

For: PLANNING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE – 27 NOVEMBER 2017

By: DIRECTOR FOR PLANNING AND PLACE

Development Proposed:

Extraction of sand and gravel with associated processing plant, conveyors, office and weighbridge, parking areas. Construction of new access onto the A4130. Restoration to agriculture, incorporating two ponds, using imported inert materials at New Barn Farm, Cholsey, Near Wallingford.

Division Affected: Benson and Cholsey

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Location: New Barn Farm, Cholsey, Wallingford, Oxfordshire
OX10 9HA

Application No: MW.0094/16 P16/S2662/CM

District Council Area: South Oxfordshire

Applicant: Grundon Sand and Gravel Limited

Application Received: 22 July 2016

Consultation Period: 4 August – 9 September 2016
31 January – 23 February 2017
11 May – 2 June 2017
5- 26 October 2017

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Recommendation: The report recommends that application MW.0094/16 be **approved** subject to conditions and a legal agreement.

PART 1- FACTS AND BACKGROUND

Location (see Plan 1)

1. The application site is located approximately 500 metres¹ south of the edge of Wallingford and 1km north of Cholsey in the south of the county.

Site and Setting

2. The site covers approximately 34 hectares (ha) of agricultural land and is roughly square in shape and relatively flat, lying at an elevation of between 46 and 47 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The site is bordered to the north east by the A4130 Bosley Way; the south east by the Wallingford Road, which links Wallingford and Cholsey; to the south west by a drainage ditch, beyond which lies agricultural land; and to the north west by the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway, beyond which lies agricultural land. There is a solar farm to the east of the northern part of the site, on the other side of Wallingford Road.
3. The cluster of farm buildings at New Barn Farm lies 20m to the south east of the application area, one of these barns is Grade II Listed. There are two residential properties on the opposite side of the Wallingford Road from New Barn Farm. Cox's Farmhouse, which is a Grade II Listed Building, lies approximately 130 metres west of the site boundary on the other side of the railway line. There are other nearby residential properties on Brookfield Close in Wallingford, 150 metres to the north east on the other side of the A4130. The Lodge lies east of the site boundary, immediately on the opposite side of Wallingford Road. There is a day nursery in Elizabeth House, approximately 180 metres east of the site. A property named Coachman's Cottage lies in the same area.
4. The River Thames lies approximately 500 metres to the east, at its closest, on the far side of the Wallingford Road and the A329. The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding. According to the Environment Agency (EA) mapping, the site does not lie within a groundwater Source Protection Zone.
5. A Public Right of Way (PROW) no. 167/24/20 cuts across the northern corner of the site and then runs down the north western boundary on the other side of the railway line (PROW 167/24/10) and extends to the northeast towards Winterbrook (PROW 167/24/30). This PROW also forms part of the Dame Agatha Christie Trail, which forms a loop between Wallingford and Cholsey.

¹ All distances are approximate

6. The application site area is approximately 33.8 hectares, including an extraction area of 27 hectares and comprises agricultural land, of which 83% is classified as grades 2 and 3a (best and most versatile (BMV)) land. The remainder is grade 3b. The site comprises one large agricultural field with trees and/or hedgerows along the boundaries.
7. The site is located approximately 3 km (1.9 miles) from RAF Benson and 10km (6.2 miles) from RAF Chalgrove and it is therefore within the statutory safeguarding zone for managing bird strike risk to aircraft.
8. The site is not located within an Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB), however, the boundary of the Chilterns AONB lies approximately 500 metres to the east, following the River Thames and the boundary of the North Wessex Downs AONB lies approximately 600 metres to the west.
9. Fairmile hospital is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden lying 1.5 km south of the site. The application site falls into the impact risk zone for Little Wittenham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which lies 4.5 kilometres to the north. The closest Local Wildlife Sites are Cholsey March and Pond north of Cholsey March, 1.6 km south east of the application site.
10. A gas main and overhead electricity cables cross the site. A water main runs along the eastern boundary and a rising sewer main runs along the railway fenceline on the north western boundary. The Cholsey Sewage Treatment Works lies approximately 700 metres to the south west of the site.
11. There are designated conservation areas at Winterbrook (350 metres north east), Wallingford (800 metres north east) and Cholsey (1.2km south west). The Scheduled Monument of the Saxon town of Wallingford comes within 500 metres to the north of the application site.
12. SODC has received an outline planning application for new residential development of up to 502 dwellings (amended from 550 dwellings) and a new primary school, directly north of the application site, on the other side of A4130. This application (reference P16/S4275/O) was considered by Committee on 8 January 2017 and there is a resolution to grant permission.

Details of Proposed Development

Mineral Extraction

13. It is proposed to extract 2.5 million tonnes (Mt) of sand and gravel at a rate of 140 000 tonnes per year. The site would be split into 18 phases each taking approximately one year to work. It is anticipated that the mineral will be 5-6 metres deep, beneath 0.5 metre of soils. It is proposed to work the site 'wet', i.e. without dewatering and for it to be

progressively restored, using imported inert materials, back to agricultural use.

14. If permission is granted it is proposed to commence site preparation works and extraction in 2019, with completion of extraction in 2037 and completion of restoration in 2039. The maximum depth of working is proposed to be 6m at 39m AOD. The mineral would be processed on site for use in the construction industry in Oxford and across South Oxfordshire, including Abingdon, Didcot and Wallingford.
15. The site would be worked starting with Phase 1 in the north west and then from the south west towards the north east. The site would be worked wet, without dewatering. Mineral would be worked using an excavator and a loading shovel to feed it onto the conveyor for transport to the plant site.
16. Soils and overburden would first be stripped from each phase and used to create noise and visual attenuation bunds of between 3 and 5 metres high. Additional landscaping would be provided prior to the commencement of extraction, including hedge planting on the north and north west boundaries. Buffer zones would be provided to the receptors at The Lodge and New Barn Farm, as well as soil bunds and advance planting.
17. It is proposed to re-route the utilities as necessary, following discussion with the relevant companies.
18. No operations are proposed in the triangle in the northern corner of the site which is cut off by the existing footpath (PROW 167/24/20). Therefore, there would be no need to divert this footpath. It is proposed to plant a hedge to screen the footpath from the workings.

Restoration and Afteruse

19. The site would be progressively restored using 2.1 Mt of imported inert naturally occurring excavated materials from construction/demolition projects in the south of Oxfordshire. This would be used to fill the void which would have a maximum depth of 6 metres.
20. The site would be restored to agricultural use, with some additional biodiversity enhancements including tree and hedge planting, two attenuation ponds and grassland. The site contains mainly Grade 2 and 3a BMV agricultural land, which will be conserved and replaced upon restoration.
21. It is anticipated that landfilling and restoration would be completed 20 years after the commencement of extraction.
22. Additional woodland planting along Wallingford Road is proposed as part of the final restoration.

Minerals Processing Plant

23. The plant site would be located in the north of the site, close to the access point onto the A4130. It would comprise mineral processing plant to screen and wash the as dug mineral.
24. A conveyor would be used to transport mineral from the extraction phase to the plant site.
25. The processing plant area would also include a site office and weighbridge, 15 car spaces, external lighting and a secure compound for storage.
26. Mineral would be worked from beneath the plant site as the last extraction phase.

Traffic and Access

27. It is proposed to construct a new road access into the site from the A4130, which forms a southern bypass of Wallingford. The junction would be designed so that vehicles turned into it from the left and turned left out of it. HGVs would then use the Hithercroft roundabout to turn around to travel east away from the site and the Wallingford Road roundabout to turn if travelling from the west on approach to the site.
28. It is estimated that the development would generate a maximum of 120 HGV movements per day and 22 car movements from staff and visitors.
29. Routeing is proposed to ensure that HGVs do not travel through Cholsey or Wallingford. HGVs would exit onto the A4130 and from there remain on the strategic road network, towards Didcot or taking the A4074 south towards Reading or north towards Oxford.

Hours of Operation

30. The proposed hours of operation would be 07.00-18.00 Monday to Friday and 07.00-13.00 on Saturdays. No operations are proposed for Sundays or Bank/Public holidays.

Environmental Impact Assessment

31. The application is supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Statement (ES) was submitted with the application. This covers the range of potential environmental impacts of the proposal. A summary of the findings can be found in Annex 3.

PART 2 – OTHER VIEWPOINTS

32. There were four periods of public consultation. The application was originally consulted on in August and September 2016, which resulted in requests for further information. A summary of the consultation responses can be found in Annex 4 and details of representations can be found in Annex 5.
33. Consultation responses are available to read in full on the eplanning website.²

PART 3 – RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Relevant planning documents and legislation (see Policy Annex to the committee papers)

34. In accordance with Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan Documents

35. The Development Plan for this area comprises:
- Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (OMWCS)
 - Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (saved policies) (OMWLP)
 - South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (saved policies) (SOLP)
 - South Oxfordshire Core Strategy (adopted 2012) (SOCS)
36. The OMWCS was adopted in September 2017 and covers the period to 2031. The Core Strategy sets out the strategic and core policies for minerals and waste development, including a suite of development management policies. It is anticipated that Part 2 of the Plan will include Site Allocations and any further development management policies that may be necessary in relation to the allocated sites.
37. The OMWLP was adopted in July 1996 and covered the period to 2006. 46 policies within the OMWLP were 'saved' until the adoption of the OMWCS and 16 of these policies continue to be saved until the Part 2 Site Specific document is adopted. The saved policies are non-strategic site-related policies and none of them apply to the area proposed in this

² <http://myeplanning2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/Wphappcriteria.display>

planning application. Therefore, they are not relevant to the determination of this planning application.

Other Policy Documents

38. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in taking planning decisions. Relevant sections include those on facilitating the sustainable use of minerals, meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
39. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) contains specific advice on matters including flood risk, minerals, conserving and enhancing the historic environment, determining a planning application and natural environment.
40. The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) provides advice on planning for waste management facilities.
41. The Wallingford Neighbourhood Development Plan Area was designated on 1 May 2015 and the Cholsey Neighbourhood Development Plan Area was designated on 4 August 2016. Both Parish Councils are working on draft versions of their neighbourhood plans.
42. The publication version of the emerging South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2033 was published on the 11th October 2017. Following the publicity period it will be submitted to the Secretary of State after which there would be an Examination in Public with a view to adoption in summer 2018. Therefore, this emerging plan is a material consideration, although as it is not yet adopted its policies should be given limited weight.

Relevant Development Plan Policies

43. OMWCS:

- M2 – Provision for working aggregate minerals
- M3 – Principal locations for working aggregate minerals
- M5 – Working of aggregate minerals
- M10 – Restoration of mineral workings
- W1 – Oxfordshire waste to be managed
- W2 – Oxfordshire waste management targets
- W3 – Provision for waste management capacity and facilities required
- W5 – Siting of waste management facilities
- W6 – Landfill and other permanent deposit of waste to land
- C1 – Sustainable development
- C2 – Climate Change
- C3 – Flooding

- C4 – Water environment
- C5 – Local environment, amenity and economy
- C6 – Agricultural land and soils
- C7 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- C8 – Landscape
- C9 – Historic environment and archaeology
- C10 – Transport
- C11 – Rights of way

44. SOLP 2011 Saved Policies:

- G2 – Protection and enhancement of the environment
- C3 – The River Thames and its valley
- C6 – Biodiversity conservation
- C9 – Landscape features
- CON5 – The setting of listed buildings
- CON7 – Conservation areas
- EP1 – Prevention of polluting emissions
- EP2 – Noise and vibrations
- EP3 – Light pollution
- EP6 – Surface water protection
- EP7 – Groundwater protection
- R8 – Public rights of way

45. SOCS:

- CSEN1 – Protection of Landscape Character
- CSEN3 – Historic Environment
- CSB1 – Biodiversity
- CSG1 – Green Infrastructure
- CS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

PART 4 – ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

Comments of the Director for Planning and Place

46. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14), which is supported by policies C1 of the OMWCS and CS1 of the SOCS. This means taking a positive approach to development and approving an application which accords with the development plan without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
47. All planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The key planning policies are set out above and discussed below in accordance with the key planning issues.

