

For: PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE – 23 MAY 2016

**By: DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY
(STRATEGY & INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING)**

Development Proposed:

Proposed extension of ironstone extraction, revocation of existing consented mineral extraction, export of clay, construction of temporary and permanent landforms, retention of an existing overburden store, relocation of consented stone saw shed, replacement quarry, farm and estate office building, erection of a new shoot store and multi-purpose building.

Division Affected: Chipping Norton
Contact Officer: Matthew Case **Tel:** 01865 815819
Location: Great Tew Ironstone Quarry, Butchers Hill, Great Tew, Chipping Norton
Application No: MW.0078/15 **District Ref:** 15/02678/CM
Applicant: Great Tew Farms
District Council Area: West Oxfordshire DC
Date Received: 16 June 2015
Consultation Period: 2 July to 23 July 2015

Contents:

- Part 1 – Facts and Background
- Part 2 – Other Viewpoints
- Part 3 – Relevant Planning Documents
- Part 4 – Analysis and Conclusions

Part 1 – Facts and Background

Location (see site plan Annex 1)

1. Great Tew Quarry is located 500 metres to the west of the village of Great Tew, which is 8 km (5 miles) east of Chipping Norton. The nearest residential property is Home Farm which lies approximately 80 metres to the south of the application area. An Oxfordshire Local Wildlife site adjoins the site to the north. Little Tew Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies approximately 1.1 Km to the south. The site contains approximately 16.6 hectares of grades 3a (0.6 ha) and 3b (16 ha) agricultural land. A public bridleway runs to the west of the woodland on the western boundary of the application area.

Site and Setting (see site plan Annex 1)

2. The proposed extension to the area of mineral extraction is to the west of the existing quarry site. The field where it is proposed to deposit overburden material from the proposed extension area lies to the north of the existing quarry. An existing soil/overburden storage area which the application seeks to regularise lies to the south of the existing quarry. The existing quarry access is to the east onto the B4022. The existing quarry lies effectively in a valley with the landform rising immediately to the south and more gently to the north. The proposed extension area is on land rising to the west and which also rises to the south. Areas of woodland lie both to the north of the existing quarry and to the west of the proposed extension area which also contains two areas of woodland within it. The new buildings would be located in the eastern part of the application area.
3. The proposed temporary overburden and topsoil store areas are located to the south of the quarry, immediately south of the Phase 2 & 1B areas.

Details of the Development

4. The applicant is proposing an extension to the west of the existing ironstone quarry covering approximately 6 hectares, although the total red line application area is 33.2 hectares. The western extension proposed has a potential reserve of approximately 700,000 tonnes of mineral: 425,000 tonnes of dimension stone, 137,500 tonnes of chopped building and walling stone and 137,500 tonnes of aggregate which would be used solely within the Great Tew Estate. At the current levels of production this reserve would be worked over a period of approximately 21 years.
5. The proposed works exclude the extraction of part of the consented Phase 3 in the existing quarry. The consented area excluded includes part of 'clay bank' an area of woodland and individual trees, which would now be retained.

6. The development also proposes to retain an area of overburden store outside the consented existing planning permission to the south of the existing quarry which is currently unauthorised. Proposing further tree planting on the overburden mound to soften the structure in the landscape.
7. The total volume of overburden requiring excavation within the extension site is approximately 1.15 million m³. Much of the overburden is clay. In order to access the full range of stone types within the proposed extension, the initial phase of works would be to extract the overburden and its placement in permanent new landforms (including restoration of the existing consented quarry). One landform would be created as a mounded landform in the north-western part of the application area to the north of the proposed extraction area. To this end the application proposes to partly infill a field which forms a shallow valley to the north-east of the existing quarry. The existing soil from the field has already been stripped and stored and some overburden material from the existing quarry has already been deposited in it and the application also seeks to regularise this. A surface water attenuation pond would be created in the north-western corner of the application area. Temporary topsoil storage mounds would be provided to the north of both the north-western and north-eastern mounded landforms as well as to the south of the new extension area.
8. The applicant also proposes that a proportion of the clay extracted would be removed from the site, approximately 300,000 m³. The clay extracted would not be exported during the existing site's peak harvest period when the site's other use as a grain store is at its peak.
9. The applicant proposes to construct a multi-purpose building just to the south of the existing grain stores. The facility would provide vehicle maintenance and potential agricultural storage. The building would be very similar in construction and appearance to the existing grain stores and workshop with a pitched roof. The pitched roof would be constructed with fibre cement sheeting, with green plasisol coated profiled metal cladding for the walls. The south elevation would contain 5 pairs of aluminium roller shutter doors. It would be set at a low level in approximate location of the consented stone saw shed, and accessed from the quarry farm yard area. The multi-purpose building would have a floor space of 2198m², and would be 11 metres in height.
10. The applicant proposes the erection of a storage unit. The proposed unit would create a floorspace of 282m² and a maximum pitched roof height of 0.067 metres. It would primarily be used to store agricultural vehicles and equipment. The external appearance of the building would replicate the existing grain stores and workshop with green platisol metal cladding walls and grey aluminium roller shutter doors on the east elevation. The pitched roof would be of grey fibre cement sheeting. Along with the construction of the storage unit, the applicant proposes to relocate the consented stone saw shed further south within the existing consented quarry. This would provide 551 m² of new floorspace and have a maximum pitched roof height of 9.8 metres. The walls would be of

