

Application Ref: 14/01716/MMFUL

Proposal: Limestone extraction and restoration

Site: Land At, Leicester Road, Wansford, Peterborough
Applicant: Bullimores Sand And Gravel Ltd

Agent: Liam Toland

Site visit: 02.02.2015

Case officer: Mr A O Jones
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Recommendation: **GRANT** subject to relevant conditions

1 Description of the site and surroundings and Summary of the proposal

Site and Surroundings

The site comprises a single arable field of approximately 5.4 hectares sitting in open countryside immediately to the east of Thornhaugh II limestone quarry and the recently permitted inert landfill site within that quarry. Sibberton Lodge farmhouse lies beyond farm buildings approximately 200m to the north, beyond the A47, with the village of Thornhaugh approximately half a mile beyond the site boundary. The closest residential property to the east is the Old Pump House, at approximately 250m from boundary to boundary, with the village of Wansford approximately 550m beyond the site boundary. An oil depot lies beyond the Wansford to King's Cliffe Road, approximately 150m to the south beyond the county boundary.

Proposals

Permission is being sought to extract approximately 700,000 tonnes of limestone over a 5 year period commencing at the end of 2021, with progressive backfilling of 400,000 cubic metres of inert waste. Permission is being sought for an extended commencement period due to the complicated history of the wider Thornhaugh II site which previously enabled operations to be completed up to 2025. The quarry is proposed to be operated between the hours of 07:00 to 18:00 Mondays to Fridays, and 07:00 to 13:00 Saturdays. 56 vehicle movements (in and out) are predicted in relation to quarrying activities, with a 50% backhaul rate for inert fill. Allowing for periods when backhauling is not possible a maximum of 156 vehicle movements per day are anticipated. No blasting is proposed as part of the extraction operation as the limestone is proposed to be extracted by a 360 hydraulic excavator. Restoration is proposed on a phased basis to arable farmland based on the existing landform, with biodiversity enhancements to include gapping up of existing hedgerows and supplementary calcareous grassland strips along field margins with an emphasis on the area in proximity to the County Wildlife Site along the A47 verge.

2 Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
11/01711/MMFUL	Importation of inert material for recycling and infill to achieve a beneficial restoration to agricultural land	Refused	30/01/2012
97/P0071	Application to determine new conditions for extraction of limestone and restoration to agriculture and nature conservation after use - site 2	Permitted	25/04/1997

3 Planning Policy

Decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan policies below, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Mineral and Waste Core Strategy DPD (2011)

MW01 - Strategic Vision and Objectives for Sustainable Minerals Development

In delivering the growth agenda there will be an increase in the use of recycled secondary aggregates and a preference in these over land won minerals, however, where this is not practicable a steady supply of mineral from the Plan area will be maintained. Limestone only exists in the Peterborough area and extraction will continue thought the Plan period. In order to avoid reserves becoming exhausted, new sites will need to be identified and brought forward if they meet environmental criteria. Major infrastructure projects will be facilitated by the supply of mineral and in the case of the A14 improvements, by borrowpits close to the scheme. Mineral safeguarding and consultation areas will be identified to avoid needless sterilisation and prejudice to future mineral extraction. As extraction progresses across the area it will help deliver other objectives through restoration including increased biodiversity, amenity and recreational use. The natural and historic environment will continue to be protected with increased emphasis on operation practices which contribute towards addressing climate change and minimise the impact of such development upon communities. (Policy CS1 sets out a list of strategic objectives to support this vision; those of relevance will be discussed in the body of the report).

MW02 - Strategic Vision and Objectives for Sustainable Waste Management Development

Growth will be supported by a network of waste management facilities which will deliver sustainable waste management. The facilities will be 'new generation' which will achieve higher levels of waste recovery and recycling in line with relevant targets. They will also be of high quality design and operation, contributing towards addressing climate change and minimising impacts on communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. There will be a network of stand alone facilities but also co-located facilities in modern waste management 'eco-parks'. The network will manage a wide range of wastes from the plan area, contributing to self sufficiency but also accommodating the apportioned waste residues from London or authorities in the East of England. Any long distance movement of waste should be through sustainable transport means - such facilities will be safeguarded via Transport Zones. A flexible approach regarding different types of suitable waste technology on different sites will be taken and Waste Consultation Areas and Waste Water Treatment Works Safeguarding Areas will be designated to safeguard waste management sites from incompatible development. A proactive approach to sustainable construction and recycling will be taken and strategic developments will need to facilitate temporary waste facilities to maximise the reuse, recovery and recycling of inert and sustainable construction waste throughout the development period. Where inert waste cannot be recycled it will be used in a positive manner to restore sites. The natural and built historic environment will continue to be protected with an increased emphasis on operational practices which contribute towards climate change and minimise the impact of such development on local communities. (Policy CS2 sets out a list of strategic objectives to support this vision; those of relevance will be discussed in the body of the report).

MW06 - Scale and Location of Future Limestone Extraction

The Mineral Planning Authorities will seek to maintain a limestone landbank of at least 10 years supply to meet the requirement to supply 300,000 tonnes of limestone per annum and contribute towards the national and regional need for aggregates. Proposals for new or extended quarries for extraction of oolitic limestone from the north west Peterborough area will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that they meet the criteria set out in the policy.