48. The key planning issues are:
- i) Prematurity
 - ii) Need for sand and gravel
 - iii) Waste
 - iv) Location
 - v) Landscape and visual impact
 - vi) AONB
 - vii) Traffic
 - viii) Rights of Way
 - ix) Potential amenity effects
 - x) Flood risk and water environment
 - xi) Archaeology and historic environment
 - xii) Biodiversity
 - xiii) Restoration
 - xiv) Soils and agriculture
 - xv) Socio-economic impacts
 - xvi) Cumulative impact

Prematurity

49. A number of representations have raised an objection to the application on the grounds of prematurity, stating that it pre-empts the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
50. Prematurity is no longer an issue in relation to the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy (OMWCS), which was adopted in September 2017, after the initial consultation periods but prior to the determination of this application.
51. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states that from the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans.'
52. There is not yet a published draft of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 2, which will include specific sites. Therefore, it is not possible to give weight to any policies in that plan and prematurity is not a consideration in relation to the Part 2 plan at this stage.
53. The NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the NPPG provides guidance on the circumstances where it may be justifiable to refuse planning permission on the grounds of prematurity (paragraph 14):

'...arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than where it is clear that the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, taking the policies in the

Framework and any other material considerations into account. Such circumstances are likely, but not exclusively, to be limited to situations where both:

a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging Local Plan or Neighbourhood Planning; and

b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft Local Plan has yet to be submitted for examination, or in the case of a Neighbourhood Plan, before the end of the local planning authority publicity period. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how the grant of permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.'

54. With regard to part a) the OMWCS paragraph 4.19 identifies a need for approximately 5 Mt of additional sand and gravel provision over the plan period. This has since increased to about 5.98 Mt due to permitted reserves at Thrupp Farm Quarry no longer being included in the landbank. The 2.5 Mt of mineral proposed to be produced by this development would comprise almost 50% of this identified mineral provision. Whilst it is considered that the development proposed is significant in relation to the provision currently identified within the OMWCS, it would not satisfy the entire assessed need. It would not prejudice the policies of the OMWCS and a policy concerning sharp sand and gravel will be required in any event.
55. Further, it is not considered that part b) is met. The Part 1 plan is adopted and the Part 2 plan is not yet published in draft form.
56. The Council sought Counsel's advice on the concerns relating to prematurity. Having taken into account the legal advice as well as the NPPG, the NPPF, the ongoing need to plan for mineral extraction, and all of the representations concerning prematurity, I do not consider that this application would undermine the emerging local plan process in the circumstances, particularly in light of the very early stage of Part 2 of the Core Strategy, and that a refusal on prematurity grounds would not be justified.

Need for mineral

57. The NPPF contains a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development,' and Section 13 specifically promotes 'facilitating the

sustainable use of minerals'. It clearly sets out at paragraph 144 that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should 'give great weight to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy', which is one of the strands of sustainable development.

58. Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that 'minerals are essential to support economic growth and our quality of life.' The mineral industry plays a large part in the construction industry and is vital to support the current demand for new housing, schools, roads and major infrastructure projects.
59. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that minerals planning authorities (MPAs) should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by, amongst other things:
 - Preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA);
 - Making provision for the land-won and other elements of their LAA in their minerals plans...such provision should take the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria as appropriate;
 - Taking account of National and Sub National Guidelines on future provision;
 - Using landbanks of aggregate minerals reserves principally as an indicator of the security of supply, and to indicate the additional provision that needs to be made for new aggregate extraction and alternative supplies in mineral plans;
 - Making provision for the maintenance of landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel... taking into account productive capacity of permitted sites;
 - Ensuring that large land banks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition; and
 - Calculating and maintaining separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market.
60. OMWCS policy M2 requires that planning permissions be granted to enable a landbank to be maintained for sharp sand and gravel with at least 7 years supply in accordance with the annual requirement rate in the most recent LAA, taking into account the need to maintain sufficient productive capacity to enable that rate to be realised. It also states that provision will be made to enable the supply of 1.015 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of sharp sand and gravel.
61. OMWCS policy M2 identifies the total requirement over the Plan Period 2014 to 2031 for sharp sand and gravel to be 18.270 Mt. Taking into account sales in 2014 and 2015, permitted reserves at the end of 2015 (excluding those that are expected to be worked after the plan period) and permissions granted in 2016, OMWCS paragraph 4.19 identifies a need for a further 5 mt of sharp sand and gravel over the plan period. Taking into account sales from 2016 and permitted reserves at the end

of 2016, this has now been recalculated as 5.979 mt. The increase in the remaining requirement is due to permitted reserves at Thrupp Farm Quarry no longer being included in the landbank due to the planning permission going into suspension.

62. The NPPG makes it clear that landbanks are principally a monitoring tool to provide MPAs with early warning of possible disruption to the provision of an adequate and steady supply of aggregate. It should be used as a trigger for a MPA to review the current provision and consider a review of the allocation of sites. At paragraph 82, the NPPG says that low landbanks may be an indicator that suitable applications should be permitted as a matter of importance.
63. The NPPG makes it clear that there is no maximum landbank level and each application for minerals extraction must be considered on its own merits (paragraph 84). It goes on to set out reasons why an application for mineral extraction might be brought forward where an adequate landbank exists, these include:
 - Significant future increases in demand that can be forecast with reasonable certainty;
 - The location of the consented reserve is inappropriately located relative to the main market areas;
 - Known constraints on the availability of consented reserves that might limit output over the plan period.
64. The Aggregates Monitoring Survey 2016: Quarry Sales and Reserves in Oxfordshire shows that permitted reserves of sharp sand and gravel in Oxfordshire totalled 11.383 Mt at the end of 2016. No additional reserves have been granted permission so far in 2017. Sales of sharp sand and gravel in 2016 are recorded as 651 000 tonnes and although they fell back from this level in 2015, from 2009 there has been a trend of increasing sales. The average of 10 years sales of sharp sand and gravel (2007-2016) was 595 000t and the average of 3 years sales (2014-2015) was 686 000t. The current Local Aggregate Assessment provision rate for sharp sand and gravel, in the Oxfordshire Local Aggregate Assessment 2014, is 1.015 Mt per annum. Based on this figure (in line with OMWCS policy M2), the landbank for sharp sand and gravel at the end of 2016 was 11.2 years.
65. Therefore, new permissions are not currently needed to maintain a landbank of at least 7 years. However, the NPPF is clear that a 7 year landbank is a minimum and not a maximum level to be maintained. The fact that the landbank is currently more than 7 years is not a reason to refuse planning permission.
66. Objections have been raised in representations received regarding the lack of need for mineral. However, as set out above, landbanks are a minimum and provide an indicator for when reserves are critically low. They are not to be used as a reason to refuse applications for further mineral extraction.

67. Approximately half of the current permitted reserves of sharp sand and gravel are at a single site (Gill Mill Quarry) and those reserves are expected to be worked over a period up to 2036. Therefore, it would not be possible for Oxfordshire's production of sharp sand and gravel to be maintained at the LAA level of 1.015 mtpa throughout the theoretical period of the current landbank (11.2 years available from the end of 2016), since the reserves at other sites are expected to be worked out within a shorter period. Some quarries are expected to be worked out in less than 7 years (the minimum landbank period required by the NPPF), which would result in a decrease in production as quarries close. Currently, it is expected that production capacity will fall below the policy M2 provision level (LAA requirement) of 1.015 mtpa in 2019. In accordance with OMWCS policy M2, and the NPPF paragraph 145 requirement that MPAs should ensure that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition, consideration must be given to the need to maintain sufficient productive capacity to enable the annual requirement rate in the LAA to be realised.
68. In view of this, notwithstanding the current sharp sand and gravel landbank being significantly more than 7 years, there is a strong argument that there is a need for further reserves to be permitted to ensure the continuation of a steady and adequate supply of aggregates at the required level established in the LAA, and in accordance with OMWCS policy M2.
69. The Inspector's Report on the Examination of the Core Strategy (Appendix A – Interim Report, paragraph 117) noted that Oxfordshire is an area likely to experience considerable growth with potential housing construction well above recent rates.
70. National policy and guidance make it clear that the existence of a landbank greater than 7 years is not in itself justification for a refusal of permission. It also indicates that the productive capacities of the sites that make up the landbank, and the consequent limitations this imposes on overall output, and having a large part of the landbank contained at a single site are factors that may justify additional reserves being permitted notwithstanding the existence of a landbank of more than 7 years.
71. OMWCS policy M5 (first paragraph) is also relevant. This states the circumstances in which permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals in advance of the Site Allocations Document being adopted, these being where it would contribute towards meeting the requirement for provision in policy M2, provided the proposal is in accordance with the locational strategy in policy M3. The application site lies within 'The Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey' sharp sand and gravel strategic resource area that is identified in policy M3 as a principal location for aggregate minerals extraction. The last paragraph of policy M3 seeks to achieve an approximately

equal split of production capacity for sharp sand and gravel between northern and southern Oxfordshire by 2031. The current situation is that significantly more than half of permitted reserves and production capacity are at sites in northern Oxfordshire, whereas the split of demand between northern and southern Oxfordshire is believed to be approximately 50:50. To achieve an equal split of production capacity between northern and southern Oxfordshire, policy M3 seeks to locate approximately 75% of the additional tonnage requirement in southern Oxfordshire and 25% in northern Oxfordshire. The application would contribute towards achieving this and would be in line with the spatial strategy in policy M3.

72. This is also supported by NPPG paragraph 084, which includes amongst the reasons why an application for mineral extraction might be brought forward where an adequate landbank exists: 'The location of the consented reserve is inappropriately located relative to the main market areas.'

Waste

73. Policy W1 of the OMWCS states that provision will be made for waste management facilities that provide capacity that allows Oxfordshire to be net self-sufficient in the management of its principal waste streams. The proposed development would contribute to meeting this need as it would provide a suitable facility for the disposal of 1.4 million m³ of naturally occurring excavated material primarily from within Oxfordshire in order to restore a mineral site back to high grade agricultural land.
74. OMWCS policy W2 sets out the targets for the diversion of various waste streams from landfill. The policy includes a target of 25% for the permanent deposit of inert waste other than for disposal to landfill. A footnote states that this includes the use of inert waste in backfilling of mineral workings. The proposed development would contribute towards achieving this target as it would involve the use of inert waste in backfilling a mineral working, thus diverting that inert waste from disposal for landfill.
75. OMWCS policy W3 sets out the need for at least 326,800tpa of additional waste management capacity up to 2031 and states that specific sites to meet this requirement will be allocated in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Part 2 – Site Allocations Document. This application would help the County meet its targets for the use of CDE waste to backfill a mineral working.
76. OMWCS policy W5 states that priority will be given to siting waste management facilities on land which is at an active mineral working or landfill site. This policy supports the location of an inert waste disposal facility at an active mineral working.

77. OMWCS policy W6 states that priority will be given to the use of inert waste that cannot be recycled as infill material to achieve the satisfactory restoration and after use of active or unrestored quarries. This policy supports the proposal to use inert waste to achieve a satisfactory restoration.
78. The proposed development is considered to be in accordance with policy relating to waste disposal as it provides a suitable location for the use of inert waste in restoration, which diverts it from disposal.

Location

79. The application site lies within 'The Thames and Lower Thame Valleys area from Oxford to Cholsey' sharp sand and gravel strategic resource area that is identified in policy M3 of the OMWCS as a principal location for aggregate minerals extraction within which sites for mineral working will be allocated in the Part 2 Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
80. Policy M3 seeks to rebalance supply and demand of sharp sand and gravel across the County, by setting out that site allocations will be located such that approximately 25% of additional tonnage requirements will be in northern Oxfordshire and 75% in southern Oxfordshire. The current situation is that significantly more than half of permitted reserves and production capacity are at sites in northern Oxfordshire (and mainly within West Oxfordshire District) whereas the split of demand between northern and southern Oxfordshire is believed to be nearer 50:50. This indicates that any additional reserves and production capacity should preferably be provided within southern Oxfordshire, as set out in paragraphs 4.28 – 4.30 of the OMWCS. This application would therefore help to achieve this aim, enabling local supplies of aggregate for planned housing and economic growth in this part of the county, including the Science Vale area and therefore accord with policy M3.
81. Mineral can only be worked where it is found. At this time the Site Allocations Plan (Part 2 of the Core Strategy) is not yet available, even in a draft form.
82. OMWCS policy M5 states that prior to the adoption of the Part 2 Minerals and Waste Local Plan permission will be granted for the working of aggregate minerals where it would contribute towards the requirement for provision identified in policy M2 and is in accordance with the locational strategy in policy M3 and the core policies for minerals and waste (C1-C12). The proposed development would contribute towards the requirement for provision as identified within policy M2 and as discussed elsewhere in this report, it is also considered to accord with policies C1 – C12.
83. Policy W5 gives priority to the siting of waste management facilities on sites including active mineral workings, the proposal will accord with this

policy if planning permission is granted for the development including mineral extraction.