concrete panels at the bottom with green plastisol steel sheeting above and galvanised roller shutter doors on three elevations. Currently all stone is exported off site for processing elsewhere. The proposed scheme allows for relocation of a dedicated platform away from the main mineral haul routes. A stone stock area will be located to the east of the stone shed for processing.

11. The applicant proposes the erection of a replacement office building. The development proposes the replacement of the existing 'portacabin' office with a new office development which would create a central hub for the wider estate business, this includes both the quarry and agricultural sectors. The office building would have a gross internal floorspace of 664m² over four storeys to a maximum height of 11.572 metres including a light well and including a basement . The basement and ground floor would be faced with cut stone, the first floor with horizontal cedar cladding and the second floor with glass curtain walling with a colourless glass balustrade with stainless steel capping rail. The pitched roof would be of metal cladding with a metal clad light well. The office would be located on the existing office car park, to the east of the existing office building. The development would be accompanied by approximately 18 car parking spaces with the new car park located approximately on the site of the existing office building.
12. The applicant does not propose any changes to the operating hours which would remain in accordance with the consented scheme – 07:00 – 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and 07:00 – 13:00 on Saturdays. Access to the site would be as existing to and from the B4022.
13. The extraction of stone would generate an average of 8 movements per day and 42 per week. The extraction of clay for export would generate an average of 22 per day and 110 per week. In addition during the harvest period (August to October), the site access would also serve an average of 52 movements per day and 260 per week. No clay would be exported during the harvest period. The overall average mineral movements in the non-harvest period would therefore be 30 per day and 152 per week.
14. It is proposed that the site would be restored to a mixture of agricultural land, scrubland and woodland with biodiversity enhancements.
15. The application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Statement (ES) was submitted along with the application. This covers the key environmental impacts of the proposal. Details can be found in Annex 2.

Part 2 – Other Viewpoints

Representations

16. No letters of objection have been received to this application.

Consultations

17. A summary of consultation responses received in relation to this application can be found at Annex 4. They are also available to read in full on the eplanning website <http://myeplanning.oxfordshire.gov.uk> using the reference number MW.0078/15.

Part 3 – Relevant Planning Documents

Relevant planning policies (see Policy Annex to the committee papers)

18. Planning applications should be decided in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

19. The relevant Development Plan policies are:

- i) West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (WOLP):
 - Policy BE2 (General Development Standards)
 - Policy BE19 (Noise)
 - Policy NE1 (Safeguarding the Countryside)
 - Policy NE3 (Local Landscape Character)
 - Policy NE6 (Retention of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows)
 - Policy NE7 (Water Environment)
 - Policy NE9 (Surface Water)
 - Policy NE11 (Water Quality)
 - Policy NE13 (Biodiversity Conservation)

- ii) Oxfordshire Mineral and Waste Local Plan 1996 (OMWLP):
 - Policy PE2 (proposals for mineral workings that are located outside the areas identified in the OMWLP)
 - Policy PE3 (Buffer Zones)
 - Policy PE4 (Groundwater)
 - Policy PE10 (Woodland)
 - Policy PE13 (Restoration)
 - Policy PE14 (Sites of nature conservation importance)
 - Policy PE18 (Code of Practice)
 - Policy SD4 (Additional Ironstone Extraction)
 - Policy SD5 (Clay Extraction)