MW14 - The Scale of Waste Management Provision

Sets out the amounts of waste provision and timescales for the various types of waste management facility to be provided for by the Waste Planning Authority by 2026.

MW15 - The Location of Future Waste Management Facilities

A network of waste management facilities will be developed across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The spatial distribution of the network will be guided by various economic and environmental factors (the relevant details of which will be discussed in the main body of the report).

MW20 - Inert Landfill

Strategic allocation is made at Block Fen/Langwood Fen Area of Search.

Sites to deliver the remaining 3.69 million cubic metres capacity will be made at mineral extraction sites requiring restoration and identified in the Site Specific Proposals Plan.

MW22 - Climate Change

Minerals and waste proposals will need to take account of climate change over the lifetime of the development, setting out how this will be achieved. Proposals will need to adopt emissions reduction measures and will need to set out how they will be resilient to climate change. Restoration schemes which contribute to climate change adaption will be encouraged.

MW24 - Design of Sustainable Minerals and Waste Management Facilities

All proposals for minerals and waste management development must achieve a high standard in design and environmental mitigation. Waste Management proposals must be consistent with guidance set out in The Location and Design of Waste Management Facilities SPD.

MW25 - Restoration and Aftercare of Mineral and Waste Management Sites

Minerals workings and waste management sites will be restored to a beneficial afteruse with aftercare arrangements. Restoration proposals will be considered on a site by site basis but must meet the criteria set out in the policy.

MW26 – Minerals Safeguarding Areas

Minerals Safeguarding Areas identify economic deposits of mineral, and are defined in order that proven resources are not needlessly sterilised by non-mineral development.

MW27 – Mineral Consultation Areas

Mineral Consultation areas are allocated to ensure that existing or future working of mineral reserves will not be prevented or prejudiced by other forms of development.

MW29 - The Need for Waste Management Development and the Movement of Waste

Proposals for new or extended waste management development will be permitted where they meet a demonstrated need within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Applicants will be required to enter into binding restrictions on catchment area, tonnages and/or types of waste. Permission may be granted for development involving importation of waste from outside the Plan area where it is demonstrated it is sustainable.

MW30 – Waste Consultation Areas

Waste Consultation Areas are allocated to ensure that existing or future planned waste management facilities will not be prevented or prejudiced by other forms of development.

MW32 - Traffic and Highways

Minerals and Waste development will only be permitted where it meets the criteria set out in this policy.

MW33 - Protection of Landscape Character

Minerals and Waste development will only be permitted where it can be assimilated into the local landscape character in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, local Landscape Character Assessments and related SPDs.

MW35 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Mineral and waste management development will only be permitted where there will likely be no significant adverse affect on local nature conservation or geological interest. Where it is demonstrated there are overriding benefits to the development compensation and/or mitigation measures must be put in place. Proposals for new habitat creation must have regard to the Peterborough Biodiversity Action Plan and supporting Habitat and Species Action Plans.

MW36 - Archaeology and the Historic Environment

Minerals and waste development will not be permitted where there is an adverse effect on a designated heritage asset, historic landscape or other historic asset of national importance and/or its setting unless substantial public benefits outweigh the harm, or any significant adverse impact on a site of local architectural, archaeological or historical importance. Development may be permitted where appropriate mitigation measures are in place following consideration of the results of prior evaluation.

MW38 - Sustainable Use of Soils

Mineral and Waste development which affects the best and most versatile agricultural land will only be permitted where it meets the criteria set out in this policy.

MW39 - Water Resources and Water Pollution Prevention

Mineral and waste management development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated there is no significant adverse impact or risk to;

- a. Quantity or quality of groundwater/water resources
- b. Quantity or quality of water enjoyed by current abstractors unless alternative provision is made
- c. Flow of groundwater in or near the site

Adequate water pollution control measures will need to be incorporated.

MW40 - Airport Safeguarding

Mineral and waste development in the safeguarding areas of airports/aerodromes will only be permitted where the development will not cause a significant hazard to air traffic.

Peterborough Planning Policies DPD (2012)

PP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Applications which accord with policies in the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no relevant policies, the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4 Consultations/Representations

PCC Wildlife Officer (17.02.15)

No objections subject to operations being carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ecological Assessment. The amended restoration proposals are acceptable subject to the inclusion of 6m calcareous grassland strips (rather than 2m wide) and the planting-up of all existing gaps along the boundary hedgerows.

PCC Pollution Team (13.02.15)

No objections. Appropriate noise limits are recommended and a monitoring scheme should be agreed. Details of reversing alarms will be required. Suitable dust control measures are set out and a monitoring scheme should be agreed. Appropriate lighting is required and can be secured by condition.

PCC Landscape Architect (Amey) (14.02.15)

No objections. A broader strip of limestone grassland is recommended and further details can be secured by condition in relation to hedgerow and grassland management.

PCC Transport & Engineering Services (23.02.15)

No objections subject to provision of appropriate vehicle cleansing equipment and vehicle to vehicle visibility splays.