Landscape and Visual Impact

84. NPPF paragraph 115 states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), which (along with National Parks) have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
85. Policy C8 of the OMWCS requires that minerals development respects and where possible enhances local landscape character and are informed by landscape character assessment. It states that proposals shall include adequate and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts.
86. The development site is currently agricultural land located to the south of Wallingford and approximately 500m west of the River Thames. It falls within the National Character Area 108 'Upper Thames Clay Vales', South Oxfordshire Character Area '4, River Thames Corridor' and the Flat, Open Farmland landscape character type. The North Wessex Downs AONB is located approximately 600m to the west and southwest of the site, while the Chilterns AONB lies approximately 500m to the east, the boundary following the River Thames. The site is in effect framed by these two AONBs and although it is located outside of the designated areas, it does lie within their setting. This matter is discussed further below.
87. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement, which includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). The LVIA states that the landscape of the study area is in good condition and has a coherent pattern, despite the presence of discordant features such as the A4130. It concludes that there will be a high adverse effect on the landscape character type, high adverse effect on the Grade II Listed New Barn Farm and medium adverse effect on the Grade II Listed Cox's Farmhouse, high adverse effect on PROW 167/24/20 and medium adverse effect on the Dame Agatha Christie Trail, medium adverse effect on the scenic qualities of the site and a low adverse effect on the tranquillity of the site and Cholsey Wallingford Railway during the operational phase. However, the works are temporary and the long term effects are considered to be beneficial. Mitigation measures to reduce landscape and visual impacts during the operational phase include soil screen bunds located close to New Barn Farm in the south of the site, close to The Lodge along the eastern boundary, as well as along the western boundary, along the west of the plant site and bordering the access road. Additional planting is proposed along the eastern, south eastern, south western and western boundaries of the site.

88. Of the 33 viewpoints assessed, 11 would experience adverse effect and 5 of those are considered 'substantial to moderate' or 'substantial', the majority are a consequence of the views of the screen bunds and not of the operational area or plant site. These effects would also be temporary and reversible.
89. Concerns have been raised by Parish Councils (represented by Communities Against Gravel Extraction (CAGE)) that the LVIA fails to appreciate the historic context of the site, being part of open, flat farmland separating ancient settlements. They consider that the loss of views across this landscape due to bunds and hedges has not been adequately assessed. However, the Environmental Strategy Officer was satisfied with the LVIA methodology and assessments.
90. SOLP policy C3 states that the distinctive character of the River Thames and its valley will be maintained and where possible enhanced. Proposals for any form of development which detracts from its special character will not be permitted. Policy C9 states that development will not be permitted if it would cause the loss of a landscape feature which makes an important contribution to the local scene, or contains important wildlife habitat, or has important historical value.
91. The proposed development would involve the current agricultural site being worked for mineral over a period of 18 years. The site would be worked in a phased manner, with the mineral being dug and the phase restored behind it. The site would be restored back to agricultural land with measures to conserve the soil resource, with some additional habitat being created for biodiversity benefit. The site is not particularly sensitive in terms of landscape value and therefore, although the proposed development would result in some impacts on landscape character, these would be temporary and their duration would be reduced by the phased working and prompt restoration. There would be no significant landscape feature lost as a result of the development and wildlife habitats would be improved upon restoration.
92. SOLP policy G2 states that the district's countryside, settlements and environmental resources will be protected from adverse developments. SOCS policy CSEN1 states that the district's distinct landscape character and key features will be protected against inappropriate development and where possible enhanced. High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of the AONBs and planning decisions will have regard to their setting. The landscapes and waterscapes of the River Thames corridor will be maintained and where possible enhanced.
93. The Environmental Strategy Officer does not object to the proposals on landscape grounds, but remains to be convinced that the upper parts of working machinery would not be visible from the public right of way on Cholsey Hill, which could lead to a moderate adverse impact during the operational phase. However, this viewpoint is not within the AONB.

94. The proposed development includes mitigation measures designed to minimise any potential landscape and visual impacts where possible. Although there is likely to be an adverse visual effect during the operational phase of the development, this will cease upon completion of the works and as the site will be restored back to agricultural land, with some biodiversity enhancements, there is considered to be an improvement upon restoration. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant landscape policies.

AONB

95. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF places great weight on “conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.” Paragraph 116 states that planning permission for major development in these areas should be refused except in exceptional circumstances. The development site is located outside of the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns AONBs, although it does lie within their setting.
96. Policy C8 of the OMWCS states that great weight will be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs, with high priority given to the enhancement of their natural beauty. Policy CSEN1 of the SOCS, requires that planning decisions have regard to the setting of AONBs. It goes on to say that “Proposals which support the economies and social well-being of the AONBs and their communities, including affordable housing schemes, will be encouraged provided they do not conflict with the aims of conservation and enhancement.”
97. The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) object to the application due to the visual impacts on the setting of the AONB as well as the landscape character impacts. The North Wessex Downs AONB board comment that the application site lies within the setting of the AONBs, that there will be distant views of the site from the upland areas to the west and south and that proposed new planting will take time to establish and have real screening benefits.
98. The Chilterns AONB Management Plan policy L7 states that ‘the quality of the setting of the AONB should be conserved by ensuring the impact of adjacent development is sympathetic to the character of the Chilterns’.
99. The Environmental Strategy Officer initially requested an update to the LVIA to consider views from the higher ground within the two AONBs. This information was provided and the Environmental Strategy Officer is satisfied with the findings that there would not be a significant impact on the setting of the AONBs from these points.
100. Whilst it is considered that the development would have an impact upon the setting of the AONBs in terms of distant views from some parts during the operational period, this is reduced by the working of the site in

a phased manner, which will minimise the amount of land out of agricultural use at any one time. The proposed restoration is back to agriculture, with additional planting and biodiversity enhancements around the boundaries of the site. Therefore, in the longer term there will be some improvements to the site, which should be seen as a positive to the AONBs' settings. Impacts on the AONBs are not likely to be significant.

Traffic

101. NPPF paragraph 32 states that all development that generates a significant amount of movements should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Decisions should take account of whether opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved and whether improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. It goes on to state that development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe.
102. Policy C10 of the OMWCS states that minerals development will be expected to make provision for safe and suitable access to the advisory lorry routes shown on the Oxfordshire Lorry Routes Maps. It also requires that where minerals will be transported by road, they should be located so as to minimise road distance to locations of demand. The proposed development would serve the local area, including Wallingford, Didcot, Oxford and other parts of south Oxfordshire.
103. Regarding sustainable transport modes, it is considered that there are no practical opportunities for more sustainable transport modes at this site. Although it is in close proximity to a railway line, there is no rail head or siding to facilitate loading or unloading. Although the site is also within 1 kilometre of the River Thames, river transport is not a feasible option as the site is not adjacent to the river and a number of roads lie between the site and the river. In addition there are no loading facilities and the mineral worked here is bound for local markets and so transport by river is not practical to take the mineral to construction sites in the local area.
104. Access to the site is proposed off the A4130 Bosley Way, which serves as the southern bypass of Wallingford. A new access is proposed to be located 235m west of the A4130 junction with Wallingford Road. A 'left in, left out' access arrangement is designed to prevent traffic queuing behind vehicles turning right into the site. Instead, vehicles would need to turn around at the Wallingford Road roundabout and approach the site from the east, turning left into the new access. Likewise, vehicles exiting would need to turn left out of the site and use the Hithercroft Road roundabout to travel back towards the east. The development is proposed to generate 120 HGV movements per day (60 in, 60 out)

105. The Highways Authority considers that the proposals, including the access design; 'left in, left out' arrangement; visibility splays; wheel wash facilities and proposed HGV movements would have minimal impact on the local highway network and therefore, subject to recommended conditions and a legal agreement to secure the routeing of vehicles and highway and access works, no objections are raised. An objection related to the site access design was removed following the submission of further information.
106. Subject to the conditions and routeing agreement as recommended by the Highways Officer it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the NPPF and policy C10 of the Core Strategy.

Rights of Way

107. NPPF paragraph 75 states that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access and local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.
108. OMWCS policy C11 states that the integrity and amenity value of the rights of way network shall be maintained and where possible routes shall be retained in situ in a safe and usable condition. Improvements and enhancements will be generally encouraged and public access sought to restored mineral workings.
109. SOLP policy R8 states that the retention and protection of the existing rights of way network will be sought and where possible proposals to improve it will be supported.
110. As stated above, no public rights of way are proposed to be stopped up or diverted as a result of the development. As such the Countryside Access Team have requested that a suitable buffer zone be placed between public footpath 167/24/20 which runs through the northern corner of the site and any additional planting or operational phases. The application proposes a 10 metre buffer zone between hedges, trees and footpaths and the extraction areas in order to protect ecology. It is considered that this would also be a suitable width of buffer to protect the amenity of users of the footpath. As such, it is recommended that a planning condition be placed on any forthcoming consent requiring a 10 metre buffer between footpaths, hedges and trees and the extraction.
111. Subject to the proposed condition, it is considered that the development accords with the relevant rights of way policies, as the existing rights of way network would be retained and the amenity of users would be protected, in accordance with relevant development plan policy.

Potential Amenity & Health Impacts

112. Policy C5 of the OMWCS states that proposals for minerals development shall demonstrate that it will not have an adverse effect on the local environment; human health and safety; residential amenity; and the local economy from impacts including noise, dust, visual intrusion, light pollution, traffic and air quality.
113. NPPF paragraph 125 states that by encouraging good design planning decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
114. NPPF paragraph 144 states that when determining planning applications, planning authorities should ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on human health and that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions are controlled, mitigated or removed at source. Local planning authorities should establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties.
115. NPPF paragraph 143 states that in preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should, when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short term activities, which might otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction. In the absence of an adopted Local Plan which specifies noise limits, this is considered to also be relevant to decision making.
116. SOLP policy EP1 states that proposals which would (by reason of smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust, grit, or other forms of polluting emissions) have an adverse effect on people and other living organisms, the atmosphere, the land, underground water supplies or watercourses will not be permitted, unless effective mitigation measures will be implemented.
117. SOLP policy EP2 states that proposals which would have an adverse impact on occupiers by reason of noise or vibrations will not be permitted, unless effective mitigation measures will be implemented.
118. SOLP policy EP3 states that proposals for new floodlighting or other external lighting which would have an adverse effect on neighbouring residents, the rural character of the countryside or biodiversity will not be permitted, unless effective mitigation measures will be implemented.
119. The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which addresses noise, air quality and dust, traffic and lighting.
120. The Noise Assessment, Noise Addendum and additional information submitted in response to consultee comments/requests measures the baseline conditions at the nearest sensitive receptors, calculates the predicted worst case noise levels generated by the development and assesses the potential impacts associated with the proposal. Mitigation

measures proposed in order to reduce noise levels to an acceptable level, include the erection of soil bunds close to New Barn Farm, The Lodge, Cox's Farm, along the northern boundary of the site and along the western side of the plant site and along both sides of the internal access road. The potential effect upon of the proposed residential development at Winterbrook, to the north of the proposed mineral working, and the cumulative impacts of both developments were given careful consideration by the applicant, SODC and OCC. Following changes to the phasing and an additional bund being located along the north western boundary of the site, and subject to conditions to limit noise levels, the Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) is satisfied and therefore raises no objection to the development.

121. The application states that any external lighting will be limited to the plant site in order to ensure a safe working environment during poor lighting conditions, likely to be the start and end of the working day during the winter months. Other than lighting on individual plant and machinery, the excavation and infill operations will not be lit and therefore operations will cease when there is insufficient light. It is recommended that should consent be granted, a condition be included requiring details of lighting to be submitted to and approved in writing by the MPA.
122. Following concerns raised during the initial consultation period, including from residents of nearby houses concerned about the health impacts of air emissions, an addendum to the Air Quality and Dust Assessment was provided in December 2016. This includes traffic emission modelling. There was also a further assessment dated May 2017 with an addendum dated September 2017. The assessment work includes consideration of potential impacts to air from NO_x (associated with Heavy Duty Vehicle (HDV) traffic and Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM)); PM₁₀ (associated with road traffic and quarry operations); and disamenity dust. The submissions include an assessment of the potential impacts upon the prospective receptors at Winterbrook, the closest of which is circa 75m to the north/northeast.
123. The assessment shows that one receptor could experience Moderate Adverse impacts, with others experiencing no more than a Slight Adverse effect. The mineral will be worked wet and standard mitigation measures are proposed, such as seeding of soil storage bunds, minimising dusty activities in dry and windy conditions, wetting haul roads- and internal speed limits. With the addition of enhanced mitigation such as ensuring that no bare ground or potentially dusty material is stockpiled within 100m of the proposed new receptors to the north, or if a water sprinkler system were in place to minimise the risk of dust generation, the assessment concludes that the overall impact is considered to be not significant. It is recommended that a Dust Management Plan (DMP) is required by condition.