20. Other material considerations are:

- i) The Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (DWOLP) is also a material consideration to which limited weight should be given. Relevant policies are:
 - Policy EH1 (Landscape Character)
 - Policy EH2 (Biodiversity)

- Policy EH5 (Flood Risk)
 - Policy EH6 (Environmental Protection)
 - Policy OS4 (High Quality Design)
- ii) Draft Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy (Proposed Submission Document 24th March 2015). The Draft Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy (OMWCS) has been out to consultation. This document is now at a more advanced stage of preparation and as such further weight can be given to the policies it contains. At the meeting of the full County Council on 24th March 2015, the OMWCS was approved for publication and submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination following consideration of any representations received. Therefore it is appropriate to consider draft policies which are relevant to this development. Those policies are:
- Draft Policy M5 (Working of aggregate minerals)
 - Draft Policy M7 (Non-aggregate Mineral Working)
 - Draft Policy M10 (Restoration of mineral workings)
 - Draft Policy C1 (Sustainable Development)
 - Draft Policy C5 (Local environment, amenity and economy)
 - Draft Policy C7 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)
 - Draft Policy C8 (Landscape)
 - Draft Policy C10 (Transport)
- iii) The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012.

Part 4 – Analysis and Conclusions

Comments of the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy & Infrastructure Planning)

21. The key policy issues to consider in determining this application are:

- i) Working of Ironstone
- ii) Site Restoration and Biodiversity
 - Restoration
 - Arboriculture
 - Hydrology
- iii) Landscape
- iv) Export of Clay
- v) Transport
- vi) Impacts on Local Amenity
- vii) Office, Workshops and Agricultural Buildings

Working of Ironstone

22. OMWLP policy PE2 states that permission should not normally be granted outside the areas identified in the plan unless demand for the mineral cannot be met from within areas identified in the plan. Draft OMWCS

Policy M7 states that permission will be granted for extensions to existing quarries and new quarries for the extraction of traditional local building stone where a need for the material has been demonstrated and the proposed quarrying is small-scale.

23. The application site is the only quarry in the County that produces brown ironstone for dimension stone (other permitted ironstone reserves in the county are only producing aggregate) and the existing permitted reserves at the site are nearing exhaustion. Therefore the need for this mineral cannot be met from areas identified in the OMWLP or from existing ironstone permissions, and the proposal accords with Policy PE2 of OMWLP, and Policy M7 of the OMWCS in this respect.
24. OMWLP policy SD4 states that planning permission for additional ironstone extraction will only be granted in exchange for an agreed revocation, without compensation, of an existing planning permission containing workable reserves. OMWCS policy M5 states that the extraction of ironstone for aggregate purposes will only be permitted where it is in exchange for the revocation of an equivalent permission and where there would be environmental benefits.
25. The proposal does make provision for the retention of the consented 'Clay Bank', an area of woodland and individual trees. Therefore the application is considered to be generally in accordance with Policy SD4 of the OMWLP. I do not consider that it accords with OMWCS policy M5 which requires for the aggregate element of the application that an equivalent revocation is provided and that there is environmental benefit. However, provided that the aggregate is only used for the maintenance of works within the adjoining Great Tew Estate, then I do not consider that refusal of the application on this ground could be sustained. This matter could be conditioned should planning permission be granted.
26. Policy SD5 of the OMWLP states that clay extraction will only normally be permitted from set areas where sand and gravel extraction is identified. The proposed development does not fall within any of the set areas identified in the existing local plan. With regard to clay extraction, OMWCS policy M7 similarly states that clay extraction will not be permitted other than in conjunction with sand and gravel extraction from identified areas unless it is to meet an identified local need or the impacts would be less than from such areas. The site does not lie within one of the areas for sand and gravel and so possibly clay extraction identified in policy M3 of the OMWCS. The applicant has not identified a local need for the clay. At this point in time, the OMWCS has been submitted for examination, but until the outcome of the examination is known, the weight that can be given to the policies in it is limited. NPPF paragraph 144 states that local planning authorities should give great weight to the benefits of mineral extraction. In this case the ironstone extracted is from the only quarry of its type extracting this particular type ironstone. It is considered that there is a need for further sources of building stone to be permitted. Therefore the need for ironstone from the quarry is considered to be acceptable and,

provided that the clay would be extracted in conjunction with the ironstone and would not give rise to unacceptable adverse impact including as a result of additional mineral vehicle movements, refusal of the application on the grounds of it being contrary to OMWLP Policy SD5 and/or OMWCS Policy M7 with respect to the proposed working of clay is unlikely to be justified.

