Please see Annex RN4 for supporting information, and the “Introduction” for Health and Safety considerations and advice on the use of the guidance.

1. **What is the condition of the bunds**
   a. are weeds evident
   b. are the bunds vegetated
   c. are the soil layers in a suitable condition to be moved

2. **What are the weather conditions**
   a. is it the correct season for moving soil
   b. is there favourable weather for the soil replacement

3. **What record keeping (and auditing) has been undertaken**
   a. is the soil in store properly recorded
   b. has any soil been removed from or added to the bund since it was last surveyed

4. **Does the soil strategy document address where the soil is to be placed**

5. **What bund removal details are provided**
   a. is any treatment of the surface under the bund proposed
   b. does the storage space need re-grading to blend in with the surrounding landform

**COMMENTS**

For more detailed information see:
- Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils (MAFF April 2000)

**Cross references:**
- AP 8, 9, 10
- SW 4, 6, 7, 8, 9
- RN 5, 8
1. What is the condition of the bunds

   a. are weeds evident
      Weed control of soil bunds is required throughout the period of storage to avoid
      the creation of a weed seedbank and the spreading of weed seeds to adjacent
      land. The control of any weeds prior to soil replacement is particularly important,
      as otherwise the respread soil will provide an ideal opportunity for the weeds to
      germinate.

   b. are the bunds vegetated
      Any excess vegetation on the bund should be removed prior to the
      stripping/replacement operations to assist in the creation of a suitable seedbed
      for aftercare.

   c. are the soil layers in a suitable condition to be moved
      Various layers within the soil bund are likely to be at varying soil moisture levels.
      Stored soil may remain in the bund for periods ranging from a few months to
      several years. Very long-term soil storage presents the danger of the bund being
      assimilated into the landscape and becoming a forgotten resource. Careful site
      planning should ensure the soil remains available for restoration.

2. What are the weather conditions

   a. is it the correct season for moving soil
      The soil replacement process should have been planned well in advance in order
      to minimise the risks of encountering adverse weather conditions.

   b. is there favourable weather for the soil replacement
      The soil replacement programme should be carefully supervised with the
      personnel having the authority to suspend operations if conditions are
      unfavourable. Soil should only be handled when in a dry and friable condition
      and when the land is in an appropriate condition for trafficking by plant and
      machinery.

3. What record keeping (and auditing) has been undertaken

   a. is the soil in store properly recorded
      Before the soil is moved a check should be undertaken to ensure the actual soil
      corresponds to the plans and documentation. The quantities and location of the
      particular soil type should have been recorded.

   b. has any soil been removed from or added to the bund since it was last
      surveyed
      An annual audit of soil is recommended and between such surveys it is possible
      for material to be added or removed either in accordance or contrary to the
intended soil strategy. Either way a visual check should highlight any changes to the bund from the survey (lack of vegetation, change in shape – bulge/hollow).

4. Does the soil strategy document address where the soil is to be placed

The soil handling strategy should identify all the likely soil operations and their approximate timing. A record should have been established and maintained for each soil bund that provides a clear record of operations including dates, volumes, types of soil, area from where the material originated, weather conditions during stripping and any problems encountered. This information will assist in ensuring the soil is replaced in the correct area.

5. What bund removal details are provided

a. is any treatment of the surface under the bund proposed
   The general principle is that each storage bund should be stored on like material. Therefore subsoil bunds once removed will require topsoil to be replaced. Soil loosening will be required under the location of bund when the soil in store has been removed.

b. does the storage space need re-grading to blend in with the surrounding landform
   A bund could occupy a width of 30 metres and extend much further linearly. This is a significant area that has to be restored in conjunction with the adjacent mineral extraction area. Levels may require alteration due to the permanent diversion around the periphery of the site of water features such as rivers or streams or roads. Levels may also require changing due to new drainage patterns or adjacent land uses. The restoration details for the site should clearly show how the soil storage areas are to be restored. The building up of adjacent land levels prior to the removal of the soil could compromise the soil resource through contamination from, for example, overburden materials.