124. The EPO has provided a response confirming no objection subject to a contribution towards extra NO₂ monitoring along the A4074 and the submission of a dust management plan. The final response from the public health team, following liaison with Public Health England, confirms that they have no objections to the application, subject to a condition for a dust management plan covering both operating and non-operating hours.
125. The EPO has confirmed that it is appropriate to use wind rose data from RAF Benson. It is accepted standard practice to use the closest meteorological station and in her view this would not alter the results significantly such that different advice on mitigation would be given.
126. Concerns have been raised about amenity impacts on users of the Agatha Christie trail and Wallingford and Cholsey Heritage Railway. It is not considered that there would be significant effects on the amenity of people travelling around the edge of the site by foot or train. As set out above, a 10 metre buffer is proposed from footpaths, which is satisfactory to the rights of way team. A 15 metre buffer is proposed from the railway, which would also be secured by condition and is considered to be satisfactory.
127. Assessment of the visual impact, traffic and impacts upon the water environment are considered elsewhere within this report. It is considered that, subject to conditions as set out within Annex 1, that there would be no unacceptable adverse impacts as a result of noise, lighting, dust or air quality, including in terms of public health, in accordance with the NPPF. It is considered that the development would accord with policies EP1, EP2 and EP3 of the SOLP and policy C5 of the OMWCS.

Flood Risk and Water Environment

128. OMWCS policy C3 states that development should take place in areas with the lowest probability of flooding. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding, less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding, and as such a sequential test is not required. OMWCS policy C4 requires that applications demonstrate no unacceptable adverse impact on the quantity or quality of surface or groundwater resources required for habitats, wildlife and human activities; water abstraction; flow of groundwater; and waterlogged archaeological remains. It goes on to say that the River Thames and other water courses of significant landscape, nature conservation or amenity value should be adequately protected from unacceptable adverse impacts.
129. Policy EP1 of the SOLP states that proposals should not have an adverse effect on underground water supplies or watercourses, similarly SOLP policy EP7 protects groundwater resources. SOLP Policy EP6 requires that development accords with sustainable drainage principles.

130. The application is supported by a Hydrological Impact Assessment (HIA) and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The sand and gravel deposits are classed as a Secondary A Aquifer by the EA, defined as 'permeable layers capable of supporting water supplies at a local rather than strategic level, and in some cases forming an important source of base flow to rivers'. The Chalk and Upper Greensand bedrock is defined as a Principal Aquifer, which 'usually provide a high level of water storage. They may support water supply and/or river base flow on a strategic level.'
131. Groundwater levels are between 1.8 and 3.3m below ground level and the sand and gravel to be extracted lies 5-6m below ground. No dewatering is proposed and therefore the mineral will be worked 'wet', i.e. dug from below the water table. This will mean the level of impact on the quantitative water environment is considered to be 'negligible' and therefore there would be no significant impact. There is considered to be a minor impact upon the private groundwater abstraction on Wallingford Road to the east of the site, which is 80m downgradient. As this is minor, no mitigation measures are considered necessary. No impact is anticipated on groundwater levels during extraction as the site will not be dewatered, however, the proposed inert infill will result in a lower permeability than the current sand and gravel, which will present a partial barrier to groundwater flow. This may result in a small (0.4m) rise in groundwater up-gradient of the site. This could affect a pond close to the western boundary of the site, near Cox's Farm and may result in new ponds forming in surface depressions in this area. Mitigation measures are proposed including the construction of a French drain along part of the north western boundary, between the working area and the private railway line for a distance of approximately 200m, which will connect into the existing drain along the southwestern boundary of the site at a point downstream of the railway culvert.
132. The HIA states that as the restoration using imported inert materials will require an Environmental Permit from the EA, likely to be a Recovery Permit, and it will have strict Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC), which would act to reduce the risk of potentially contaminated material being imported. This is assessed as of 'moderate' significance on the groundwater quality at the Wallingford Road private water supply, therefore mitigation measures are proposed, including the provision of an alternative water supply, if required. This could be secured by Section 106 agreement.
133. Policy C2 of the OMWCS requires that proposals take account of climate change for the lifetime of the development. This includes accounting for anticipated more frequent, short duration, high intensity rainfall events and periods of long duration rainfall in the future. The FRA takes account of recommended increases in annual rainfall parameters as a result of climate change. In terms of the NPPF Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification, the proposed use of mineral extraction comprises a 'water compatible' classification. As the site lies within Flood Zone 1, it is

considered very unlikely to be subject to fluvial flooding. The EA's 'Risk of flooding from surface water' map indicates a number of small 'low risk' areas associated with topographic low points. Low risk flood depths are typically <300m, which are likely to be accommodated within the quarry void and therefore it is considered that the risk is very low. Upon restoration at levels close to existing, surface water flow paths will be to the south west. Surface water flood risk, groundwater flood risk and flood risk posed by interaction with mains leakage are all considered to be not significant.

134. As the site will be worked 'wet' there will be no water discharged off site. Proposed soil bunds would be located within the site and away from 'low risk' surface water flood areas. There is the possibility of increased run-off rates and infiltration during extraction and increased run-off rates that could increase flood risk downstream and increased groundwater levels up-stream, although both are considered to be low or very low risk.
135. Surface water run-off from the post-development site would be attenuated via a small network of ditches, linking to two ponds, one in the east and one in the south of the site. The discharge rate from the attenuation features to the existing drainage ditch will be the 'greenfield' rate minus 3l/s to allow for potential increase in flows as a result of groundwater discharge. The total combined storage of attenuation ponds and ditches would be 7,500m³, which would provide for the 1 in 100-year event plus climate change, for a storm duration of 6 hours.
136. The Lead Local Flood Authority does not raise a drainage objection to the application, stating that the EA will control the imported material via an Environmental Permit and monitor groundwater quality, and that the anticipated rise in groundwater will be reduced by the proposed drain and would not unduly affect local properties.
137. It is therefore considered that, subject to the mitigation measures as proposed, the proposed development would not result in adverse impacts to the surface or groundwater quantity or quality and accords with the NPPF and policies EP1, EP6 and EP7 of the SOLP and C2, C3 and C4 of the OMWCS.

Archaeology and Historic Environment

Archaeology

138. OMWCS policy C9 states that minerals and waste development will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated, including where necessary through prior investigation, that they or associated activities will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the historic environment.
139. NPPF paragraph 141 states that planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost. Para 144 of the NPPF states that there

should be no unacceptable adverse impacts on the historic environment from mineral development.

140. Policy CSEN3 of the SODC Core Strategy seeks to conserve and enhance historic assets.
141. A Cultural Heritage Assessment was submitted with the original application, followed by a Geophysical Survey Report and Archaeological Evaluation Report in response to the Regulation 22 Request and a Historical Environment letter in response to a request for further information from SODC's Conservation Officer.
142. The archaeological field evaluation revealed two broad periods of historic activity, the Bronze Age and the medieval/post medieval period. Two Bronze Age burials were found, a single crouched inhumation and a single cremation within a collared urn. No trace of barrows was found in association with either of the two burials. The trenching and the geophysical survey results suggest a sparse Bronze Age landscape with a number of trackways and possible enclosures.
143. Evidence of the post medieval Wallingford to Cholsey road was found but this appears to have been unmetalled with some evidence of flanking ditches. There is some evidence of ditches that formed a drainage system to relieve winter flooding.
144. The LVIA states that the Grade I, II and II* Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Park and Gardens and Conservation Area within the study area of the development site are likely to have no affect from the proposed development due to the distance from the site and the intervening landform.
145. Six Scheduled Monuments (SMs) lie within 2km of the site, but each one is over 1km away and with no visual relationship with the site. It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse effects upon the SMs as a result of the proposed development.
146. The County Archaeology Team responded to say that none of the features revealed by the evaluation are of such importance to preclude the principle of mineral extraction but further investigation and monitoring will be required if consent is granted. Therefore, they recommend a programme of archaeological works to be required by condition.
147. Historic England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites and therefore has no objection.
148. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with relevant policies relating to potential archaeological remains and with the NPPF.

Listed Buildings

149. The development has the potential to affect the setting of a number of listed buildings. The closest of which are the Grade II Listed barn at New Barn Farm, which lies just 20m from a proposed bund and 50m from the limit of the extraction area, and the Grade II Listed Building at Cox's Farm, which lies approximately 130m from the site boundary.
150. Section 66 (1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
151. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It goes on to say that "significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting." At paragraph 133, the NPPF states that consent should be refused, where development will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, unless the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Paragraph 134 states that where development will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
152. SOLP policy CON5 states that proposals which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will be refused.
153. SODC's Conservation Officer responded with three main concerns regarding Listed Buildings:
 - 1) That a change in the use of the land around New Barn Farm will have a more substantial impact than has been recognised and will need to be mitigated in a meaningful way. The applicant responded to this by saying that the proposed development is temporary and reversible, that the site will be restored to agriculture and to similar levels to existing and that this end of the site will be one of the earliest phases to be worked and restored. Whilst, the applicant does not propose any further mitigation in response to the Conservation Officer's comments, the County Archaeologist does not raise any objections in this regard.
 - 2) That the proposal makes no use for the barn and would make it difficult for appropriate alternatives to come forward. The Conservation Officer suggests that a conservation management plan and safeguarding plan should be put in place to ensure the short and long term conservation of this building. The applicant has responded to say that the barn is currently used to store farm machinery and will continue to perform an agricultural function to serve the remaining adjoining agricultural land. This is considered

acceptable and in keeping with the proposed restored use of the site. It is not considered that the proposed development would impact upon the existing use of the barn.

- 3) That a heavy reliance has been placed on indivisibility within the report, which provides a limited understanding of the setting of heritage assets. The applicant has responded by explaining the mitigation measures such as buffer zones and bunding to reduce impacts such as visual and noise; and that the site access is located away from the Listed Buildings.
154. The development would not result in direct impact to any Listed Building, although there would be an impact upon the setting of the Grade II Listed Buildings at New Barn Farm and Cox's Farm during the operational phase of the development. However upon restoration, it is considered that the setting would be restored unharmed.
155. The ES notes that the setting of the listed building at New Barn Farm is divorced from the application site due to modern agricultural buildings and the fact that its doors are orientated away from the development. Temporary screening bunds would reduce effects during operations. The listed building at Cox's Farm is separated from the site by the railway line.
156. It is not considered that other Listed Buildings within the vicinity of the site would be affected by the proposed development due to their separation from the site by distance and/or features such as topography, roads and other built development.
157. Therefore, it is considered that any harm to the setting of listed buildings during the temporary operational period would be less than substantial, in accordance with the NPPF. The less than substantial harm would be outweighed by the public benefits that mineral extraction would bring in serving the construction industry.
158. In their final consultation response, the Conservation Officer suggested a management procedure be put in place for the maintenance of the listed barn within the site ownership. The legal responsibilities of the landowner for the ongoing maintenance of the listed building are outside the scope of this planning permission.

Setting of Conservation Areas

159. SOLP policy CON7 states that permission will not be granted for development which would harm the character or appearance of a conservation area.
160. SOCS policy CSEN3 states that designated heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments and conservation areas, will be conserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their important contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.

161. Three Conservation Areas (CAs) are considered: Cholsey, which lies 1.2km south west, Winterbrook, which lies 350m to the north east and Wallingford, which is 800m to the north east.
162. Each of the CAs are separated by features such as topography, roads and other built development. Vehicles associated with the development are not proposed to use roads through the CAs and there is not anticipated to be any further direct or indirect effects upon the character and appearance of the CAs or their settings. Therefore it is considered that the development is compliant with policies CON7 and CSEN3 and the NPPF.