Site Restoration, Hydrology and Biodiversity and Arboriculture

Restoration

27. Draft Policies M10 and C7 of the OMWCS and policy PE13 of the OMWLP, discuss the need to restore mineral working sites to a high standard and in a timely and phased manner, with satisfactory restoration proposals. Policy C7 seeks a biodiversity or geodiversity net gain. OMWLP policy PE14 states that proposals which would affect a nature conservation interest will be assessed taking into account the importance of the affected interest, the degree of damage and the extent to which replacement habitat could preserve the interest in the long term. The WOLP has a similar policy NE13 which states the Council will seek to safeguard, maintain and enhance priority habitats and species within the District. Development proposals should include measures to mitigate any effects upon features of nature conservation value, including where appropriate the provision of compensatory habitats or management.
28. The proposed extension will be split into two phases (phases 4&5). Generally the working direction will move in a north-western direction. As much of the ironstone is under overburden and clay, the initial stage involves extraction of clay and overburden, moving and infilling of the north-east landform with overburden, which involves partially infilling a slight valley landform. Much of the work of the north-east landform will be completed before the extraction of the lower and upper quarries of Phase 5. The site will be progressively restored, starting with the existing quarry, and then moving to Phase 4 (Upper Quarry).
29. At the current rates of extraction, the extension would have approximately 21 years of ironstone reserves. The restoration scheme which involves a mixture of woodland and hedgerow planting, grassland scrub and arable farmland split into four by two small woodland blocks and connecting hedgerows would provide an overall biodiversity net gain from the existing use of arable farmland. Both BBOWT's Ecologist and OCCs Planner Ecologist withdrew objections after modifications and additional information were provided by the applicant, providing conditions are applied to any permission granted. The applicant has also agreed to enter into 20 year long term management plan with Oxfordshire County Council via a Section 106 legal Agreement.
30. Therefore in terms of achieving a good and diverse restoration the application is considered to be in accordance with draft policies M10 and

C7 of the OMWCS, policies PE13 and PE14 of the OMWLP and policy NE13 of the WOLP.

Hydrology & Biodiversity

31. Policy NE7 of the WOLP states that development should not have an adverse impact on the water environment. Initiatives which seek to restore or enhance the natural elements of this environment will be supported. Policy NE9 of the WOLP states new development or intensification of existing development will not be permitted where the additional surface water run-off would result in adverse impacts such as an increased risk of flooding, river channel instability or damage to habitats, unless appropriate attenuation and pollution control measures are provided. Policy NE11 of the WOLP states development should not have an adverse impact on the quality of surface or ground water supplies and resources. Policy EH2 of the DWOLP states the biodiversity of West Oxfordshire shall be protected and enhanced to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity.
32. Policy PE4 of OMWLP states proposals for mineral extraction and restoration will not be permitted where they would have an impact on groundwater levels in the surrounding area which would harm existing water abstraction, river flow, canal, lake or pond levels or important natural habitats. Proposals must not put at risk the quality of groundwater.
33. Policy PE14 of the OMWLP states sites of nature conservation importance should not be damaged. Proposals which would affect a nature conservation interest will be assessed by taking into account the importance of the affected interest; the degree and permanence of the projected damage; and the extent to which replacement habitat can be expected to preserve the interest in the long-term. Draft Policy EH5 of the DWOLP states sustainable drainage systems to manage run-off will be integrated into the site design, maximising their habitat value and ensuring their long term maintenance. West Oxfordshire District Council has raised objection to the application on ecology grounds.
34. Valley West of Great Tew Local Wildlife Site (LWS) lies immediately adjacent to the application site and supports a range of priority habitats including wet woodland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, lowland meadows and fen. The LWS includes the River Tomwell/Deddington Brook. Dewatering of the quarry extension is proposed in order to excavate the brown ironstone, this has the potential to reduce and/or remove the groundwater flow across the site, which would normally enter the Deddington Brook to the north of the site. The proposal would see the pumped groundwater discharged into the Brook via a settling pond to allow the removal of excess suspended solids. There were concerns as to how the system would cope in extreme weather conditions and impact of soil erosion on habitats within the LWS.
35. After discussion the applicant has agreed to use a silt buster to prevent silt and other solids travelling from the site and entering the brook. Conditions