PCC Archaeological Officer (02.02.15)

The evaluation of the area has been completed, including geophysical survey and trial trenching. No objections subject to an appropriate archaeological scheme of work being required by condition.

Natural England - Consultation Service (13.02.15)

No objection. Natural England are satisfied that the additional information confirms that the proposal is unlikely to have any adverse effect on nearby Sites of Special Scientific Interest, including Wansford Pasture SSSI. The amended restoration proposals to include provision of a limestone grassland field margin and gapping up of hedgerows are also welcomed.

Environment Agency (18.02.15)

No objections subject to the inclusion of appropriate conditions to establish greenfield run-off rates and require a surface water drainage scheme ensuring post restoration infiltration and run-off rates match the existing greenfield runoff rate.

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (MOD - Statutory) (06.10.14)

No safeguarding objections.

National Grid (17.11.14)

No objections subject to no demolition being allowed within 150 metres of a pipeline without an assessment of vibration levels at the pipeline. Further advice provided in relation to working in the vicinity of pipelines.

GeoPeterborough (Designated Sites) (06.02.15)

The amended application acknowledges the status of the Local Geological Site and the applicant supports the conditioned provision of access to record geological exposures during the working life of the quarry. Representative sections through the Lincolnshire Limestone should be conserved throughout the wider Thornhaugh II quarry.

The Wildlife Trust (Cambridgeshire) (16.02.15)

No objections subject to the inclusion of suitable areas of limestone grassland in the restoration, such as a 6m margin recommended by environmental stewardship schemes, and the use of appropriate seedmix to establish the grassland.

Thornhaugh Parish Council (03.02.15)

In addition to the points raised by Wansford Parish Council, Thornhaugh PC has concerns regarding effective monitoring of dust and noise, conditioning appropriate lighting, Parish Council involvement in monitoring, additional traffic along the A47, and request that a 40mph speed limit is imposed on the A47 from the Old Oundle Road junction to Wansford.

Wansford Parish Council (21.10.14)

Object. Concerns regarding; the suitability of the noise assessment; noise and dust monitoring; increased volumes of traffic on the A47; appropriate implementation of restoration and request for fines in the event of failure to restore within set timescales.

Barnack Parish Council (14.10.14)

Wildlife enhancements should be considered when restoration is undertaken.

East Northamptonshire Council (29.10.15)

No objections subject to ensuring dust emissions are controlled and blasting practices regulated to minimise the impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers; all other matters should be considered and mitigated including those specifically affecting East Northamptonshire.

Local Residents/Interested Parties

Initial consultations: 5

Total number of responses: 2

Total number of objections: 2

Total number in support: 0

Two objections have been raised with regard to the following issues;

The number of vehicles using the site daily; the proposed operating hours; the views from residential property to the east; blasting; duration of operations; impacts on potential residential development between the Old Pump House and Robins Field; use of hydraulic breakers and crushing and screening plant; noise and dust.

The background noise data presented is not representative of ambient conditions, including background noise from the A47 and A1, and working at the neighbouring Thornhaugh II quarry; concerns regarding the methodology used to propose noise limits; concerns regarding the ability of the operations to take place within the proposed limits; concerns regarding noise monitoring and arbitration of any disputes;

There are no guaranteed measures to minimise the effect of dust; the mature vegetation at the boundary of the Old Pump House and the outbuildings at Sibberton Lodge should not be used to class the properties as being of low to moderate sensitivity (to dust); measures to reduce the impact of dust have been demonstrably ineffective at nearby quarrying operations; limestone will dry out following extraction and wind blown dust will be generated during loading and HGV movements; concerns regarding dust monitoring and remedial measures.

5 Assessment of the planning issues

The main considerations are

1. Suitability of the proposal (mineral extraction and infilling with inert material)
2. Noise and dust
3. Landscape and visual impact
4. Biodiversity and Geodiversity
5. Floodrisk
6. Archaeology
7. Traffic and Highways
8. Other Issues

1. Suitability of the proposal

The proposed works include the extraction of mineral and the deposition of waste. As such it must accord with policies CS1 and 2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2011 (the Core Strategy). The proposals will help to ensure that local requirements for limestone can be met and would represent the only permitted limestone landbank reserves (CS6), and provision made for inert landfill capacity (CS20). The Core Strategy is aligned with the National

Planning Policy Framework, which includes the requirement to 'give great weight to the benefits of mineral extraction, including the economy' (paragraph 144).

Mineral Extraction

The proposed extraction area lies within the eastern extent of the former Thornhaugh II quarry, which benefitted from planning permission P0071/97 granted on appeal (ref. M25/1/3-M25/1/6). The proposal site was acknowledged as being both a separate and constituent part of the former Thornhaugh II quarry by virtue of the permission, which included a number of bespoke conditions for this area of the site. The appeal permission was recently subject of a review of conditions, for which no application, which would have been required to cover the entirety of the site, was forthcoming. As such, the previous permission, which enabled extraction up until 2025, has fallen away in so far as it related to the extraction of the mineral reserves. The landowner for the proposal site did not exercise this option due to the practical difficulties involved with making a submission including land outside their control.