Biodiversity

163. Policy C7 of the OMWCS reflects the requirement within the NPPF to conserve and where possible provide a net gain in biodiversity.
The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international nature conservation importance and in all other cases development that would result in significant harm will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for to result in a net gain in biodiversity. Proposals shall demonstrate how the development will make an appropriate contribution to the maintenance and enhancement of local habitats, biodiversity or geodiversity, including contributing to the objectives of the Conservation Target Areas wherever possible. Satisfactory long-term management arrangements for restored sites shall be included in proposals.
164. SOLP policy G2 states that the district's countryside and environmental resources will be protected from adverse development. SOLP policy C6 states that the maintenance and enhancement of the diversity resource will be sought and full account of the effects on wildlife will be taken. Where there is any significant loss in biodiversity new habitat will be required to ensure there is no net loss.
165. NPPF paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
166. NPPF paragraph 118 states that when determining planning applications, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by refusing planning permission if significant harm cannot be avoided and by encouraging opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments.
167. Paragraph 118 also states that planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration in irreplaceable

habitats, including ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

168. SOCS policy CSB1 states that a net loss of biodiversity will be avoided and opportunities for net gain will be sought. The highest level of protection will be given to sites and species of international importance but damage to nationally and locally important sites and species will be avoided unless the importance of the development outweighs the loss. Policy CSG1 requires that new development takes into account the relationship to existing green infrastructure and where appropriate contributes to improvements. Net loss of green infrastructure and biodiversity will be avoided.
169. The District Council responded to say that they are keen to ensure that Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity are protected and enhanced wherever possible. The main consideration is that the proposals minimise impacts on biodiversity and where possible lead to a net gain.
170. The Arboricultural Officer notes that no trees are to be removed as a result of the development and recommends conditions requiring the protection of trees and the submission of a detailed restoration scheme.
171. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) is submitted with the application which included an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Phase 2 Surveys of reptiles, bats and invertebrates. The protected species recorded and suitability of habitats identified indicates 'local level' of importance. Within the EclA habitat change was considered to be the largest direct impact from the proposed development. As the site would be worked in phases, impact of change would be gradual and it would be progressively restored. The site is proposed to be restored to arable land with additional woodland and hedgerow planting. Subject to protected species mitigation, including exclusion fencing for Common Lizard, ecologist checks for breeding birds and updated badger survey to reconfirm absence and as recommended by the County Ecology Officer, there are no objections regarding ecological issues.
172. Natural England advise that this application may provide opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes. Such measures would enhance the biodiversity of the site in accordance with paragraph 118 of the NPPF and Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).
173. As the site is proposed to be restored back to agricultural land, there is limited opportunity for restoration to nature conservation. However the applicant has included some aspects of biodiversity enhancement within the restoration scheme, which include additional hedgerow and tree planting, including woodland along the south eastern boundary, ponds and rough grassland. As such it is considered that the development

accords with the OMWCS policy C7, the NPPF, policies G2 and C6 of the SOLP and policies CSB1 and CSG1 of the SOCS.

Restoration

174. OMWCS policy M10 states that mineral workings shall be restored to a high standard and in a timely and phased manner to an afteruse which is appropriate to the location and delivers a net gain in biodiversity. It contains criteria which the restoration must take into account.
175. Policy W6 of the OMWCS refers to provision being made for inert waste disposal at existing facilities and sites that will be allocated in the Sites Allocations Document (Part 2 of the Local Plan). It goes on to say that priority will be given to the use of inert waste that cannot be recycled as infill material to achieve the restoration and after use of active or unrestored quarries.
176. NPPF paragraph 144 states that local planning authorities should provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to the highest environmental standards. NPPW paragraph 7 states that land raising or landfill sites should be restored to beneficial after uses at the earliest opportunity and to high environmental standards through the application of appropriate conditions where necessary.
177. The development proposals include the restoration of the site using imported inert material, back to agricultural land. The site will be worked and restored in a phased manner, thereby ensuring minimum impact on the agricultural operation and restoration of the site in a timely manner. As such, the development accords with the NPPF and policies M10 and W6 of the OMWCS.
178. A number of queries and objections have been made to the application regarding the lack of information of the method of restoration, lining of the site and proposed infill materials. The applicant has stated that they propose the site to be worked as a recovery operation (which would be regulated under the EA, who categorise the site as 'low risk' in land-use planning terms) and therefore it would not be necessary to line the site with clay or any other geological barrier to minimise the risk of pollution to groundwater. The applicant states that the inert material will consist of uncontaminated naturally occurring materials, which will primarily consist of subsoils. They also state that these materials will be tested at the point of origin, unsuitable material will be turned away and if unsuitable material is found within a load, it will be removed and stored in a quarantine area before being removed from site and disposed of at an approved facility. This will be undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Permit, which will stipulate the types of material that are acceptable and require monitoring. Contractors delivering material to the

site will be required to be a registered waste carrier under the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989.

Birdstrike

179. Paragraph 144 of the NPPF states that mineral development should not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on aviation safety. The application is located 3km from RAF Benson and therefore the MOD was consulted on the application plans to confirm whether they had concerns about an increase in risk of bird strike, due to habitat creation.
180. The development would involve the creation of open areas of water during the operational phase of the development, as the mineral is worked 'wet'. The restoration scheme also includes the creation of two new ponds, although they are not particularly large in area. The applicant has submitted a draft Bird Management Plan, which incorporates measures proposed to deter large dense flocks of birds and/or large species including gulls and waterfowl. The MOD is satisfied
181. Following the submission of the draft Bird Management Plan with the Regulation 22 response, the MOD confirmed that they are satisfied with the content, although recommend some changes to trigger levels. It is recommended that the Bird Management Plan is controlled via a Legal Agreement to ensure it is implemented for the duration of the development, subject to which, the development is considered acceptable in terms of birdstrike and therefore compliant with the NPPF.

Soils and Agriculture

182. Policy C6 of the OMWCS states that the presence of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land should be taken into account, the permanent loss of BMV land will only be permitted where there is an overriding need and provision should be made to maintain agricultural land quality, soil quality and for the long-term conservation of soils.
183. The NPPF paragraph 143 states that worked land should be reclaimed at the earliest opportunity taking into account the safeguarding of the best and most versatile agricultural land to conserve soil resources, amongst other considerations including biodiversity and recreation. NPPF paragraph 112 states that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
184. The application is accompanied by an Agricultural Land Classification and Soils Resources Report, which concludes that the site comprises primarily Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a land and makes recommendations

for soil handling and storage so as to preserve the integrity and characteristics of the soils.

185. Natural England considers that the small amount of non-agricultural restoration is acceptable, provided that the methods used in the restoration and aftercare would enable the land to retain the high quality soil resource. However, the submitted soil handling, restoration and aftercare proposals do not meet their requirements and request that conditions are placed on any forthcoming consent to address the points raised in their response, to safeguard soil resources and promote a satisfactory standard of reclamation.
186. Subject to the conditions recommended by Natural England regarding soil handling, stripping, storage and replacement, it is considered that the development accords with policy C6 of the OMWCS and NPPF paragraphs 112 and 143.

Socio-economic Impacts

187. A number of objections have been raised in relation to the impacts on tourism in the area, especially in relation to the Dame Agatha Christie Trail and Cholsey and Wallingford Railway. The Dame Agatha Christie Trail is a circular walking route between Cholsey and Wallingford which uses the footpath on the north west site boundary and the footway along the Wallingford Road to the east of the site boundary. The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway is a 2.5 mile long heritage railway on a former branch line, which runs tourist services on some weekends.
188. The SOLP contains a number of policies relating to tourist related development, including TSM1 which states that the prosperity of the area's tourist industry will be supported through encouraging enterprises based on the conservation and enjoyment of the inherent qualities and heritage of the area. However, this policy does not directly address the consideration of proposals with the potential to have an impact on existing tourist attractions and facilities. The concern of objectors is that the development proposed here will be detrimental to existing attractions which encourage visitors to the area.
189. It is not considered that the proposed development would have direct significant detrimental impacts on the attractiveness of the area for visitors specifically interested in Agatha Christie or the Heritage Railway. It is considered unlikely that potential visitors to either of these attractions would be put off from pursuing their interest because of the presence of a quarry in the vicinity. Although there would be a change to the landscape setting of the trail and railway, the development would not prevent people from visiting and using those features. The quarry would not be worked on Saturday afternoons, Sundays or Bank and Public Holidays, when it could be expected that there would be more recreational visitors. The quarry would be worked in phases and so at any point in time the workings would be small in scale compared to the

scale of the application site. Passengers on the train would view the workings only briefly and views from the train would predominantly be of agricultural land.

190. The ES includes a consideration of socio-economic impacts, including potential impacts on the Agatha Christie Trail and the railway. It also includes details of the socio-economic benefits to the area due to additional employment and the supply of aggregate to local markets. As set out above, it is not considered that there would be significant impacts on users of the rights of way.
191. Overall, it is not considered that there would be a significant impact on the tourism industry in the local area as a result of this development. There is the potential for socio-economic benefits from employment and aggregate supply.

Cumulative Impact

192. NPPF paragraph 143 states that in relation to minerals, local plans should set out environmental criteria to assess planning applications against and the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites in a locality should be taken into account.
193. The individual assessments undertaken as part of the EIA take into account the potential cumulative effects from the following proposed developments:
- proposed extraction of 500,000 tonnes of sand and gravel and restoration to a marina on land at White Cross Farm, Wallingford (planning application not yet received);
 - proposed residential development comprising 555 dwellings, a primary school and a new access onto the A4130 Calvin Thomas Way / Bosley Way on land to the west of Wallingford (Site B); and
 - proposed extraction of mineral with restoration to agriculture and nature conservation including lakes on land at Fullamoor Plantation, Clifton Hampden.
194. A planning application for 550 residential dwellings (amended to 502 dwellings), a primary school and new access on land to the north of the A4130 Bosley Way, was submitted in January 2017 and therefore this was also assessed in terms of potential cumulative impacts. Further mitigation measures have been incorporated into the development design, including changes to the phasing of the development and the erection of a soil screen bund along the north western boundary of Phase 1, if this development is granted planning permission, in order to reduce noise, air quality and visual impacts to an acceptable level.

Conclusions

195. As set out above, the development accords with the Development Plan as a whole and with individual policies within it, as well as with the

NPPF. It is considered to be sustainable development in terms of environmental, social and economic terms. The proposed development would be beneficial in terms of contributing towards Oxfordshire's supply of sharp sand and gravel and providing a high quality restoration. It is considered that potential impacts can be adequately addressed through planning conditions and legal and routeing agreements as proposed.

RECOMMENDATION

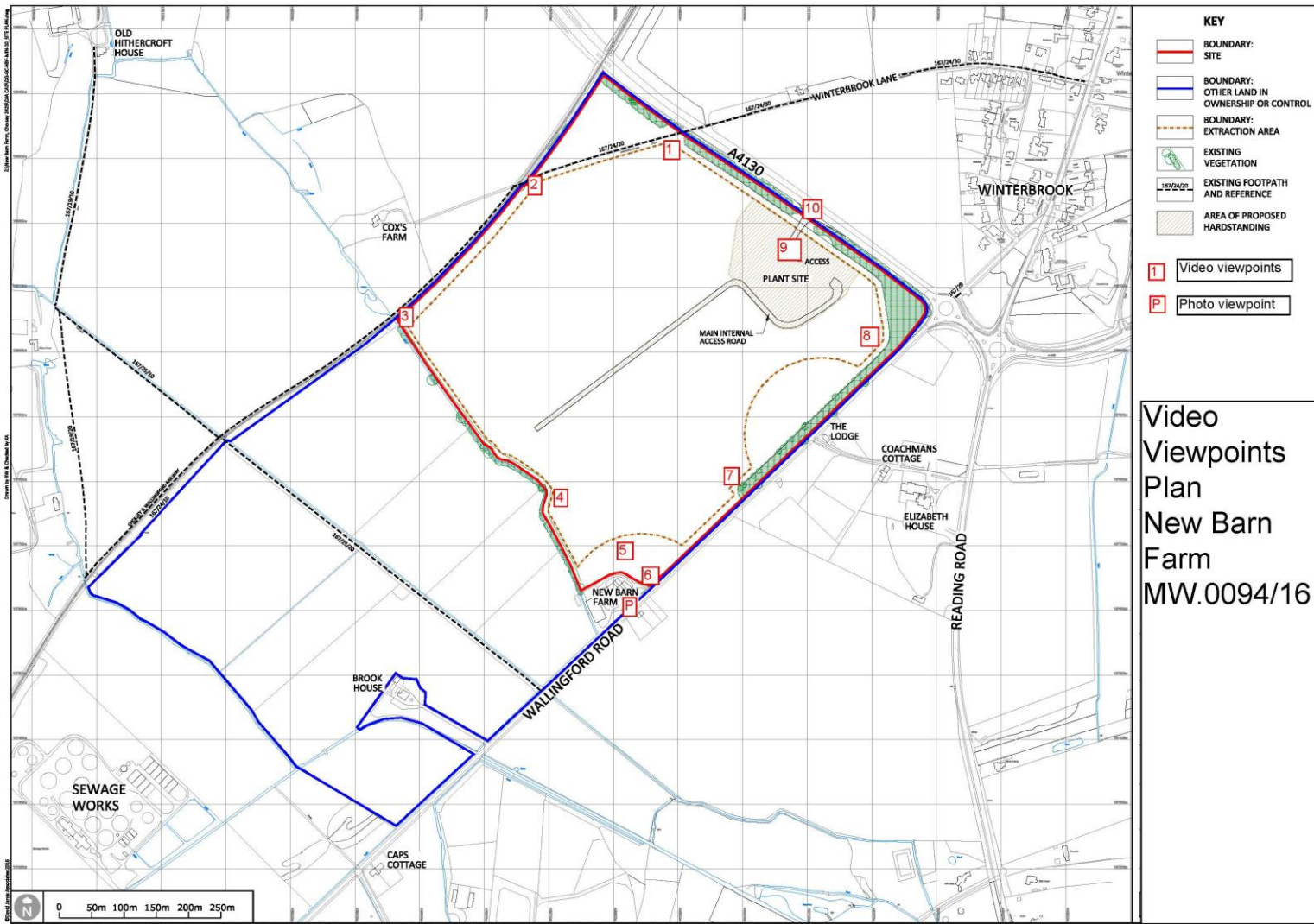
196. **It is RECOMMENDED that subject to:**