have been proposed by the county's Ecologist Planner require a Water Monitoring, Maintenance and Action Plan including programmes to monitor water quality & quantity in Deddington Brook, monitoring habitats within the LWS, monitoring of groundwater levels, monitoring of silt loading within ditches, and maintaining the silt buster. The Ecologist Planner has also recommended an additional condition requiring that annual groundwater monitoring data is sent in the form of a report to the MPA. If the development is shown to be harming the groundwater quality or quantity, remedial action shall be proposed by the operator.

36. To prevent heavy soil erosion impacting on the LWSs hydrology and habitats, the applicant proposes a temporary dense ryegrass crop to be planted to the north of the extension's proposed clay and ironstone extraction area to intercept and filter runoff and provide enhanced mitigation to the LWS.
37. Therefore, subject to these conditions, notwithstanding the comments of the District Council, in terms of hydrology and related biodiversity, the application is considered to be in accordance with Policies NE7, NE9 & NE11 of the WOLP, EH2 & EH5 of the DWOLP, and Policies PE4 & PE14 of the OMWLP.

Arboriculture

38. Policy PE10 of the OMWLP states mineral working should not damage or destroy woodland and forestry. Proposals which would affect woodland will be assessed by taking into account the importance of the affected woodland, economically, scenically and ecologically; the local abundance or scarcity of woodland; the remaining life of the woodland; the extent of replacement proposed; and the time which it can be expected to take for replacement woodland to make a positive contribution to the landscape. Policy NE6 of the WOLP states planning permission will not be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of trees, woodlands or hedgerows, or their settings, which are important for their visual, historic, or biodiversity value. Removal will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would enhance the landscape quality and nature conservation value of the area. West Oxfordshire District Council has raised objection on arboricultural grounds.
39. The proposed development would see the removal of a small block of woodland in the Upper Quarry extension and most of the woodland block in the Lower Quarry. The tip of the Lower Quarry woodland would remain with new hedgerows splitting the proposed arable restoration from the grassland scrub in the south. There would also be additional hedgerow running in a north-west direction joining the proposed hedgerow with the remaining woodland tip in the north. The applicant also proposes additional planting to the south of the extension and around the proposed pond in the north-eastern corner of the proposed extension as well as additional planting on the currently unauthorised landform to the south of the existing quarry.

40. Early comments from the county's Arboricultural Officer requested further information linked to the attached Arboriculture report including additional information relating to woodland management practices. Arboricultural Impact Assessment was also requested for areas around the proposed new office building, due to the proposed removal of three Sycamore trees and one Ash tree.
41. After the additional information was supplied the Arboricultural Officer was happy with the additional information, but requested a pre-commencement condition to be attached to any planning permission which requires the submission and approval of an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan to protect the existing trees on site.
42. Overall the development would see an increase in the number of trees on both the existing site and extension once restoration is complete. Therefore, whilst I note the objections raised by the District Council, the application is considered to be in accordance with policy PE10 of the OMWLP and policy NE6 of the WOLP.

Landscape

43. WOLP policy NE3 states that development will not be permitted if it would harm the local landscape character. Policy NE1 of the WOLP seeks to maintain or enhance the value of the countryside for its own sake, in particular its local character and agricultural values. Draft OMWCS policy C8 seeks to see development respect and where possible enhance local landscape character. Proposals should include adequate and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts on landscape, including careful siting, design and landscaping. Draft policy EH1 of the DWOLP seeks to conserve and enhance the District's landscape quality, character and distinctiveness.
44. The application site is located on and surrounded by gently sloping and relatively flat valley plateau and escarpment, becoming steeper and more heavily vegetated nearer the valley centre, providing a significant level of visual containment locally. The nearby settlement, the village of Great Tew is located to the east of the application site, due to tree cover and topography, the village is well screened from the quarry.
45. The proposed development would see extended mineral extraction further west, and increase the level of built development. It would also see the creation of two new permanent screening landforms and result in a significant level of additional woodland. The most significant new landform would be created to the north of the proposed extension including a temporary screening mound in the north-west corner, which would help screen the development from views from the north. The temporary screening mound created from the overburden from Phase 4 will later be used in the restoration, and re-landscaped, with the overburden as backfill and restored to approximate original landform.