Notwithstanding that the previous permission for mineral extraction has fallen away, the site still benefits from being within a Mineral Consultation Area (MCA) (CS27) and is within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) (CS26). The MCA exists to ensure that where mineral reserves are permitted or allocated, the Mineral Planning Authority will seek to ensure that existing or future working of reserves will not be prevented or prejudiced by other forms of development. The MSA designates mineral deposits considered to be of economic importance. The proposals enable the accessing of known economic reserves of limestone in this area. As the proposal meets with all other relevant policy and material considerations, the principle of extraction at this site is acceptable. The remainder of this report sets out why this is the case, indicating how the proposal complies with the relevant policies.

Infilling with inert material

The National Planning Policy for Waste sets out a number of criteria for waste planning authorities, with which it is considered the Core Strategy is in compliance. The scale, location and requirement for inert landfill is set out in policies CS14, CS15 and CS20, and the proposal site is allocated for inert landfill in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals DPD 2012 (the SSP) policy SSP W2 as site W2F. The proposal is therefore considered to be consistent with the waste spatial strategy. As the proposal meets with all other relevant policy and material considerations, the principle of inert landfilling at this site is acceptable. The remainder of this report sets out why this is the case, indicating how the proposal complies with relevant policies, and the 'implementation issues' as outlined in the SSP.

2. Noise and dust

The National Planning Policy Framework clearly establishes (para. 144) that some noisy short term activities are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction, and there is a corresponding need to ensure that unavoidable noise emissions are controlled, mitigated or removed at source. The Technical Guidance accompanying the NPPF provides guidance and advice upon acceptable levels of noise from minerals operations.

'Typical' background levels are advised as the most appropriate means of establishing the permissible noise levels for the site and will minimise the impact on noise sensitive properties without imposing unreasonable burdens on the operator, ensuring noise levels are appropriately controlled by condition to protect surrounding uses, including residential noise sensitive properties. Some concerns were raised through representations regarding the validity of the noise assessment provided with the application, however this has been independently assessed by the Council's Environment and Pollution Control Officer and found to be appropriate and sound, with realistic and achievable noise limits, in accordance with the Technical Guidance to the NPPF, proposed. Although concerns have also been raised about the effectiveness of any monitoring and enforcement of the proposed noise levels, a robust monitoring system is implemented within the authority, (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012), and enforcement options are available in the event of non-compliance with conditions. As such, the proposals are in accordance

with Core Strategy policy CS34. A noise monitoring scheme can establish the frequency and duration of monitoring requirements, any additional mitigation measures and be secured by condition.

Concerns have been identified regarding the manner in which the 'typical background noise levels' have been established for the site, whereby a single recording occurrence was undertaken. These levels were acknowledged as not being indicative of background noise levels on Saturdays, and the Environment and Pollution Control Officer has consequently recommended different noise limits for both weekday and Saturday working. It is also acknowledged that the applicant is not seeking to commence development until 2021, and that the only permitted activity with the exception of the Mick George Ltd area of the quarry benefitting from planning permission (11/01711/MMFUL) on appeal (APP/J0540/A/12/2179541/NWF) for inert fill (which must be commenced by 8th May 2016, and completed within four years from the commencement of the development) within the wider Thornhaugh II quarry is for restoration purposes. The nearby Stonehill quarry in East Northamptonshire must also be completed no later than 15 January 2016 (permission ref. 13/00004/MINVOC). As such, there is limited potential for 'overlapping' of the nearby quarry developments and cumulative impact in terms of noise. The proposed noise limits can be controlled by condition and the Environment and Pollution Control Officer is satisfied that these are achievable and appropriate.

Temporary operations which will be in excess of normal operating site noise limits (such as site preparation, soil stripping and replacement, and bund formation and removal) can be satisfactorily controlled by condition to a maximum of eight weeks per calendar year. Mobile plant can cause nuisance if unsuitable reversing beepers are used; this can be satisfactorily controlled by condition to ensure suitable beepers are utilised.

The proximity of residential properties to the extraction area of the proposal requires regular monitoring to ensure that additional mitigation measures can be implemented if proven necessary. It is noted that the impacts of the development will vary over time as operations progress between phases, and it is therefore important to control by condition the scheme of soil movements to ensure the perimeter bunds are constructed at appropriate times to aid mitigation. The effective storage of top-soils (to preserve its nutrients) dictates that top soil cannot be stored in bunds greater than 3m in height. The provision of a scheme of soil movements prior to the commencement of development will ensure both the satisfactory storage of soils and the effectiveness of the bunds as noise mitigation barriers. This can be appropriately controlled by condition in accordance with policy CS34. Additionally, operating hours, and the use and maintenance of machinery to manufacturers specifications can be controlled by condition to ensure minimal noise impacts.