- (i) a Section 106 legal agreement to include matters set out in Annex 2;**
- (ii) a routeing agreement to ensure that HGV movements associated with the new development accord with the County Council's Lorry Routeing Strategy; and that**
- (iii) that the Director for Planning and Place be authorised to refuse the application if the legal agreement referred to in (i) above is not completed within 10 weeks of the date of this meeting on the grounds that it would not comply with OMWCS policy M10 and the guidance set out in paragraph 118 of the NPPF in that there would not be satisfactory provisions for the long term management of the restored site.**

application no. MW.0094/16 be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Director for Planning and Place to include the matters set out in Annex 1 to this report.

SUSAN HALLIWELL
Director Planning and Place

November 2017



Annex 1 – Draft Conditions

1. Complete accordance with all plans unless amended by the requirements of other conditions;
2. Commencement within 3 years;
3. End date for extraction (19 years after commencement);
4. Restoration in accordance with approved plans within 24 months of end of mineral working;
5. No operations or HGV movements outside of operating hours proposed;
6. Removal of all associated plant and development upon cessation of mineral working;
7. Depth of working as proposed;
8. Detailed restoration schemes for each phase to be submitted prior to working in that phase;
9. Detailed working schemes for each phase to be submitted prior to working in that phase;
10. 5 year aftercare, in accordance with aftercare scheme to be submitted and approved;
11. Submission of details of access, and implementation;
12. Submission of details of visibility splays, and implementation;
13. Submission and implementation of a Traffic Management Plan;
14. Turning and parking areas within the site shall be provided prior to first occupation;
15. No mud or dust on highway;
16. Sheeting of lorries;
17. No gates within 18m of highway;
18. Access road to be maintained during development and removed afterwards;
19. A sign shall be erected advising lorry drivers of left in, left out arrangement;
20. Restriction of permitted development rights;
21. Maximum noise limits at the closest dwellings, as specified in ES;
22. Maximum noise limit for temporary operations measured at the closest dwellings, as specified in ES;
23. Noise monitoring;
24. No reversing beepers other than white noise;
25. Submission and implementation of dust management plan covering operational and non-operational hours, including monitoring provisions;
26. Vehicles, plant and machinery shall be serviced and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
27. Submission and implementation of detailed planting scheme;
28. Only naturally occurring materials are to be used in restoration;
29. Soil screen bunds shall be erected and maintained in accordance with approved plans;
30. Additional bund for phase 1 should permission for new residential development at Winterbrook be issued;
31. Submission and implementation of a scheme for protected species mitigation;
32. Buffer zone between right of way and working phases (10m);

33. Buffer zones for railway (15m);
34. Buffer zone for hedges and trees (10m);
35. Submission and implementation of scheme for tree and hedgerow protection;
36. Ramping of excavations to minimise risk of death and injury to mammals;
37. No lighting other than in accordance with an approved scheme;
38. No external lighting on the southwest boundary and buffer zone;
39. Submission and implementation of scheme for fencing south western boundary buffer for protection of ditch;
40. Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeology ;
41. Staged programme of archaeological investigation;
42. Submission and implementation of scheme of soil movement;
43. Soil handling operations carried out in accordance with approved documents;
44. Submission of plan showing bund locations and soil types;
45. Soil shall only be moved when in a dry and friable condition;
46. Measures to prevent the spread of soil borne animal or plant diseases;
47. No soil handling when puddles on the surface;
48. No soil handling between October and March inclusive;
49. Haul routes only on locations to be approved;
50. Handling methods for topsoil;
51. Soil stripping depths in accordance with approved details;
52. Subsoil substitute soils shall be stripped and stored separately;
53. Written notification shall be provided of the intention to strip soils;
54. Soil storage bund criteria for agricultural soil storage;
55. Soil storage bunds intended to remain in situ for more than 6 months shall be grassed and subject to weed control;
56. All topsoil, subsoil, and soil forming material shall be retained on the site;
57. Recovery of pockets of soil forming material for use during restoration;
58. Restored soil depths as approved;
59. Stones to be picked and removed from site;
60. Notification of commencement of final subsoil placement;
61. Imported soils shall be stored separately, free of large objects and identified as suitable;
62. Implementation of approved final settlement contours;
63. Refuelling of mobile plant on hardstanding only;
64. Fuel storage only in double sided tank, on concrete base and bunded;
65. Plant shall be maintained;
66. Submission and implementation of scheme for dealing with hydrocarbon spills;
67. Construction of a French drain along north west boundary;
68. Ensure drainage from adjacent areas is not impaired; and
69. Submission, approval and implementation of details of local liaison committee.

Annex 2 – Section 106 legal agreement heads of terms

- Bird management plan
- 20 year funded long term management plan
- Contribution of £2000 towards SODC undertaking 5 years of additional NO₂ monitoring along the A4074 using diffusion tubes, implementation of mitigation if required.
- In the event of a sustained deterioration to water quality at identified private water supply, commitment to undertake a water quality assessment to identify the likely cause and to provide an alternative supply if the cause is found to be the quarry;
- Commitment to carry out necessary highway works under Section 278 of the Highways Act to provide access to the site;

Annex 3 - Environmental Statement

1. An Environmental Statement was submitted with the planning application.
2. Chapter 1 sets out the background to the Environmental Statement. Chapter 2 covers the site description and history including mineral reserves and geology and utilities. Chapter 3 sets out the proposed development, including a consideration of bird strike risk. Chapter 4 covers the potential environmental impacts. This includes a consideration of alternative sites and methods of working, cumulative impacts and climate change. Chapter 5 contains the conclusions.
3. The assessments of environmental impacts are included in appendices. Appendix 2 is the Ecological Impact Assessment including a range of habitat and species surveys. It concludes that the largest direct impact would be habitat change and this would be negative but not significant as the habitat would be gradual and the final restoration would create new habitat. Mitigation measures are proposed including lizard fencing, updated surveys and a check of vegetation for nesting birds prior to removal.
4. Appendix 3 considers agricultural land classification and soil resources. This provides a detailed account of the condition of soil across the site and makes recommendations for soil handling.
5. Appendix 4 is the Hydrological and Hydrogeological Impact Assessment. This concludes that impacts to most receptors would be negligible during extraction, although groundwater levels up-gradient of the site would be raised in places as the site is restored. There is also a risk to groundwater quality through accidental inclusion of contaminated material. A French drain is proposed for the western boundary to mitigate the groundwater level rise. Some residual risks to a private water supply on Wallingford Road would be mitigated by provision of an alternative water supply if required.
6. Appendix 5 contains the Flood Risk Assessment, this considers the risk of flooding to and from the site in relation to fluvial, groundwater, surface water and sewer/water mains. It is concluded that the proposal satisfies the flood risk requirements of the NPPF and technical guidance.
7. Appendix 6 is the Air Quality and Dust Assessment. This includes mitigation measures for dust. It is concluded that subject to the proposed mitigation residual effects would be minimal and unlikely to cause adverse air quality or dust impacts. Further assessment work was provided following requests from consultees and the Regulation

22 requests, including an addendum dated December 2016, an additional Air Quality and Dust Assessment dated June 2017 and an addendum dated September 2017. The June 2017 assessment concludes that the proposed workings can be operated in a manner unlikely to cause adverse air quality or dust impacts in their vicinity, and that the overall impact of the development is considered to be not significant. The September 2017 addendum contains a PM¹⁰ monitoring study to establish baseline PM¹⁰ concentrations for the proposed development. It concludes that background levels are below the annual and daily objectives and that it is unlikely that the quarry would lead to an exceedance.

8. Appendix 7 is the noise assessment. This suggests noise limits for various locations and shows that with noise mitigation measures, noise levels at those properties should be less than the limits. The mitigation includes 4 metre high screening bunds close to Willow Cottage, The Lodge and Cox's Farm. Cumulative noise impacts are also considered.
9. Appendix 8 is a Cultural Heritage Assessment. This considers direct and indirect impacts on heritage assets in the area including Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and listed buildings within 2 km of the application area and a geophysical survey. This find that there is the potential for direct impacts on archaeology, but this could be mitigated through the implementation of a written scheme of investigation. It concludes that there would be no significant residual effects upon known features of cultural heritage.
10. Appendix 9 is the Landscape and Visual Assessment. This concludes that there would be no long term effect on the River Thames Corridor character area or Flat Open Farmland landscape type. It concludes that in terms of landscape value there would be no significant effect on the AONBs due to the distance from the boundary and vegetation screening. It concludes that there would be an impact on the setting of listed buildings, but this would be temporary for the duration of works only. The impact of the extraction on the setting of the listed buildings would be mitigated by the bunds, but these would themselves have an impact. There would also be an impact on the footpath on the north west boundary due to bunds blocking views and an impact on the tranquillity and scenic qualities of the site. 33 viewpoints are assessed for impacts on visual amenity and it is concluded that there would be an adverse impact on 11 of them.
11. Appendix 10 contains the Transport Statement. This concludes that the proposed development would be a modest generator of traffic which would have minimal detrimental effects on the local highway network. This includes a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit of the proposed new junction.

12. Further information in respect of the ES was requested under Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. Further to that request, the applicant submitted a further statement with appendices in January 2017.
13. In summary, the Regulation 22 information included an Archaeological Evaluation Report, the raw data to accompany the previously submitted geophysical survey, an addendum to the Air Quality and Dust Assessment, an updated noise assessment, an addendum to the Ecological Impact Assessment providing information on badgers, a Draft Landscape Aftercare Management Plan, soil handling information, an addendum to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and a draft bird management plan.
14. A second Regulation 22 request was made in July 2017. This required further information on dust monitoring and site access design. This information was provided in September 2017.
15. All Environmental Statement and Regulation 22 documents are available to view on the e-planning website.

Annex 4 – Consultation Responses Summary

South Oxfordshire District Council

1. South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) responded initially to say that regarding policy, there was insufficient information to assess the application and requested further information on noise, emissions and vibrations; and ecology.
2. They commented that the approach to restore the former “flat, open farmland” landscape diversity and structure in accordance with policy CSEN1 of the SODC Core Strategy would be desirable. They also comment that, it is considered inappropriate in the open countryside and along the river corridor as it is a large-scale development. However, subject to the recommended mitigation and restoration strategy, they do not object on landscape grounds.
3. The Environmental Protection Officer on Air Quality requested detailed air quality modelling works to be carried out to fully assess the air quality impacts of the development, particularly taking account of the proximity to the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Wallingford. The applicant provided an addendum to the Air Quality Assessment, which includes traffic emission modelling and as such the EPO has provided the following further advice:

“Based on the impacts of the HGV’s on the local road network, the current high levels of NO₂ recorded on the surrounding roads I can confirm mitigation is required. This is in order to protect public health from the cumulative impact of small developments. I also have concerns over the potential dust impacts of the development on existing and proposed new receptors.

“I have no objections to the principle of the application providing the following conditions are adhered to;

- *Contributions towards extra NO₂ monitoring along the A4074 are required in the form of section 106 agreements.*
- *No development shall take place until a detailed scheme for the control of dust emanating from the site, so as not to cause undue disturbance to the occupants of nearby residential properties has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.”*

4. The Environmental Protection Officer on Noise, requested baseline noise monitoring on a Saturday morning; continuous monitoring over several days at the nearest property to the development site; and that the L90 background levels should be calculated using the most occurring value rather than the average.