46. Part of the proposed development would see the regularising of an unauthorised landform to the south of the existing permitted development. The proposal would see a woodland belt created along the southern edge of the unauthorised landform.
47. West Oxfordshire District Council has objected to the application due to a number of concerns related to the cumulative visual impact caused by the quarry works and associated ground modelling, in particular from the north. The original proposal saw a restoration scheme in the extension area to create parkland on the southern slopes. This was questioned by the County's Environmental Strategy Officer, leading the applicant to modify the proposal to show grassland scrub, and extended hedgerow, which are both considered more in keeping with the surrounding landscape character and show a higher biodiversity gain than the original scheme.
48. Although the development proposal would see a short term detrimental impact on the landscape character, the long term restoration scheme would see a number of landscape enhancements with the inclusion of arable scrub, additional hedgerow and tree planting. The additional buildings, including shoot store, new office and workshops proposed to the east of the site in the existing quarry would be in keeping with the existing agricultural buildings, and would be well screened from the surrounding landscape. Therefore the proposed development would enhance the value of the countryside as the proposed land use would match the character of the surrounding area and also enhance the agricultural value of the local area. Therefore, whilst I note the objections raised by the District Council, whilst there would be some short term detrimental impacts, there would be overall enhancements and I consider that the application is generally in accordance with policies NE1 and NE3 of the WOLP, draft OMWCS policy C8 and draft policy EH1 of the DWOLP.

Transport

49. Policy PE18 of the OMWLP and Policy C10 of OMWCS require that developments will among other things provide safe and convenient access to the highway network. Access to and from the mineral site should be laid out and constructed to the satisfaction of the County Council as the highway authority. The rate of extraction of Brown Ironstone will not increase beyond the existing rates. The significant difference with the proposed development is the additional clay exportation, which involves approximately 300,000 m³ on an ad-hoc basis over 21 year period. A Transport Statement was submitted with the application. The Transport Development Control Officer has stated that providing the clay exportation is not carried out during the harvest period when the agricultural business is at its peak, the proposal would have similar traffic implications to the existing site and subject to conditions has not objected to the application. The Transport Development Control Officer has recommended the

inclusion of a condition which requires clay exportation to be restricted to outside the harvest season (August to October).

50. The code of practice attached to Policy PE18 of the OMWLP states 'measures should be taken by the operator to keep mud, dust and other material off the public highway'. The proposed extension is located further west to the existing quarry, allowing for a longer internal haul road. The long haul road will allow more time to knock off any loose mud off HGV tyres.
51. In addition, Draft Policy C10 also states "mineral workings should as far as practicable be in locations of demand for the mineral, using roads suitable for lorries". The access road joins the B4022, HGVs can either take a left turn and head north to the A361, an approved lorry route, or take a right turn and access the A44 south to Oxford. The site is the only brown Ironstone quarry extracting and exporting block building stone of its type. The location of the traditional local building stone is geologically located in the north of Oxfordshire. The proposed development is for an extension on existing quarry, with similar levels of extraction of ironstone as currently permitted.
52. Providing the clay exportation is carried outside the harvest period, the proposal would be in accordance with policy PE18 of the OMWLP and policy C10 of the OMWCS.