The Dust and Air Quality Assessment provided with the application sets out an appropriate range of mitigation measures which can be controlled by condition to minimise the environmental impacts. Restricting plant and vehicle movements to clearly defined haul routes, will serve to both preserve the condition of soils, in accordance with policy CS38, and minimise the potential for dust to arise on site in accordance with policy CS34. In addition, the provision of a water bowser / spray to be used as required for site operations can be satisfactorily conditioned. Although concerns have also been raised about the effectiveness of any monitoring and enforcement of the proposed dust mitigation measures, a robust monitoring system is implemented within the authority, (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2012), and enforcement options are available in the event of non-compliance with conditions. As such, the proposals are in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS34. A Dust Action Plan can be secured by condition, and can establish the frequency and duration of monitoring requirements, any additional mitigation measures and be secured by condition.

3. Landscape and visual impact (including lighting)

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment provided with the application is recognised by the

Landscape Architect as having been carried out appropriately with a sound methodology. The proposed restoration ensures the land will be returned to original contours, which is desirable in light of the approved contours at the neighbouring inert fill site immediately to the west within Thornhaugh II, and the long term impacts are therefore acceptable.

The site is relatively small and well screened due to the local topography and surrounding hedgerows, with the only significant views into the site being from the A47 and the entrance to Sibberton Lodge to the north. The timely construction of the soil storage bunds will assist with mitigating this visual impact during the lifetime of development. In addition the proposals include the gapping up of hedgerows, which, whilst providing little immediate mitigation, over the medium to long term will improve the landscape in the area.

The gently undulating topography in the locality requires any lighting to be carefully designed, as the site is visible from some residential properties and from two major trunk roads in the form of the A1 and A47. Although none is expressly proposed, it is a reasonable expectation that lighting may be required, during winter months for example. A condition is therefore proposed requiring lighting details to be submitted for approval.

Notwithstanding the construction of the bunds, the visual impact of the proposed development is likely to be at its most significant during the early stages of operation whilst the plant and stockpiles have to sit on the mineral surface. Although this impact will reduce when the stockpiles and plant can be relocated to the quarry floor, both the plant (e.g. to control the size) and size of stockpiles can be controlled by condition to minimise this to an acceptable level, and the proposal therefore accords with Core Strategy policies CS33 and CS34.

Although the broad scope of the revised Restoration Plan is acceptable, the detail, including the aftercare of both the biodiversity enhancements and the arable land, and an expansion to the limestone grassland strip to 6m in line with the criteria for the Natural England's Environmental Stewardship scheme, can be controlled by condition and the proposal is therefore in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS25 and CS33.

4. Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Ecological Impact Assessment has adequately assessed protected species, including the population of Great Crested Newts known to inhabit the Thornhaugh II site, and habitats, including the SSSIs within 2km of the site at Bedford Purlieus, Wansford Pasture, and West, Abbott's and Lound Woods within Peterborough, and Old Sulehay Forest, within Northamptonshire, and the A47/A1 Interchange Road Verges County Wildlife Site. The Assessment provides broadly acceptable mitigation and enhancement measures to ensure ecology and biodiversity is effectively controlled, the measures of which can be controlled by condition in line with the strategic objectives of policies CS1 and 2. Such measures address the issues raised by Natural England (NE) and the Wildlife Officer.

The National Planning Policy Framework aims to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the national environment (Ch.11), and the safeguarding of best and most versatile agricultural land through the restoration and aftercare of mineral sites (Ch. 12). The soils on the site are classified as Grade 3 (good to moderate), and the proposal must incorporate proposals for the sustainable use of soils in accordance with CS38. As previously described, schemes of soil movements prior to commencement of development will ensure the satisfactory handling, temporary storage, and replacement of top and sub soils. Although not considered to be land of the highest grade, the restoration nonetheless strikes an appropriate balance between restoration to arable agriculture (as it is at present) and biodiversity enhancements.

The final restoration proposals must strike a balance between retention of the site for agricultural purposes and biodiversity enhancements. The two are not mutually exclusive, and effective husbandry of agricultural land can enhance biodiversity on a site. Notwithstanding such measures which can be controlled by an effective Aftercare Scheme required by condition (as described in

the Landscape and Visual Impact section of this report), the proposed restoration of the site offers a number of biodiversity enhancements over and above its current condition, in physical areas distinct from the arable restoration. The proposal therefore accords with policy CS25 particularly parts c and e with respect to biodiversity enhancements and restoration of high grade agricultural land. Having achieved an appropriate balance with the restoration proposals, controlling the final detailed elements of the scheme, which may include a requirement for underdrainage of the restored arable field, will be required by Condition to ensure a comprehensively satisfactory scheme.

The proposed restoration scheme has evolved from that submitted with the original application, and improved to a standard that can be recommended for approval. The main biodiversity enhancements, the limestone grassland strips, have increased substantially in size, and the gapping up of hedgerows, prior to commencement of development, help ensure the thoroughness of the biodiversity enhancements, which accord with the priority habitats and biodiversity targets set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Action Plans. The restoration scheme when viewed as a whole, is deemed to offer an appropriate balance. To secure biodiversity enhancement benefits, a detailed restoration and landscaping scheme will be required by condition to ensure the satisfactory balancing of competing and complementary afteruses.