5. The Environmental Protection Officer on noise provides further comments in response to the additional information provided by the applicant regarding noise, stating that it addresses his concerns and recommends a condition be included regarding the erection of a 4m high bund along the northwest and northeast boundaries of Phase 1 in the situation that this phase is worked at the same time as newly constructed dwellings at Winterbrook become occupied.
6. The District Forestry Officer recommended that the semi-mature planting along the northern and eastern boundaries are retained and fenced off during operations and that additional planting should be required along the southern and western boundaries.
7. The District Ecology Officer had no concerns subject to the protected species mitigation as set out within the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) being implemented.
8. SODC's subsequent response to the second consultation raised an objection on the grounds of prematurity, they state that the application pre-empts the inspector's final report on the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and the allocation of sites in the future Part 2 Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
9. The Environmental Protection Officer requested some further information on noise levels in relation to 24 Wallingford Road, which is much closer to the plant site than Cox's Farm and The Lodge.
10. Planning application P16/S4275/0 was submitted to SODC in January 2017 for 550 residential dwellings, a primary school and new access on land to the north of the A4130 Bosley Way and therefore north of the proposed mineral extraction site at New Barn Farm. The development, if permitted, would result in residential receptors being located 65m from the plant site. As neither site is allocated, SODC strongly encourages the applicants of both sites to seek a combined mitigation solution.
11. The Environmental Protection Officer's final comments were that any noise issues could be resolved by a 4 metre bund which would only be necessary if the new residential development north of the application site goes ahead.
12. The Conservation Officer requested further work on heritage assets, in particular on New Barn Farm. The Conservation Officer's final comments were to re-inforce that the listed barn would be within the ownership of the site and the legal responsibility for the listed building and its ongoing maintenance lies with Grundon. They urged that a management procedure is put in place to ensure that the barn is appropriately maintained.

13. October 2017 – The Environmental Health Officer confirmed that previous comments stand. Require a condition for NO2 monitoring and submission of a full dust management plan prior to the commencement of work.
14. **CAGE** (Communities Against Gravel Extraction) has responded to the application on behalf of Cholsey Parish Council, Wallingford Town Council, Aston Tirrold Parish Council, Aston Upthorpe Parish Council, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Parish Council, North Moreton Parish Council and Moulsoford Parish Council. CAGE object to the application on the following grounds:
 - 1) Lack of demonstrable need for mineral – not required to meet the landbank
 - 2) Archaeological Heritage Impacts – consider further work should be done prior to determination
 - 3) Proposed working method by wet pit working
 - 4) Impact of operations at RAF Benson – bird strike risk
 - 5) Proposed method of restoration using waste and risk of pollution to groundwater
 - 6) Potential flooding issues – concerned about potential rise in groundwater levels
 - 7) Quality of mineral – concerned that aggregate is not good quality and therefore deliverability is open to doubt
 - 8) Impacts on tourism and leisure – concerned about impacts on Dame Agatha Christie Trail in terms of noise, dust and impacts on views from hedges and bunds. Also concerned about impact on Cholsey and Wallingford heritage railway in terms of loss of views and stability of track bed. Concerned about noise impacts on people using Hithercroft Sports Park during festivals.
 - 9) Use of RAF Benson Wind Rose to assess noise and air quality impacts – concerned that it is not correlated to actual site conditions
 - 10) Impacts on two AONBs
 - 11) Traffic impacts – nearby roundabouts are approaching capacity, impacts on cyclists not adequately assessed, impact of dust on pedestrians and cyclists on Wallingford Road
 - 12) Lack of consideration of alternative sites – traffic assessment is not compliant in this respect
 - 13) Lack of detail in consideration of socio-economic impacts – particularly negative impacts on tourism and leisure.
15. **Wallingford Town Council** object to the application on the grounds as raised by CAGE.
16. **Cholsey Parish Council** object to the application for the following reasons:
 - 1) Quality of mineral
 - 2) Proximity to and impact on the AONBs
 - 3) Archaeological impacts and lack of information

- 4) Noise
 - 5) Dust
 - 6) Traffic impacts
 - 7) Premature
 - 8) Other sites available
 - 9) Concern that there is a lack of inert material for infilling
 - 10) Concern that working the site wet could lead to contamination of the local aquifer and localised flooding
 - 11) Clay lining will cause flooding
 - 12) Impact on amenity, the Agatha Christie Trail and the Cholsey and Wallingford (heritage) railway.
17. In the second round of consultation, **Wallingford Town Council** and **Cholsey Parish Council** provided a joint response. They continue to object to the application, stating that the additional documents supplied in response to the Regulation 22 request do not address all of the major weaknesses that were previously identified.
18. **Rights of Way Officer** - no diversions are required and therefore no comments to make.
19. **Arboricultural Officer** - notes that the application states that no trees will be removed as a result of the development and recommends the following conditions:
- No works of site clearance, or development shall take place unless or until a scheme for the protection of trees has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority, to include details of the method of protection around the perimeter of the trees remaining on site. The protection measures shall be erected, retained and maintained throughout the development, from site clearance until all plant, equipment and surplus materials have been removed from the site, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations. Nothing shall be stored or placed in the area protected and the ground levels within these areas shall not be altered. There shall be no use of plant or heavy earth moving equipment within the protected areas. Upon completion of the restoration the protection measures shall be removed off site.
 - No extraction shall commence in any of the phases as shown in DG/GC/NBF/MIN/03, until a Detailed Restoration Scheme for that phase has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Minerals Planning Authority. The Detailed Restoration Schemes must be based on up to date arboricultural best practice and no more than two years old. No restoration work shall take place other than in accordance with the approved detailed restoration schemes. The Detailed Restoration Scheme relating to trees for each phase shall include suitable actions and appropriate timeframes regarding planting (species, size, spacing, protection,

soil improvement), aftercare (weeding, watering, inspection (pests and diseases, vigour), formative pruning, replacement).

20. **Archaeological Officer** - initially responded requesting that the desk based assessment (DBA) needed to be revised to include all available sources, for example more recent aerial photography and to better process the Lidar data. They also requested a full report following the Geophysical Survey, to include the unprocessed and trace data and grey scale plots.
21. The County Archaeologist responded to the second consultation having reviewed the Geophysical Survey and Archaeological Evaluation Report and attended site during the evaluation. He commented that, whilst features were revealed, none were of such importance to preclude the principle of mineral extraction, although further investigation and monitoring will be required if permission is granted. Therefore, conditions are recommended requiring a programme of archaeological work.
22. **Ecology Officer** - initially responded with an objection, now withdrawn, stating lack of information/clarification. Information on how net loss of biodiversity would be avoided and how impacts on reptiles would be avoided, including what buffer zones would be provided. It is advised that a minimum of 5m is provided as a buffer between the hedge and soil mound on the north-western edge of the site and a minimum of 8 metres to non-main river watercourses.
23. The County Ecology Officer further recommends a condition to ensure tree and hedge protection; suggests considering a small reedbed at the outfall of the southern attenuation pond to improve water quality; and requests 6m margins to the site boundaries within the restoration proposals.
24. Natural England passed on a report from a local resident of a recent sighting of Otter within Hithercroft Brook or Ditch, close to Wallingford Road, close to the south/southwestern boundary of the site. In response to this, the County Ecology Officer consulted Natural England's standing advice and reviewed the Ecological Survey, which indicated that the watercourse does not contain suitable habitat for otters, so it is likely to be a 'commuting route'. As such, the County Ecology Officer recommends a condition requiring a 10m buffer along the watercourse, fencing to ensure the buffer remains undisturbed, no lighting along the southwest boundary and ramped workings to avoid accidental harm.
25. **Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council** object to the application for the following reasons:

Water Environment

- lack of details regarding the lining of the site prior to infilling L
- dewatering has not been considered D
- concerns regarding settlement and subsequent impact on surface water drainage and agricultural production C

Transport

- lack of transport modelling L
- incorrect assumption regarding even split for HGV trips I
- A doesn't assess roads other than the Wallingford ring road T
- failure to assess sustainable transport method i.e. by rail F

26. **Countryside Access Team** - would like to see any potential reduction in enjoyment of members of the public using Footpath 167/24/20 to be kept to a minimum by the inclusion of a suitable buffer zone between the public right of way and working phases. Footpath 167/24/20 follows the north western site boundary and Winterbrook Lane, which cuts through the northern corner of the site. They also request that additional planting should be set back from the public right of way so that it does not grow out and encroach across the footpath.

27. In response to the consultation on the further information they stated that there should be a fence to separate the footpath users from the workings. The fence should be set back from the edge of Winterbrook Lane to avoid a claustrophobic feel to the route.

28. **Lead Local Flood Authority** - has the following comments:

- Water quality – digging out the sand and gravel wet and then infilling with inert material will cause some pollution to the ground water flows – EA will have to give an Environmental Permit for the infill and would monitor the material fill.
- Ground water will raise due to the porosity of the inert material – it is suggested that the ground water will raise up to 0.4m but the proposed filter drains will help to reduce this height. Also this locally raised level will not unduly affect any local properties.
- I agree that they have not been monitoring the local water levels for very long, but I do not see what additional information a longer monitoring would provide.

29. He concludes that as the EA will be monitoring the quality of the ground water and all the material used in the infilling, he has no drainage objection to this quarry site.

30. In response to the consultation on the further information, he stated that the filter drain must be constructed alongside of the railway line before backfilling commences. Ground water levels must be monitored outside the site during excavation and restoration to see the effects on the surrounding areas and if effects are noted then remedial action should be undertaken.
31. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** comments on need, landbank and the rate of supply, stating that reserves are adequate.
32. **Crowmarsh Parish Council** object to the application for the following reasons:
 - 1) Premature – it should wait for the adoption of the Oxfordshire Core Strategy
 - 2) Traffic – HGVs will cause further congestion
 - 3) Air Quality – pollution from HGVs
 - 4) Impact upon AONBs
33. **Ministry of Defence (MOD)** is principally concerned with potential increase in birdstrike risk to aircraft operations as a result of the creation of wetland habitats through the restoration of mineral extraction sites. They do not consider that the two proposed ponds included within the restoration proposals would result in increased birdstrike risk, although they are concerned about the proposed method of working the site without dewatering, as this will create a large body of water. They therefore request that a bird management plan is maintained so the site is free of gulls and waterfowl, which should also make provision for access to the site for inspection by the MOD to verify bird populations and to disperse bird populations considered to be an unacceptable hazard.
34. Following the submission of a draft Bird Management Plan with the Regulation 22 response, the MOD confirmed that they are satisfied with the content, although require that the trigger level for Geese and Swans be reduced from 100 to 20 and that a trigger for Gulls and Lapwings be included at 100 each.
35. **Environment Agency (EA)** have assessed the proposed development as having a low environmental risk [in planning land-use terms] and therefore have no comments to make. However, they have advised that the proposal is likely to require an Environmental Permit and they advise that “*strict importation criteria and additional safeguards may be required...[which] is especially so if material is proposed to be deposited in locations that will be sub water table.*”
36. **Environmental Strategy Officer** states that it is important to consider the views of the site from the AONBs on higher ground against the surrounding more natural landscape features. He

requested that the ZTV (Zone of Theoretical Visibility) be recalculated using the highest point of features such as plant and bunds and that viewpoints from higher ground be provided. He comments that the proposed screening hedgerow along the north western boundary, adjacent to footpath 167/24/20 and the railway, will not provide substantial screening benefits until it is mature, which is likely to be towards the end of operations. Screening will be more dependent upon the soil bunds, which are an unnatural feature in this flat and relatively open landscape. He requested further input from the applicant on how to maximise the biodiversity value of the ponds and the supply ditches; confirmation of the width of rough grass margins; and suggested there is an opportunity to provide in-field biodiversity features, such as beetle banks (low narrow grassland).

37. A further response from the Environmental Strategy Officer recognises the changes made in the revised LVIA. With regard to the impact on the setting of the AONBs, the Officer states:

“Views from higher ground within the two AONBs have been examined as requested and do not appear to show a significant adverse impact on the setting of the AONBs from these points. This is without prejudice to any further comments the AONBs may have on the wider setting of the AONB, the sustainability and cumulative impacts of the proposals.”

