on the restored site. For example, the topography, soil or climate may restrict what type of agriculture can be practised.

3. Off-Site Constraints

There may be other limitations as to what type of agriculture may be undertaken on the site. For example, if the site is close to an urban area, there may be an increased risk of theft, trespass or disturbance of livestock.

4. Level of Experience

Similar to paragraph 2 above, the skills and expertise of the operator, landowner and farmer may limit agricultural operations. The farmer may have limited experience of farming restored land. Farming recently restored land requires more careful management, as disturbed soil is at greater risk of damage than an undisturbed soil of a similar type. Therefore, it is always safer to choose an agricultural system which the operator or farmer is familiar with.
5. Site Assessment

It is rare for a site to pass through 5 years or more of aftercare without there being some disagreement between the parties with an interest in aftercare. From time to time, it may be useful to be able to call upon an independent expert to assess the site and offer impartial advice. For example, there may be a problem with the establishment of a crop, or a drainage problem and the parties cannot agree on the cause and/or remedial measures required.

6. Codes of Good Agricultural Practice

Defra has produced a series of Codes of Good Agricultural Practice covering:

- air
- soil
- water
- controlling soil erosion
- sewage sludge, and
- pesticides

All farmers should adhere to these Codes on restored sites where agriculture is an after-use. The Soil Code and Controlling Soil Erosion guidance document also offer specific guidance relevant to restored land.

7. Landfill Gas Wells

The design and layout of gas wells should take into account the final after-use of the site following restoration. If agriculture is the after-use, the wells should ideally be located around the periphery of the site. If this is not possible, then they should be located in rows with even spacing in between. This should help minimise the disruption to agricultural machinery and operations. Detailed guidance can be found in the publication Landfill Gas and Leachate Control Applied to Arable After-Use (MAFF 1998 PR4869).

8. Landfill Gas Monitoring

As part of the Waste Management Licence, the Environment Agency will almost certainly require regular monitoring of landfill gas emissions from the wellheads. Monitoring is likely to be at any time of the year, including times when the land is saturated and prone to soil damage. Access to the wellheads, particularly if by vehicle, should be carefully controlled with agreed access routes, to avoid indiscriminate trafficking.