The proposal site lies within the 'Thornhaugh II' Regionally Important Geological Site. As such the proposal presents an important opportunity to provide access to the exposed underlying geology. Temporary section recording during the working life of the quarry can be facilitated by condition in accordance with policy CS35. The restoration scheme for the neighbouring phase of Thornhaugh II, approved on appeal, is such that the landscape potential of Thornhaugh IIb does not lend itself to the retention of rockfaces without creating an inappropriate landform.

5. Floodrisk

The proposal site is located within Flood Zone 1, and the application included an assessment of the impact on water resources and Flood Risk, and further information was supplied in the form of a Water Environment Report to ascertain a better understanding of the impacts of the proposal, particularly in relation to the Wansford Pasture SSSI. The Environment Agency took into consideration the Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of planning application 11/01711/MMFUL (i.e. the inert fill site within Thornhaugh II) and withdrew their objection on floodrisk grounds.

The additional information within the Water Environment Report establishes that dewatering of the site will not be required as the watertable elevation is likely to be below the base of the Northampton Sand. Water management is unlikely to be required on site due to the permeability of the sand underlying the limestone. Although groundwater monitoring will be required prior to infilling for Environmental Permitting purposes, the application demonstrates that the principal of infilling with inert material is achievable.

The Environment Agency have highlighted the need to ensure there is no additional risk of surface water flooding from the proposal, and this can be secured by condition in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS39. Adequate water pollution prevention and control, such as the risk of spillages within the quarry, can also be secured by condition.

6. Archaeology

A Geophysical Survey has been undertaken at the site and present with the application. The Council's Archaeologist has identified a number of features in the adjacent quarry at Thornhaugh II, and in combination with the geophysical survey is satisfied that the evaluation of the area has been completed. With regards archaeology, the next phase of work will entail targeted excavation, and this can be conditioned alongside a Written Scheme of Investigation in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS36.

Sibberton Lodge, to the north of the site, is a Grade II listed building. The Lodge is separated from the proposal site by the A47, a small area of arable fields, and numerous agricultural buildings. Any impacts on the setting of Sibberton Lodge are considered to be short term and negligible, the mitigation measures as outlined in the rest of the report will also help to ensure there are no significant impacts on this heritage asset.

7. Traffic and Highways

A Transport Statement was included with the application, and further information has been supplied in relation to vehicle movements and numbers, swept path analysis of the site entrance, and a plan depicting the accident data included within the Transport Statement. The Local Highway Authority have no objections to the proposal subject to the imposition of a condition to control wheel cleaning.

The proposal includes the exportation of a maximum of 150,000 tonnes per annum of limestone over a three year period, with waste infilling of 100,000 cubic metres per annum over a four year period. Infilling is expected to commence until after the first year of extraction has been undertaken, i.e. when sufficient void space has been created. Following the first year it is expected that 50% of loads will be back hauled. As such, the worst case scenario for traffic volume would see 156 HGV movements, 56 in relation to extraction, and, with no back hauling, 100 HGV movements associated with the inert filling. The proposal represents less than a 1% proportional increase in traffic on the A47, and consideration has also been given to Thornhaugh II quarry, which no longer benefits from planning permission and therefore has no associated vehicle movements. The proposals are not considered to adversely increase the level of traffic on the adjacent highway.

The proposal site will be accessed by the existing junction of the A47, which has appropriate vehicle to vehicle visibility splays, and, despite the extraction operations within Thornhaugh II quarry has been demonstrated to be accessible to HGVs through the swept path analysis presented with the application.

The access and highway network serving the site are considered to be suitable to accommodate the increase in traffic, which is accepted as being marginal, and whilst it is acknowledged that there is a local desire for speed restrictions to be imposed on this stretch of the A47 it is not considered that this proposal carries a requirement for such acts of traffic management to be imposed. The proposals are therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS32.

8. Other issues

The proximity to RAF Wittering requires the proposal to ensure that operations and final restoration do not present a bird strike hazard. Defence Estates have raised no objections to the proposals, which are therefore considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS40.

Following consultation and further review the applicant no longer intends to work the proposal site with quarry blasting, but rather through using a 360 hydraulic excavator; this can be controlled by condition and will remove a number of concerns expressed through representations regarding the proposed working practices at the proposal site.

Concerns have been raised regarding the effectiveness of any monitoring that may be required in the event that the proposal is approved. Such concerns are not a reason to refuse permission, and the proposed conditions are considered to offer an appropriate level of control over the impacts of the development and are enforceable. In addition to the regular monitoring required under the Regulations (as described above, and typically undertaken 3 – 4 times per year), the operator may choose to organise a Liaison group. Such community engagement is a recognised method of alleviating concerns, airing grievances, and creating a better understanding of working practices and the implications of development. Although whether or not these are held is at the discretion of the operator this approach would be encouraged by the Minerals and Waste Officer at every Site

Monitoring Visit. Additionally, the reports published following every Site Monitoring Visit are available on request, and interested members of the public and / or Parish Councils can take the opportunity to scrutinise the effectiveness of the monitoring regime. Effective monitoring is assisted by the reporting of any complaints, both to the operator and to the Council, who will investigate if a breach of control is occurring and enforce where necessary and appropriate.