38. Further, he comments that the viewpoint from public right of way 167/22/20 on Cholsey Hill is within the ZTV and the assessment indicates that the site is not visible from this location. The Officer remains to be convinced that the upper parts of plant will not be visible, although if they were, in his opinion the visual impact would be moderate adverse during the operational phase.
39. With regards to the Draft Aftercare Management Plan, the Officer seeks a 5 + 20 year management period to be guided by a management plan to include environmental mitigation measures and measures to enhance soil condition, in order to protect and enhance the valued landscape and soils. Further, he comments that the applicant does not provide further insight on the opportunities for additional biodiversity / Green Infrastructure gain, which would benefit the scheme.
40. **Highways Authority** commented (November 2017) that there is no objection subject to conditions and legal agreements to control the routing of HGVs and securing the highway works needed for the access. Conditions requested include approval of site access and visibility splays, a traffic management plan, gates to be set back 18m from highway, no mud on road.
41. Initially commented that the access proposals with a left in/left out arrangement would prevent development traffic physically crossing

and interrupting traffic flows on the A4130, which is seen as a positive; the proposed visibility splays of 2.4m x 215m; the routing of HGV's on the Strategic Roads; the parking and turning provision; and the wheel wash are all acceptable. Further, the proposed 120 two-way daily HGV movements are considered acceptable and will have minimal impact on the local highway network. Subject to conditions and a legal agreement to secure the routing of vehicles and highway and access works, no objections are raised.

42. In July 2017 a new highways objection was raised, due to concerns about the site access design. This was resolved following the submission of further information showing amended access detail.
43. **Historic England** responded to say that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and specialist conservation advice.
44. **Natural England (NE)** No objection. Considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites and therefore has no objection. NE considers that the small amount of non-agricultural restoration acceptable, provided that the methods used in the restoration and aftercare would enable the land to retain the high quality soil resource. However, the submitted soil handling, restoration and aftercare proposals do not meet their requirements. Therefore, any permission should be subject to conditions to address the points raised in their response, to safeguard soil resources and promote a satisfactory standard of reclamation. They provide advice on landscape matters, including regarding consideration of the nearby AONBs and the need to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty. They advise that the proposal provides an opportunity to improve connectivity within the wider landscape and that further improvements could be made to the watercourse and the riparian habitat that runs along the southwest of the site. They also recommend further biodiversity enhancements.
45. **North Wessex Downs AONB** have commented that although the site lies outside of the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns AONBs, it does lie within their setting. They make the following points:
 - 1) Evergreens are not native and therefore while they provide a quick and all year round screening effect, are discouraged.
 - 2) Any new planting will not have a real screening effect for 5-10 years.
 - 3) Buffer zones should be increased to ensure minimal disruption to biodiversity corridors.
 - 4) There does not appear to be a demand for sand & gravel that would warrant approval within this sensitive location.
 - 5) Restoration proposal should include landscape and biodiversity gains/enhancements.

- 6) There would be long distance views of the site from the upland areas of Cholsey Hill to the west and Lollington Hill and Moulsoford Downs to the south.
46. **Chilterns Conservation Board** object to the application due to the visual impacts on the setting of the AONB as well as the landscape character impacts.
47. **OCC Public Health (in consultation with Public Health England)** – No objection, subject to a condition for a Dust Management Plan covering both operational and non-operational hours.
48. Previously they were unable to comment on whether the development would exceed health based standards and required further information, which was provided.
49. **South Moreton Parish Council** do not have any comments to make.

Annex 5 - Representations Summary

197. 53 representations were received in response to this application during the initial consultation, including from local residents, the Wallingford Museum and The Historical and Archaeological Society, and from Kemp & Kemp LLP on behalf of Berkeley Homes.

198. 7 of those representations are in support of the application, raising the following points:

- Local stocks being used to supply local developments, which reduces transportation
- Generating local jobs
- Local roads are suitable
- Dust suppression measures
- Traffic not using village roads
- Local supply means fewer trucks making long journeys
- Meeting need for housing, schools etc in local area i.e. Didcot, Cholsey, Benson and Wallingford
- Well-hidden site due to existing trees
- Temporary nature of workings, therefore not a 'blot' on the landscape
- The site has no significance to the Agatha Christie trail
- Nature conservation benefits offered

199. One representation is neutral, making comments on the proposed method for transporting the mineral and recommending the use of the adjacent railway.

200. A further 8 representations were received during the October 2017 consultation. Those who had previously made comments were informed that there was no need to write in again, unless they wanted to comment on the further information. These comments re-iterated previous concerns, especially in relation to dust and associated health impacts. Concerns raised included that the latest addendum to the air quality assessment does not alleviate concerns as dust will inevitably be produced and concerns about inaccuracies and inadequacies in that report. One representation was from a Grundons employee supporting the development for reasons of job security. The others were objections.

201. 45 of the representations object to the application for reasons including the following points, which are addressed in italics.

- Traffic impacts, including to pedestrians and cyclists crossing the roundabout at the end of the Wallingford Road; adding to existing congestion; double use of HGV's turning left out of the site and

having to use the roundabout to turn back in an easterly direction; impacts on villages and towns; dangerous railway crossing.

The impact on traffic has been assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES) and this assessment has been reviewed by the County Council's Transport Development Control Team, who do not object. The ES addressed potential impacts on cyclists and pedestrians and traffic impacts for key links onto Wallingford bypass. Routeing is proposed to ensure that HGVs do not unnecessarily travel through village and town centres.

- Anti-social working hours proposed – from 7am and on Saturday morning

The hours proposed are in line with standard quarry operating hours for Oxfordshire. There would be no working or vehicle movements on Saturday afternoons (after 1pm), Sundays or on bank or public holidays.

- Noise pollution, including that noise from lorries has not been assessed and that the assessment is based on a high level of screening

The noise impact of the proposed operations has been assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment and this assessment has been reviewed by the District Council's Environmental Health Team, who has not objected to this application. Further detail is provided in the report.

The ES calculates noise levels with and without mitigation. Bunds are proposed to mitigate noise. The ES calculation methods included an assessment of lorries. Conditions can be used to control noise, for example to ensure noise is kept below set levels and to require the use of white noise for reversing beepers on all lorries at the site.

- Duration – 20 years, concern that it would be extended

The application proposes 18 phases, each taking one year to work. An appropriate end date would be secured by planning condition. If working does not take place as fast as anticipated the applicant would either need to make an application to change the end-date condition, or to change the restoration to leave mineral in the ground but finish extraction on time. Any application submitted would be assessed on its merits at that time.

- Premature – should wait until the Local Plan is adopted

Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 has been adopted since the consultation period. This is covered in detail in the main report.

- Need – no further minerals required at this time; mineral demand likely to be lower than projected due to Brexit

The policy position on need for mineral is set out in detail in the main report.

- Method of working – wet working will lead to a difficulty in achieving a high quality restoration, risk to groundwater if the site is not lined and tipping into water would produce high levels of dust

There has been no objection from the Environment Agency, who would be responsible for issuing a permit for the waste disposal element, in terms of the proposed method of restoration. Dust impacts have been assessed in the ES.

- Lack of details i.e. the height of soil bunds and trees planted,

The Minerals Planning Authority is satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to allow the application to be determined. Further detail would be required through planning condition, should permission be granted.

- Insufficient mitigation – tree screening will be diminished in winter

Inevitably, screening vegetation is less effective during the winter months. However, the screening along the Wallingford Road and A4130 has been in place for some years and therefore is well established and provides a good level of visual mitigation. A soil storage bund is proposed between the extraction and Cox's Farmhouse to the north west, which would provide visual screening year round.

- Location of processing plant will result in greater noise and air quality impacts as it is closer to housing and the gap in the screening created by the site entrance

The applicant has confirmed that the location of the processing plant near the site entrance would reduce dust by reducing HGV movements across the site. As set out elsewhere, the noise and dust impacts of the development on sensitive receptors have been assessed through the ES.

- Visual impact, including on the nearby AONB; including the scale of the processing plant; including in relation to River Thames; including in the context of the site separating ancient settlements

The ES includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. There has been no objection from the Environmental Strategy Officer. The ES concludes that there would be no significant impact on the AONBs, which are over 500 metres away and views are screened by vegetation and landform.

- Impact upon the Green Belt

This site is not located within the Green Belt

- Impact on tourism and on historical and archaeological interest including the Dame Agatha Christie trail and the Cholsey and Wallingford Heritage Railway
- Assessment of socio-economic impact in ES is inadequate and potential detrimental impact on tourism in the area is not recognised

Impacts on local tourism, including on the Dame Agatha Christie Trail and the Cholsey and Wallingford Heritage Railway are considered in the main report. It is not considered that the development would give rise to significant impacts.

- Effect of dust and noise on amenity of people walking along the Agatha Christie trail and the Wallingford to Cholsey cycleway

The Environmental Health Officer has assessed the impact of dust and noise from the development on nearby properties and has not objected to the proposals. The potential impact of dust and noise on users of rights of way in the area is considered to be less significant than the potential impact on residents as people would be moving through the landscape and not exposed for long durations. Conditions can be used to protect the amenity of those using the rights of way. There has been no objection from the rights of way team. It is common for footpaths to run alongside quarries and this has not caused problems elsewhere in the county. It is understood that the Wallingford to Cholsey cycleway is not yet in place, but would run on the other side of a hedge to the quarry, which would mitigate some noise and dust.

- Unallocated site

The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy Part 2 Site Allocations Document has not yet been published even in draft form and therefore no sites are allocated for sand and gravel extraction in Oxfordshire. However, applications which have been submitted must be determined.

- Quality of the mineral

The applicant has confirmed that the deposit at New Barn Farm has been tested for quality and is suitable for construction and concrete uses.

- Proximity to existing and proposed new housing in Wallingford

The ES has taken into account potential impacts on the nearest residential properties. It also includes an addendum covering the application for new residential development north of the site and the A4130.

- Potential risk to water environment and groundwater quality; site needs to be lined prior to waste importation; hydrological and hydrogeological assessments not adequate

Impacts on the water environment are assessed in the ES. There has been no objection from the Lead Local Flood Authority, or the Environment Agency. The site would not need to be lined for waste recovery using inert material.

- Impact on public health, particularly those with asthma, young children (nearby nursery) and the elderly (nearby nursing home).
- Air pollution adding to existing air pollution issues in Wallingford

The ES includes a comprehensive Air Quality and Dust Assessment, which concludes that there would be no significant impacts. Public Health England via the County Council's Public Health Team were consulted on this application and requested further information so that the health impacts could be fully assessed. Following the submission of additional assessment work they have confirmed that they have no objections to the proposals.

- Assessment work submitted for historic environment and archaeology not adequate

Additional information was submitted with respect to aerial photography and lidar data in response to the Regulation 22 request. Following the submission of further information, the Archaeology Officer confirmed that they have no objection to the development.

- Air quality and noise assessments rely on RAF Benson wind rose
- Air quality and dust assessments contain errors

The Environmental Health Officer has specifically confirmed that the use of the RAF Benson wind rose is appropriate as it is the nearest

reporting station to the site. They have not asked for any further amendments or clarification to the air quality and dust assessment.

- Impact on RAF Benson – proposed ponds risk air safety

There has been no objection from RAF Benson, subject to a requirement for a Bird Management Plan.

- Loss of house value

This is not a material planning consideration.

- Would be unable to use garden due to dust concerns
- Development would lead to increased costs of living in property due to dust impacts – need for air conditioning and filtration, hire of venues if can't use home or garden for parties, running tumble dryer, cost of employing a gardener, additional window and car cleaning
- Effect of dust on vulnerable people in close proximity – including Mongewell Park nursery (in Elizabeth House), Winterbrook nursing home, Wallingford Community Hospital
- Impact of dust on the adjacent solar farm

The dust impacts at the principal dust receptor locations, including the solar farm to the east of the site, have been assessed in the ES and there has been no objection from the Environmental Health Officer.

Annex 6 – European Protected Species

The Local Planning Authority in exercising any of their functions, have a legal duty to have regard to the requirements of the Conservation of Species & Habitats Regulations 2010 which identifies 4 main offences for development affecting European Protected Species (EPS).

1. Deliberate capture or killing or injuring of an EPS
2. Deliberate taking or destroying of EPS eggs
3. Deliberate disturbance of a EPS including in particular any disturbance which is likely
 - a) to impair their ability –
 - i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
 - b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.
4. Damage or destruction of an EPS breeding site or resting place.

Ecological survey results indicate that a European Protected Species is likely to be present.

The mitigation measures detailed within the survey are considered to be convincing and in your officers opinion will secure “offence avoidance” measures.

The recommendation:

Your officers consider that sufficient information has been submitted with the application which demonstrates that measures can be introduced which would ensure that an offence is avoided. The application is therefore not considered to have an adverse impact upon protected species provided that the stated mitigation measures are implemented.