Impacts on Local Amenity

53. OMWLP policy PE18 states that in determining applications the County Council will have regard to the appropriate provisions in the Code of Practice. This sets out details of measures to protect amenity to dwellings and other noise sensitive buildings and uses, including buffer zones, landscaping, standard hours, noise, dust and odour. Draft Policy C5 of the OMWCS concludes there should be 'no unacceptable adverse impacts on the environment, residential amenity and other sensitive receptors', this includes noise, dust and visual intrusion and also requires where appropriate the provision of buffer zones. Policy BE19 of the WOLP states planning permission will not be granted if occupants would experience 'significant noise disturbance'. Policy PE3 of the OMWLP requires the safeguarding of appropriate 'buffer zones' around the site to protect against unacceptable losses of residential or natural amenity and NPPF paragraph 123 states that planning decisions should aim to avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse effects as a result of new developments, whilst recognising that development will often create some noise.
54. Policy EH6 of the DWOLP states 'Proposals which are likely to cause pollution or result in exposure to sources of pollution or risk to safety', in this case noise, 'will only be permitted if measures can be implemented to minimise pollution and risk to a level that provides a high standard of protection for health, environmental quality and amenity.'

55. The nearest residential property is located approximately 80 metres to the south-west of the proposed quarry extension (Home Farm), although in terms of the area proposed for ironstone extraction boundary it is approximately 225 metres from Home Farm. No objections have been received from the Environmental Health Officer (EHO), providing the existing controls on noise and dust continue to be implemented. Whilst a right of way passes alongside the site to the west, the use of this is by its nature transitory. The development also proposes bunding to the southern boundary of the proposed extension to help mitigate any noise and visual intrusion created to both the right of way and Home Farm.
56. Providing existing conditions are replicated in any new permission that may be granted, the development will be in accordance with policies PE3 and PE18 of the OMWLP, draft policy C5 of the OMWCS, policy EH6 of the DWOLP and policy BE19 of the WOLP.

New office, workshops, agricultural buildings

57. Policy BE2 of WOLP states new development should respect and, where possible, improve the character and quality of its surroundings and provide a safe, pleasant, convenient and interesting environment. Proposals for new buildings and land uses should clearly demonstrate how they will relate satisfactorily to the site and its surroundings, incorporating a landscape scheme and incidental open space as appropriate. Policy OS4 of the DWOLP states 'high design quality is central to the strategy for West Oxfordshire. New development should respect and contribute to local distinctiveness and, where possible, enhance the character and quality of the surroundings.
58. As mentioned in the report, the applicant wishes to replace the existing one storey portacabin office building with a four storey office, which includes the basement level, largely below ground. This will allow wider estate business within one location, including the quarry and agricultural sectors. The office building appears to be relatively well screened from the surrounding area and will be constructed with high quality materials including the brown ironstone for the basement and ground floors, cedar cladding for the first floor and glass curtain for the second floor. The roof is clad with metal to match the surrounding agricultural buildings. The office building mixes both traditional building techniques (ironstone walling and cut stone dressing) with contemporary design to blend with the surrounding agricultural buildings.
59. The applicant also wishes to erect a storage unit, a large multi-purpose building, and relocate the stone saw shed. The buildings would be similar in construction and appearance to the existing grain stores and workshop. The proposed buildings are well screened to properties to the north and south by a mixture of trees, existing agricultural buildings and topography. Therefore I see no conflict with policy BE2 of the WOLP and draft policy OS4 of the DWOLP.

Sustainable Development

60. The NPPF contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development which has environmental, economic and social roles, which is reflected in OMWCS policy C1. This development would contribute towards the environmental aspect of sustainable development by the provision of ironstone for building purposes and as a local source of aggregate material for use on the Great Tew Estate. It would have an economic role through its contribution towards providing the materials necessary for the provision of buildings and infrastructure and a social role through the provision of employment to the local community and the resources necessary for the creation of a high quality built environment.

Conclusions

61. The development contains a number of elements including the additional new area of extraction, areas to be used for permanent overburden disposal and so changes to the landform and new buildings. The application and associated environmental information has been subject to three periods of consultation and the majority of objections have been overcome subject to conditions. Subject to a legal agreement to provide that the “clay bank” area of the existing planning permission will not be further worked and to the provision of a 20 years long term management scheme, I consider that the application is generally in accordance with development plan and national policy and would be sustainable development in environmental, economic and social terms in accordance with the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

62. It is **RECOMMENDED** that subject to a legal agreement to secure that the mineral permitted under the “clay bank” is not further worked and a 20 years long term management plan that planning permission for application MW.0078/15 be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Strategy and Infrastructure Planning) including those set out in Annex 3.