6 Conclusions

The NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development - in terms of decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. The principle of development is in accordance with policy SSP W2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals DPD (SSP DPD) which allocates the site for inert landfill; and the proposed extraction lies within the Minerals Consultation Area (CS27) associated with the previous permission for limestone extraction at Thornhaugh II quarry.

An Environmental Statement accompanies the application which, alongside the submitted further information is considered comprehensive and meets the requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011. Detailed topic areas have been assessed/considered:- With regard to noise and dust, the proposal is in compliance with policies CS24 and CS34. The landscape and visual impacts of the proposal are in compliance with policies CS25, CS33 and CS34 of the Core Strategy. Ecology, Hydrogeology and Physical characteristics (including soils) have been carefully considered (no objections raised by Natural England or the Environment Agency subject to conditions) and are in compliance with policies CS22, CS25, CS35 CS38 and CS39 of the Core Strategy. Heritage and Archaeology have been assessed and are in compliance with policy CS36. Other matters have been assessed including Traffic and Highways, Flood risk, quarry design and climate change and are considered acceptable and in compliance with development plan policy. Cumulative impact of this development with that of the neighbouring site, Eyebury landfill, has also been taken into account. Comments of consultees have been taken into account and suitable conditions will be attached which address any issues raised. The representations have also been also taken into account but given that the site is allocated for inert landfill, previously benefitted from permission for limestone extraction, and in all other respects the proposal is acceptable, there is no reason not to approve the application in line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

7 Recommendation

The case officer recommends that Planning Permission is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

- C 1 The development hereby approved shall be begun no later than the expiration of 6 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- C 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the details set out in the application (received 22/09/2014) and approved plans except as required elsewhere in this scheme of conditions.
Location Plan, Drawing No. HPL/TH/003 (Sept 2014)
Quarry Phasing Plan, Drawing No. HPL/TH/001 (June 2014)
Depths of Working, Drawing No. HPL/TH/002 (May 2014)
Restoration Plan, Drawing No. LD025/TGH/001 Rev B (March 2015)
Planning and Environmental Statement, dated September 2014
Letter from Liam Toland, and accompanying information, dated 27th January 2015

Reason: To clarify what is hereby approved and in accordance with policies CS; 1, 2, 6, 14, 15, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38 and 39 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD, policy SSP W2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Site Specific Proposals DPD, and the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly Chapter 13.

- C 3 The site shall be restored on a phased basis in accordance with the 'Quarry Phasing Plan'. Notwithstanding any additional landscaping, biodiversity enhancement or aftercare works, the restoration shall be complete no later than 5 years after the development is commenced.

Reason: To ensure a timely restoration allowing beneficial restoration in accordance with policy CS25 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

- C 4 Only inert material shall be imported for the restoration of the site.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt of the extent of the development and operations hereby permitted, and to ensure that the principles of the waste hierarchy have been applied in accordance with policy CS2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

- C 5 Prior to the commencement of development a scheme of soil movements, placements and replacements, based on the 'Quarry Phasing Plan' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The development thereafter shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure the sustainable use of soils and to safeguard the amenity of sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site in accordance with policies CS 34 and 38 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

- C 6 Plant and vehicle movements shall be restricted to clearly defined haul routes or to the overburden surface and shall not cross areas of topsoil and subsoil except for the express purpose of soil stripping or replacement operations.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users, and to ensure conservation of soils in accordance with policies CS34 and 38 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

- C 7 Prior to commencement of development, a Dust Action Plan, for the monitoring of dust from the site, and outlining appropriate mitigation measures, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users, and to ensure conservation of soils in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

- C 8 The operator shall give the Mineral Planning Authority at least 21 days written notice prior to the commencement of top or sub soil stripping from any part of the site. Prior to soil stripping any standing crop or vegetation shall be cut and removed.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users, and to ensure

conservation of soils in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

- C 9 Prior to the commencement of development an Environmental Management Plan, based on the mitigation measures outlined in the Ecological Assessment, and the Restoration Plan, Drawing No. LD025/TGH/001 Rev B (March 2015), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall include at least the following:
- 1) An effective survey and monitoring programme, and submission of survey reports and updates of any implementation issues.
 - 2) Provision for overseeing of the permitted works by an appropriately qualified Ecological Clerk of Works, including works of biodiversity enhancement aftercare.
 - 3) Details of the timing of the measures to be put in place as part of the approved scheme, e.g. landscaping.
 - 4) Tree and hedge protection measures

The development thereafter shall be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Management Plan.

Reason: In order to ensure appropriate protection and conservation of protected species and provide appropriate biodiversity enhancement and visual impact mitigation in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policies CS1, 24 and 33.

- C10 Prior to commencement of development a detailed landscaping scheme, including the timing of planting, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority based on the following submitted drawings.
Restoration Plan, Drawing No. LD025/TGH/001 Rev B (March 2015)
Should any trees, shrubs or other planting die, become diseased or be removed within 5 years from its planting, it shall be replaced in the first available planting season with a plant/plants of a similar size and species to that removed.
The development shall not take place except in complete accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure the development will be appropriately assimilated into its surroundings and local landscape character in accordance with policy CS33 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

- C11 A detailed 5 year strategy of agricultural aftercare shall be submitted to and improved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority at least 6 months prior to the restoration of each phase. The scheme shall incorporate, but not be limited to, measures for soil replacement, stone removal and under-drainage if required.
The aftercare shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme other than such minor variations as may be set out in the required annual detailed programmes for the forthcoming year which have been approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the effective restoration of agricultural land in accordance with police CS25 and CS38 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

- C12 The operations authorised, required or associated with the development hereby permitted shall only be carried out between the following times:
07:00 - 18:00 Mondays to Fridays
07:00 - 13:00 Saturdays
and at no other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of surrounding occupiers in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C13 All plant, machinery and vehicles operated within the site shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specification and shall be fitted with and use effective silencers in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and shall be operated so as to minimise noise emissions. The manufacturers specifications shall be provided to the Minerals Planning Authority within 5 days of being so requested.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C14 Prior to the commencement of development details of reversing alarms to be fitted to all mobile plant shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The approved reversing alarms shall be utilised on all mobile plant throughout the period of the development.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C15 Except for temporary operations, the level of noise emitted from the site when measured at the noise sensitive properties listed, shall not exceed the limits set out in below:

LOCATION	During permitted weekday working hours dBLAeq 1 hour (free field)	During permitted Saturday working hours dBLAeq 1 hour (free field)
Sibberton Lodge	53	51
Old Pump House	55	51

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C16 Prior to the commencement of development a scheme for the monitoring of noise from the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C17 For temporary operations essential for site preparation work and restoration such as soil stripping and replacement, and bund formation and removal, the free field noise level due to operations at the nearest point to locations identified in condition 16 shall not exceed 70 dB LAeq,1hour(free field). The Local Planning Authority shall be notified at least 21 days in advance of essential temporary operations. Temporary operations shall not take place for more than eight weeks in any calendar year.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy policy CS34.

C18 Prior to the commencement of development details of mobile hydraulic breakers to be used on site shall be submitted to, and approved by, the Mineral Planning Authority. Such breakers as may be approved are only to be used below existing ground level and only between 08:00 to 17:00 Mondays to Fridays and 09:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays and not at all at any other times.

Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of nearby residents in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (July 2011).

C19 No blasting shall take place within the site at any time.

Reason: In order to protect the amenity of the locality in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C20 No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority in writing. No development shall take place unless in complete accordance with the approved scheme. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full including any post development requirements e.g. archiving and submission of final reports.

Reason: To secure the obligation on the planning applicant or developer to mitigate the impact of their scheme on the historic environment when preservation in situ is not possible, in accordance with Policy CS36 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD and the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly paragraphs 128 and 141.

C21 The developer shall make allowance for 'Temporary Section Recording' of the limestone sequences on an annual basis or at the request of the Minerals Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure the benefits of exposing the geological interest within a RIGS site in accordance with policy CS35 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C22 No basal clay shall be removed from the site.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt of the extent of the development and operations hereby permitted in accordance with policies CS32, 34 and 39 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C23 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any other statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that order) no fixed or mobile plant, machinery or buildings connected with the development shall be erected or placed on site without the express permission of the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt of the extent of the development and operations hereby permitted, and to safeguard the amenity of the area and minimise disturbance to adjacent land users, in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C24 In the event of a cessation of operations prior to the completion of the development hereby permitted, which in the opinion of the Mineral Planning Authority constitutes a permanent cessation within the terms of paragraph 3 Schedule 9 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a revised scheme, to include details of restoration, landscaping and aftercare, shall be submitted within 12 months of the cessation to the Mineral Planning Authority for approval. The approved revised scheme shall be implemented in full within 12 months of the written approval unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt of the extent of the development and operations hereby permitted in accordance with policies CS1 and 2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C25 Any fuel, oil, or chemical storage above ground and refuelling facilities shall be bunded to at least 110% of the tank capacity.

Reason: To protect the water environment in accordance with policy CS39 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD.

C26 No permanent fixed lighting shall be erected unless a scheme of lighting is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of types of lights, mountings and positions, lux values and measures to prevent light spillage occurring outside the site. No lighting shall be erected except in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure that operations are carried out in a manner which will safeguard the amenity of the area and highway safety in accordance with policy CS34 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

C27 There shall be no access to the site other than from that approved at the A47.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity in accordance with policy CS32 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

C28 A wheelwash facility shall be retained on site in full working order for the duration of the mineral extraction and restoration works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and dust control in accordance with policies CS14 of the adopted Core Strategy, CALP 14 and emerging policy CS6 of the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

C29 Prior to commencement of development a Surface Water Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The Scheme shall be include, but not be limited to the following;

- Percolation tests and existing site surveys shall establish existing Greenfield runoff rates
- Rates of infiltration to be achieved as a result of the inert fill; the rates of infiltration must match the existing Greenfield runoff rates.

The development shall thereafter be undertaken in complete accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure there is no significant adverse risk to the quantity or quality of surface water resources in accordance with policy CS39 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

Copies to Councillors: J Holdich OBE, D Lamb

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